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THE AUSTRALIAN VEHICLE DEALER'S NEWS SOURCE

  
**infinitev**  
SUSTAINABLE ENERGY STORAGE

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BYD SCORES  
FIVE-STAR ANCAP

# LIVING IN THE MOMENT

**A**ustralian new car dealers in are enjoying a sales boom that's looking more and more likely to break all previous records.

**Passing one million sales in 10 calendar months is a first for the market, but also testament that production is now back to pre-pandemic levels for many manufacturers.**

And in spite of a constrained supply chain, namely port congestion, demand for new vehicles, particularly light commercial 4x4 pick-ups, is unabated.

And there are very few people who buy a stock-standard ute. At the very least, they'll order a towbar, a canopy or a tray lid, some form protection for the tray bed if it does come standard, bigger rims and tyres.

It's a great margin opportunity for dealers, and one that many exploit to its fullest.

**Then there are those who go all out and buy lift-kits, bull bars, winches, roof tents; and theres a huge aftermarket industry which has done very nicely from this demand.**

October saw 6215 Ford **Rangers** hitting the road, followed by 5766 Toyota **HiLuxes**, and 3198 Isuzu **D-Maxes**. That's a lot of potential profit margin in dealer-fitted accessories.

Sales of electric vehicles softened in Australia in October to 5.7% of the market, more than 6057 units.

Meanwhile, across the ditch in New Zealand, the October new vehicle market was interrupted by school holidays, a general election, and consumer reluctance to spend money on large capital items.

October registrations in New Zealand were 12.2% lower than October 2022 (14,736 units) and 7.7% lower than October 2021 (14,019).

Year to date, New Zealand's 2023 registrations are

9.1% lower than 2022 (12,535 units) and 8.8% lower than 2021 (12,062).

In spite of the centre-right National Party's campaign promise that it will scrap the Labour Government's Clean Car Rebate/Fee on December 31, there wasn't a rush by Kiwi buyers to dealerships in October to buy a battery electric vehicle which attracts a NZ\$7015 rebate.

**The top three battery electric models sold in New Zealand in October were the new MG 4 (357 units), followed by the BYD ATTO 3 (246), and the heavily discounted Nissan Leaf (165).**

Some Kiwi distributors are scrambling to move stock of battery electric vehicles before calendar year end, and the discounting offensive has begun.

Inchcape New Zealand Limited which now owns the SAIC-Maxus (LDV) brand is running out the e-T60 battery electric ute with the price cut from NZ\$79,990 to NZ\$49,975, which includes the brand's NZ\$23,000 discount and the Clean Car NZ\$7015 rebate. Yes, it's cheaper than the diesel version.

Volkswagen New Zealand is offering a further NZ\$7000 discount on top of the Clean Car discount rebate of NZ\$47015 on its ID.4 Pro and ID.5 Pro models to move inventory quickly.

**The Peugeot/Citroen/Opel importer, Auto Distributors New Zealand (ADNZ), which is owned by car dealer magnate Rick Armstrong, is also heavily discounting some of its plug-in hybrid and battery electric vehicles offering savings of up to NZ\$20,000 including the NZ\$7015 rebate.**

It's going to be very interesting to see how new cars sales, particularly battery electric vehicles wash out in November for both Australia and New Zealand.

Enjoy your reading this month,

Best regards,

*Robert Barry*  
EDITOR **AUTOTALK**





# HOBBS IS NEW MTAA CHIEF EXECUTIVE

**T**he Motor Trades Association of Australia (MTAA) has appointed **Matthew Hobbs** as its new chief executive.

**Moving from his current role of policy and advocacy director at the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries, Hobbs brings a breadth of experience in the automotive industry.**

That includes senior executive roles in GM Holden, and with General Motors and Nissan internationally.

The MTAA says Hobbs has a record of leading successful government relations campaigns and helping leadership to develop corporate strategies that impact the bottom line.

It says his experience includes securing substantial government incentives, developing restructuring plans, asset disposal, business savings, and

obtaining favourable industry, trade and regulatory settings.

MTAA chair **Frank Agostino** says Hobbs' attributes "will be critical for MTAA, particularly given the anticipated changes and disruption the industry will experience as we transition to an electric vehicle fleet".

**Hobbs will work closely with MTAA member bodies, the Victorian Automotive Chamber of Commerce and the motor trade associations of WA, NSW, SA/NT, and Queensland.**

The role's central focus will, be working with member bodies, and with the industry and government.

The MTA says developing high-quality policy and industry submissions to governments, along with building strong relationships between MTAA and policymakers, will be priority actions



MATTHEW HOBBS

for Hobbs who will begin his new role in January 2024.

## NEW RESEARCH SHOWS LMCT COMPLAINTS ARE MINISCULE

**C**alls by consumer advocates to introduce an automotive industry 'lemon law ombudsman' are misleading governments and regulators, says a new report by the Victorian Automotive Chamber of Commerce (VACC).

**VACC says Consumer Action Law Centre data from 2020 and 2021 showed 3000 automotive complaints out of 5.1 million registered vehicles in Victoria, meaning there's little justification to introduce an ombudsman.**

According to VACC, data from VicRoads shows 63% of the motor vehicles transferred are private-to-private sales and, for these consumers, there's almost no protection.

Meanwhile, VACC says when consumers buy from a Licensed Motor Car Trader (LMCT) they receive the following protections:

- In most cases, there's a three-day cooling off period and a three-month/5000km statutory warranty



if a car isn't more than 10 years old and has travelled less than 160,000km.

- Opportunity for the buyer to make a claim for any faults or other issues under the Australian Consumer Law (ACL) if, in the opinion of the purchaser, the vehicle doesn't meet one or more of the ACL consumer guarantees.
- The right for the purchaser to make a claim on the Motor Car

Traders Guarantee Fund if there's breach of the Act by the dealer.

VACC's report said the ombudsman proposal would cost Victorian dealers an additional \$6.6 million a year – an annual contribution of \$3000 per licence on top of the existing licensing fee.

**It says that dealers would have little option but to pass on this increase to consumers.**



## O'DEA TAKES OVER DEALER SALES AT ISUZU AUSTRALIA

**M**urray O'Dea is Isuzu Australia Limited's (IAL) new national dealer sales manager.

He replaces **Craig White**, who was appointed head of sales earlier this year.

**O'Dea brings to the role more than 30 years in the heavy vehicle industry across a diverse range of operations and locations.**

He's been with IAL since 2016 as a regional parts manager and business manager across New South Wales, Western Australia, and Tasmania.

In 2022 Isuzu Australia sold 13,360 trucks, a new record and its 34th consecutive year of truck sales leadership.

**This year the upward trend is continuing with sales increasing a further 7.4% (709 units) to the end of September.**

"With 70 locations in operation, our dealers should all feel extremely proud of their contribution to the success of Isuzu in Australia – success that wouldn't be achievable without their commitment and professionalism," says IAL chief of sales and aftersales

**Ben Lasry.**

"And the lynchpin to this highly effective and productive relationship is the support we provide to our dealers through key roles in our management structure at head office, such as the national dealer sales manager.

"Murray's appointment strengthens our ability to deliver this support and to assist our dealers in keeping Isuzu trucks on the road working for Aussie businesses," Lasry says.

**IAL says its national dealer sales manager provides a critical link between Isuzu and its dealers, and O'Dea's previous experience at Isuzu places him in an ideal position to continue growing those relationships.**

Isuzu has forged a reputation in both the light- and medium-truck segments and is a major player in the heavy-duty end of the market.

It has enjoyed success with both custom-built models and the increasingly popular pre-bodied ready-to-work range that provides a range of models directly into popular industry segments.

A focus on customer need has seen

growth in sales with smaller owner-operators and larger fleets.

**O'Dea will work with IAL's zone dealer managers to support the dealer network to ensure the right product is available for the right segment and ensure Isuzu remains at the forefront in forecasting trends.**

"A big part of my role is ensuring IAL has the correct mix of wholesale and retail stock needed to meet demand across a wide range of industries and applications," O'Dea says.

"This is where working closely with our zone managers and the dealers is crucial so that we can collectively meet the needs of our customers.

"I know that Isuzu Trucks has a fantastic group of dedicated dealers that want the best for their customers, no matter how big or small, and they'll be my number one priority.

**"Every location and customer requirement are different. You must have the right product and the right people in place but also the ability to evolve with the times."**

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KARSTEN SEIFERT

## SEIFERT IS NEW VW AUSTRALIA MANAGING DIRECTOR

**V**olkswagen Group Australia (VGA) has appointed **Karsten Seifert** as its new managing director.

Seifert will take over the reins from chief financial officer **Gabriele De Neidels** who has been the interim managing director since the departure of **Paul Sansom** in December, 2022.

**Since 2020, Seifert has been Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles' European and international sales executive director based in Hanover, Germany.**

Seifert has worked for Volkswagen, Audi, and Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles. He was the executive director of Commercial Vehicle's European fleet business, head of fleet and business development for Europe, and head of market planning sales for North and South America.

Previously has had been stationed in South Korea and worked closely with South America and specific projects in India, which allowed him to gain extensive international market

knowledge.

"VGA has emerged from the critical supply issues of the past few years in a strong position to transform into a leading provider of Battery Electric Vehicles, while continuing to offer a conventional passenger and commercial model portfolio," Seifert says.

"Audi and Cupra have BEVs in-market today with more models scheduled; Volkswagen will have an array of BEV models in Australia by 2025 and Skoda at least two.

"In five years, VGA will be selling more BEVs than conventional vehicles," he says.

**VGA employs 300 staff supporting sales growth, dealership networks, customer experience, service facilities, and media/public communications.**

Thousands are employed by the more than 180 VGA brand dealerships nationwide.

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# INFINITEV AND KIA JOIN TO REUSE EV BATTERIES

**I**nfinitev and Kia Australia are jointly providing an electric vehicle (EV) battery reuse, repurpose, and recycling program.

**Recognising the potential in eco-friendly battery solutions, they're addressing the challenges associated with the entire lifecycle of EV batteries.**

This partnership aims to use Infinitev's expertise in sustainable technology and Kia's position as a carmaker, to develop a battery reuse and repurpose program. Together, the companies aim to set new standards and reshape electric vehicle sustainability.

"We're proud to have a holistic solution that addresses the environmental concerns associated with electric vehicle batteries," says Infinitev general manager **Dickson Leow**.

"Our reuse approach ensures that the transition to a circular economy is not only sustainable but also reduces waste and preserves valuable resources.

"Through responsible battery management, we can accelerate the adoption of electric vehicles and build a greener Australia," Leow says.

Drawing on more than four decades of expertise in automotive electronics re-engineering, Infinitev has developed a suite of battery lifecycle management

solutions.

When a traction battery experiences diminished functionality within a vehicle, Infinitev initiates a protocol starting with a SafetyCheck—a meticulous examination encompassing both a physical and electro-chemical safety assessments of EV batteries.

**Following the SafetyCheck, Infinitev's engineers use their proprietary HealthCheck diagnostic tools to conduct thorough performance evaluations of the battery pack and its individual modules.**

This assessment yields a precise characterisation, placing the modules into one of three distinct categories:

1. A-grade modules are reused to build batteries for EV traction.
2. B-grade modules are repurposed for battery energy storage systems.
3. C-grade modules are recycled by Infinitev's partners to recover valuable materials.

"We're currently in the very early stages of developing a solution tailored to Kia customers that will allow their electric vehicle batteries to be refurbished instead of discarded," says Kia Australia chief executive **Damien Meredith**.

"What happens to an electric vehicle battery at the end of its life is an

important consideration when it comes to EV buyers, so this is a very significant program."

Kia Australia's line-up of electric vehicles started with the introduction of the first-generation Niro in 2021.

Hybrid and plug-in hybrid variants of the Sorento large SUV followed along with the second-generation Niro, all adapted for platforms designed initially for internal combustion engine models.

Kia's move towards becoming an electric car maker hit high gear with the introduction of its first vehicle built on a dedicated Electric Global Modular platform (E-GMP), the Kia EV6.

**The EV6 will be joined soon by Kia's new electric Upper Large SUV, the Kia EV9, both offering a holistic strategy for mitigating the environmental impact of a car, from design to disposal.**

The collaboration between Infinitev and Kia Australia is seen as a milestone in the quest for sustainable transportation.

By combining their strengths, the companies say they hope to pave the way for a cleaner future, revolutionising the way EV batteries are used, repurposed, and recycled.

# INCHCAPE REPORTS CONTINUED GROWTH IN THIRD QUARTER

**B**ritish automotive multinational, Inchcape, has reported 35% growth and 10% organic revenue growth, in the third quarter of 2023.

**Inchcape says its distribution business achieved 13% organic revenue growth with continued momentum in Asia Pacific (APAC) markets.**

During the 2023 third quarter Inchcape bought New Zealand LDV/SsangYong agent Great Lake Motor Distributors, and businesses in Indonesia and the Philippines.

**It also signed five new distribution contracts with the Changan brand in the Philippines and East Africa.**

However, new consumer demand in Europe remains muted and its strong market performance is supported by the order bank unwinding.

Inchcape says growth in most markets, and market share gains and accelerated cost synergies in the Americas offset softer markets in Chile and Colombia.

Its digital and data capabilities continue to support optimisation of the core business and development of Vehicle Lifecycle Services initiatives.

Based on prevailing market conditions, and considering accelerated cost synergies and the contribution from acquisitions, the group's results expectations for FY 2023 remain unchanged.

"Inchcape produced another strong performance in the third quarter," says group chief executive **Duncan Tait**.

"We delivered continued momentum across APAC, supported by acquisitions, while our business in Europe and Africa performed well.

**"In the Americas, were gaining share in key markets and the integration of Derco remains on track.**

"Driven by the highly cash generative and capital-light characteristics of our business, Inchcape will continue to be a key consolidator in a highly fragmented market.

"As a result of our market leadership positions, diversified business and digital and data capabilities to support our OEM partners, we remain confident about the medium- to long-term outlook for the group," he adds.



DUNCAN TAIT

## COX AUTOMOTIVE

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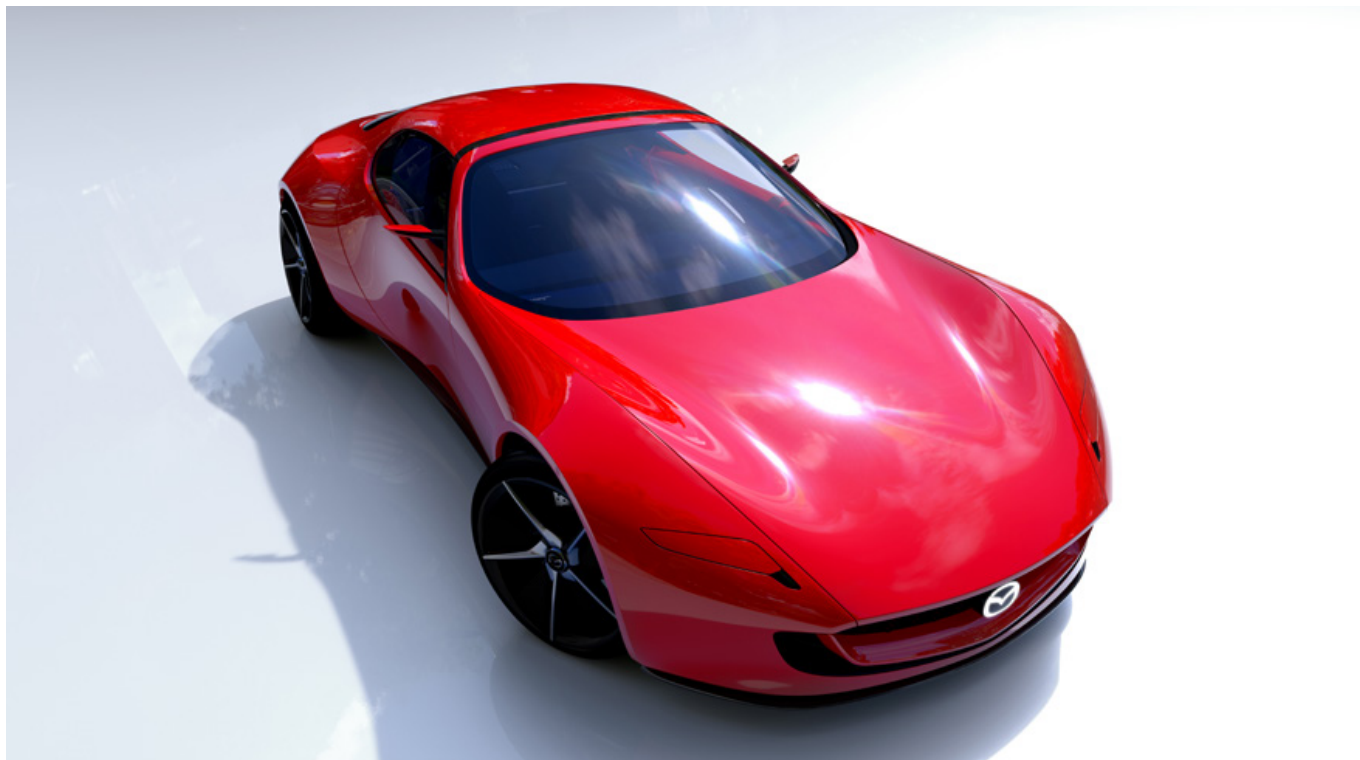
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# JAPAN MOBILITY SHOW PRESENTS INSIGHT INTO ELECTRIC FUTURE

**M**ost major Japanese carmakers debuted electric and electrified vehicles at last month's Japan Mobility Show, with some hinting at what future production cars might look like.

**Formerly known as the Tokyo Motor Show, the rebranded event was held at the Tokyo Big Sight venue from October 28 to November 5.**

The expo focused on all aspects of how people might use transport in a low carbon future.

## MAZDA UNVEILS SPORTS CAR CONCEPT

Mazda unveiled a compact sports car concept the Iconic SP which may herald a future MX-5 replacement.

**The Hiroshima-based Japanese manufacturer says the Iconic SP is designed for electrification yet respond to customers who "desire a car that embodies the joy of driving".**

It says the Viola Red is a concept paint colour paying homage to Mazda's corporate philosophy of enriching the driving experience and its desire to "cherish the colour red".

The car features Mazda's compact twin-rotor powertrain which offers a high degree of layout flexibility and allowing a low centre of gravity to improve handling.



Batteries are charged by a recyclable energy source and the twin rotor rotary engine, used for power generation, is powered by carbon-neutral fuel.

"Mazda will always deliver vehicles that remind people that cars are pure joy and an indispensable part of their lives," says company president Masahiro Moro.

## MITSUBISHI PREMIERES D:X CONCEPT

Mitsubishi showed its D:X Concept electrified crossover MPV at the Tokyo show.

It's a plug-in hybrid electric vehicle

(PHEV) which has an electrically-operated selectable four-wheel drive mode. It offers an EV mode for daily use and hybrid for long-distance trips.

It hints at what a future Mitsubishi Delica MPV might look like.

"The Mitsubishi D:X Concept is a concept car that brings together the best of Mitsubishi Motors' technologies – our electrification and all-wheel control technologies in particular – with a view to realising a carbon-neutral society," says Mitsubishi president and chief executive **Takao Kato**.

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Inheriting the interior and high safety of the Delica, the D:X Concept features a spacious cabin and a protective body.

Mitsubishi says the character of the Delica is expressed by the concept's side window graphics extending from the front of the cabin to the D-pillar and by the robust D-pillar itself.

In addition, spaciousness is created by the front window that wraps around to the bottom.

**Sturdy over fenders and large-diameter tyres convey a sense of strength, and front and rear skidplates and side step protectors enable a safe, secure ride even on rough roads.**

Mitsubishi says the Dynamic Shield front face design concept, has been evolved to protect the cabin with an integrated shield that extends from the sides, with a skidplate providing an enhanced sense of protection.

Projection laser lights are used for the T-shape lights, which extend to both ends to produce an impression of width.

The body colour is a glamping-inspired copper with a new semi-gloss texture.

**The seats can be moved up and down, and a high eye position ensures forward visibility, making driving easier and creating a sense of openness.**

During breaks, the front seats can be rotated backward to create an interior space where all occupants can enjoy conversation.

The see-through bonnet, which extends from the front window glass to the bottom shows road surface conditions ahead and the turn angle of the front wheels.

A voice-interactive AI system provides navigation information on routes to destinations and weather conditions.

**A premium feel is provided by the tan-coloured genuine leather used on the instrument panel and seats, and metal parts in alumite gray are used as accents.**

A new generation, multi-speaker sound system developed with Yamaha provides powerful, three-dimensional sound.

The pillars, including the robust D-pillar, are made using a reinforced rib-bone frame with a circular framework structure.

The S-AWC integrated vehicle dynamics control system for the electric 4WD



is designed to provide a secure and comfortable ride in any weather or road conditions.

In spite of its high monobox design, Mitsubishi says the D:X Concept provides the ride of a standard passenger car.

#### LEXUS UNVEILS TWO BEV CONCEPTS

Under the theme Pushing the Boundaries of the Electrified Experience, Lexus presented the LF-ZC (Lexus Future Zero-emission Catalyst) concept, set for international release in 2026, and the LF-ZL (Lexus Future Zero-emission Luxury) flagship.

**Lexus says its committed to being an electrified brand by 2035 with a completely new modular vehicle structure, innovative production technology, and an advanced software platform.**

The Lexus approach to sustainability is shown by the interior design of the Bamboo CMF Concept1.

Lexus is exploring new ways of using traditional materials by weaving bamboo fibres and threads into high-quality materials.

As a model that symbolises the electrification of Lexus, the LF-ZC has a low centre of gravity and a compact silhouette with sleek proportions and a roomy cabin.

The LF-ZL is a future Lexus flagship, aiming to offer a prestigious ownership experience beyond just the car, with the new Arene OS software platform.

Lexus has created a spacious cabin by using the freedom in BEV-specific packaging and optimising interior space.

Next-generation Lexus BEVs will feature a new modular structure through giga casting, which splits the vehicle into three parts: front, centre, and rear.

It says casting provides greater freedom of form, while integrating parts increases rigidity for improved vehicle dynamics.

**Positioning the battery in the central section ensures the front and rear remain structurally unaffected.**

That enables the rapid integration of battery advancements into the vehicle, contributing to swifter implementation of future technology says Lexus.

The production process introduces a self-driving assembly line, where cars move autonomously to the next stage. This enables the vehicle to drive itself with only the battery, motor, tyres, and wireless terminal components in the front, centre, and rear sections.

Eliminating conveyor belts from the production line provides more flexibility in the factory layout, and reduces costs significantly.

Lexus says the LF-ZC and other next-generation BEVs will feature advanced high-performance batteries.

**Made with a prismatic structure, the batteries are engineered to increase range through improved aerodynamic integration and weight reduction, enhancing vehicle efficiency and battery performance.**

The low profile and positioning of the battery contribute to increased design flexibility, allowing for a more dynamic silhouette and a low centre of gravity for improved driving dynamics.



## BYD DOLPHIN AND SEAL GET FIVE STARS

**A**NCAP Safety has awarded five-star safety ratings to the BYD Seal sedan and Dolphin hatchback.

**The Seal and Dolphin battery electric vehicles are the second and third cars to be rated against new 2023 criteria.**

Both were assessed for their structural crash protection through a rigorous series of physical crash tests, as well as their ability to avoid collisions with other cars, pedestrians, cyclists, and – new from 2023 – motorcycles.

**In ANCAP's destructive crash tests, the BYD Seal (Medium Car) achieved full points for protection of the driver and child passengers in the side impact test, and the driver in the oblique pole test.**

Protection offered to the driver's chest and lower legs in the frontal offset (MPDB) test, and rear passengers chest's in the full width test, were assessed as Adequate.

For its size, the BYD Dolphin (Small Car) demonstrated a mix of Good and Adequate protection for adult occupants in crash tests, with a Marginal level of protection offered to the driver's chest in the frontal offset test.

Maximum points were scored for the Dolphin's protection of child occupants in both frontal and side impact tests.

Like the Seal, the Dolphin is fitted with a centre airbag to minimise injury from head contact between front seat occupants or contact with the intruding side of the vehicle in side impact crashes, and effective protection was



demonstrated by both vehicles.

**In addition to the routine active collision avoidance performance tests, under the new 2023 test criteria, both BYD models were tested for their ability to detect a cyclist passing the vehicle from the rear, and warn and/or prevent occupants of the vehicle opening their door into the cyclist's path.**

The Seal and Dolphin are both fitted with a system that provides an audible warning, however neither has a system for occupant retention (temporary door locking).

Another new aspect of ANCAP testing from 2023 includes

an assessment of vehicle access when submerged in water. Both the Seal

and Dolphin meet the requirements for 'door opening' functionality – demonstrating that, if the car entered water, the doors would remain functional for the minimum required two minutes after vehicle power is lost.

However, window opening functionality was not demonstrated.

"Our 2023 test and rating criteria have introduced further requirements for high levels of structural protection as well as new challenges for manufacturers in the area of active safety systems and, pleasingly, the three models rated so far this year have each achieved five-star ratings," says ANCAP chief executive **Carla Hoorweg**.



# SUBARU MELBOURNE BECOMES VICTORY FOOTBALL CLUB AUTOMOTIVE PARTNER

**T**he Melbourne Victory Football Club has announced that the Subaru Melbourne Group will be its official automotive partner for the next two seasons.

**Subaru Melbourne will also partner with Victory in Business' Female Forum to bring together and empower female leaders in business.**

Melbourne Victory managing director **Caroline Carnegie** says she's thrilled to have Subaru Melbourne join the club.

"The dedicated team at Subaru Melbourne share our understanding of what it's like to work collaboratively together as a team to achieve a common goal and succeed at the highest level, and we're looking forward to doing that together.

"This is a unique partnership that sees Subaru Melbourne become the club's first official automotive major



partner and we're excited to see the partnership prosper."

**Subaru Melbourne Group's head of sales Rodney Tranter: "at Subaru Melbourne, we don't just sell cars, we deliver exceptional customer experiences and forge lasting connections with our owners and the community.**

"(Our) partnership with Melbourne Victory will allow us to continue creating those connections and having a positive impact in the community, from supporting the Female Forum at Victory in Business to connecting with fans and members during matches..."



## TOYOTA RECALLING MORE THAN 29,000 KLUGERS

**T**oyota Australia is recalling about 29,000 Kluger SUVs produced between March 2021 and early August 2023.

**It says the vehicles have a resin front lower bumper cover, connected with mounting tabs.**

A minor impact to the lower front bumper cover assembly can cause the mounting tabs to detach.

One or more parts of the assembly could detach, become a road hazard, and increase the risk of a crash or injury for other road users.

Toyota dealers will inspect the mounting tabs of the upper front bumper cover for damage. If no damage is found, the dealers will install retention hardware of an improved design.

If damage to the front bumper cover assembly is found, the dealers will replace the upper and lower front bumper cover free of charge.



**The inspection and installation of retention hardware will take about an hour. In a small number of cases the bumper cover may need to be replaced which will take approximately 2.4 hours.**

However, depending on the dealer's work schedule, owners may be required to make the vehicle available for a longer period.

Toyota Australia will provide owners of involved vehicles with details of the safety recall by text, email and/

or mail to their last known address. Customers are asked to keep their contact details up to date so future communications can be received. Customers with additional questions or concerns can contact their local/preferred Toyota dealer or the Toyota Recall Campaign Helpline on 1800 987 366 (Mon-Fri 8am to 6pm (AEDT) and quote the vehicle's 17-digit Vehicle Identification Number (VIN).





# FCAI: EV INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT MAJOR STEP FORWARD

**T**he Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries (FCAI) has welcomed continuing investment in EV charging by the Queensland and New South Wales governments.

**Investment in EV infrastructure is a key priority as Australia heads towards an electric future and is a critical step in EV take-up the FCAI says.**

The initiatives underscore the importance of building the necessary infrastructure to support the increasing number of EVs on Australians roads.

The Queensland Government has allocated \$42 million towards installing 2500 EV chargers over the next three years, and 2000 of them will be used by the government's fleet.

The New South Wales Government has allocated \$10 million in grants to retrofit



more than 100 apartment buildings with EV chargers.

**In 2023, Australians have bought 65,743 new EVs, up from more than 21,771 during the same period last year, and EVs account for 7.3% of new vehicle sales.**

Of EVs sold, 21,974 have been in NSW

and 13,874 in Queensland.

The FCAI says it supports collaborations between the public and private sectors which will be essential as Australian consumers embrace low-emissions technologies.

## DEALERS INSTANT OFFER ACCEPTED WITHIN 24 HOURS

**C**arsales says more than 68% of its customers who accept an Instant Offer for their car from a dealer do so within 24 hours.

**In FY23, Carsales says it saw a 48% increase in cars sold through the Instant Offer program and that the top three cars traded between the owner the and dealer for 2023 are the Mazda 3, the Hyundai i30, and the Mazda CX-5.**

It says Instant Offer is the go-to service for Aussies wanting to sell their cars quickly, with thousands of cars purchased every month by dealers in the Carsales network.

Users can get an obligation-free Instant Offer for their car, with guaranteed next business day payment. The service is backed by Carsales' dealer network, and can be accessed across Australia.

Carsales' managing director **Paul Barlow** says Instant Offer is popular because of the speed with which people can sell their cars.

"Instant Offer is a hassle-free and fast way for Aussies looking to sell



their cars within 24 hours, and this service has continued to build momentum over the past year, highlighting the demand for new and innovative ways to sell cars.

**"Car owners can sell directly to participating dealers in Carsales' dealer network with prices earned usually higher than the typical trade-in valuation.**

"For those who might be looking to sell a car, the average sell price in September 2023 was \$24,100. With peace of mind, most sellers can obtain a free Instant Offer priced by Carsales within just a few minutes," Barlow says.

### HOW DOES INSTANT OFFER WORK?

1. Eligible users enter their car's details (such as make, model, year, condition and the odometer reading) to receive a free Instant Offer priced by Carsales in a few minutes.
2. If users accept the Instant Offer within seven days, they can schedule a time for the car to be inspected at home or another location.
3. Once the sale is finalised, the user can drop the car off or use Carsales' collection service for a fee, hand over the keys, and get paid the next business day.

# STELLANTIS TO IMPROVE HANDLING OF COMPLAINTS

**S**tellantis Australia, which imports and handles Jeeps, says it will address ACCC concerns about the way it has handled complaints by consumers who've had problems with their vehicles.

**It made the pledge in a court-enforceable undertaking accepted by the ACCC.**

The ACCC investigated Stellantis Australia's response to many complaints from consumers about Jeeps, and their difficulties in obtaining remedies under guarantees in the Australian Consumer Law.

The reasons for the complaints included lengthy delays in obtaining a remedy, vehicles requiring multiple repairs for the same issues, and delays in parts being provided.

**Stellantis Australia has acknowledged the ACCC's concerns that because of deficiencies in its internal policies Stellantis staff may not have understood properly the company's consumer law obligations when dealing with customer complaints.**

"Consumers have rights under the Australian Consumer Law, which are independent of manufacturers' warranties," says ACCC deputy chair Mick Keogh.

"Businesses should have appropriate systems in place to ensure they don't mislead consumers about these rights and must comply with their obligations if customers experience problems with a product or service they have purchased."

**Under the court-enforceable undertaking, Stellantis Australia will review its procedures for handling customer complaints and make changes to ensure consumers who experience a major failure with their vehicle are given the refund or replacement they're entitled to.**

As part of the undertaking, Stellantis Australia will ensure that all customers who buy a new Jeep are advised in writing of their consumer guarantees rights.

In addition, the undertaking ensures that consumers who request a refund or replacement vehicle, receive a written response and, if applicable,



are informed of the reasons why Stellantis Australia hasn't agreed to the requested remedy.

**"As a result of Stellantis Australia's commitments in the undertaking it has provided to the ACCC, Jeep customers will be better informed about, and more easily able to access, their consumer guarantee rights under the Australian Consumer Law," Keogh says.**

Stellantis Australia says it will improve its inclusion of Australian Consumer Law rights in its internal systems and staff training, so customers aren't denied remedies that they're entitled to. Stellantis Australia is required to report on these changes to the ACCC.

Access to consumer guarantee rights continues to be the most common type of motor vehicle related complaint made to the ACCC.

Over the last two years, 24% of complaints made to the ACCC in relation to consumer guarantees have raised issues with motor vehicles.

The ACCC monitors these complaints and will continue to take action so that consumers who buy new vehicles receive the consumer protections they're entitled to, alongside

manufacturers' warranties.

Empowering consumers and improving industry compliance with statutory consumer guarantees, with a focus on high value goods including motor vehicles, is one of the ACCC's compliance and enforcement priorities in 2023 and 2024.

A copy of the undertaking is available at Stellantis (Australia and New Zealand) Pty Ltd.

Previously, the ACCC has accepted court-enforceable undertakings from several automotive businesses to address consumer guarantee issues, most recently from Toyota Australia.

In 2021, the Federal Court found that Mazda Australia engaged in misleading and deceptive conduct and made false or misleading representations to nine consumers about their consumer guarantee rights, in proceedings brought by the ACCC.

**In March 2023, the Federal Court dismissed an appeal by Mazda Australia in relation to the finding that Mazda Australia made false representations to consumers about their consumer rights.**



# TOYOTA MOST TRUSTED BRAND FOR SECOND CONSECUTIVE YEAR

**A**ustralians have named Toyota the most trusted automotive brand for the second year running.

Market research company Roy Morgan asked a random cross-section of nearly 25,000 Australians to name, without prompting, brands they trust and distrust with detailed responses as to why they feel that way.

The award is based on monthly surveys over the past year, with Toyota emerging as the most trusted automotive brand for the second consecutive year following the introduction of the awards in 2022.

Toyota was named the most trusted brand in a category that analysed vehicle manufacturers, dealerships, and servicing.

Respondents noted Toyota's reputation for manufacturing reliable vehicles and offering outstanding customer service as reasons for its industry-leading ranking.

Toyota was also judged as one of the



top 10 most trusted brands across all industries.

Toyota Australia spokesperson **Sean Hanley** says the award was a clear indication of the trust consumers have in Toyota's wide range of products.

"To be judged Australia's most trusted automotive brand for a second year running is a great honour and acknowledges Toyota's engineering prowess and inherent quality – important factors given the tough and varied environments found across

Australia," Hanley says.

"It's a testament to the work and commitment of our Toyota dealers and the broader Toyota Australia team, who work hard to support our customers, products and services."

**Roy Morgan has been providing Australian market research data for more than 80 years and covers a broad cross-section of industries as part of its most trusted brand awards and monitoring of trust and distrust.**



## TOYOTA SETS GLOBAL SALES RECORD

**T**oyota is reporting record high global sales of 5.6 million vehicles, an increase of 8.3% for the 2024 fiscal first half year (April to September).

The figure includes global sales of Toyota, Daihatsu, and Hino vehicles.

**During the 2024 fiscal first half year, Toyota's sales and production were up year-on-year after the easing of the impact of semi-conductor shortages.**

That contrasted with the COVID-19 spread and semi-conductor shortages in the first half of the 2023 financial year.

Toyota says global sales and production reached record highs as production capacity increased in each region.

"We will continue to carefully monitor the parts supply situation and make every effort to deliver as many vehicles as possible to our customers at the earliest date."



**Sales in Japan during the first half of the 2024 financial year were 1,074,817, an increase of 23.9% over the previous corresponding period.**

Sales outside Japan during were 4,524,366, an increase of 5.1% over the previous year.

Toyota achieved record levels of production. It says this now marks three consecutive years of year-

on-year increases in worldwide production.

It says global production in the first half of FY24 rose 10.1% to 5,738,126 units for Toyota, Daihatsu, and Hino vehicles. Production inside Japan rose 21% to 2,114,442 and production outside Japan rose 4.3% to 3,623,684.





# JOINT DRIVE TO DEVELOP CANBERRA HYDROGEN REFUELLING STATIONS

**A**mpol, Hyundai Australia, Pacific Energy and Toyota Australia have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), to develop hydrogen refuelling infrastructure.

**The goal is to combine the expertise and capabilities of each partner to help develop hydrogen refuelling stations for fuel cell EVs (FCEVs) in Canberra.**

The four companies are all proponents of Australia's growing hydrogen economy.

Hyundai and Toyota have fuel cell electric vehicle fleets operating in Australia and Ampol and Pacific Energy are investing in energy solutions.

"Hydrogen can play an important role in delivering decarbonisation benefits for transport and developing the right infrastructure to support a successful roll-out is key," says Ampol managing director and chief executive **Matt Halliday**.

"The MOU establishes a collaborative working relationship between the

parties, who are all required to develop the necessary hydrogen ecosystem to make hydrogen use as a transport fuel feasible."

Hyundai Australia chief executive **Ted Lee** says that in 2021 Hyundai deployed 23 Nexo fuel cell EVs into Canberra as a partner in the ACT Government's hydrogen station project – the first hydrogen refueller of its kind in Australia."

**"Our consortium partners have a great track record of deploying energy and refuelling infrastructure, along with hydrogen fuel cell vehicles."**

Pacific Energy chief executive **Jamie Cullen** says the new consortium is driven to decarbonise transport and make hydrogen a success.

"Our purpose at Pacific Energy is to transition the world to a clean energy future. To be successful, we know we must collectively lean into bold opportunities that help accelerate our journey towards net zero.

"And we know hydrogen and zero-



emissions vehicles play an important role in this approach," Cullen says.

Toyota Australia president and chief executive **Matthew Callachor** says that since 2018, Toyota has been expanding its hydrogen capability in Australia, first with local trials of the Mirai FCEV sedan and then with the establishment of Victoria's first hydrogen production, storage and refuelling facility.

**"This month, we announced plans to locally assemble and distribute the E0Dev GEH2 fuel cell generator in Australia and this joint collaboration provides further opportunities to explore and grow this vital technology."**



## MAZDA AUSTRALIA FAREWELLS CX-8 AND MX-30

**A**fter more than five years in the Mazda line-up and almost 25,000 sales, the Mazda CX-8 will leave the Australian market at the end of this year.

At the same time, the MX-30 will bow out of the local market following three years and more than 2200 sales.

The decision is part of Mazda's strategy to launch a range of new electrified models between now and 2025.

They include hybrids, PHEVs, and BEVs.

By 2030, 100% of Mazdas will be electrified and pure-electric vehicles will make up at least 25% of the line-up.

The end of CX-8 and MX-30 production for Australia aligns with that strategy, freeing up valuable

resources at Mazda.

"The Mazda CX-8 has played a pivotal part in our market growth since its launch," says Mazda Australia managing director **Vinesh Bhindi**.

"As we move into the next phase of the Mazda brand's evolution – with electrification at the heart of our focus – we will ensure our customers continue to be furnished with a suite of exciting models...

"Fortunately, for drivers who want to enjoy everything the CX-8...stock is plentiful and readily available across our dealer network right now."

Mazda Australia marketing director **Alastair Doak** says one of the CX-8's many strong suits was its breadth of choice – from FWD and AWD powertrains and petrol or diesel options, and six or seven seats.



Bhindi says the MX-30 became a trailblazer as the first fully electric Mazda.

"This was previously uncharted territory, and the MX-30 has since served a hugely valuable purpose, both as a technology demonstrator and to thoroughly prepare our dealer network with the knowledge and skills required for the next phase of our...evolution."

Mazda will sell the CX-8 and MX-30 through the first quarter of 2024.



# RAV4 LEADS SLUMPING NZ CAR MARKET

**T**he Toyota RAV4 was a shining light in an otherwise depressed New Zealand market in October that saw fewer registrations for new passenger and commercial vehicles.

**Some in the industry expected a far worse result – as the chance of the Clean Car Discount/Fee legislation ending in a matter of weeks rose to near certainty.**

In passenger cars, EVs and hybrids did well – eight of the top 10 models were either electric or have hybrid or plug-in options.'

In utes, activity was dampened as people realise a short wait can save thousands – the new government says it will scrap the levy on petrol and diesel vehicles on December 31.

Passenger vehicle registrations were down 6.3% to 10,055 units, while commercial fell 26.7% to 2890 off an already depressed 2022 result.

Leading the passenger market, **Toyota** recorded 2683 registrations, up 20.8% for a 26.7% market share.

In second, **Kia** gained 12.5% to 1125 units, an 11.2% market share, while in third **Mitsubishi** was down 44% to 987 – corresponding with the time the new Outlander arrived, and the old model was in run-out last year.

Fourth for the month, and making its entrance into the top five, **MG** made 594 sales – the majority electric – a rise of 19.5% for a 5.9% market share.



**Ford** took fifth on 569, up 32% for a 5.7% share.

**Hyundai** took sixth place on 495, followed by **Suzuki** on 405, **Mazda** on 373, **BYD** on 359, and **Nissan** on 307.

In the model stakes, **Toyota** had a strong showing, with the **Rav4** on 1103, **Corolla Cross** on 368, and **Yaris Cross** on 359 to take three of the top four positions.

The Mitsubishi **Outlander** in second on 529 slightly spoiled the party.

The **MG4** made a very strong debut, and was the top non-SUV, finishing fifth in passenger sales on 357 units.

In the commercial market, **Toyota** topped the charts on 860, up 16.5% for

a 29.8% market share.

**Ford** took second on 825, down 46.4% for a 28.5% market share, followed by **Isuzu** on 156, down 1.9% for a 5.4% share.

**Mercedes-Benz** took fourth on 139 followed by **Fuso** on 111.

The **Ford Ranger** was the top commercial model on 794, well down on 1489 a year ago.

The Toyota **HiLux** was second on 679 units, slightly up on last year, while the Toyota **HiAce** gained third on 160.

The Mercedes-Benz **Sprinter** had a strong month on 126 sales, followed by the Mitsubishi **Triton** on 99.

## MOTORCYCLE MARKET ALSO SOFTER IN NEW ZEALAND

**N**ot unexpectedly with the New Zealand general election and bad weather, new motorcycle sales in October were 4% fewer than the same month of 2022 with 866 units registered, for a year-to-date total of 7471.

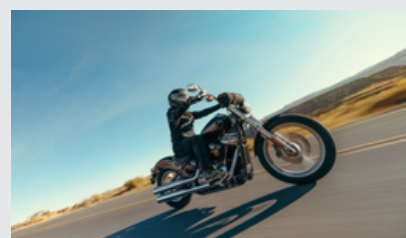
**Suzuki** led the New Zealand new motorcycle market in October, with 95 registrations – a year-to-date tally of 923 – followed by the market leader, Honda, which recorded 91 registrations for a year-to-date tally of 1027 units.

In third place was **Yamaha** with 70 registrations and a year-to-date tally

of 687, followed by **KTM** with 52 (YTD 427), **Triumph** with 48 (YTD 411), **Forza** with 38 (YTD 275), **Harley-Davidson** with 38 (YTD 450), **Kawasaki** with 38 (YTD 353,) and **Royal Enfield** with 31 (YTD 350).

The top 10 motorcycles in October were the Harley-Davidson **Softail** (279), TNT Motor **Roma** (263), Suzuki **UZ50** (221), UBCO **2x2ADV** (221), Honda **CB** (199), Suzuki **GSX 250** (164), Honda **CT** (148), Forza **Ciclone** (135), and KTM **309** (124).

Registrations of used imported motorcycles dropped 11% year-on-year.



**Harley-Davidson** led the market with 24 registrations, followed by **Ducati** with 16, **BMW** with 14, **Honda** with eight, **Suzuki** and **Yamaha** with seven, **Triumph** with five, **MV Agusta** with three, and **BSA** and **Kawasaki** with two each.





# BELGIANS WIN SOLAR CHALLENGE, AUSTRALIA TAKES CRUISER CLASS

**B**elgian solar team Innoptus has won successive Bridgestone World Solar Challenge titles.

Its solar car crossed the Adelaide finish line on October 27 in 34 hours, four minutes, and 41 seconds – about 48 minutes faster than their 2019 win (the biennial event was cancelled in 2021 because of COVID).

Travelling about 3600km from Darwin, the Belgians' aerodynamic Infinite with a fin for stability handled the windy conditions which affected many in the Projecta Challenger Class.

Smoke from wildfires was also an issue. The Belgians finished nearly 20 minutes ahead of Team Twente from the Netherlands in solar car RED X.

Wind was also a factor in the CSIRO Cruiser Class.

**None of the Cruiser Class teams could complete the arduous second stage 650km run from Alice Springs to Coober Pedy by 5pm where they could recharge, so the on-road scoring component was calculated from the last completed stage.**

University of New South Wales (UNSW) Sydney's Sunswift 7 won the Cruiser Class – the first time an Australian car has done so.

The Sunswift car was leading the points classification on day four of the race before weather threw the competition into disarray.

It put such a strain on all the cars' batteries that none of the five entrants (out of 10) still racing could complete the stage in the allotted time, and subsequently they were all ruled out of



the rest of the challenge.

**Final results were based on standings from the previous checkpoint at Tennant Creek, where Sunswift was well ahead of its rivals.**

In the Cruiser Class, positions are based not just on which car drives the fastest but use a points system which takes into consideration the car's energy usage, the number of people inside the car and its practicality, as well as the time taken to complete each stage.

Sunswift had three passengers plus its driver and was ahead of other Cruiser cars on the road in each completed stage.

The team had to wait until a final scrutineering session on October 28 when a panel of judges gave an additional score to each car based on criteria such as design innovation, environmental impact, ease of access and egress, occupant space and comfort, ease of operation (driving and charging), versatility, style, and desirability.

The NSW team was officially announced as Cruiser Class champions at an awards event in Adelaide on Sunday evening, October 29.

The University of Minnesota was second with Team Solaride from Estonia third.



The Sunswift project will now focus on developing and building a new car in 2024 likely to feature hydrogen fuel cells alongside solar panels, that might not even be allowed to race because of current regulations, says Sunswift Racing team principal **Richard Hopkins**.

Current designs indicate it will be a two-seater sports car capable of completing laps of Mount Panorama (where the Bathurst 1000 is held) only 20 to 30 seconds slower than the fastest V8 Supercars.

Potentially, the chassis could be made of hemp and flax rather than carbon fibre.

**"Sunswift 8 won't just be a hybrid, it will be a tri-brid, utilising solar, batteries and hydrogen fuel cells in combination," Hopkins says, adding the car could run on all three or one at a time.**



# TIC INAUGURATES FIRST ZERO AND LOW EMISSION HEAVY TRUCK SALES REPORT

**T**he Truck Industry Council (TIC) has released its inaugural report into the Zero and Low Emission Vehicle (ZLEV) truck market in Australia.

**TIC is the industry body and advocacy voice for Australian truck manufacturers and importers, heavy vehicle engine companies and major component suppliers to Government.**

Its members act for 17 truck brands currently on sale in Australia representing 99% of all new truck sales above 4.5 tonne GVM.

TIC chief technical officer **Mark Hammond** is the curator of T-Mark, the industry's sales data base for heavy vehicles.

T-Mark is a database that compiles all trucks (that is, non-passenger carrying vehicles with Gross Vehicle Mass above 3,500 kg) sold into the Australian market that comply with Australian Design Rules. All road registered vehicles are captured, plus most of the off-road vehicles.

Hammond says the new report

heralds the evolution of the heavy vehicle market in Australia with new technologies now being introduced and provides clarity on the actual sales of zero and low emission vehicles in one report.

Zero and low emission new truck sales up until September this year total 259 vehicles, of which 94 were battery electric and 165 were hybrid electric vehicles according to Hammond.

**"For the whole of 2023, out of a total of 44,379 trucks sold, a record year in terms of new truck sales, 27 of these vehicles were battery electric and 72 were hybrid electric vehicles," Hammond says.**

"Although 2023 has seen an impressive growth of low and zero emission truck sales, it also highlights that there is a long way to go to achieve a zero and low emission fleet in Australia. The proof of success will be determined if these sales figures can be sustained into 2024 and beyond. Tracking these sales is the purpose of this new report", he says.



The report further notes that while all truck manufacturers and importers are experiencing increased enquiries the decision to purchase a vehicle is ultimately a business decision requiring operator confidence.

"Barriers to faster low and zero emission heavy vehicle take up exist, such as range and payload limitations, high capital cost, lack of charging/ refuelling infrastructure, and no clear understanding of the future Road User Charging (RUC) costing model", Hammond says.

The Low Zero Emission Truck Market Update Report can be found on the Truck Industry Council's website: <https://www.truck-industry-council.org/> under the Downloads tab.



## ISUZU LAYS OUT FUTURE PRODUCT PATHWAY

**I**suzu Australia Limited (IAL) has laid out the pathway for the release of its all-new truck range.

"In 2024, we'll set off with a brand-new model line-up, the first of which will be the four-cylinder F Series," says IAL director and chief operating officer **Andrew Harbison**.

"From there, we'll see the arrival of the light-duty N Series and the workhorse six-cylinder F Series, followed by heavy-duty FX Series model releases, and concluding with the FY twin-steer range."

**The new N Series light truck range offers new features and an expanded line-up.**

"The new N Series provides a new cab and more car driver's licence and tipper models, increased GVM ratings, and ADR80/04 emissions compliance," says IAL Light-duty product manager **Jeff Gibson**.

"We also have some new model options including the tight-access master, the new NKR 6.5-tonne GVM

narrow cab models, and a new high-power 4J engine variant in the 4JZ1 with both 150 and 175 horsepower ratings."

The roll-out includes the N Series EV, which will be used in Australian customer trials scheduled for 2024.

**"We have several Japanese-spec N Series battery electric models due to arrive shortly in Australia," Gibson says.**

"The trucks will be car and light rigid licence models, rated at a 4.5-and 7.5-tonne GVM.

"The eNLR at 4.5-tonne GVM will feature a three-battery configuration with 60kWh capacity, while the eNPR is rated at 7.5-tonne GVM in a five-battery configuration with 100kWh capacity."

Another part of the launch will be six-cylinder F Series models, with a 6.7-litre DB6A Euro-VI engine in FSR/D, FV, and FTS models. All will have Allison automatic transmissions.

"We have also upped the spec on



heavy-duty FV models, with higher capacity steer axles, Meritor full-air disc brakes and an all-new chassis frame," says IAL medium and heavy-duty product manager and chief engineer **Simon Humphries**.

"In our heavy-duty FX and FY model ranges, we'll see the introduction of our Euro-VI (Step C) 6UZ1 Isuzu engine and once again, a shift to auto only with Allison HD4430 across all models.

**"The trucks will also receive higher capacity Meritor steer axles and Meritor full-air disc brakes on all axles, plus a comprehensive ADAS suite," he says.**





# AAA EXPO CONFIRMED FOR APRIL 2024 IN MELBOURNE

To avoid a date clash with the Melbourne Grand Prix, the 2024 Australian Automotive Aftermarket Expo (AAA Expo), will be held from April 11 to 13 at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC).

**The AAAA says the AAA Expo is the nation's only exhibition for the \$25 billion aftermarket industry and runs alongside the Collision Repair Expo (CRE), all under one roof.**

The Repco-sponsored 2024 AAA Expo will see the return of the International Pavilion which will give showgoers a chance to connect with suppliers from Australia and across the globe.

"We're very excited to officially launch the 2024 Australian Auto Aftermarket Expo," says AAAA chief executive **Stuart Charity**.

"Designed by the industry for the industry, we have some game-changing features lined-up to make AAA Expo 24 a must-attend event for business owners, managers, and technicians.

"The AAA Expo will deliver a multitude of opportunities for visitors to connect, learn and build their businesses."

**The 2024 AAA Expo theme is The Future is Here and it will showcase the latest vehicle repair and servicing equipment, parts, tools and accessories, new technology, and trends.**

A training and education program is being developed, including free opportunities for attendees. More details of the program will be released



soon.

"The automotive industry in Australia is in the midst of revolutionary change driven by the complexity of the car park, rapid changes in vehicle technology, and the evolving capabilities and needs of our workforce and customers," Charity says.

**"Those that prepare today will be the ones who succeed tomorrow, and it's our mission at the AAAA and with AAA Expo to provide our members and trade visitors with the tools and knowledge they need to make the right future-focused decisions for their businesses.**

"As part of this, training will be a key focus of the Expo. The AAAA are pulling together an incredible education program for the Expo which will deliver a calibre of speakers and depth of technical content, as well as increased hands on training...

"The AAAA will be bringing an enhanced Workshop of the Future concept to the 2024 show. It will be so comprehensive that it requires two sections – one focused on EVs and one

on ADAS calibration.

"Similarly, visitors to the 2024 4WD Innovation Zone will be more impressed than they were at its inaugural appearance," he says.

The expos will bring together more than 400 brands plus international exhibitors and guests, showcasing the latest vehicle repair and servicing equipment, technology, parts and accessories to the estimated 9000 trade visitors.

Dedicated training programs led by industry experts, the Australian Auto Aftermarket Awards banquet and breakfast, a networking event, vehicle display area, celebrity appearances and competitions will add to the three-day experience.

Free registrations for this huge event are now open at [www.aftermarketexpo.com.au](http://www.aftermarketexpo.com.au).

To get involved as an exhibitor or sponsor at the Auto Aftermarket Expo, contact [partnerships@aftermarketexpo.com.au](mailto:partnerships@aftermarketexpo.com.au).





CAPRICORN GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
DAVID FRASER



CAPRICORN AUTOMOTIVE CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
BRADLEY GANNON



CAPRICORN RISK CHIEF EXECUTIVE ROD  
SCANLON

## CAPRICORN RETURNS \$82.8M TO MEMBERS IN FY23

**T**he Capricorn automotive cooperative reports another year of "outstanding business growth and success", saying it returned \$82.8 million in value to its more than 26,000 members in Australia and New Zealand in the 2023 financial year.

**That included distributing more than \$50.1 million in Capricorn Rewards Points earned by members from purchases of almost \$3.4 billion from Capricorn Preferred Suppliers.**

That's an increase of 16% compared to member purchases made in 2022.

A trade rebate of \$17 million was paid to members in the form of Capricorn Bonus Rewards Points for trade account purchases made throughout the year.

Member shareholders received a 7% dividend payment which was fully franked in Australia and partially franked in New Zealand.

The total member distributions paid from sales generated in 2023 are the highest return yet that Capricorn has provided to its members in the company's almost five decades of operation.

Along with the growth in sales through

Capricorn trade accounts during the past 12 months, Capricorn Mutual Limited wrote \$121.9 million in gross written protection.

In addition, Capricorn Insurance Services wrote \$20.6 million in gross written protection. These results show that members are happily using their own specifically tailored risk protection and financial services options, the company says.

**The year saw the announcement of a new joint venture with Repairify. It enables Capricorn to provide remote automotive diagnostics and ADAS calibration capabilities to Australian and New Zealand automotive repairers.**

The Capricorn executive management team, led by Group CEO **David Fraser**, has diversified with the inclusion of a chief technology officer, **Mary Karborani**, chief experience officer **Jacky Mills**, chief people and culture officer **Kerryn Gavin**, and chief innovation officer **Kim Radalj**.

These roles work alongside the CEO of Automotive, **Bradley Gannon** and CEO of Risk, **Rod Scanlon**.

Capricorn will spread these messages of success to its members across Australia and New Zealand at its annual gala dinner and trade show through to the end of the year.

"2023 was a truly outstanding year of growth for Capricorn and all of our members. We've managed to generate significant business growth both for our members and for our highly valued Preferred Suppliers," says Group CEO Fraser.

"As an organisation that's committed to the long-term success of our members, we also continued to grow our business support, financial, and risk protection offerings over the past 12 months.

"This is an ongoing process of constant development across all of our operations," Fraser adds.

**More than 26,000 Capricorn member automotive repair, sales and service businesses in Australia and New Zealand continue to benefit from being part of the region's strongest performing co-operative structured organisation, the company says.**



# BMW TO OFFER SIX EVS UNDER TAX THRESHOLDS

**B**MW Australia will introduce two models priced below key tax thresholds next year.

The iX2 eDrive20 and iX2 xDrive30 are priced at \$82,900 and \$85,700 respectively.

**This means BMW Australia will have six EVs priced under \$89,332, exempting them from both the Luxury Car Tax (LCT) for fuel-efficient vehicles and Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) for fleet operators.**

The two new iX2s will join the iX1 eDrive20, iX1 xDrive30, i4 eDrive35 and iX3 M Sport in BMW's six-model line-up of sub-LCT variants.

When the iX2 eDrive20 and iX2 xDrive30 arrive next year, BMW Australia will have 15 variants across seven fully electric models in its range.

BMW Financial Services will have a range of finance offers. A key feature is the Full Circle product integrating Guaranteed Future Value (GFV).

**It gives owners the flexibility to return their vehicle at the end of the loan period, knowing its value upfront.**

The BMW Group anticipates that by next year at least one in five of the company's new vehicles should have a fully electric drivetrain. In 2025, it should be one in four, and in 2026, one in three.

It aims to have more than two million fully electric vehicles on the road by the end of 2025.

The iX2 eDrive20 and iX2 xDrive30 BMW Australia's iX2 line-up will begin with the eDrive20, which features a front-mounted drive unit and generates system output of 150kW, including temporary boost.

The iX2 eDrive20 features a high-voltage battery with an impressive 64.8kWh of usable energy with the high efficiency



of the drive system, enabling a range of up to 477 kilometres on the WLTP cycle.

Adaptive recuperation and the max range function also contribute to good range. The latest version of the Max Performance Charging software optimises efficiency when charging the vehicle.

**The drive units of the iX2 xDrive30 – one at the front axle and one at the rear – together generate system output of 230kW (including temporary boost) and 494Nm of torque.**

The iX2 xDrive30 accelerates from 0 to 100km/h in 5.6 seconds on the way to a top speed of 180km/h. A combination of the high-voltage battery's 64.8 kWh of usable energy and the high efficiency of the drive system enable a range of 417 to 449 kilometres on the WLTP cycle.

Adaptive recuperation and the max range function also contribute to the range. The latest version of the

Max Performance Charging software optimises efficiency when charging.

And with up to 130kW DC fast charging rates, the high voltage battery of the iX2 can replenished from 10% to 80% in less than 30 minutes.

And both iX2 variants – as well as the iX1s – are the only battery electric models in the compact premium segment to benefit from 22kW onboard AC charging capability as standard equipment.

The iX2 xDrive30 will be delivered with the Flexible Fast Charger for charging at home sockets as well as a Mode 3 charging cable and a 12-month subscription to the national Chargefox network.

**The full charging package for the iX2 eDrive20 will be announced in the lead-up to local launch next year.**

2023/24 BMW FBT & LCT EXEMPT FULLY ELECTRIC LINE-UP

MODEL	POWER	TORQUE	ACCEL. (SEC)	GROSS BATTERY CAPACITY (KWH)	RANGE (KM)	PRICE	LAUNCH TIMING
iX1 eDrive20	Range	247Nm	8.6	67	Up to 475#	\$78,900*	Q1, '24
iX1 xDrive30	Price	Launch	5.6	67	Up to 400^	\$84,900*	Q2, '23
iX2 eDrive20	150kW	247Nm	TBC	67	Up to 477#	\$82,900*	Mid-2024
iX2 xDrive30	230kW	494Nm	5.6	67	Up to 449#	\$85,700*	Q1, '24
i4 eDrive35	210kW	400Nm	6.0	70	Up to 430^	\$85,900*	Q4, '23
iX3 M Sport	210kW	400Nm	6.8	80	Up to 461^	\$89,100*	Q4, '23

# FORD ANNOUNCES PRICING AND SPECIFICATION FOR NEW MUSTANG

**F**ord Australia has announced pricing and specification of the all-new seventh-generation Mustang which can be ordered at Ford dealerships with the first cars arriving in the second quarter of 2024.

**The new Mustang is available in three models – EcoBoost, GT and the all-new Dark Horse.**

The EcoBoost is powered by a 2.3-litre EcoBoost turbocharged four-cylinder engine, while the GT and Dark Horse have a 5.0-litre V8 in two different outputs.

The EcoBoost is available only with a fastback body style and will open the 2024 Mustang line-up at \$64,990 MLP.

The GT is available in fastback with a six-speed manual (\$77,002) or 10-speed automatic (\$80,902) gearbox.

The is also convertible GT (\$86,752) exclusively with an automatic transmission.

**A 1000-unit special edition model for Australia, the Dark Horse is the first new Mustang performance nameplate in 21 years.**

Available with either a six-speed manual transmission (\$99,102) or automatic (\$103,002) transmissions, it's available only as a fastback.

The new Mustang adds chiselled elements to its heritage-inspired design.

Its low, horizontal brow emphasises frontal width, and the upper grille shape is influenced by 1960s Mustangs.

### RETHOUGHT INTERIOR

The redesigned Mustang interior offers the driver two flowing and curved displays that can be customised quickly to show information the driver wants or needs to see.

Drivers can customise the 12.4-inch digital instrument cluster to display different animated designs and new drive-mode dependent visuals.

**Based on the same Unreal Engine 3D creation tool used in modern video games, the current set-up – based on drive mode selection – is displayed on the centre stack as real-time graphics.**

This digital instrument cluster flows into a 13.2-inch SYNC 4 centre stack behind the same piece of integrated glass, angled towards the driver.



2024 FORD MUSTANG LINE-UP		
VARIANT	POWERTRAIN	MANUFACTURER LIST PRICE (INC. GST & LCT)
EcoBoost Fastback (AT)	2.3L turbo four-cylinder, 10-speed auto, 232kW @ 5500rpm, 475Nm @ 3000rpm	\$64,990
GT Fastback (MT)	5.0L V8, six-speed manual, 347kW @ 7250 RPM, 550Nm @ 4850pm	\$77,002
GT Fastback (AT)	5.0L V8, 10-speed auto, 347kW @ 7250 RPM, 550Nm @ 4850pm	\$80,902
GT Convertible (AT)	5.0L V8, 10-speed auto, 347kW @ 7250 RPM, 550Nm @ 4850pm	\$86,752
Dark Horse (MT)	5.0L V8, six-speed manual, 349kW @ 7250 RPM, 548Nm @ 4850pm	\$99,102
Dark Horse (AT)	5.0L V8, 10-speed auto, 349kW @ 7250 RPM, 548Nm @ 4850pm	\$103,002

All Australian Mustang models have a B&O sound system, with 12 speakers including a subwoofer.

### FOURTH-GENERATION V8

The fourth-generation Coyote 5L V8 engine has been revised with dual 80mm throttle bodies and air inlets.

A dual-fuel delivery system works to deliver high-pressure direct-injection and low-pressure port fuel injection, increasing low-end torque and high-rpm power.

### REVISED ECOBOOST

The 2.3-litre EcoBoost engine has been updated with a revised exhaust manifold, revised twin-scroll low-inertia turbocharger with electronic wastegate, revised camshaft timing and integrated air-induction system.

Increased low-end torque and high-rpm power are delivered by using port injection for low engine speed and direct-injection for high-rev operation.

### PERFORMANCE EXHAUST

All Mustangs use the Active Valve

Performance Exhaust which helps reduce back pressure and is designed to improve power while delivering a deep growl.

Controlling it using the steering wheel or centre-stack touch-screen, drivers can select from four modes: Normal, Sport, Track and a Quiet mode, each offering a signature rumble.

Quiet mode ensures the exhaust valves are set to be closed during a pre-selected timeframe so that the Mustang doesn't disturb neighbours.

**Australian Mustangs have Brembo brakes, a larger radiator with improved cooling capability and more powerful cooling fans.**

V8 GT models get an auxiliary engine oil cooler, 19x9-inch front and 19x9.5-inch rear wheels. Carbonised Grey-painted aluminium wheels, with 255/40R19 front and 275/40R19 rear Pirelli P-Zero tyres.



# ISUZU AND UD JOIN FORCES AT JAPANESE SHOW

**I**suzu Motors (IML) and UD Trucks exhibited jointly at the Japan Mobility Show in Tokyo.

**Everything on display was central to IML's development approach to achieve its goal of achieving net zero carbon emissions from its trucks and buses by 2050.**

The theme of the stand in Tokyo emphasised the brand's vision of a mobility society, showcasing the latest battery-electric advances, a hydrogen fuel-cell example, and clean internal combustion improvements.

It revealed the e-Vision Cycle Concept, showcasing the potential for a fast-turnaround battery-swap system.

Four themes underpinning Isuzu's approach to product development – are carbon neutrality, driver comfort, safety, and connectivity.

Isuzu Australia Limited chief operating officer **Andrew Harbison** says the Tokyo show provided an opportunity to get to grips with the cutting-edge of world transportation technology.

**"Our industry is in the midst of unprecedented change. From the very fundamentals of the way in which we do business, to evolving environmental and societal expectations it's clear an industry transition is well and truly upon us," Harbison says.**

"From a product perspective, events such as the Mobility Show are invaluable for markets such as Australia.

"Having direct access to some of the key emerging technologies, we're looking at genuine solutions in our corner of the world which are both insightful and highly valuable," he says.

**A theme of the Isuzu/UD Trucks showcase was the Isuzu Group's long-term goal to create environmentally responsible transport that can drive both economic growth and positive environmental outcomes.**

"We saw in that in Tokyo an unapologetically holistic approach to technological development is being pursued," Harbison says.

A significant part of the approach is the Isuzu Modular Architecture and



Component Standard (I-MAC) which combines various components, parts, and devices to be applied in light of future tech advancement and the expansion of vehicle types.

Breaking with the convention of producing model-specific parts, I-MACS has developed an all-new Isuzu line-up that meets the diverse needs of customers around the world.

The Isuzu/ UD Trucks booth provided a glimpse into what lies ahead with four defined spaces with the Future Tunnel, and Future Cube, at its centre.

The former drew visitors into another world, and the latter exuded a sense of wonder at what the future holds.

**Another two display areas on the large stand were called View Point and Warehouse.**

View Point, gave showgoers a vision of the sustainable city of the future and Warehouse indicated the future of logistics.

## GIGA FUEL CELL

Jointly developed with Honda and attracting plenty of attention, the heavy-duty Giga Fuel Cell truck went on display for the first time.

Since 2020, both Isuzu and Honda have backed hydrogen fuel cell (FC) technology as the ideal solution for heavier loads over longer distances.

With production models slated for 2027, the pace of fuel cells as a genuine heavy-duty solution has gathered pace in recent years.



## N Series EV

Of key interest for the Australian market at the Tokyo show was the N Series EV, or as it is known in Japan the Elf EV.

The N Series EV is Isuzu's first mass-produced BEV, with variants set to join the Australian line-up with other light-duty diesel N-Series models during the imminent full model change.

Isuzu's introductory zero-emissions vehicle, the N Series EV, is poised to be made available in several variants and numerous configurations.

## Quon GW 6x4

Another model watched closely by the Australian market, the Quon GW 6x4 is already on sale in Japan under Isuzu EXY nomenclature. It's touted to combine efficiency and power for heavy hauling.

**It has a next-generation 12-speed electronically controlled ESCOT-VII automatic transmission.**



## NEW VEHICLE SALES PASS ONE MILLION

**A**ustralian customers have bought more than one million new vehicles as 2023 continues to break all-time sales records.

FCAI chief executive **Tony Weber** says the achievement is a testament to the unwavering demand for a wide array of vehicles across various price brackets.

**"The Australian market has demonstrated incredible strength and vitality throughout 2023, culminating in Australia reaching one million sales in October for the first time," he says.**

"After some challenging years through COVID, this milestone speaks to the range of vehicles available to consumers, affirming Australia's position as one of the world's most dynamic and competitive markets. It also reflects vastly improved supply chains.

"Of the past six months, five have broken all-time sales records compared with previous years and in October 106,809 new vehicles were delivered to Australian customers," he says.

In October, 38.3% of sales were in light commercial utes, large, or upper large SUVs vehicle categories. Conversely, EV sales softened to represent 5.7% of the market.

**Sales across every state and territory increased compared with October 2022.**

Sales in the Australian Capital Territory were 18.9% (1552); New South Wales 22.8% (33,001); Queensland 16.4% (21,937); South Australia 20% (6677);



TONY WEBER

Tasmania 20.8% (1996); Victoria 32% (30,740); Western Australia 12.3% (10,166), and Northern Territory 1.9% (740).

**Toyota** was the highest selling marque with 20,298 sales. **Mazda** followed with 9316 then **Ford** (8605), **Hyundai** (6620), and **Mitsubishi** (6395).

The **Ford Ranger** was the top selling vehicle recording 6215 sales. It was followed by Toyota **Hilux** (5766), Isuzu Ute **D-Max** (3198) Toyota **RAV4** (2598,) and Toyota **Landcruiser** (2561).

## TOP 10 BRANDS



1. TOYOTA 20,298



2. MAZDA 9316



3. FORD 8605



4. HYUNDAI 6620



5. MITSUBISHI 6395



## 4X4 UTES



1. Ford Ranger  
**5949**



2. Toyota HiLux  
**4829**



3. Isuzu Ute D-Max  
**2591**



4. Mitsubishi Triton  
**1321**



5. Toyota Landcruiser  
70 Series  
**1111**



6. Volkswagen Amarok  
**1024**



7. Mazda BT-50  
**1002**



8. Nissan Navara  
**779**



9. LDV T60  
**729**



10. GWM Ute  
**550**

## SUV SMALL &lt;\$40K



1. MG ZS  
**2537**



2. Mazda CX-30  
**1646**



3. Hyundai Kona  
**1378**



4. Mitsubishi ASX  
**996**



5. Volkswagen T-Roc  
**905**



6. GWM Haval Jolion  
**813**



7. Toyota Corolla  
Cross  
**724**



8. Nissan Qashqai  
**654**



9. Kia Seltos  
**643**



10. Mitsubishi  
Eclipse Cross  
**609**

# TOP 10 BRANDS



6. MG 5368



7. MITSUBI 4961



8. ISUZU UTE 4712



9. SUBARU 4706



10. NISSAN 4233



## EV SALES SOFTEN IN OCTOBER

**N**ew EV sales softened to be 5.7% of the market amid a million new vehicles sold so far in 2023, says the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries (FCAI).

Utes (Ford Ranger, Toyota Hilux) and SUV new vehicle categories were among the most popular representing 38.3% of sales, says FCAI chief executive **Tony Weber**.

**Meanwhile, the chamber applauds continuing investment in EV charging by Queensland and New South Wales governments in recently announced programs.**

The Queensland Government has allocated \$42 million towards the installation of 2500 EV chargers over the next three years, 2000 of these for government fleet use.

The New South Wales Government has allocated \$10 million in grants to retrofit more than 100 apartment buildings with EV charging stations.

Investment in EV infrastructure is a key priority as Australia journeys towards its electric future and a critical step in support EV take up, says the FCAI.

"These combined initiatives underscore the importance of building the necessary infrastructure to support the increasing number of EVs on Australians roads," the organisation says.

"In 2023, Australians have purchased 65,743 new EVs, up from more than 21,771 during the same period last year.

"EVs currently account for 7.3% of new vehicle sales. Of EVs sold, 21,974 have been in NSW and 13,874 in Queensland."

**The FCAI says collaborative efforts between the public and private sectors will be essential as Australian consumers continue to embrace low-emissions technology.**

October new vehicle sales saw MG in seventh place among leading brands – its ZS in sixth among the most popular models, ahead of Tesla in eighth place.

A total 6057 electrics were sold in October 2023, up 188.7% on October 2022's 2098, while year-to-date (YTD) sales were 71,800, up 200.8% on the 23,869 sold for the same period in 2022.

Plug-in hybrids (PHEVs) accounted for 1738 new vehicle sales in October 2023 – a 274.6% increase on October 2022's 23,869.

PHEV YTD sales were up 68% (from 5048 to 8481).

In the passenger category, new electrics

comprised 2689 sales – up 624.8% on October 2022's 371, while YTD sales increased 100% from 11,682 to 23,358.

PHEV sales rose 61.1% from 36 to 58 in October comparisons and 8.9% YTD from 358 to 390.

The SUV category saw new electrics rise 92.9% (1725 to 3327) in October comparisons and 297.3% in YTD comparisons (12,146 to 48,260).

**PHEVs also have reasonable showing in the SUV sector, going up 292.5% from 428 to 1680 in October comparisons and 72.5% in YTD comparisons (4690 to 8091).**

Perhaps reflective of increasing availability, light commercial electrics went from two in October 2022 to 41 in the month just gone and 41 in YTD last year to 181 YTD in 2023 – up 341.5%.

ELECTRIC, PHEV AND HYBRID SALES				OCTOBER 2023			
Total Market	Month		YTD		Variance +/- Vol. & %		
	2023	2022	2023	2022	MTH	YTD	MTH YTD
ELECTRIC							
Passenger Private	2,689	371	23,359	11,682	2,318	11,677	624.8% 100.0%
SUV Private	3,327	1,725	48,260	12,146	1,602	36,114	92.9% 297.3%
Light Commercial Non-Private	41	2	181	41	39	140	>999% 341.5%
Sub Total	6,057	2,098	71,800	23,869	3,959	47,931	188.7% 200.8%
HYBRID							
Passenger Private	2,495	1,113	22,516	21,436	1,382	1,080	124.2% 5.0%
SUV Private	6,692	5,748	56,402	44,766	944	11,636	16.4% 26.0%
Sub Total	9,187	6,861	78,918	66,202	2,326	12,716	33.9% 19.2%
PHEV							
Passenger Private	58	36	390	358	22	32	61.1% 8.9%
SUV Private	1,680	428	8,091	4,690	1,252	3,401	292.5% 72.5%
Sub Total	1,738	464	8,481	5,048	1,274	3,433	274.6% 68.0%
TOTAL	16,982	9,423	159,199	90,071	7,559	69,128	80.2% 76.7%