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DECEMBER 2024

THE AUSTRALIAN VEHICLE DEALER'S NEWS SOURCE



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MTA QUEENSLAND

# THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Hello there,

The last issue of the year is always a good time to reflect on the past 12 months, and 2024 has been an annus horribilius for many of us, both personally and professionally.

It is not a year that I will look back on with undiluted fondness, especially after a health scare towards the end of May. But what doesn't kill you makes you stronger, allegedly.

Indeed, many people have commented that this has been the most challenging time in the automotive industry since the great financial crisis 2008, which may have eclipsed that.

Impending regulations, climate change, supply chain issues, and the Trump election have added to the challenging economic conditions for the Australian motor vehicle industry.

Mr Trump needs to understand how inextricably linked the global automotive supply chain is to free trade. His intention to place tariffs on vehicles crossing the border from Canada and Mexico will not protect US factories or stem the tide of imports. Indeed, it will simply raise the costs of the cars, reduce choice, and impact production.

China's answer to European tariffs will be to build factories in the EU to meet local demand for its products. Still, I doubt that Ford, GM, and Stellantis will be able to move their factories from Canada and Mexico to the continental USA to appease the president's desire to

Make Automotive Great Again.

Currently, Ford, GM and Stellantis are focused on profitability and retaining their market share in the USA during a challenging time and dealing with electrification, so dealing with Trump's future policy is an unwelcome distraction.

There is some light at the end of the tunnel locally. The Australian Government's decision to include many automotive trades in the new Core Skills Occupation List (CSOL) marks a milestone for the industry's workforce development.

The announcement confirms the inclusion of nine essential automotive trades among the 456 occupations eligible under both the new Skills in Demand visa and the Direct Entry stream of the Employer Nomination Scheme (subclass 186) visa, effective from December 7, 2024.

The approved automotive occupations encompass:

- Diesel Motor Mechanic (321212)
- Automotive Electrician (321111)
- Panel beater (324111)
- Vehicle Painter (324311)
- Motor Mechanic (General) (321211)
- Vehicle Body Builder (324211)
- Vehicle Trimmer (324212)
- Motorcycle Mechanic (321213)
- Small Engine Mechanic (321214)

The CSOL is a key component of the government's reformed temporary skilled migration programme. It will



operate alongside the new Skills in Demand visa, which replaces the previous Temporary Skill Shortage (subclass 482) visa.

The government has shown more common sense by reviewing the need for the Australian Design Rules, an unnecessary hangover from the days of local manufacturing.

The review will evaluate whether Australia's current ADRs align with international standards, identify opportunities for improvement, and streamline the adoption of globally harmonised standards. It comes on the eve of the commencement of the New Vehicle Efficiency Standard (NVES), with manufacturers planning future product strategies for Australia. Therefore, unnecessary and unjustified barriers must be removed.

The review aims to ensure that Australia's vehicle standards evolve to support consumer choice better, promote price competition, and drive technological innovation in the automotive sector. As the global transition to electric vehicles and cleaner technologies continues, aligning ADRs with international standards is crucial in supporting Australia's transition to net zero.

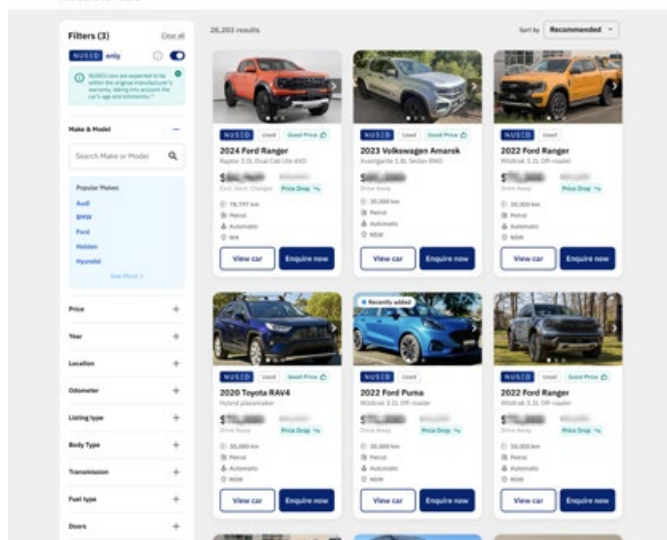
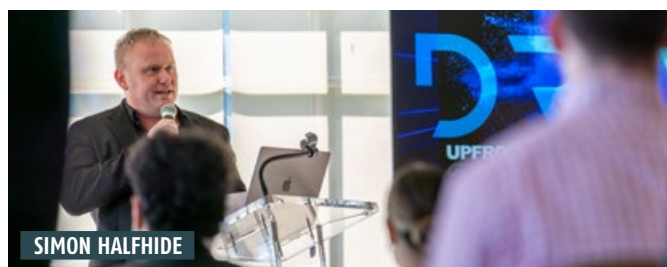
Enjoy your reading this month, Have a restful Christmas and New Year's break,

Kindest regards,

*Robert Barry*  
EDITOR AUTOTALK



# NINE LAUNCHES DRIVE NUSED QUALITY USED CAR PLATFORM



**N**ine, Australia's largest locally owned media company, has created more opportunities for brands in Drive's large, exclusive monthly audience.

Drive recently unveiled an end-to-end, full-service automotive media solution for brands at its 2025 Upfronts presentation.

It has launched an innovative all-new marketplace product, Drive NUSED, a quality used car platform where consumers can shop in-stock dealer cars with estimated manufacturing warranties.

"Our latest research tells us many consumers have put off buying a car over the last couple of years due to cost-of-living challenges," Drive chief executive **Simon Halfhide** says.

"We know 55% of Australians wait longer to buy a car or change their mind about purchasing one. But, as more

people delay buying a car, their current vehicles are getting older, and the pressure may be building to upgrade them over the next year."

From 2025, consumers can access new and quality used cars on the dealer-only platform, with all vehicles available to drive away.

For brands, this means selling quality Drive NUSED cars, sharing retail campaigns and deals, offering certified pre-owned programs, and targeting the entire funnel in one location, all backed by Nine.

"As we enter 2025, Drive continues redefining the automotive landscape by setting new standards for how brands connect with consumers," Halfhide says.

"The launch of NUSED marks a significant milestone as we offer consumers a seamless journey from discovery to purchase. In a time where economic challenges shape buyer behaviour, we're committed to empowering consumers and brands with cutting-edge solutions that reflect the trust and reach our platform has cultivated over the years," he says.

"We are proud to have created the automotive industry's first marketplace category for new and quality used cars," Drive's head of marketplace **Lee Mason** says.

"We're already receiving excellent feedback from established car dealers, who hope to add their listings to the site in the coming months.

"With the dream of buying a brand-new car becoming less achievable due to the cost of living, opting for a quality used car has become one of the best alternatives, and Drive is simplifying the search for these vehicles," Mason says.

In addition to NUSED, Drive unveiled new advertising solutions for automotive brands.

- **Drive Launchpad:** A new media launch event opportunity for automotive brands, offering partners to involve customers in launches and amplifying key messages with bespoke TV series/episodes.
- **Storylines:** Australia's first auto publisher vertical video network, built in collaboration with sustainable technology provider SeenThis. This new channel delivers instant-loading, high-definition 9:16 videos for a seamless viewing experience.
- **Drive Crowds:** Bringing together more than 40 data sources across the Nine Group, Drive Crowds will give brands the power to target people considering purchasing their next vehicle in the coming months.
- **Drive TV formats:** Six independent TV formats, with custom brand specials across lifestyle, educational, driveaway, review and Getaway programs designed to align with various stages of the car buying journey.
- **Drive Brand Studios:** Bespoke content offerings focused on brand storytelling and customer engagement, including digital custom magazines that allow brands to utilise Drive's commercial journalists and designers to directly reach their customer base.
- **Drive Learn:** Product education content for dealers and consumers.



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## VACC WELCOMES NEW PRESIDENT AND BOARD



**T**he Victorial Automotive Chamber of Commerce (VACC) has elected its new executive board following a member ballot.

"VACC celebrates its 106th year of industry advocacy, with an organisation proudly led by a new board dedicated to the VACC's charter and delivering on its member promise," VACC chief executive **Geoff Gwilym** says.

VACC welcomes its new president and board chairman, **Craig Beruldsen**, from the Towing Operators Industry Division. He operates the Mel Schmidt Panel Works business in Mildura.

**Paul Bertoli** of the Farm and Industrial Machinery Dealers Association, who owns Bertoli Farm Machinery in Shepparton, was elected vice chairman.

The new VACC Secretary is **Matt Jones** from the Motorcycle Industry Division, who operates Matt Jones Motorcycles in Melton.

The newly elected Board brings together a diverse range of automotive industry expertise, comprising:

- Chris Hummer (Dynamic Wheel Co.)
- Michael Grubb (Specialist Auto Cambridge, TAS)
- Sid Cetindag (Brighton Toyota & Lexus Of Brighton)
- Paul Hopper (Werribee Hyundai)
- Ms Carly Ruggeri (Europanel EP Pty Ltd)
- Anthony Schache (Horsham Auto

Electrical Pty Ltd)

The board's composition reflects the breadth of Victoria and Tasmania's automotive industry. Adding first-time board members **Anthony Schache** and **Carly Ruggeri** brings fresh perspectives and demonstrates VACC's commitment to evolving with the industry.

"It's a pleasure and an honour to lead Victoria's most prominent and dedicated automotive industry association. My task will be to work closely with the Board and the CEO to ensure VACC continues to be a strong advocate for the industry and its 5,000 business owner members," Beruldsen says.

Many challenges are ahead, including the transition to an electric vehicle fleet and the skills required to keep the vehicle fleet moving. Engaging with the government will be central to VACC's role. This includes working closely with the national automotive body MTAA to ensure we get state and national outcomes," he says.

**The new board takes office at a pivotal time for Victoria and Tasmania's automotive industry, navigating significant technological transitions, workforce development challenges, and evolving consumer expectations.**

VACC's leadership will be instrumental in guiding members through these changes while maintaining the high standards of service and professionalism that have characterised the industry for over a century.

Its immediate priorities include strengthening industry training pathways, advocating for sustainable business practices, and ensuring member businesses are well-positioned to meet the challenges of an increasingly complex automotive landscape.

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# GEELY AUTO ANNOUNCES AUSTRALIAN DEALER NETWORK

Chinese automotive manufacturer Geely Auto recently brought Australian dealers and New Zealand partners together for a strategic partnership signing ceremony, marking its official entry into the Australian and New Zealand (ANZ) markets.

Attended by newly appointed Geely Dealer Principals and senior executives, and those in advanced negotiations, the ceremony was led by **Evin Ye**, Deputy General Manager of Geely Auto International Corporation, and Business Director of Asia-Pacific Region, and **Li Lei**, Head of Geely Australia, who shared insights into Geely Australia's objectives and introduced the company's Australian team.

During the event, Geely Auto outlined its localised brand and product launch strategy, affirming its long-term commitment to becoming an approachable and trusted brand in Australia.

The event's roundtable workshop session saw Geely leadership collaborate with dealers on commercial and marketing activities. Geely's strong after-sales support, extensive product pipeline, and plans to develop an extensive showroom network across significant cities and regional areas in 2025 were shared.

The event recognised the first seven dealer groups committing to Geely, marking the first step towards Geely's vision of establishing an expansive dealer network across Australia.

These include:

- Balanced Brick International, Queensland
- GWS Automotive Group, Victoria,
- James Frizelle's Automotive Group,

Queensland

- Kevin Dennis Motors, Victoria
- Knox Auto, Victoria
- Peter Warren Automotive, NSW
- Rex Gorell, Victoria

The Geely EX5, a mid-sized electric vehicle slated for launch in H1 2025 as the first model to enter the ANZ market, was also showcased at the ceremony.

"We are excited to bring models like the EX5 to the market. This vehicle represents our commitment to innovation and our dedication to meeting the needs of our local customers. We're introducing new vehicles to enrich consumers' lives in Australia and New Zealand and building a brand that represents quality, innovation, and trust in these markets," says Ye.

Geely also announced a strategic partnership with the Giltrap Group, one of New Zealand's most prominent automotive distributors, appointing them as the official distributor for Geely Auto in New Zealand.

The New Zealand market will align its marketing and product strategies with Australia's, reinforcing Geely's commitment to investment and synergy between the two countries.

"These markets are crucial to our global expansion, and we are excited to strengthen our presence and partnerships here. The alliances we've established with leading distributors and dealers will be pivotal to Geely's sustained growth and regional reputation," says Lei.

Geely Auto is committed to driving transformation through electrification, intelligence,

connectivity, and shared mobility while further elevating its competitiveness in the passenger vehicle market. This strategy highlights Geely's dedication to innovation, service, and sustainability, paving the way for introducing additional products featuring first-class designs and advanced technologies to the ANZ markets.

Geely Auto Group is based in Hangzhou, China. Founded in 1997 as a Zhejiang Geely Holding Group (ZGH) subsidiary, it manages several leading brands, including Geely Auto, Lynk & Co, and Zeekr. Geely Auto Group is also the global strategic partner of Malaysian national automaker PROTON.

The group employs more than 50,000 people and operates 12 plants. It also owns five global R&D centres in Hangzhou, Ningbo, Gothenburg, Coventry, and Frankfurt and four global design studios in Shanghai, Gothenburg, Milan, and Coventry, each with 1000 employees.

Geely Automobile Holdings, a subsidiary company holding controlling stakes in Geely Auto, Lynk & Co, and Zeekr, has been listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange since 2005.

In 2023, the brands under Geely Auto Group management sold 1.68 million units, with new energy vehicle sales increasing 48.3% and exports growing 38%.

The controlling shareholders in Geely Auto are Zhejiang Geely Holding Group (ZGH), the parent company of Volvo Car Group, Geely Commercial Vehicles Group, Geely New Technology Group and Mitime Group.

## SUBARU TECHNICIAN SECURES BACK-TO-BACK VICTORY FOR AUSTRALIA

**E**blen Subaru Glenelg technician James Daly has won the 2024 Subaru World Technician Competition.

**Daly's achievement marks the second consecutive year that Australia has claimed the top spot in this esteemed global competition.**

Last year, Richard Fergusson—also from Eblen Subaru—won the gold medal, making this an outstanding double win for the Eblen team.

Held in Tokyo, Japan, the competition gathered the top 13 Subaru technicians from 13 countries. Participants faced tight time constraints and immense pressure as they diagnosed complex electrical and mechanical issues, showcasing their technical expertise and problem-solving skills.

Daly's success highlights his skills and reflects Subaru Australia's collective commitment to excellence in service

and the talent within its service network across the country.

"The competition was so tough. It's been a privilege and honour to compete here to represent Australia and my dealership back home. Winning is a dream come true," Daly says.

"I want to thank Subaru Corporation for hosting us in Japan this week, as it's been an incredible experience. Thanks for all the support as well, especially to my wife EJ, Marc Grobler from Subaru Australia and the team back at my dealership, Eblen Subaru, for providing me with all the training, advice and guidance that I needed to be able to compete and become world champion for 2024.

This experience has proven invaluable for Daly's career. It gave him the cultural opportunity of a lifetime and enriched his understanding of the brand's rich heritage.

The insights gained during this competition will undoubtedly enhance his contributions to the Subaru community in Australia and inspire other automotive technicians in the industry.

**"We are incredibly proud of James and extend our warmest congratulations to him. His victory is a testament to his superb skillset and knowledge and a significant representation of the exceptional talent within our network," Subaru Australia general manager Scott Lawrence says.**

"It also highlights our unwavering commitment to customer service excellence, reflecting our network's exceptional knowledge and expertise that supports Subaru customers daily. We hope James's story inspires other automotive professionals, emphasising the vital role skilled technicians play in shaping the industry's future," he says.

## JAC MOTORS AUSTRALIA ANNOUNCES WARRANTY LOAN VEHICLE PROGRAM



**J**AC Motors Australia has partnered with Carbiz Replacement Cars to create a warranty loan vehicle program for its JAC All Roads Assurance (JARA) package.

**Carbiz will manage the program, which provides approved owners**

**with a JAC T9 Ute loan vehicle during warranty repairs, paid for by JAC Motor Australia.**

"While JAC may be a new name to some Australians, we bring 60 years of global automotive excellence to this market. This program demonstrates

our absolute confidence in the JAC T9's quality and reliability," JAC Motors Australia managing director **Ahmed Mahmoud** says.

"We understand that a T9 is more than just a vehicle – it's essential to our customers' businesses, daily operations, and family life. Getting them back on the road quickly is our absolute priority," he says.

"We're excited to partner with JAC Australia in this innovative program. Our extensive network and commitment to customer service align perfectly with JAC's vision to help keep their drivers moving forward," Carbiz spokesperson **Alex Rodov** says.



# FAMILY-OWNED CMV GROUP EXPANDING ITS VICTORIAN PACCAR OPERATIONS

**C**ommercial Motor Vehicles Pty Ltd (CMV Group) has expanded its Victorian Hallam Truck Centre Kenworth and DAF (PACCAR) operations, acquiring Somerton and Ballarat as sales territories.

**The group will acquire the existing TRP Ballarat and TRP Somerton parts outlets on January 1, 2025, and it will build a new Kenworth and DAF Truck dealership at Mickleham, in Melbourne's North.**

The new PACCAR dealership, Melbourne North Truck Centre, will open in 2028.

"Melbourne North Truck Centre will support the ever-growing customer base to the North of Melbourne, along with the inner West, including Ballarat, a pivotal region for Australia's important national freight task," CMV Group joint managing director **Daniel Crawford** says

"Locating a full-service dealership adjacent to Australia's greatest freight route, the Hume corridor, is also critically important to improve the level of service and support for PACCAR customers on the eastern seaboard," he says.

CMV Group's relationship with PACCAR began in 1968 when it obtained the franchise in Adelaide. Melbourne North Truck Centre will join its PACCAR dealership network, which includes CMV Truck Centre in Adelaide, Hallam and Bayswater Truck Centres in Victoria, and the Barry Maney Group in Mount Gambier.

"PACCAR Australia is thrilled to support CMV Group's expansion with the new Melbourne North Truck Centre, which will significantly enhance our customer service and support in this vital growth corridor north of Melbourne," PACCAR Australia managing director **Damian Smethurst** says.

"This investment reflects our unwavering commitment to our customers, ensuring they have access to the highest level of service and expertise."

"CMV Group's longstanding partnership with PACCAR, marked by their strategic investments in key locations, reinforces our shared mission of supporting the success of our current and future customers," he says.

Hallam Truck Centre general manager **Matt Keene** is excited to extend their Victorian operations.

"Our investment in Melbourne North Truck Centre (MNTC) represents the strength we see in the Kenworth, DAF Truck and Cummins brands and demonstrates our commitment to supporting our customers across South Australia and Victoria," Keene says.

"The new dealership at Mickleham will offer world-class facilities designed to attract and retain a great team and deliver the results our customers expect.

"When you overlay the new MNTC dealership with our current dealership operations, including Wimmera Truck Centre at Horsham, the level of service and support we can provide is significantly increased, particularly along the main freight corridors leading to Melbourne."

Construction of MNTC is expected to commence in 2026 and be completed by early 2028. In the meantime, Melbourne North Truck Centre will operate from a temporary leased facility at 106 Hume Highway, Somerton, and will offer truck sales, servicing, parts, and Paclease rental commencing in Q1 2025.

"With our Kenworth and DAF customers at the forefront of our minds, we were keen to be operational as soon as

possible, and we feel fortunate to have been able to secure a great temporary location for MNTC as a way to support our customers in the immediate future," Keene says.

"Providing convenience and maximum uptime for our customers is always a priority, and in conjunction with this temporary full-service dealership, we're pleased to offer roadside repair, breakdown assistance, and 24/7 customer support in the newly appointed territory."

Industry veteran **Martin Hinkley** has been appointed Branch Manager of Melbourne North Truck Centre, bringing 20 years of experience in the heavy-duty truck and parts industries to the group.

"I'm extremely excited to join MNTC and the wider CMV Group," Hinkley says.

"Their value of safety first and prioritising exceptional customer service resonates with me, and I'm looking forward to the challenge of building a dealership and a team from scratch."

The acquisition of TRP stores in Somerton and Ballarat significantly bolsters the CMV Group's TRP network in Victoria, complementing existing Pakenham, Peninsula (Hastings) and Warrnambool stores.

"We are excited to have both TRP stores at Somerton and Ballarat join our existing TRP operations, and we look forward to smoothly transitioning those customers in early 2025 and ensuring we continue to offer the convenience and customer service they've come to expect," Keene says.

"Our TRP stores in both South Australia and Victoria play an important role within our PACCAR operations as we look to support our growing customer base and ensure we can offer them

*continue to page 08...*





## TOWNSVILLE DEALER DELIVERS 100,000TH AMAROK

**A** light grey Amarok Style V6 has driven into history, becoming the 100,000th unit of Volkswagen's ute to sell in Australia, the primary global market for the dual cab.

On November 12, Pickerings Auto Group of Townsville, Queensland, handed over the keys to the figure-making Style V6 to a returning customer, **Peta Wilson**.

In recognition of the occasion, Volkswagen contributed free of charge Ms Wilson's choice of accessories in the form of roof bars, a rooftop tent, a bonnet protector, a snorkel, a dual battery system and a smart power outlet. This represented a combined value of almost \$9000.

The Amarok, now in its second generation, was introduced to Australia in 2010. In 2017, it became the first mass-production ute equipped with a V6 turbo diesel.

Australia became the home of the Amarok V6, which outsells the original and more affordable four-cylinder types by as much as nine to one. Typically, Amarok customers favour the higher-end versions, but the Style V6 has found the most homes in this generation.

"This is a milestone achievement for our Australian sales champion," Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles director **Ryan Davies** said.

"The new generation Amarok was designed and engineered with Australian conditions as the foremost consideration.

"The design team spent several years in this country to understand requirements better. While sales reflect that the newer truck has 'picked up' where the previous one left off, we have even greater ambitions for this pillar of Volkswagen's Australian business."

"We had long known that the Amarok would clock up six figures this year," Davies said. ■



## ISUZU UTE CELEBRATES 350,000 SALES

**I**n October 2024, Isuzu Ute Australia (IUA) celebrated three milestones: over a quarter of a million D-MAX and more than a hundred thousand MU-X were sold and delivered locally, marking more than 350,000 sales of Isuzu utes and SUVs since 2008.

**The Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries (FCAI) reported that the October 2024 new vehicle sales results brought the annual industry sales to 1,025,621 units.**

According to the same report, IUA's year-to-date results of 41,228 new vehicles sold have earned the brand a top 10, currently tracking 8th overall.

The same report illustrated that utes continue to be Australia's favourite vehicle, with three of the top four best-selling vehicles being utes. The Isuzu D-Max holds a strong position, ranking fourth overall and third in the 1-tonne segment, with 25,644 deliveries recorded between January and October 2024.

The Isuzu MU-X continues to prove popular, with 15,584 examples of the seven-seat SUV finding homes amongst Australians—eclipsing the

previous annual record of 14,139 sold throughout 2023.

**IUA managing director Junta Matsui celebrated the accomplishments, citing them as a "testament to the continual evolution of our product, which has earned a place with our valued customers."**

"From our humble beginnings in 2008 to becoming one of the most trusted and capable vehicle brands on the market, over 350,000 Isuzu D-Max and MU-X on Australian roads is proof of how far our vehicles have evolved over the years, earning a place in the lives of hundreds of thousands of Australians who rely on our vehicles every day."

"We're proud of what we've accomplished this year, and with just two months remaining in 2024, we're energised by the opportunities ahead," Matsui says.

IUA and its dealer network, including 165 sites nationwide, are set to maintain momentum into 2025. The brand is trending towards the next milestone of 400,000 accumulated sales.

... continued from page 07

the option of genuine parts alongside a range of reliable quality, warranty-backed parts for all makes of trucks and trailers," he says.

**The CMV Group will shortly commence a local recruitment drive, seeking to hire workshop technicians, service advisors and a sales team for Melbourne North Truck Centre, who will initially base themselves at Hume Highway before transitioning to the**

**newly constructed dealership.**

Melbourne North Truck Centre will be a subsidiary of the giant CMV Group, which began operations in 1934.

The fourth-generation family business operates light and heavy vehicle dealerships and agricultural interests, predominantly in Victoria and South Australia. It employs more than 2000 staff.



# DOAK RETIRES FROM MAZDA AUSTRALIA

**A**lastair Doak will retire in December after 23 years as Mazda Australia's marketing director, after a decades-long media career that spans motoring journalism, PR, and marketing.

**Doak joined the Mazda team in May 2001 as national public relations manager, taking responsibility for introducing Zoom-Zoom products, kicking off with the transformative Mazda6 in August 2002.**

In September 2007, he was promoted to marketing director and was responsible for product, communications, PR, CRM, and the Mazda website.

"Alastair has played a key part in many milestones during his career with Mazda, including unique projects like leading a global update for the previous BT-50 – a rare thing for a local market to do," Mazda Australia managing director **Vinesh Bhindi** says.

"In addition, he has worked with agencies to develop some iconic advertising and has had a major impact on keeping the Zoom-Zoom slogan alive in Australia. He has also been integral to the Global Mazda product

and marketing committee."

"Alastair leaves a real legacy here at Mazda Australia, punctuated by many impressive achievements. I and the entire team here at Mazda Australia and our colleagues at Mazda Corporation are grateful for his accomplishments and lasting contribution to the brand's success. I heartily congratulate him on his next chapter."

"I've witnessed numerous brand-defining moments over more than two decades that have helped secure Mazda Australia's reputation as a much-loved, dependable and desirable household name," Doak says.

Playing a significant part in this journey is very humbling. I've had the pleasure of working with many dedicated, enthusiastic and passionate teams along the way, with plenty of fond memories to cherish," he says.

**Jarrold Gieschen** will become the director of sales and marketing, combining the two departments to serve the business's future needs. Gieschen has been a longstanding member of the Mazda Australia team, having worked for the brand for 22 years.



"Jarrod has played a key role in consistently meeting our sales goals and nurturing Mazda Australia's impressive market share over many years," Bhindi says.

"Under his leadership, the marketing and sales department will go from strength to strength in a critical time for our transition towards electrification and the continued pursuit of our multi-solution approach."

Doak's final day with the business will be December 20, 2024, after which he plans to enjoy managing the family farm in regional Victoria.

# CARSALES APPOINTS BEN TYERS AS ITS NEW HEAD OF CONTENT



RAFAEL CONSTANTINOU AND BEN TYERS

**C**arsales has announced the appointment of **Ben Tyers** as its new head of content.

With a background in content strategy, production, and audience engagement at BuzzFeed, Popsugar, The Urban List, and Thrillist Australia, Tyers is well-positioned to guide Carsales' content strategy.

"Content has always been at the heart of our business, guiding consumers through their buying and selling experiences and beyond," Carsales

Marketing, Content, and Customer EGM **Rafael Constantinou** says.

"While traditional content like reviews and comparisons remain essential, we're entering an exciting new phase with Ben's extensive experience; we're confident he will lead us into this new era, crafting content that connects with everyday Australians," he says.

Carsales has led the automotive marketplace for twenty years, providing reviews, news, and comparisons. With YouTube views now exceeding one

million each month—an increase of over 100% year over year—and the most-followed Instagram and fastest-growing TikTok among automotive competitors, Carsales is reimagining its content to drive continued momentum and ensure it remains relevant to shifting consumer expectations.

"Carsales has been an iconic Australian brand and leader in the automotive space for decades, and I'm excited to help shape a bold new direction for its content," Tyers says.

"Leveraging car sales extensive data and insights, we'll carry on innovating with dynamic and creative content to meet the evolving behaviours of our consumers and strengthen our reach and engagement across all platforms," he says.

Tyers will steer the content strategy for car sales and its marketplace brands, including bike, boat, caravan camping, truck, farm machinery, and construction sales. Under his leadership, Carsales will deliver a broader range of new engaging video formats and accessible content while maintaining valuable news, reviews, and comparisons.



# DEBT FACILITY DRIVES KARMO'S MOTOPOL ACQUISITION

**A**ustralian car subscription provider Karmo has secured a \$138 million debt facility from Volkswagen and Toyota's finance arms.

**Simultaneously, Karmo acquired Motopool, a fellow industry player, making it the country's number one car subscription provider.**

The acquisition of Motopool has combined the companies' FY24 revenues to \$33M.

The new entity will service thousands of customers across all Australian capital cities, specialising in a range of new models, with more than 30 brands from budget friendly cars, commercial utes and vans to high-end luxury vehicles, including hybrid, plug-in hybrid and electric cars.

The combined business plans to acquire an additional 5000 cars in the next 12 months.

Karmo founder and chief **Nick Boucher** will remain in his role, while Motopool CEO **Andrew Rickett** will be chief operating officer.

Completing the senior leadership team is Karmo CFO **John Bush**, with former Motopool COO **Laura Harewood** taking on the newly created role of Chief Revenue Officer, while former Karmo COO **Sam Zammit** steps into the role of Chief Product Officer.

Karmo's online subscription service provides flexible, short-term leasing options that conveniently cater to the evolving stages of life.

This model covers insurance, servicing, depreciation, and maintenance—leaving the customer responsible only for fuel and tolls.

There are no credit checks, setup fees, or upfront costs. The application process and hubs with specialised staff in Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane, and Perth allow customers to pick up the car they choose on the same day.

Karmo also delivers an offer for businesses aiming to streamline their fleet management.

"We're thrilled to announce Karmo's acquisition of Motopool, which solidifies our position as Australia's number one car subscription provider," Boucher says.

"This acquisition is a significant step forward in our journey, allowing us to accelerate our ambitious growth targets through our focus on a seamless customer experience, continuing to build out our proprietary software platform, expand our range of vehicles, and extend our reach beyond capital cities into regional areas across Australia.

"Motopool brings an exceptional team and a strong foundation to our shared mission. I'm excited to work alongside Andrew, Laura, and their team as we meet and exceed the growing demand for flexible car subscription solutions," he says.

"We've been the quiet achievers in this industry, respectively building Motopool and Karmo into Australia's top car subscription providers. None of this would have been possible without our dedicated teams," Ricketts says.

"Now, by joining forces, we'll be able to accelerate innovation and expand our

services and product offerings while staying true to our commitment to a customer-first experience," he says.

"Securing this \$130 million debt facility, backed by the finance arms of the two largest global automotive industry leaders like Volkswagen and Toyota, is a tremendous milestone for us," Bush says.

"This debt facility provides the flexibility to accelerate our expansion while maintaining our commitment to sustainable growth. I'm excited to see what we'll accomplish on this next chapter of our journey," he says.





# STELLANTIS OPENS NEW PARTS DISTRIBUTION CENTRE



**S**tellantis Australia has moved its spare parts warehousing from Port Melbourne to a new 14,000-square-metre, five-star green energy-rated distribution centre (DC) in Mickleham, Victoria.

To manage this move, which involved

**more than 40,000 stock-keeping units (SKU) whilst continuing to service dealers and customers, Stellantis chose logistics specialist DB Schenker to oversee the project and committed to a 12-month partnership extension.**

Stellantis – which represents 16

automotive brands, including Alfa Romeo, Fiat, Jeep, Maserati, and Peugeot – has an existing relationship with DB Schenker and chose it to manage the move for continuity and minimal impact to service.

“DB Schenker has provided end-to-end inbound and outbound management of spare parts for Australia to stock almost 200 dealers. We were chosen to manage the move because our expertise and resources enabled us to continue providing service to dealers during the move,” DB Schenker Australia and New Zealand chief commercial officer **FILIPA RUSEC** says.

“We’ve worked collaboratively with Stellantis for more than five years now, and we’ve been growing as the customer grows and continuing to support them as their needs evolve,” she says.

## READY FOR GROWTH

Stellantis’ new 14,000-square-metre facility includes a 2,200-square-meter mezzanine deck. The Mickleham DC

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INTRODUCING

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# SUBARU AUSTRALIA OPENS NEW MELBOURNE CITY DEALERSHIP

**S**ubaru Australia is ushering in a new era of customer experience and retail innovation with the grand opening of Melbourne City Subaru.

**The brand-new dealership is located on Salmon Street in Port Melbourne, Victoria.**

Subaru Corporation president **Atsushi Osaki** officially opened the facility on November 27.

This milestone marks Subaru Corporation's commitment to reshaping how customers interact with the brand in an increasingly digital world.

Designed for the future of automotive retail, Melbourne City Subaru introduces a modern showroom that seamlessly blends physical and digital experiences.

This helps ensure that visitors can engage with the brand in a way that suits their preferences.

This omnichannel approach reflects Subaru's forward-thinking vision for the future of automotive retail, making it more transparent and accessible for consumers to research, configure, and purchase their vehicles on their terms.

"We are excited to share this new retail format, which provides a welcoming environment for people to come and explore everything Subaru," Subaru Australia general manager **Scott Lawrence** says.

"Melbourne City Subaru is where technology and customer care converge, helping ensure that Subaru's renowned values of quality, trust and innovation

are accessible to customers wherever they are – whether in their living room or on the showroom floor.

We are incredibly excited to open the doors of this cutting-edge new facility and share it with our customers," he says.

The new facility in Salmon Street is complemented by the recently opened all-new service department, which is only one block away on Ingles Street.

Subaru Australia says these new facilities reflect its commitment to providing a welcoming, innovative, elevated experience throughout the ownership journey.

... continued from page 11

will be a bustling site with a two-shift operation in Melbourne's Northern Corridor. It will receive 100,000 lines and pick a quarter of a million lines yearly.

DB Schenker key account manager **Michael Canning** says planning for the future is essential for a forward-thinking company like Stellantis.

"DB Schenker can stay agile and flexible for future expansion, so if Stellantis has expanding requirements, we are ready to assist promptly, and with the high level of service Stellantis has come to expect," he says.

In addition to spare parts management, DB Schenker provides material handling equipment, IT, and labour to Stellantis

and will continue this relationship in the new facility.

"This modern facility is a step into the future for Stellantis, and DB Schenker is ready to support this valued customer on their growth journey," Canning says.



# CAREXPERT IQ UNVEILS INSIGHTS INTO NEW CAR BUYER BEHAVIOUR



**E**V enthusiasm is on the wane; new car buyers have longer shopping lists but are making quicker purchase decisions, and a single test drive can be the defining moment for buyer and seller groups.

**These were among the insights revealed during the launch of CarExpert's annual Road to Purchase report, presented during a livestream.**

CarExpert's independent consumer research conducted by Nielsen delves into buyer behaviours, brand preferences, and market trends, offering valuable insights into modern consumer decision-making.

CarExpert.com.au chief executive **Damon Rielly** hosted the launch event. It featured a panel led by Australian Automotive Dealer Association (AADA) chief executive **James Voortman** and CarExpert co-founder **Alborz Fallah**. Nielsen Australia's Head of Publishers and Platforms, **Kirsten Riollo**, presented key findings.

## EV ENTHUSIASM IS SLIPPING

Receptiveness to Electric Vehicles

(EVs) has declined. Nearly one in six buyers now say they are closed to the possibility of an EV as their next vehicle, compared to only one in eight last year.

The research showed that 65% of Australian respondents cited insufficient charging infrastructure as the primary barrier to EV adoption.

Range, price, and depreciation were also significant concerns, with 53% and 48% citing these issues. While 46% expressed potential future interest in EVs, 24% raised additional concerns about fire risks, environmental impact, battery life, and costs.

Surprisingly, the industry is not so concerned with EV challenges. An instream poll indicated that EV adoption and the New Vehicle Efficiency Standard (NVES) were the bottom two concerns for 2025.

The AADA emphasised the need for home charging infrastructure to address buyers' reservations.

"We need to start talking about home charging. Those are the customers we

need to service. First, those who can charge at home," Voortman says

"If you look at all the government incentives in this space, it's all-around public charging.

"What we are doing, more than anything, is ensuring that people can charge their vehicles at home, including doing things like investing in retrofitting these apartment buildings," he says.

## KEY FINDINGS

The Road to Purchase research revealed several key findings around research and purchase behaviour, new car buyer demographics, and vehicle ownership patterns.

**New car buyers, for example, have a longer shopping list but spend a shorter time identifying and buying their next new car:**

- The average number of cars considered has risen 13% to 2.9.
- 49% now consider three or more vehicles – a 12% increase from last year.

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## ZEEKR AUSTRALIA ANNOUNCES FIRST TRANCHE OF DEALER PARTNERS

**A**ustralia's most recent new automotive entrant, Zeekr, has confirmed its first four dealer partners representing the brand in Perth, WA, Canberra, ACT, Paramatta, NSW and Doncaster, VIC.

**"Our dealer network is currently being established, focusing on partnering with the right teams across Australia to deliver the quality, innovation**

**and service that define the Zeekr experience," says the brand.**

The VicPark City dealership, a member of the Autoleague Group in Western Australia, will run the Zeekr Perth operation.

The team behind John McGrath Auto Group will manage sales and service for Zeekr Canberra.

ASX-listed automotive retailer

Autosports Group will operate Zeekr Doncaster.

In NSW, SCL Automotive will helm Zeekr Parramatta's operations.

Zeekr Australia says additional dealer partners across Sydney, Brisbane and Adelaide will be added in the coming months.

... continued from page 13

- Buyers continue to invest significant time, spending three to four months researching their purchase decision.
- Fewer than 1 in 3 new car buyers start the research process knowing exactly what they want.

**Riolo says that brand price and reliability are the most critical factors, such as safety, efficiency, and styling, but the test drive was crucial in the purchase process.**

"Buyers are taking 2-3 test drives on average, though intenders expect to take more," Riolo says.

"But it's worth highlighting that 27% of new buyers needed only one test drive, so it's a pivotal stage for the buyer and seller because some of those decisions can be made instantly."

**Demographics also play a clear, identifiable role with new car**

**buyers demonstrating distinctive characteristics:**

1. Global Mobility:
  - 1.6x more likely to be international travellers
  - 52% have or are planning to travel overseas in the last/coming 12 months
2. Economic Profile:
  - 32% higher incomes compared to used car buyers
  - 1.5x more likely to have a household income over \$150,000
  - 26% more likely to have recently bought or sold a house
3. Vehicle Ownership Patterns:
  - 56% expect to own their vehicle for under five years
  - More likely to regularly renew their vehicle

### THE YEAR AHEAD

Fallah says 2025 will be the most exciting year in the Australian automotive landscape, and the competition in the marketplace will be fierce and fascinating.

"There are going to be so many new brands and manufacturers, including ones I haven't even heard of, it blows my mind," Fallah says.

"It's going to be very exciting to see how those brands establish themselves while, at the same time, those more established brands manage to survive and continue to keep their market share.

"I've learnt this year that consumers are willing to look at other brands they may not have been willing to look at previously," he says.





# MTA QUEENSLAND GALA ANNOUNCES 2024 INDUSTRY AWARD WINNERS

**M**TA Queensland hosted its 2024 Industry Awards Gala on November 23. The event celebrated the excellence and dedication of business owners, entrepreneurs, and apprentices in the state's automotive sector.

Hosted by Channel 7's **Ben Davis**, the night was filled with live entertainment and dancing.

Will Brown, the newly crowned 2024 Repco Supercars Champion, appeared as a special guest speaker.

**"The Awards Gala is the pinnacle of Queensland's automotive event calendar, celebrating the outstanding individuals and businesses that drive our industry forward,"** says MTA Queensland chief executive Rod Camm.

"Our members' resilience, innovation, and commitment— particularly amid supply constraints and economic uncertainty – have been inspiring. Congratulations to all of our 2024 winners. We look forward to seeing their continued success in the years

ahead."

The event recognised excellence in six prestigious categories: Community, Innovation, Women in Industry, Small Business Excellence, Large Business Excellence, and Apprentice of the Year.

## COMMUNITY AWARD

The Community Award was presented to **Wheelnutz Garage**, a business that has truly made its mark in promoting diversity and inclusion within the automotive industry. Known for offering hands-on experiences for individuals with disabilities, Wheelnutz Garage also launched the "Torque it Out" initiative, providing vital mental health support to men in the South Brisbane area. The company's tireless efforts to foster an inclusive and supportive environment make it deserving of this award.

## INNOVATION AWARD

The Innovation Award was awarded to **Maryborough Service Centre**, a standout business renowned for its commitment to technological

advancement.

Maryborough Service Centre has won the Repco Authorised Service—Service Centre of the Year award three times. Its investment in employee training, innovative inspection tools, and ADAS calibration equipment continually raises the bar. The company's forward-thinking approach positions it for sustained success.

## WOMEN IN INDUSTRY AWARD

**Barbara Sparrow**, Service Manager at Mike Carney Toyota in Townsville, was honoured with the Women in Industry Award. A proven leader, Barbara manages a diverse team of 89 and has spearheaded initiatives to enhance customer satisfaction and operational efficiency. Her exceptional leadership has elevated her team and profoundly impacted the industry.

## SMALL BUSINESS AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE

The Small Business Award for Excellence was presented to **Highfields Mechanical**, an independent workshop based in Toowoomba. Known for its

*continue to page 16...*





# GEARING UP FOR INDUSTRY GROWTH AT AUTOCARE 2025

**A**utocare, hosted by the Australian Automotive Aftermarket Association (AAAA) and sponsored by mycar Tyre & Auto, will take place from June 20 to 21, 2025, at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre (BCEC).

**Thousands of technicians, business owners, and industry leaders are expected to gather at the BCEC for two transformative days of learning and networking.**

**Autocare will bring together international automotive trainers and Australian experts to present an education program tailored for parts, service, and repair professionals.**

The agenda will focus on global trends, the latest technology, and the best practices to equip attendees with the

knowledge to stay at the forefront of an evolving industry.

"Autocare 2025 is a must-attend for any workshop owner, manager, or technician committed to advancing their career and business," said AAAA chief executive **Stuart Charity**.

"With technology progressing rapidly, Autocare offers cutting-edge training from top experts and solutions to the most pressing challenges we face."

A technical training program will provide technicians and apprentices with in-depth, hands-on sessions on advanced diagnostics and service.

A business management program will focus on emerging industry and consumer trends, improving profitability, and strategies to future-

proof workshops, including best practice approaches to staff recruitment and retention.

More than 120 companies will showcase the latest products and services during the free Trade Show. Exhibitors will be on the interactive demonstration stage, and visitors will be able to interact with them and gain valuable insights through live displays.

The National Light Vehicle Modifications Summit returns, bringing together aftermarket leaders, manufacturers, and regulators to collaborate on national vehicle standards. The summit supports innovation in vehicle modification while navigating regulatory compliance.



*... continued from page 15*

unwavering commitment to customer satisfaction and a forward-thinking approach to business operations, Highfields Mechanical stands out as a regional leader. The company's focus on staff development, exceptional customer service, and active community engagement earned it this recognition.

## **LARGE BUSINESS AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE**

**Auto Parts Group (APG)** won the Large Business Award for Excellence after achieving a remarkable 20% year-over-year growth. Strategic initiatives, including employee development

programs, facility expansions, and the launching of an innovative recycled product line, drove the company's success. APG's dedication to operational efficiencies and cutting-edge technology set a new benchmark in the industry.

## **APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR AWARD**

The Apprentice of the Year Award went to **Kye Robinson**, a light vehicle apprentice at BMAS Biloela. Kye's remarkable skills and dedication to excellence have set him apart as a future leader in the automotive

industry. As part of this recognition, Kye will receive a 191-piece toolkit, courtesy of Repco, and an incredible opportunity to gain hands-on experience with the Penrite Racing team, thanks to Gates Australia. He will spend a week in their Melbourne workshop, further honing his expertise.

MTA Queensland would like to thank platinum sponsors BUSY At Work, Capricorn, CareSuper, and Gates Corporation, whose partnership made the event possible.





# MTAA BACKS REVIEW OF AUSTRALIAN DESIGN RULES

**T**he Motor Trades Association of Australia (MTAA) welcomes the government's independent review of the Australian Design Rules (ADRs) to remove regulatory barriers and promote innovation in the car, truck, and motorcycle market.

**It also supports the government's decision to use this review to address obstacles in supplying electric and low-emission vehicles.**

MTAA is encouraged by the appointment of Dr Warren Mundy, whose experience in the transport sector will bring insights to the review.

"Dr Mundy will bring a fresh perspective to regulatory frameworks that have served safety and emissions goals and protected local manufacturing. We commend the Government for committing to an independent review of the ADRs to contribute to a competitive and safe market for all consumers," MTAA chief executive **Matt Hobbs** says.

It will evaluate whether Australia's current ADRs align with international standards, identify opportunities for improvement, and streamline the adoption of globally harmonised

standards.

This announcement comes on the eve of the commencement of the New Vehicle Efficiency Standard (NVES), and manufacturers are planning their future product strategies for Australia.

The review aims to ensure Australia's vehicle standards evolve to support consumer choice better, promote price competition, and drive technological innovation.

As the global transition to electric vehicles and cleaner technologies continues, aligning ADRs with international standards is crucial in Australia's transition to net zero.

However, MTAA notes that while harmonisation offers significant benefits, unique Australian standards come with additional costs. Customising standards for local conditions can increase compliance costs for manufacturers, which may be passed on to consumers.

This review presents an opportunity to evaluate whether these standards are still necessary or if globally aligned alternatives could streamline production without compromising safety or environmental goals.



"We fully support this review as an opportunity to address outdated regulatory barriers that hinder the adoption of new technologies, especially electric vehicles," Hobbs says.

"Aligning Australian standards with international best practices will create a more competitive market and accelerate our nation's transition to a sustainable future."

## FORD AUSTRALIA AXES PUMA GEN-E INTRODUCTION



**F**ord Australia has ceased plans to introduce the fully-electric Puma Gen-E, citing changing market

demands.

**The Blue Oval dropped the ICE Puma from its line-up in the middle of 2024**

**following more than three years of sluggish sales.**

However, Ford Australia will add the Transit Custom plug-in hybrid to its local lineup in the third quarter of 2025.

According to Ford Australia marketing director Ambrose Henderson, the decision to no longer sell the Puma Gen-E was made after an extensive review of the current dynamics of the new-car market.

"Since we announced that the Puma Gen-E would join the Ford Australia line-up in early 2023, the EV market, particularly for small SUVs, has changed significantly," Henderson says.

"Many factors influence whether a vehicle's business case stacks up – such as economic trends, material costs, consumer incentives and global supply chain – and after weighing these up, we took the call that we were better to focus our electrified lineup on other models," he says.

# LDV VALIDATING TERRON 9 UTE AHEAD OF MID-2025 ARRIVAL

**A**ccording to the Ateco Group, which distributes the brand locally, the new-generation LDV Terron 9 ute series—with a choice of electric or diesel power—is one step closer to Australian showrooms.

**Two LDV Terron 9 ute prototypes are in Australia for final validation testing before arriving in local showrooms by mid-2025.**

Engineers have tested the LDV Terron 9 on various Australian roads to validate advanced safety systems such as speed-sign recognition, lane-keeping assistance, and other electronic aids.

The test route includes major arterials and backroads in NSW, Victoria, and Queensland, as well as the metropolitan areas of Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane.

"The purpose of this validation test is to ensure the new-generation LDV Terron ute series is ready for Australian driving conditions," says LDV Automotive Australia general manager **Dinesh Chinnappa**.

"The arrival of these vehicles for final validation testing shows the factory recognises the importance of the

Australian market."

LDV Automotive Australia has confirmed that the LDV eTerron 9 electric ute and the LDV Terron 9—powered by a new-generation diesel—will be sold alongside Australia's LDV T60 ute series.

"We want to make sure when a ute buyer walks into an LDV showroom, we have a vehicle that offers value across a range of price points," says Chinnappa.

"We are not going to leave our traditional ute buyers behind. Rather, the LDV Terron ute series will broaden our offering across the ute segment," he says.

Prices and specifications for the LDV eTerron 9 electric ute and the LDV Terron 9 new-generation diesel ute will be announced closer to Australian showroom deliveries.

"Certain segments of the ute market are not only ready for an electric ute, they've been pleading for one. Particularly fleets and mining companies who want a factory-built, turn-key solution straight off the showroom floor, rather than a diesel vehicle converted to electric power," says Chinnappa.

**While the LDV eT60 electric ute has recorded modest sales in Australia since its introduction in late 2022—100 examples have been sold to date—the company has high expectations for the all-new LDV eTerron 9.**

"This is a completely different vehicle, inside and out," Chinnappa says.

"We are proud that the LDV eT60 was the first electric ute in Australian showrooms, but we are also proud to demonstrate just how far electric ute technology has progressed with this all-new model," he says.

Figures show the LDV Terron 9 ute is longer, wider, taller and roomier than the recently updated LDV T60 Plus.

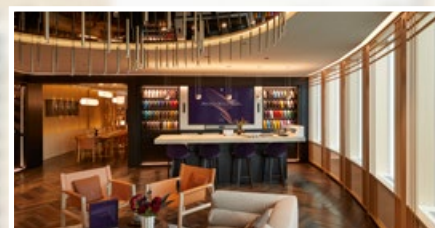
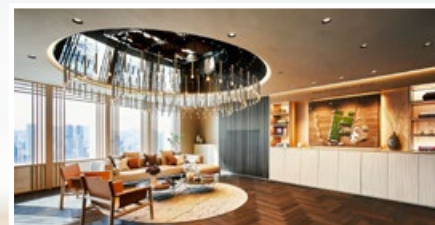
Once the LDV eTerron 9 electric ute and LDV Terron 9 new-generation diesel ute have completed their final validation testing, LDV Automotive Australia expects the first shipments to arrive in the second quarter of 2025, pending any delays.



DIMENSIONS	
MODEL	MY24 LDV T60 Plus
LENGTH	5395mm
WIDTH (BODY)	1900mm
HEIGHT	1819mm
WHEEL BASE	3175mm
MODEL	MY25 LDV Terron 9
LENGTH	5500mm
WIDTH (BODY)	1997mm
HEIGHT	1860mm
WHEEL BASE	3300mm







## ROLLS-ROYCE MOTOR CARS EXPAND PRIVATE OFFICE NETWORK TO SEOUL

**R**olls-Royce Motor Cars has opened its fifth Private Office in Seoul, South Korea.

**It joins the existing locations in Dubai, Shanghai, and New York and the original Private Office at the Rolls-Royce home in Goodwood, UK.**

The international network of Private Offices enables the marque to engage more closely with clients worldwide, bringing the Rolls-Royce experience closer to their residence.

As the global trend for highly personal and emotionally resonant luxury experiences continues, Rolls-Royce clientele are becoming increasingly ambitious about creating personally meaningful Bespoke motor cars.

Private Offices provide the platform to bring these visions to life, complementing the traditional dealership experience.

"Following significant demand for Bespoke commissions, Private Office Seoul will offer our valued clients in the Asia Pacific region an opportunity to work directly with a Rolls-Royce designer, enhancing their experience whilst also complementing and supporting our dealer partners," Rolls-Royce Motor Cars chief executive **Chris Brownridge** says.

"We are now bringing Goodwood closer to our clients in this region, and we look forward to welcoming them to this new creative outpost. Our Private Office clients will embark on an extraordinary journey with us as we bring their dreams and ideas to life by creating their uniquely personal Rolls-Royce," he says.

As one of Rolls-Royce's fast-growing markets, the Asia Pacific region has significantly increased Bespoke creativity over the past years. The opening of Private Office Seoul is a response to this growing demand, and it will further elevate the value of each commission in this region, aligning with the marque's focus on unique creation.

It also allows the brand to become even closer to its regional clients, providing the global Rolls-Royce design team with insights into trends and client preferences in the Asia Pacific markets. Private Office Seoul, available by appointment, is located in the heart of the Jamsil area, where heritage and innovation meet amongst iconic buildings. The studio's serene atmosphere and inspirational elements drawn from local culture provide the setting to inspire creativity and collaboration between clients and the

Bespoke designer and client experience manager.

The Private Office experts work closely with each client through in-depth conversations to understand their wishes. This collaborative process empowers clients to shape their one-of-a-kind Rolls-Royce commission, which reflects their tastes and aspirations.

Once the initial design is agreed upon, the client will continue to follow the commission's progress and communicate directly with the artisans in Goodwood. They are entrusted with transforming their vision into a Bespoke Rolls-Royce motor car.

**In addition, Private Office Seoul also gives clients access to Rolls-Royce's exclusive Private Collection. The curated and limited edition motor cars are crafted around a theme and designed to inspire customers by showcasing the artistry of the Bespoke Collective.**

Rolls-Royce Motor Cars says that Seoul and the four other dedicated Private Office facilities demonstrate the marque's dedication to delivering exceptional client experiences worldwide.



## NOVEMBER REGISTRATIONS REFLECT COST-OF-LIVING PRESSURES FOR PRIVATE BUYERS

**T**he Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries (FCAI) says the softening demand for new vehicles in November 2024 reflects cost-of-living pressures for private buyers.

**However, the FCAI says the preference for hybrid and plug-in hybrid technology in new vehicles continues.**

In November, 99,091 new vehicles were delivered, a decrease of 11.6% from the same period last year.

"From a historical perspective, the 2024 year-to-date result is strong," FCAI chief executive **Tony Weber** says.

"However, the market is starting to show several clear trends—the first half of 2024 recorded market growth of 8.7% compared with 2023. Since July, the market has declined by 8.2% compared with 2023.

"The private buyer segment continues to struggle with a decline of 16.6% on November 2023. This follows falls of 14.2% in October, 17.2% in September and 15.9% in August. This disturbing trend illustrates how the pressure of living costs is impacting households.

"Consumer preference remains clear with SUVs and Light Commercial vehicles making up the top ten new vehicles sold while Passenger vehicles fell to a monthly market share of 13.7%," he says.

Weber says November recorded another disappointing result for the sale of electric vehicles. Hybrid and Plug-in vehicles accounted for 16.9% of November sales, compared with 9.9% last year.

"The Australian experience with EVs is like many major markets overseas, such as Europe, New Zealand and the USA. By introducing new products, car makers respond to regulatory settings that mandate an increase in zero-emission vehicles," Weber says.

"However, consumers must be more cautious about shifting to pure EVs and purchasing hybrid or plug-in hybrid vehicles. The industry will continue its part by introducing an increasing range of more affordable, low-emission vehicles while working alongside governments to address challenges such as recharging infrastructure critical to building consumer confidence for the transition," he says.

Toyota was the market leader with sales of 20,562 during November, followed by Ford (8720), Mazda (7588), Kia (6410) and Mitsubishi (6205). The Toyota RAV4 was Australia's top-selling vehicle with sales of 5526, followed by the Ford Ranger (4981), Toyota Prado (3590), Toyota Hilux (3572) and the MG ZS (2794).

Sales in the Australian Capital Territory were down 18.1% to 1333 in November 2023; New South Wales was down 12.2% to 30,490; the Northern Territory was down 21.1% to 727; Queensland decreased 12.1% to 21,320; South Australia also decreased by 9.5% to 6591; Tasmania decreased 18.8% to 1,642; Victoria decreased 9.8% to 26,729; and Western Australia decreased by 12.2% to 10,259.

## TOP 10 BRANDS



TOYOTA | 20,562



FORD | 8720



MAZDA | 7588



KIA | 6410

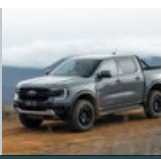


MITSUBISHI | 6205



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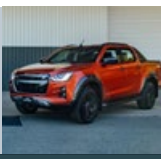
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D-Max  
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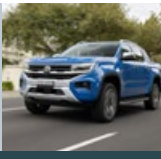
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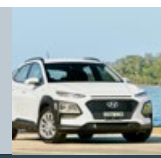
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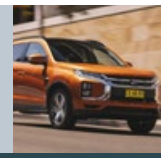
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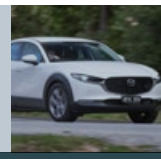
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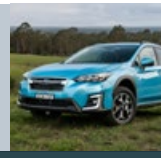
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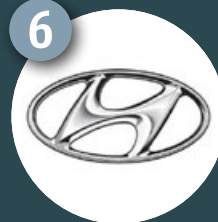
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## HYBRIDS AND PHEVS REMAIN POPULAR

**N**ovember had another disappointing EV sales result while hybrid and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs) accounted for 16.9% of November sales compared with 9.9% last year.

So says Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries (FCAI) chief executive **Tony Weber** who notes the Australian experience with EVs is similar to many major markets such as Europe, New Zealand and the US.

**"Car makers are responding to regulatory settings that mandate an increase in the number of zero emission vehicles by introducing new products," he says.**

**"However, consumers remain cautious about making the shift to pure EVs and instead are purchasing hybrid or plug-in hybrid vehicles."**

Weber says the industry "will continue its part by introducing an increasing range of more affordable, low emission vehicles while working alongside governments to address challenges such as recharging infrastructure which is critical to building consumer confidence for the transition to low emission vehicles".

**The Toyota RAV4 (which includes a hybrid and is expected to be all hybrid from 2026) was Australia's top selling vehicle with 5526 November sales.**

Total electric sales were 3969 in November 202, down 54.1% compared

with 8646 in November 2023, while year-to-date (YTD) VFACTS figures show a 12.9% fall (89,446 to 70,051).

Meanwhile, hybrids rose 47% (9637 to 14,171) and 79.3% (88,251 to 158,242) in November and YTD comparisons respectively.

PHEVs also increased 80.1% (1438 to 2590) and 100.4% (10,299 to 20,543) for the same periods.

Hydrogen didn't change in monthly comparisons – remaining at zero – and went from two to 10 in YTD comparisons, while petrol and diesel vehicle sales were down overall.

**In the passenger category, electrics dropped 43% in November comparisons (3055 to 1741) but increased 15.4% in YTD comparisons (26,414 to 30,472).**

It was a similar story for hybrids in the passenger sector, declining 18.9% in November comparisons (3037 to 2462) yet up 47.7% in YTD comparisons (25,553 to 37,742).

**PHEVs in the passenger category went up in both comparisons – 16.2% or 68 to 79 in November comparisons and 57% or 484 to 760 in YTD comparisons.**

Electrics dropped in both comparisons in the SUV category, down 60.4% or 5568 to 2205 in November comparisons and 27.1% (53,828 to 39,241) in YTD comparisons.

**Meanwhile, hybrids were well up in the SUV sector, with 75.3% (6594 to 11,561) recorded for November comparisons and 91.2% (62,692 to 119,860) YTD comparisons.**

In the same SUV category, PHEVs rose 83.3% (1370 to 2511) in November comparisons and 102.6% (9765 to 19,783) in YTD comparisons.

Hybrids climbed also in the light commercial category – up more than 999% (six to 148 and six to 640) in the November and YTD comparisons.

Electrics stayed the same at 23 in November comparisons and went up 65.7% in YTD comparisons (204 to 338) in the light commercial sector.

**Electric Vehicle Council (EVC) figures for Tesla and Polestar show 2540 and 76 sales respectively in November 2024, both down on November 2023 (5940 and 188 respectively).**

The Tesla Model Y was the most popular EV, according to the EVC, recording 1653 sales in November 2024 compared with 3151 in November 2023 and 19,392 YTD compared with 27,418 in YTD 2023.

**Battery electric vehicle (BEV) sales dropped from 4128 in November 2023 to 2616 in November 2024, says the EVC.**

**It also reports YTD BEV sale comparisons of 45,979 down to 36,289 YTD 2024.**