

THE AUSTRALIAN VEHICLE DEALER'S

NEWS SOURCE

autotalk

JUNE 2023

.COM.AU



COX AUSTRALIA EV REMARKETING REPORT

P.04

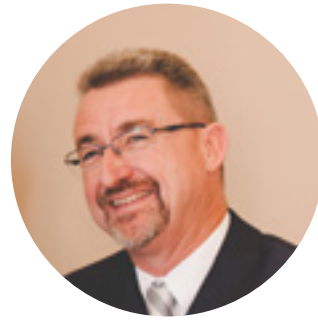
DEALERS SUPPORT
CODE REVIEW

P.05

DEALERSHIP
DIGITALISATION

P.08

INFRASTRUCTURE IS KEY TO FLEET ELECTRIFICATION



ROBERT BARRY
EDITOR AUTOTALK

Hello there,

One of the key points I took away from the recent Australasian Fleet Management Association (AfMA) conference and exhibition in Sydney in May, was the need for a concerted effort by the Federal and State governments to address charging infrastructure for battery electric vehicles.

My view is that if the National Electric Vehicle Strategy (NEVS) is to be successful in encouraging a much greater transition to zero-emissions vehicles, then it's a case of you need to build it first and then they will come.

Having a fuel efficiency standard is good to encourage more low- and zero-emissions vehicles into the market.

And offering FBT relief is good for the buyer, but rather than focus on making access to electric vehicles easier, I think it's better for the Federal and State governments to put emphasis on financially supporting national charging infrastructure which is the biggest elephant in the room.

Making it easier for more corporates, local government entities, and private households to install their own electric vehicle chargers, or at least have easier access to public chargers, will speed up the process as well as improve confidence in the battery electric vehicle market.

And it needs to happen sooner rather than later, as the adoption of battery electric vehicles (BEV) increases.

We're now beyond the early adoption stage. The mass market is showing an increased interest led by the Tesla Model 3 and Model Y.

But the new entrant brands from China are also cranking into gear, witness the rise and rise of the MG and BYD electric cars.

In April 2023, OEM brands in Australia sold a cumulative total of 6530 BEVs including passenger SUV and light commercial vehicles, for a year-to-date tally of 23,926 units.

Compare this to the previous corresponding period of 5664 units for April 2022, and a 2022 year-to-date tally of 16,308 units.

Most of the new battery electric vehicles available in Australia were on display at the AfMA conference for the delegates to check out and included light commercials as well as passenger and SUV models.

Ford showed its new Mustang Mach-E and the e-Transit Cargo van, Volkswagen Group showcased the SEAT Born and VW ID.5, and there were electric vehicles on display from BYD, Foton Trucks, Hyundai, Polestar, Mazda, and Tesla.

LDV which is distributed by the Ateco Group was conspicuously absent from the two-day event, but you can read about that brand's electrification journey in this issue.

Some large corporate and local government entities have grasped the nettle about introducing electric vehicles to their tool of trade and pool vehicle fleets, by taking their employees on the journey with them, and working together to figure out best practice.

Telematics data has been hugely helpful in identifying where battery electric vehicles can be deployed best, and where a plug-in hybrid or hybrid vehicle would be better fit for purpose.

I was pleased to see that for the most part the AfMA delegates were more than receptive to electrified vehicles because they're the people who'll be in the driving seat as Australia journeys towards net zero emissions.

Enjoy your reading this month.

Best regards,

Robert Barry
EDITOR AUTOTALK



ASIC TARGETS BREACHES BY AUTOMOTIVE FINANCIERS

Finance industry regulator ASIC has begun civil proceedings in the Federal Court against car financier Money3 Loans Pty Ltd alleging it breached its responsible lending obligations when providing finance to buy secondhand vehicles.

"Taking action against credit providers who we consider have failed to consider the financial circumstances of vulnerable consumers is a key focus for ASIC this year," says ASIC deputy chair Sarah Court.

ASIC alleges that in the period between May 2019 and February 2021, Money3 failed to assess properly whether certain borrowers could meet their repayments before entering loan contracts to buy secondhand vehicles.

It says each of these consumers, and a substantial proportion of Money3 customers, were either receiving Centrelink payments as their sole income or were on low incomes.

"ASIC is concerned that Money3 didn't properly assess these loans to determine whether the consumers could meet their repayments without causing harm," Court says.

"These loans were mainly provided to people on low incomes, adding to their financial distress.

"The consumer loans we're concerned with showed the purchase price of \$8000 for a secondhand vehicle with additional fees and warranty adding another \$3000.



"An \$11,000 loan is a substantial sum for a consumer on a low income to repay without having been properly assessed as to whether they could afford to repay it.

"In some cases, the vehicle broke down, leaving the consumer with an unusable car and a loan that they couldn't afford, compounding the detriment," she says.

Specifically, ASIC alleges that Money3:

- Entered into unsuitable loans with certain consumers, meaning the consumer couldn't meet repayments without experiencing financial hardship.
- Failed to assess those loans as unsuitable by determining that the consumers couldn't meet the repayments without experiencing financial hardship;

- Failed to make reasonable enquiries about, and verify, those consumers' financial situation, requirements and objectives.
- Failed to take reasonable steps to ensure that its representatives complied with the credit legislation and were trained adequately and were competent.

ASIC alleges further that when approving loans, Money3 applied arbitrary expense amounts from an internal 'product guide' which weren't based on the consumer's financial situation and were substantially lower than their reasonably necessary expenses.

The matter will be listed for directions on a date to be determined by the Court.

OMNI-CHANNEL BUYING AND FINANCING AT AADA

Angle Auto Finance will host a panel session at AADA 2023 conference and exhibition at the ICC Sydney (June 14-15) bringing together six industry professionals to share their expertise in achieving growth through an omni-channel buying and financing experience.

Angle Auto Finance corporate acquisitions and relationships manager **Alex Farrugia** will moderate the five panel members who are Anna Perera-Shaw (RFI Global), James Nipperess (Sime Darby), Evange Epa (Angle Auto

Finance), and market strategist Toby Simmons.

The discussion will revolve around optimising customer engagement in automotive financing as customers continue to shift away from traditional in-person experiences.

During the panel, AADA conference delegate will gain insights into leveraging digital technologies to streamline processes, reduce paperwork, and create ideal customer experiences that are aligned fully with the evolving retail environment.

The primary focus will be on an omni-channel buying and financing experience, where dealerships need to build successful relationships with buyers and stay ahead of the curve. Additionally, the panel will highlight the significance of providing an efficient and convenient online buying process to customers, while recognizing that an in-person buying experience will still be important for some customers.



COX RELEASES EV REMARKETING REPORT

A report by Cox Automotive Australia, the parent company of Manheim Auctions, has identified six trends for de-fleeting and remarketing electric vehicles.

The Future of EV Remarketing in Fleet and Rental Operations report was compiled by Cox's Australia enterprise partnerships national manager **Anthony Poci**.

"We hear and read about electric vehicles in the news daily," Poci says.

"It's crucial we understand how to prepare for the disruption this technology will impose on the automotive industry, consumers, and wider society.

"When it comes to remarketing EVs, it's clear they require new tactics and strategies, putting pressure on the industry to adjust quickly and decisively."

Poci says there are six major trends to take note of:

Growth in EV uptake across fleet, government, and rental sectors. "Right now, a large proportion of EV sales go to the private market's early adopters. Fleet EV sales have been held back by limited availability of models, and stock constraints affecting most OEMs. As such the market for pre-owned EVs is limited," Poci says.

Improved battery technology.

"Constant improvements in battery technology will lead to an increased range for more EV models. Also, the battery lifespan will increase as the global automotive industry focuses on more sustainable mobility solutions.

Expansion of charging infrastructure.

"The expansion of available charging infrastructure is a key pillar in ensuring the continued growth of EV uptake.

All up, there are about 2400 public chargers available right now, according to Federal Government figures, but there's need for a great deal more.

Increased focus on sustainability, emissions reduction and new policies for commercial vehicles. "Trucks contribute around 4% of Australia's carbon emissions, so we can expect new policies and actions imposed on light commercial vehicles and medium- and heavy-duty trucks as they tend to have a higher impact on energy use.

Increased competition. "As the EV market grows in Australia – they've tripled to the end of April 2023 an achieved 6.8% share more choice will emerge.

"This will be sped up should Fuel Efficiency Standards achieve their aim of encouraging more imports," Poci says.

Establishment of a secondhand EV marketplace. "As early adopters see their first residual returns, a secondhand marketplace will quickly grow.

"Emerging secondhand EV marketplaces, coupled with advancements in battery health technology, mean that a larger range of quality EVs will come within reach of more consumers.

"While this change to the supply/demand equation suggests EV resale



ANTHONY POCI

values may decrease, this outcome should be softened so long as demand continues to outstrip supply," Poci says.

"Cox Automotive Mobility, part of Cox Automotive, our US-based parent company, is leading the way in battery health score and vehicle diagnostics with a commitment to support the global transition to battery power and electrification to help lower emissions.

"Its focus on the entire battery lifecycle will help keep batteries out of our oceans and landfills to help ensure a more sustainable future.

"At Cox Automotive Australia and New Zealand, we're committed to bringing more information and learnings from our parent company to give you timely insights to help you better manage all the demands of battery servicing across its lifecycle," Poci adds.

autotalk

AutoTalk Magazine and autotalk.com.au are published by Auto Media Group Limited.

8/152 Quay Street, P.O. Box 10 50 10,
Auckland City, NZ 1030.



EDITOR – AUTOTALK AUSTRALIA
Robert Barry
robert@automediagroup.co.nz



ASSISTANT EDITOR
Geoff Dobson
geoff@automediagroup.co.nz



MANAGING EDITOR
Richard Edwards
richard@automediagroup.co.nz



BUSINESS MANAGER
Dale Stevenson
dale@automediagroup.co.nz



GROUP GENERAL MANAGER
Deborah Baxter
deborah@automediagroup.co.nz

Auto Media Group Limited makes every endeavour to ensure information contained in this publication is accurate, however we are not liable for any losses or issues resulting from its use.

automedia
GROUP LIMITED

autotalk.co.nz

autotalk

autotalk.com.au

autotalk

transporttalk.co.nz

transporttalk

futuretrucking.com.au

futuretrucking

evs&beyond.co.nz

EVs&BEYOND

evtalk.com.au

EVtalk

NEW CAR FRANCHISE DEALERS SUPPORT GOVERNMENT CODE OF CONDUCT REVIEW

Franchised new car dealers are welcoming the announcement by the minister for small business, **Julie Collins**, that a review into the franchising code of conduct will begin in the second half of 2023.

The review marks a significant step towards ensuring a fair and transparent business environment for new car and truck dealers.

"The decision to conduct a comprehensive review demonstrates the Government's commitment to continually improve this vital regulatory framework," says Australian Automotive Dealer Association chief executive **James Voortman**.

"It presents an opportunity to address any existing gaps or limitations in the current code, ensuring it remains relevant and effective in the rapidly evolving automotive industry.

"The relationship between franchised new car and truck dealers and their manufacturers has traditionally been characterised by strong partnerships and collaboration," he says.

"However, in recent years there have been several high-profile automotive franchising disputes, a number of which remain before the courts.

"As the industry undergoes a period of rapid change including the emergence of many new automotive franchisors, it's critical that our franchising regulations are fit for purpose.

"The review of the franchising code presents an opportune moment to address these evolving dynamics



JAMES VOORTMAN

and ensure that the code effectively safeguards the interests of dealers and their customers, now and into the future.

"Additionally, the review provides an opportunity to expand the provisions to encompass truck and other automotive franchised dealers who are currently not afforded the automotive specific protections the franchising code provides," Voortman adds.

The AADA will support the Government in undertaking the review and will contribute to the consultation when it begins.

Support this GREAT sponsor!



Autotrader



VOLVO ON TRACK FOR EV ONLY GOAL

Volvo Car Australia managing director **Stephen Connor** says in spite of the infrastructure complexities facing its dealerships he's confident the brand will sell only battery electric vehicles locally by 2026.

Last November, Connor announced Volvo Car Australia would go fully electric by 2026 – four years earlier than the parent company's global target of 2030.

He says the dealership network is on board with the decision and the strategy and dealers are "naturally both nervous and excited".

The current pace of change towards electric vehicles has moved from being linear to a steep curve and will continue to quickly climb upwards, Connor says.

"Much like the demise of the horse and coach more than 100 years ago, the disruption of electrified vehicles in the automotive industry is a once in a generation change, and while consumers are ready, the infrastructure is lagging.

"The automotive industry needs to change the old way of doing business.

"Volvo Cars is a smaller manufacturer with a 2% global market share. Therefore, it's able to be more agile to change and can go earlier than the other manufacturers.

"It will be fully electric in all markets by 2030, others won't be until 2040," Connor says.

"We understand that such a change is unsettling for our retailers. We understand the complexities and the cost of installing electric vehicle charging infrastructure for each dealership as they are all unique sites,

and we'll guide them gently through this," Connor says.

"We do understand that for some dealerships, it may even be a case of knock down and start again, but we want to start installing EV charging infrastructure later this year with a view for it to be completed in the following 12 to 18 months."

Connor says the earlier deadline will allow Volvo to meet customer expectations and be part of the solution when it comes to fighting climate change.

"Sustainability is now as important as safety to us, with climate action having the highest priority.

"Volvo Cars has one of the most ambitious climate plans in the car industry which involves consistently reducing the life cycle carbon footprint per car through concrete action.

"Australian consumers are early adopters of new technologies, and they're embracing fully electric cars in increasing numbers as part of a practical response to combatting climate change.

"There's no long-term future for cars with an internal combustion engine.

"So, instead of investing in a shrinking business, we choose to invest in the future, which is fully electric."

Connor says by 2025 nearly 80% of Volvo's Australian sales will comprise fully of electric models.

"The decision to sell only electric cars from 2026 makes perfect sense, and we believe it will give us a strategic advantage in the Australian market. The final piece of the jigsaw will be converting the last 20% of our customers to a fully electric future from



STEPHEN CONNOR

2026.

"I am very confident we can achieve this, and even go beyond to achieve our aspiration of selling 20,000 fully electric cars every year in Australia."

Volvo launched the C40 Recharge Pure Electric, the first dedicated electric only vehicle model for the Australian market in November 2022.

The C40 is available with a single electric motor and front-wheel drive, while the variant with dual electric motors comes with all-wheel drive. It is also the first Volvo to be completely leather-free.

In April 2023 Volvo Cars Australia sold 1044 vehicles for a year-to-date tally of 3781, up 8% on the previous corresponding period. It retailed 133 units of the C40 Recharge for a year-to-date tally of 369 units.

In mid 2024 the all-new pure electric Volvo EX90 large SUV will be launched, to be followed by the compact all-new EX30 SUV and a pure electric sedan which is as yet unnamed.

GOVERNMENT AND BLUE-CHIP LEAD EV CHARGE

LDV general manager **Dinesh Chinnappa** says that as expected, Government entities and Blue-Chip companies are leading the charge to buy the e-T60 battery electric ute and the e-Deliver 9 battery electric van.

Sales of the battery electric commercials are meeting the expectations of the Ateco Group, but the business still regards itself as primarily an ICE vehicle supplier and will continue to be aggressive in that marketplace.

Year-to-date, he says LDV volume is up 32.4% to 6466 vehicles registered, in spite of port congestion that hammered the brand's first quarter sales performance.

Chinnappa says getting new vehicles through the ports has been slow, ponderous, and difficult for all distributors not just Ateco, but he says good volumes of LDVs are coming through now.

"It's been a handbrake on the business for everybody," he says.

"Sales of LDV electric products are in alignment where we thought we would be and we're comfortable with our progress.



"As expected, the demand for the ute is significantly larger than the van, which marries with the same percentages as the ICE utes and vans."

Chinnappa says the electrification of the light commercial fleet is a learning process for distributors, dealers, and customers as the migration to zero-emission vehicles begins for last-mile freight forwarding and delivery to homes.

The LDV eT60 has also been bought by some early adopters such as a Gold Coast-based GP who didn't want to buy a Tesla as his wife did, and a Solar Panel installation company in

the Southern Highlands has also taken delivery of the battery electric ute.

A sustainable toilet paper distributor, Who gives a Crap?, has bought an e-Deliver 9 van for its home delivery service, wrapping the vehicle in distinctive livery.

But Chinnappa says most corporate and government buyers are taking two to three vehicles to run a trial program for six months or longer, to get an understanding of the issues involved around operating an electric vehicle in terms of range, charging infrastructure, and operator support.

6 trends

you should know when de-fleeting and remarketing EVs.



DOWNLOAD REPORT

COX AUTOMOTIVE

GETTING TO GRIPS WITH DIGITALISATION IN THE DEALERSHIP

Edwina Gilbert is the chair of the family-owned Phil Gilbert Motor Group which operates two locations in Sydney and holds new vehicle franchises for Hyundai, Kia, and Toyota employing more than 180 team members. She's also a non-executive director of CarSales, Infomedia and AADA. Gilbert spoke to **AutoTalk** about the pros and cons of digitalisation in a new car dealership.

More than 20 years ago, graduate lawyer **Edwina Gilbert** realised her future career path wasn't in the law and asked her father Phil for an opportunity to work in the family-owned dealership.

In hindsight, this was a brilliant move for both parties, providing a career path and a business succession plan.

Gilbert began a two-year cadetship in the business, becoming the general manager in 2005 and the managing director in 2011.

Then she became chair in 2021 to oversee the family interest in the business.

Naturally, she champions a diverse workplace and says the **Phil Gilbert** team reflects the multicultural clientele it serves, but she'd like to see yet more female representation.

Gilbert says operating seven-day sales in the dealerships is a barrier to entry for some people and that some younger people may be less inclined to seek an apprenticeship in a metro area with expensive rents.

But she believes automotive retail still offers people great career opportunities with the advent of digitalisation and the era of the connected vehicle.

Gilbert believes the bricks and mortar dealership will remain an intrinsic part of the customer experience. She championed the company's "Phil Says" values system which governs the interactions in the business, the staff, and the customers.

However, she says the traditional six-point selling process which defined the customer's vehicle buying journey for decades at a dealership has been disrupted by the omnichannel as intenders jump in and out of it during the transaction.

"There's not a clear linear customer journey, and as dealers we need to be more agile to meet the customer where

they want to meet at the various points of the process.

"Some buyers want to meet face to face during parts of the process, some want to solely transact online, and some want a mix of the two."

Gilbert says dealerships face the challenge of trying to create the best customer journey using multiple systems and software providers. That's true particularly for multi-franchise businesses.

"We're a data-based business with a wealth of data, but we don't necessarily have the time, systems, or ability to mine that data to our advantage.

"Our business is focused on people and processes rather than being systems based. And having different systems for different brands adds more complexity to our operations.

"I think it holds us back from providing an even better service than we do now," she says.

But the elephant in the room according to Gilbert is the future of the connected customer through their vehicle.

"In a world with cars that are more connected than ever, how will this work? Our goal is to maintain and foster a three-way conversation between the customer, the OEM, and the dealer, Gilbert says.

"As dealers we don't want to be disengaged from the customer by the OEM's connected car technology, and the brands that share such information will get the best outcomes," she says.

Gilbert says it'll be hard for the OEM and dealers to have conversations about sharing data but it's important for both to enter in a spirit of partnership to ensure regulatory requirements are met, the best outcome for customers, and a respected three-way conversation for sustainable business.



EDWINA GILBERT

"Consumers still want a bricks and mortar location to go to when they have an issue with the vehicle, so a network of touchpoints provided by dealers in a reasonable driving distance from the owner's home is still critical to the relationship, even in a connected vehicle," she says.

But Gilbert believes that dealerships could use AI like ChatGPT for repeatable tasks like service reminders using suitable integration systems to make this easy and seamless for both parties.

The company already uses Infomedia's digital data dashboard called Triage which helps the service department maintain its day-to-day efficiency, reminding staff about the daily actions they need to take to stay on top of their workload.

Gilbert says with new vehicle lead times between three and nine months for delivery, the dealership has turned to Carsales Instant Offer marketplace to purchase used car stock from private sellers.

"With the reduction of ex-fleet and ex-rental vehicles as well as the reduction in private trades, Carsales Instant Offer has been integral for us to maintain access to quality used car inventory," Gilbert adds.



THREE REASONS TO ATTEND A USED VEHICLE AUCTION IN-PERSON.

Manheim is reopening physical used vehicle auctions across Australia, starting in Melbourne on June 7, and says there are great reasons to come back for dealer seeking used vehicle stock.

The weekly Wednesday auctions in Altona North are open to the public and dealers, making them a potentially great source of real-time market intelligence, Manheim says.

Manheim plans to restart physical auctions in Brisbane on June 13, and at its other sites across the country in coming months.

The weekly passenger, SUV and commercial vehicle auctions include affordable and prestige cars, ex-government, business, and rental fleet vehicles, and trade ins.

Before COVID-19, Manheim's physical auctions were attended by thousands of people every week, creating "a dynamic marketplace for the sale of hundreds of used vehicles".

In their place, Manheim turned to convenient simulcast auctions with online bidding, which it says are here to stay and remain an important part of company operations.

However, it says there are real benefits in coming down to the lanes and kicking the tyres in person to find some top shelf used vehicle stock, even if it's only from time-to-time, says the auctioneer.

NETWORKING

For one thing, attending the auction lanes in person opens networking opportunities. Dealers can see what their competitors and clients are doing and leave with the latest insights.

"Importantly, we actively consulted with our customers to understand how we could improve our service and better meet their needs by returning to our omni channel solution," says Manheim's director of operations Sam Hunter.

"While we knew that a combination of online and in lane buyers would help sell more cars, we also knew from customer feedback that both buyers and sellers were keen to return to the days of catching up with each other in person on a regular basis."

VIEW STOCK PERSONALLY

Viewing onsite vehicles that are up for auction allows buyers to assess immediately what rectification work is required.

By inspecting physically cars beforehand and as they drive through the lanes, and by reading Manheim's downloadable condition reports, buyers have the best chance of securing the best vehicles available, Hunter says.

"Buyers can also inspect the vehicle in person and then bid online if that's their preference," Hunter says, referring to the company's commitment to an

omnichannel approach.

Manheim's Altona site is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 4pm, for vehicle inspections before each weekly auction.

GET A BETTER GAUGE OF THE MARKET

The return of physical auctions gives eagle-eyed buyers a rapid bead on consumer interest and sentiment, says Manheim.

It allows them to see what's getting the most bids, understand the market conditions, and find trends more quickly.

Ultimately, though digital buying tools are useful and convenient for obtaining topshelf secondhand vehicle stock, attending the auction lanes in person is an experience buyers shouldn't miss, Manheim adds.

"Being in lane, our dealer customers can get a direct sense of the market by seeing interest levels from wholesale buyers and the public alike," Hunter says.

"They can see which cars are getting the most bids and what the best stocking opportunities might be for their preferred mix of used vehicle for retail.

"Being in lane can also help them understand the options they have for using Manheim as a disposal channel to maximise returns for their unwanted trade-ins."



CAREXPERT WINS ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR AWARD

CarExpert co-founder **Paul Maric** was named Entrepreneur of the Year at the 2023 Commonwealth Bank Young Hero Awards.

CarExpert.com.au was nominated in the **Start-up of the Year** and **Entrepreneur of the Year** categories.

The awards recognise achievements in small business and reflect the tenacity and strength of the teams that drive start-ups with entrants aged 35 years old and under eligible to enter.

The win comes on the back of CarExpert surpassing four million Australian visits within a 28-day period (as of May 19), putting it ahead of competitors according to industry analytics tool SimilarWeb.

The new-car only marketplace says it has increased its audience reach substantially since the beginning of 2023 as it continues to invest in content, people, technology, product, and culture.

"I'm genuinely humbled to be awarded Entrepreneur of the Year. None of this would be possible without our incredible staff and founding team," says Maric.

"Our team works relentlessly to be the best..."

CarExpert co-founder **Alborz Fallah** says Maric "has been instrumental to the



success of CarExpert with our YouTube channel having more subscribers and more monthly views than any of our competitors.

"His tenacity and our whole team's willingness to persist, get up when knocked down and continue to fight for our success every single day, is why we're here today, and this award recognises the whole business."

The company says significant investment in new people, technology, product, and culture now sees **CarExpert.com.au** employ 47 fulltime staff in Brisbane, Melbourne, and Sydney with dozens of additional hirings yet to come.

The business has also seen revenue more than triple from the same period last year.

CarExpert was founded by **Alborz Fallah**, **Paul Maric**, and **Anthony Crawford**, the founders behind CarAdvice (now Drive).

It's led by chief executive **Damon Rielly**, who was the previous head of ASX listed iCar Asia.

CarExpert is backed by investment from Seven West Ventures, in addition to a multi-billion dollar Asia-based corporation, and Australian billionaire and one of Australia's largest car collectors, **Laurence Escalante**.

BENZINA ZERO DRIVES DOMINO'S SUSTAINABLE PIZZA DELIVERY

Domino's Pizza has announced a new partnership with Benzina Zero after completing successful trials of its Duo electric moped within several stores.

The partnership will further enhance Domino's goal to be the most sustainable food delivery business operating from its more than 900 stores in Australia and New Zealand.

"By utilising the Benzina Zero's Duo electric moped we're not only able to deliver our pizza more sustainably, but we are also able to provide additional efficiencies and cost reductions to our franchisees."

So says **Earle Strong**, head of new equipment from Construction, Supply &

Service, Domino's supply company.

"We started this journey sourcing the right electric delivery moped around three years ago with many not fit for purpose," he says.

"And it has taken a long time to find the right solution. We now have that solution, and we're excited to work closely with Benzina Zero on the delivery of the electric Duo moped within our network."

Joe D'Ercole, chief battery charger at Benzina Zero Australia says that as the challenges for last-mile delivery are universal, "we look forward to supporting Domino's both here and internationally where possible".

"Additionally, for each electric moped



delivered in Australia and around the world, our partnership will contribute to the Benzina Zero 1m2 Project, a land regeneration program in Australia to facilitate additional environmental support," he says.

VEHICLE REPAIR REVIEW IS A WAKE-UP CALL

An independent review has recommended a greater consumer focus and a major overhaul of the voluntary industry code of conduct governing motor vehicle insurance and repair.

Dr Michael Schaper has delivered an independent review of the code, designed to strengthen and enhance transparent and co-operative relationships between smash repairers and insurance companies.

He recommends consumers should be central in any disagreement and shorter dispute resolution timeframes between insurers and repairers.

"Until now, it's been a waiting game for motorists while insurers leverage their power imbalance over the repair industry and frustrate negotiations over important issues such as manufacturer repair methods," says Motor Trades Association of Australia (MTAA) chief executive **Geoff Gwilym**.

"If left unaddressed, the average motorist may be left with substandard repairs which compromise the resale value or, worse, the safety of their vehicle.

"Dr Schaper's review set about to improve the code across the insurance and vehicle repair sectors and that's why MTAA supports all 15 recommendations in full."

Each year, Australians lodge more than 1.5 million smash repairs, forming the largest group of consumer retail claims in the Australian insurance industry.

Since 2006, the relationship between smash repairers and insurers has been regulated under the voluntary code.

Other recommendations to improve the code include introducing sanctions for breaches and appointing an independent chair and deputy chair to the Code Administration Committee (CAC).

"Insurers and repairers should be compelled to resolve disputes quickly and fairly," Gwilym says.

"The insurance and vehicle repair industries can't exist without the motoring public, so we're committed to implementing all the recommendations and making the claims process as simple and pain-free as possible for motorists."

In December 2022, CAC – comprising equal representatives from MTAA and the Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) – announced Dr Schaper had been appointed to independently review the code.

"MTAA representatives on the CAC – **Stephen Jenkins, Kaes Cillessen and Kathy Zdravevski** – are well versed and prepared to work collaboratively with ICA representatives on CAC to see all recommendations are implemented," Gwilym says.

The report's 15 recommendations are in response to the review's terms of reference, which focused on:

1. The effectiveness of dispute resolution processes under the MVIRI



GEOFF GWILYM

code.

2. Awareness and accessibility of the code.
3. Compliance with the code.
4. Governance of the Cde and CAC.
5. Other issues pertinent to the effective governance and operation of the code.

SEE IT FIRST

Buy the right stock in person.
Our auction lanes are opening soon.
Melbourne from Wed 7 June
Brisbane from Tue 13 June

[DISCOVER MORE](#)

Manheim
COX AUTOMOTIVE



PATTERSON CHANEY GROUP WINS EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR

Melbourne dealer group, Patterson Chaney, has won the Denso-sponsored employer of the year award at the 2023 Automotive Industry Awards.

And Morrow Motor Group won the best large business (Regional Victoria) award sponsored by Bendix.

The awards were hosted by the Victoria Automotive Chamber of Commerce (VACC) and the Tasmanian Automotive Chamber of Commerce (TACC).

Nine of the 16 businesses, businesspeople, and apprentices announced as leaders in their field are from the dealership sector.

VACC chief executive **Geoff Gwilym** says the awards demonstrate member and apprentice commitment to quality and customer service.

"It's a huge accolade to be named the best in Victoria and Tasmania. These winners go above and beyond and have proved themselves more than worthy of these titles," Gwilym says.

The VACC apprentice of the year award, sponsored by Spirit Super went to **Zak Cretella** of Bundoora BMW, and the TACC apprentice of the year award with the same sponsor went to **Ben Bailey** from Hobart Performance Autos.

Eastern Subaru employee **Jonathan Roy** was awarded Outstanding First



Year Apprentice and Jeff Wignall Ford Mornington employee **Benjamin Anstice** was the Outstanding Second Year Apprentice.

Both awards were sponsored by the Mining and Automotive Skills Alliance.

Airport Toyota employee **Aiden Johnston** was presented with the Outstanding Trainee of the Year Award sponsored by SP Tools.

The VACC Progressive Excellence Award went to **Alex Cachia** of South Morang Mazda and the TACC Progressive Excellence Award went to **Brock Costello** of Launceston Mazda. Both awards were sponsored by Mas National.

An independent judge evaluated entries based on business management, workplace practices, customer service, and environmental impacts.

To ensure only the finest of VACC and TACCs' more than 5000 members would be crowned, finalists were audited randomly.

The winners were announced at the VACC President's gala dinner, a formal evening that combined industry awards and apprentice graduations at the Palladium at Crown, in Melbourne.



TOYOTA WINS MOST TRUSTED CAR BRAND AGAIN

Toyota Australia has been judged Australia's most trusted car brand in the annual Reader's Digest trusted brands survey.

It marks the 18th consecutive year Toyota has topped the publication's survey.

The survey results were based on responses from 2800 members of the Australian public, who were asked for their opinions on which brands are most important to them.

The 24th annual survey was conducted independently by Catalyst Research which gave a mixed demographic of participants an online questionnaire asking them to name the brands they trust across 74 different product categories.

Toyota was the top vehicle brand. Reader's Digest editor-in-chief **Louise Waterson** says consistency and reliability were key factors in determining the most trusted brands in Australia.

"For award-winning brands, the complex challenges created by the current economic environment has only reinforced their determination to work harder to retain the trust of their current customers and attract the trust of new ones," she says.

"Trusted brands are consistent, reliable and value-for-money - while also cleverly improving and expanding their existing practices to suit their customers' needs and concerns."

Toyota Australia chief marketing officer, **Vin Naidoo** says the results were indicative of the reputation for quality, durability and reliability that Toyota has built over decades.

"It's an honour to be named the Most Trusted Car Brand by Reader's Digest, and it's especially pleasing to top the list for the 18th consecutive year, clearly showing the faith consumers have in Toyota and its vehicles," Naidoo says, adding Toyota Australia sold more than 230,000 vehicles in 2022.



"Over 30% of those sales comprised hybrid models, which enable customers to significantly reduce tailpipe CO2 emissions and fuel costs with no compromise on practicality."



SUBARU AUSTRALIA FINDS TOP DEALER TECHNICIAN

Eblen Subaru Glenelg technician **Richard Ferguson** has beaten four other finalists to win the 2023 Subaru Australia technician competition.

Those four were **James Daly** of Eblen Subaru; **Graham Dell** of Subaru Aspley, QLD; **Brodie Rogers** from Key Motors, QLD, and **Nathan Rowney** of Hunter Subaru, NSW.

Ferguson has also won a spot at the biennial Subaru World technician competition in Japan.

After a four-year hiatus because of the COVID pandemic, Subaru Corporation will be holding the competition which 13 Subaru distributors will contest.

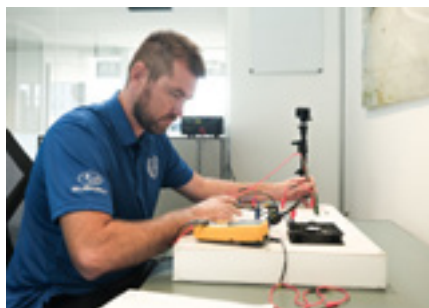
To find the best Subaru representative in Australia, the five finalists were challenged to diagnose electrical and mechanical issues pre-programmed into multiple 'stations' and complete a written test at the Subaru Academy Training Centre in Melbourne.

Time constraints applied for diagnosis, and Subaru Australia's expert technical and training team oversaw the competition, so contestants faced significant pressure.

After a challenging competition, Ferguson was named the winner.

"It was a really tough competition and I'm really happy to win," he says.

"I'm really looking forward to representing Australia in Japan and competing against the world's best

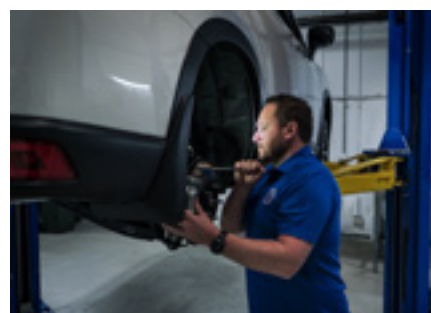
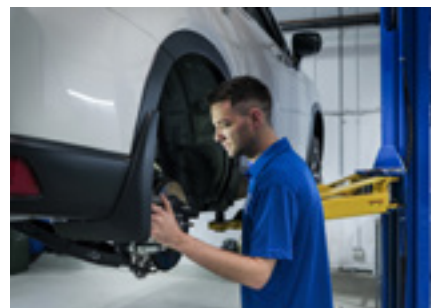


Subaru technicians."

As the winner, Ferguson was presented with the Gary Mathews Memorial Award.

This award commemorates **Gary Mathews**, who died of cancer in 2011. Mathews was also a long-term employee at Eblen Subaru Glenelg and was a Subaru Master Technician who was held in very high regard with his peers and Subaru Australia.

Subaru Australia ownership experience general manager **Mark Robinson**



congratulated the five technicians who contested the finals of the 2023 competition.

"It was an incredibly difficult competition, and all five finalists were challenged and stretched on the day," Robinson says.

"A big congratulations to Richard who has demonstrated exemplary skill and proved the best Subaru technician in the country to represent Australia on the world stage."

SAIC SHIPS MGs DIRECTLY TO AUSTRALIA

In the early afternoon of Friday, May 12, the SAIC owned car carrier Viking Emerald sailed non-stop from Shanghai in China, and docked at Port Kembla, south of Sydney with a cargo of more than 3100 new MG hatchbacks and SUVs.

It's the first time MG Motor Australia has filled an entire ship's cargo manifest with its own vehicles, and its first non-stop car delivery to Australia.

The shipment includes the ZS EV Long Range, Australia's best-selling light hatchback the MG3 and HS Plus EV and ZST wagons.

The mass delivery is part of a larger allocation of about 25,000 new MGs that have arrived in Australia since the beginning of this year.

Harnessing the resources of the parent company, SAIC group has meant MG Motor Australia can continue to ensure Aussies can get behind the wheel of an MG quickly and safely.

MG Motor Australia and New Zealand CEO **Peter Ciao** says, "time and time again, we see people feeling overwhelmed because of the pressures that they face as part of modern life.

"The least I can do is show how much we care and say thank you by delivering their car as soon as possible.

"We have many exciting plans for Australia in the near future for electric vehicles, starting with the official



launch and deliveries of the MG4 this year.

"MG Motor Australia understands, acknowledges and respects the importance of biosecurity measures to ensure the longevity and safety of Australia's environment and ecosystem," Ciao says.

MG has invested and refined the steps it takes both offshore and in Australia to ensure its cars are cleaned thoroughly before arrival.

Ciao says dealers and customers are being rewarded with faster delivery times as a result.

"Key to this is working closely with partners such as Australian Amalgamated Terminals (AAT) and the

Department of Agriculture to ensure the quick processing and cleaning of newly delivered vehicles."

AAT Port Kembla terminal manager **Evan Wissel** says the port has always been regarded as Australia's AAA quarantine cleaning facility for vehicles.

"The biggest challenge of 2023 has been the amount of cars needing to have biosecurity hazards cleaned. To date 16,631 cars have been held, successfully cleaned and cleared of contamination..."

Wissel acknowledges MG's growth, export process refinement, and "improvement of import presentation of its vehicles".

MG MOTOR RECALLING 5000 HS + EV MODELS

MG is recalling HS + EV plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEV) supplied in Australia between February 1, 2021 and March 23, 2023, because of "an individual product fault".

More than 5168 cars are involved.

"Safety is of the utmost importance to MG and as such, we've already commenced contacting owners of

affected vehicles and all other relevant parties to organise inspection and repair, at no cost to the customer, if required," says a company spokesperson.

Vehicle Recalls Australia says that because of a manufacturing defect, the carpet underlay may be positioned between the nut and the electrical ground stud.

If vibration loosens the nut over time, it could cause the wiring beneath the floor to overheat and may result in a fire inside the vehicle.

Vehicle Recalls Australia says involved consumers should contact their nearest MG dealer to arrange an inspection of the vehicle and rectification where necessary.



JEEP RECALLS 43,000 DIESELS BUT HAS NO PARTS TO FIX THEM

Jeep Australia is recalling 43,396 Grand Cherokee diesel vehicles built between 2011 and 2022 to fix a manufacturing defect in the high-pressure fuel pump.

But it has told owners of affected vehicles that it doesn't have the parts

to fix their cars.

Instead, Jeep distributor FCA Australia will contact owners when parts are available.

Once owners receive their follow-up notice they can contact any authorised Jeep dealership to arrange the repair

free of charge.

Jeep says the defect could cause the pump to fail prematurely and introduce failed component debris into the fuel system, impairing diesel supply to the engine and resulting in a loss of power.



IAG PLANS USING AI FOR CRASH REPAIR ASSESSMENTS

Vehicle insurer Insurance Australia Group (IAG) is eyeing using artificial intelligence (AI) in its assessment of crashed cars.

Through its venture capital arm, Firemark Ventures, it has invested in Israeli start-up, Ravin AI, with a view to use its AI-powered inspection tool.

Founded in 2018 by **Eliron Ekstein** and **Roman Sandler**, Ravin AI provides automated artificial intelligence vehicle inspection technology to fleet, insurance, and remarketing customers around the world.

The technology doesn't require customers to buy or install dedicated hardware but uses mobile and CCTV cameras.

Many large car insurance providers can often face internal and customer-

servicing timelags, as well as issues relating to the consistency of vehicle assessments and claims estimates.

Ravin says its platform is designed to improve the accuracy of vehicle assessments, reducing operational costs and improving customer trust by providing more transparent repair quotes.

"We look forward to helping streamline and scale IAG's operations using our deep learning vehicle inspection technology," Ekstein says.

"This investment reflects IAG's commitment to providing the best possible service for its customers by incorporating AI-based solutions into its toolkit for vehicle assessment, maintenance and repair."

IAG Firemark Ventures' general partner, **Scott Gunther** says that

after scanning the market for comprehensive and efficient vehicle inspection tools, "we found Ravin AI's technology to be the most promising, with their accuracy, speed and transparency being central to the platform".

"As we look to further scale our motor insurance operations, we're excited to see the potential impact of Ravin's vehicle inspection solution and look forward to integrating it into our approach," he says.

IAG's main businesses underwrite more than \$13 billion worth of insurance premium per year under many brands, including NRMA Insurance, RACV (under a distribution agreement), CGU, SGIO, SGIC, and WFI (Australia).



POLESTAR REPORTS DEVELOPMENT DELAYS AND HEADCOUNT FREEZE

Swedish electric carmaker Polestar says its first quarter deliveries of 12,076 were up 26% year on year, and it enters the second quarter with "good commercial momentum".

But it's also "intensifying its focus on cost management" that includes a global hiring freeze and a 10% reduction in staff.

Polestar says the final software development of the new all-electric platform it shares with Volvo has required more time and has delayed the start of production for the Polestar 3 which is now expected in the first quarter of 2024.

There's no change to the start of production of the Polestar 4, which is expected for China in the fourth quarter of 2023, and for other markets early next year.

Polestar predicts it will sell 60,000 to 70,000 cars this year, representing annual growth of 16% to 36% on last year's 51,491 deliveries.

The company has experienced strong growth over the past five years and has more than 100,000 cars on the road in 27 markets.

"We are taking necessary steps to



strengthen Polestar in the near-term," says chief executive **Thomas Ingenlath**.

"While production of Polestar 3 will now start in the first quarter of 2024, the successful launch of Polestar 4 last month means that we add two strong

offers in the attractive electric SUV market in 2024.

"I am confident that we will deliver on our growth ambitions and path towards profitability."

AUSSIE REPORT SAYS ELECTRIFY COMMERCIALS BEFORE CARS

Sydney logistics software start-up Adiona Tech says commercial vehicles should be electrified before cars in the battle to cut transport emissions.

The assertion comes in its electric vehicle report Connected Thinking, a data-driven response to the Federal Government's National Electric Vehicle Strategy (NEVS).

Adiona says data shows that electrifying 10 small delivery trucks will eliminate as many emissions as 56 households buying an EV car.

Meanwhile, articulated trucks that make up only 1% of vehicles on Australian roads, produce 15% of all vehicle emissions.

Adiona says the new national EV plan must prioritise commercial fleets and the least fuel-efficient vehicles over passenger cars.

"We can't transform the national fleet of 20 million vehicles overnight, so we need to make decisions that make the biggest difference, for the lowest effort first," says Adiona Tech founder and chief executive **Richard Savoie**.

"Every battery we put in a truck or van counts for five to 50 households buying an EV, and business often have fleets of hundreds of vehicles.

"Australia must prioritise the electrification of these vehicles that are on the road most, travel the longest distances, and are the least

fuel-efficient," he says.

Backed by KPMG and Telstra, Adiona Tech powers millions of product deliveries for some big brands – such as Coca-Cola Europacific Partners.

Adiona's AI-powered delivery route planning and optimisation engine applies machine learning to real traffic data to lower delivery costs, reduce vehicle emissions, and help businesses get to net zero faster.

For delivery companies switching to EVs, Adiona's fleet simulator enables them to optimise their fleet purchase, deployment, and infrastructure plans.



FLEETS TACKLE ELECTRIFICATION AT NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Electrifying the national vehicle fleet was the chief topic of conversation among delegates at last month's Australasian Fleet Management Association (AfMA) conference and exhibition in Sydney.

More than 700 delegates attended the event which ran between May 23 and 24 and more than 60 fleet focused supplier exhibitors were on hand to pitch their latest products and services.

The AfMA delegates could inspect some of the latest passenger and light commercial battery electric vehicles (BEV) which were displayed in the exhibition hall at the Rosehill Racecourse events centre.

The BEVs included the Seat Born and Volkswagen I.D 5. Ford brought a new Mustang Mach-E and an E-Transit, and there too were the BYD Atto 3, Polestar 2, Peugeot E-Partner delivery van, Kia EV6, Mazda MX-30, Subaru Solterra, MG4, Tesla Model Y, and Hyundai Ioniq5.

Mitsubishi presented the Outlander PHEV and demonstrated its vehicle to load (V2L) capability by powering a tiny house.

Iveco showed the all-electric Daily cab/chassis truck, Foton presented its all-electric light-duty truck, Mercedes-Benz showcased the e-Vito delivery van and Hyundai presented the new all-electric Mighty light-duty truck.

2023 FLEET AWARD WINNERS

AfMA capped off day one with the announcement of the winners of the 2023 Fleet Awards.



New South Wales' Essential Energy won the 2023 Fleet Safety Award sponsored by Teletrac Navman and Innovation Group which was accepted by fleet manager **Michael Mills**.

Mills administers a fleet of more than 3500 vehicles across the state, and says the company wanted to invest in an in-vehicle monitoring system (Nova Systems) to keep staff and the public safe and make sure people get home alive every working day.

New Zealand company Waste Management won the 2023 Fleet Environment award sponsored by Hyundai Motor Company Australia and Mix Telematics.

It also took the 2023 Fleet Manager of the Year award sponsored by BP Pulse and Geotab which went to Waste Management's head of fleet **Jitesh Singh**.



AfMA executive director **Mace Hartley** says Waste Management is the first such organisation to win two consecutive awards in the same year.

to page 19...

...from page 18

Waste Management's head of safety and risk **Guy Smith** accepted the Fleet Environment award on behalf of the company.

Smith says electrifying the fleet of rubbish trucks is a big source of pride for Waste Management, and the company is "quietly walking the walk" towards Net Zero.

"The electrification project is a very important part of our circular economy," Smith says.

In January 2023 Waste Management announced that the electric fleet had reached a significant milestone – one million electric kilometres.

The company says this represented the equivalent saving of 375,000 litres of diesel and stopped 1109 tonnes of CO₂ from entering the atmosphere.

At that time Waste Management reported it had 28 electric trucks on NZ roads and planned to add a further 23 trucks in 2023.

Waste Management's head of fleet Singh says he and his dedicated team see alternative fuels as the future and have created safer vehicles and a more efficient operation.

He also thanked the company's executive team for its support of the electric truck project.

Singh says it's invaluable having a



specialist EV Innovation Hub at Waste Management's Auckland HQ to convert diesel vehicles to electric.

"It lets us convert specialist refuse collection trucks, such as LEVs and dual controlled side loaders, which aren't available to buy.

"We've converted 13 trucks since moving to the Auckland HQ in late 2019, with a lot more to come."

Singh says the average age of the current Waste Management Truck fleet has halved from 14 to seven years old.





DIRECTED TECHNOLOGIES OPENS \$15M HUB IN AUSTRALIA

Directed Technologies has opened a \$15m connected mobility innovation centre to fuel the rapid growth of connected vehicle technology and IoT solutions.

It says the centre will advance Australia's capabilities in next-generation fleet vehicle digitisation and electrification while providing a foundation for the company to scale its APAC solutions to global markets.

A Victorian-owned and operated company, Directed Technologies provides connected solutions for fleet and passenger vehicles including trucks, trailers, cars, motorbikes, and electric delivery vehicles.

Currently, the connected mobility innovation centre manages 200 terabytes of data, processing 20 billion probe data points a day.

That includes live video feeds, vehicle and driver behaviour alerts and efficiency measures and vehicle fault codes.

"It provides customers with a live view and advanced analytical insights of their people, vehicles, and assets across the global road network to support fleet optimisation," the company says.

And it provides driver assistance programs that reduce congestion, cut carbon emissions through fuel savings, and save lives.

According to Direct Technologies

the centre will double its local manufacturing capabilities in both telematics and IoT, allowing it to meet increasing demand.

The company's telematics devices, manufactured locally, are used already by more than 2500 vehicle fleets globally, including Australia Post and Ambulance Victoria.

They're also used by truck brands like Hino, Mercedes-Benz, Kenworth, DAF, and Iveco.

Directed Technologies has also been selected by brands such as Ford to export locally designed hardware to the global passenger vehicle market.

The company says it has seen rapid growth in Australia and New Zealand, with the homegrown technology now exported to 15 APAC countries including Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, Guam, Indonesia, and Vietnam.

Backed in part by the Victorian Jobs and Investment Fund, the company says the \$15m centre will place Victoria at the centre of global connected vehicle opportunities.

It will drive the growth of digital skills and manufacturing capability by providing hundreds of jobs for high-skilled workers across design, production, engineering and manufacturing.

"You don't need to look to Silicon

Valley or Europe for cutting-edge automotive technology," says Directed Group chief executive **Steve Siolis**.

"The idea that we don't make great technology products in Australia is simply not true. We've built a world-class facility and developed innovative solutions for the world's biggest transport companies that have allowed us to compete against global competitors – and win.

"This facility is the only one of its kind nationally and one of the few full-stack solution centres of its kind globally.

"With all telematics solutions designed and built right here on site, there will be significant local employment opportunities as we scale around the globe," Siolis says.

"The reinvigoration of the automotive industry in Victoria is accelerating with data-driven solutions along with innovations in electric and hydrogen vehicle development and advanced materials manufacturing," says Directed Technologies executive director **Brent Stafford**.

"The opportunities in connectivity, data analytics and machine learning are right here on our doorstep and will help to diversify the economy but will also solidify Victoria's position as the centre of automotive manufacturing in Australia," he adds.



ANALYSIS RANKS MG AND SUBARU DEALERSHIPS AS TOP PERFORMERS

BY ROBERT BARRY

An analysis of car buying trends by finance platform MNY has found that MG and Subaru dealerships are Australia's most trusted, with 58 and 52% of their ratings, respectively, scoring above 4.5 out of five.

MNY compared vehicle sales and registration data from the FCAI, the Bureau of Infrastructure and Transport Research Economics, and CarExpert.com.au with almost 300,000 Google reviews from 1374 dealerships.

It found that MG dealerships provide a sure-fire destination for interested buyers to drive away in their new car, with an average rating of 4.54 out of five, followed by Subaru and Isuzu with equal scores of 4.51 out of five.

Volkswagen and Mitsubishi struggled with scores of 4.33 and 4.34, respectively. Meanwhile, Toyota and Ford came in last place with equal average scores of 4.29 out of five.

"It's wise to approach dealership ratings with a dash of scepticism as they may not tell the whole story," says MNY business analyst **Sabina Khanusiak**.

"While Toyota may have a decent average rating score of 4.29, it's worth noting that their no-frills reputation could be a factor in why their dealership ratings are just satisfactory.

"It's important customers do their due diligence as our research discovered that new dealerships with limited reviews also have lower average ratings."

HIGHER CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS

High-paying customers hold even

higher expectations for top-notch customer service.

Leading the pack, MG dealerships not only earn the highest admiration but also garner the most reviews, with 78 reviews per 1000 vehicles registered. That puts them ahead of their closest rivals Kia and Subaru with 53 and 48 reviews per 1000 vehicles registered respectively.

VOCAL VICTORIANS

MNY's analysis shows Victorians are the most vocal when sharing their car dealership experiences, with 23 reviews posted per 1000 registered vehicles.

Queensland and the Northern Territory follow closely behind with 21 and 19 reviews per 1000 registered vehicles, respectively.

However, Tasmania has the lowest review rate, with just seven reviews per 1000 registered vehicles, but the percentage of poor ratings is notably lower than other states, with only 3% of Tasmania's dealership ratings scoring below 3.5 stars.

In contrast, 35% of the Northern Territory's dealership reviews fell below 3.5 stars.

KEYWORDS DOMINATING REVIEWS

MNY's investigation revealed that the keyword 'professionalism' stood out the most, being mentioned nearly 7000 times in reviews of varying ratings.

Interestingly, one in seven Toyota dealership reviews emphasised the significance of professionalism, indicating that customers prioritise exceptional treatment, irrespective of

the final outcome.

The journey to customer satisfaction continued with words like 'happy' and 'pleasure' dominating customer reviews for Subaru, MG and Mitsubishi, solidifying those brands' strong connection with "a remarkable purchasing experience that has prospective customers eager to dive in".

"Gone are the days when customers had to visit a car dealership multiple times before committing to a purchase. Khanusiak says.

"In this digital era, customers are armed with a wealth of information from the internet and social media, making them highly informed about their desired cars.

"As technology continues to evolve, car manufacturers and dealerships have a golden opportunity to step up their game and deliver tangible, meaningful customer service that truly sets them apart.

"Car dealerships should focus on building strong, lasting relationships with customers that go beyond providing advice and insights during the purchasing process," she says.

"By offering exceptional customer service and a welcoming experience, dealerships can ensure the success and longevity of their business."

The full survey results, including age and State breakdowns, can be found at: <https://mny.com.au/analysing-australian-car-buying-trends/>



FORD CONFIRMS E-TRANSIT SPECIFICATION AND PRICES

The E-Transit van has beaten the Mustang Mach-E as Ford Australia's first all-electric vehicle.

Ford will sell two E-Transit models locally, the long-wheelbase 420L BEV Mid Roof and 420L BEV High Roof, with deliveries expected to start soon.

Both vans are powered by a 198kW/430Nm electric motor, the highest power and torque in any Transit yet. It's paired with a single-speed automatic transmission that drives the rear wheels.

The 68kWh battery gives the E-Transit enough driving range for businesses operating in urban environments, Ford says.

The Mid Roof 420L has a range between 230 and 307km and the High Roof 420L can cover 222 to 295km.

CHARGING

A grille-mounted charge socket makes charging easy and E-Transit comes equipped with a Mode 3, 32-amp Charge Cable as standard.

Flexible charging options allow customers to either AC charge overnight in about eight hours or quick DC Charge top up (15% to 80% at 115 kW) in approximately 34 minutes.

The E-Transit has a regenerative braking system which gathers energy from electricity ordinarily lost with coasting or light braking. The recovered energy is then stored in the traction battery to maximise range.

DRIVE MODES

The E-Transit's three drive modes are tailored to its electric powertrain, and are available via the 12-inch SYNC 4 Touchscreen or a dedicated button on the centre console.

Eco Mode is tuned to maximise driving range and aims to improve energy use by between eight and 10% if the E-Transit is driven unladen. At highway speeds, it limits the maximum speed, regulating acceleration, and optimising air-conditioning.

Normal Mode is the vehicle's default drive mode and is tuned for everyday driving, balance, and comfort.

Slippery Mode improves vehicle traction in low-grip conditions.

LOAD CAPACITY

The E-Transit's compact heavy-duty semi-trailing arm rear suspension improves steering precision and gives more confident handling, plus better traction laden and unladen, Ford says.

Its compact design allows for an uncompromised cargo capacity of up to 11 cubic metres in mid-roof specification and 12.4 in the high-roof version. Both are identical to the Transit 350L RWD diesel equivalents.

Gross vehicle mass is up to 4.25 tonnes, with a payload of up to 1611kg on the mid roof van and 156 kg in the high roof.

Because the load area on the E-Transit is largely the same as conventionally powered Transits, many load area conversions will carry over to E-Transit



with minimal modifications, making it easy to adopt an E-Transit for a business fleet.

WARRANTY

The E-Transit is covered by Ford's five-year, unlimited kilometre Express New Vehicle Warranty which sits alongside the eight-year or 160,000km (whichever occurs first) warranty package for the battery and high-voltage electric components.

The Ford E-Transit is available now, priced from \$104,990 (MLP), and can be bought exclusively through a Ford EV Dealer.

The high-roof body can be optioned for \$1500. The E-Transit has 12 month/30,000km service intervals (whichever comes first).



BORN A BEST-SELLING EV IN AUSTRALIA

Cupra's Born battery electric car is charging toward its aim of being this year's best-selling European BEV with 500 units sold already in Australia.

Buyers' response to the initial allocation of 400 Borns made available online before Christmas was such that first 600, then 700 were allocated by the factory.

Of those 500 have sold and ordering is now unrestricted.

Cupra Australia says the rear-wheel drive Born hatchback is not only the first relatively affordable BEV of its type to reach Australia but has the longest range for the most attainable price.

It can travel up to 511km between recharging and costs \$59,990 plus on-road costs.

In states and territories such as NSW and ACT the drive-away price is within \$2500 of that sum, before region-specific incentives are applied. With incentives, the drive-away price could fall below the RRP.

Built on a dedicated BEV platform – called MEB – the Born can accelerate to 100km/h in 7.0-seconds and provides the driver with engaging handling through the sharp steering and rear-drive chassis layout.

Borns run on 19- or 20-inch alloy wheels, and optional wide Michelin Pilot Sport 4 tyres.



"Customer response has been immediate, which has been recognised and rewarded by our factory with increasing allocations of a car in hot demand in other markets," says Cupra Australia director **Ben Wilks.**

"To combine a long 500km-plus EV range with instant electric performance, and controllable dynamics through the sharp steering and rear-wheel drive chassis, places the Born in an exclusive part of the market."

Pricing:

Cupra Born – \$59,990 plus on-road costs

ACT: **\$61,990** drive-away.

NSW: **\$62,490** drive-away.

QLD: **\$63,490** drive-away.

VIC: **\$64,990** drive-away.

SA: **\$64,490** drive-away.

WA: **\$66,490** drive-away.

The quoted drive-away prices don't include state and territory EV Incentives. Customers can access rebates depending on the state or territory they're living in and other eligibility requirements.



NEW CAR SALES ACHIEVE BEST MAY YET

Australian new vehicle dealers delivered more than 105,694 units in May with the industry achieving its largest May sales yet.

The Toyota **HiLux** (5772) was the largest selling model followed by Ford **Ranger** (4110), Tesla **Model Y** (3178), Toyota **RAV4** (2616) and MG **ZS** (2502).

That's a 12% increase on the same month last year and a 2.7% increase on May 2017 which was the previous best May, says the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries.

But the FCAI says too that many of the vehicles delivered in May 2023 were fulfilling orders placed by consumers in 2022.

The year-to-date sales total of 456,833 vehicles is 4.3% higher than the same period last year.

Every state and territory saw an increase with significant growth in Western Australia of 25% and Queensland (17%) compared with May 2022.

Growth was recorded in all buyer segments – private, business, government and rental – compared with May 2022.

FCAI chief executive **Tony Weber** says the result was encouraging following many months where deliveries were hampered by shipping and logistics issues.

"This result is a signal that we're starting to see some improvement in supply," Weber says.

"However, not all issues are resolved, and our members continue to work with their customers to improve delivery times."

Weber says that though vehicle supply issues might be beginning to ease,

the industry remains cautious around broader economic conditions and their potential impact on demand.

"A large proportion of vehicles delivered this month would have been ordered during 2022," Weber says.

"Since then, we've seen a shift in economic conditions with a focus on rising cost pressures for households and businesses. Nevertheless, reports from our members indicate that demand remains firm."

Sales of battery electric vehicles were 7.7% of the market in May and are running at 7% year to date.

Sales for electrified vehicles (battery electric vehicle, plug-in hybrid, and hybrid) made up 15.6% of the market in May.

Toyota (18,340) led the May market, followed by **Mazda** (8475), **Hyundai** (7078), **Kia** (7000) and **Ford** (6251). **Toyota** led **Mazda** with a margin of 9865 vehicle sales and 9.4 market share points.

The May 2023 market of 105,694 new vehicle sales is an increase of 11,311 vehicle sales or 12.0% over May 2022 (94,383).

There were 26.8 selling days in May 2023 compared to 25.8 in May 2022 which resulted in an increase of 285.6 vehicle sales per day.

The passenger vehicle market is up by 868 vehicle sales (5%) over the same month last year; the SUV market is up by 7552 vehicle sales (14.7%), the LCV market is up by 2296 vehicle sales (10.7%).

The heavy commercial vehicle market is up by 595 vehicle sales (14.4%) compared to May 2022.

TOP 10 BRANDS



1. TOYOTA 18,340



2. MAZDA 8475



3. HYUNDAI 7078



4. KIA 7000



5. FORD 6251

4X4 UTES



1. Toyota Hilux
4775



2. Ford Ranger
3664



3. Isuzu Ute D-Max
1933



4. Mazda BT-50
1393



5. Mitsubishi Triton
1114



6. Toyota Landcruiser
939



7. GWM Ute
931



8. LDV T60/T60 MAX
823



9. Volkswagen Amarok
645



10. Nissan Navara
617

SUV SMALL <\$40K



1. MG ZS
2502



2. Mazda CX-30
1169



3. Kia Seltos
1148



4. Subaru Crosstrek
1126



5. GWM Haval Jolion
1076



6. Volkswagen T-Roc
950



7. Hyundai Kona
810



8. Chery Omoda 5
584



9. Mitsubishi Eclipse Cross
570



10. Mitsubishi ASX
549

TOP 10 BRANDS



6. MG 4828



7. MITSUBISHI 4583



8. TESLA 4476



9. VOLKSWAGEN 3940



10. SUBARU 3564

EV SALES GIVE AUSTRALIAN MARKET A BOOST

Tesla's **Model Y** was the third largest-selling model during May.

At 3178 sales it was behind the Ford **Ranger's** 4110 and the Toyota **HiLux's** 5772, according to the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries (FCAI), while the MG **ZS** was fifth with 2502 sales.

Battery electric vehicle (BEV) sales were 7.7% of the market in May and are running at 7.0% year to date.

Sales for electrified vehicles (BEVs, plug-in hybrid (PHEV) and hybrid, made up 15.6% of the market in May.

FCAI chief executive **Tony Weber** says reports indicate demand remains firm and though vehicle supply issues are beginning to ease concerns remain around broader economic conditions and their potential impact on demand. Electrics are driving the vehicle sales growth.

Total electric vehicle (EV) sales in May were 8124 – up 778.3% on May 2022's 925, while year-to-date EV sales were 32,050, a 275.2% rise on the 8543 recorded for the same period last year.

The EV surge was across most categories, while hybrid and diesel sales were generally down and petrol vehicle sales up only marginally.

Electric passenger vehicle sales rose 359.8% last month (1908) compared to May 2022 (415) and were up 110.9% on year-to-date (YTD) sales, from 5873 to 12,387.

PHEV passenger vehicle sales were up 62.1% in May 2023 (47 from 29 in May 2022), and 7% YTD (153 from 143).

In the popular SUV category, electrics rose more than 999% from 507 in May last year to 6201 for May 2023 and increased 638.9% YTD (from 2654 to 19,610).

PHEV SUV sales rose a small amount (from 666 in May 2022 to 744 last month. They were up 11.7%) and 18.7% YTD (from 2228 to 2644).

In the light commercial vehicles category, electrics went from three to 15 in May comparisons, and from 16 to 53.

Many new EV models are starting to land in Australia.

The Kia Concept EV9 made its Australian debut as the brand's hero display at



Vivid Sydney.

Fresh from the Shanghai International Auto Show in April, the Kia Concept EV9 also appeared at last year's FIFA World Cup 2022 and made its global debut at AutoMobility LA in November 2021.

Sitting atop the first-of-its-kind Kia Helix activation, the Kia Concept EV9 showcases what's coming in the production version.

The Circular Quay Vivid Sydney structure staged the Kia Concept EV9 in an animated show set to a soundscape celebrating innovation and intuitive, natural design.

"As the world's largest festival of light, music and ideas, Vivid Sydney attracts a huge influx of domestic and international visitors to the city," says Kia Australia marketing general manager **Dean Norbiato**.

"We feel honoured to showcase the Kia Concept EV9 for the first time in Australia. As a brand, we continue to evolve our experiential offerings to ensure we're always representing Kia in a fresh and innovative light".

After Vivid Sydney finishes on June 17, the Kia Concept EV9 will remain for its next display at the FIFA Women's Football World Cup 2023 matches in Sydney from July 20.

Also making its Vivid Sydney debut iwa Kia's EV6 GT.

Other brands now in Australia with electrified models or coming include Audi, BMW, BYD, Cupra, Fiat, Ford, GWM, Hyundai, LDV, Mercedes-Benz, MG, Nissan, Peugeot, Polestar, Porsche, Skoda, Toyota/Lexus, Volkswagen, and Volvo.

ELECTRIC, PHEV AND HYBRID SALES					MAY 2023			
Total Market	Month		YTD		Variance +/- Vol. & %			
	2023	2022	2023	2022	MTH	YTD	MTH	YTD
ELECTRIC								
Passenger Private	1,908	415	12,387	5,873	1,493	6,514	359.8%	110.9%
SUV Private	6,201	507	19,610	2,654	5,694	16,956	>999%	638.9%
Light Commercial Non-Private	15	3	53	16	12	37	400.0%	231.3%
Sub Total	8,124	925	32,050	8,543	7,199	23,507	778.3%	275.2%
HYBRID								
Passenger Private	2,203	2,760	7,628	11,845	-557	-4,217	-20.2%	-35.6%
SUV Private	5,397	5,129	21,665	22,815	268	-1,150	5.2%	-5.0%
Sub Total	7,600	7,889	29,293	34,660	-289	-5,367	-3.7%	-15.5%
PHEV								
Passenger Private	47	29	153	143	18	10	62.1%	7.0%
SUV Private	744	666	2,644	2,228	78	416	11.7%	18.7%
Sub Total	791	695	2,797	2,371	96	426	13.8%	18.0%
TOTAL	16,515	9,509	64,140	43,203	7,006	20,937	73.7%	48.5%