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THE AUSTRALIAN VEHICLE DEALER'S NEWS SOURCE



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BEGINS

FROM SAINT CATHERINES TO MUNICH – AN ENGINEER'S TALE

Hello there,

I was recently reminded about the importance of being passionate about your career and industry. And humble at the same time.

I had the opportunity to meet **Dr Stella Clarke**, the BMW Group engineer who inspired the concept of the colour-changing car by using e-ink technology found in an e-reader such as a Kindle.

Clarke's passion for finding new applications for existing technology excited the BMW Group, and it fully supported her venture into creating E-ink solutions for vehicle interiors and exteriors.

E-ink was Clarke's submarine project for two years before management gave her the green light to apply it to a concept vehicle.

With the assistance of a team of 12 people in BMW's research and innovation centre (FIZ) in Garching, Munich, Clarke's vision drove the development of the colour-changing BMW iX Flow from black to white and back again, presented at CES 2022 in Las Vegas.

Next up was the multi-coloured 2023 i Vision Dee (digital emotional experience), which heralds the design

direction of BMW's 2025 Neue Klasse range of vehicles.

Clarke's most recent foray into colour-changing cars was the i5 Flow Nostokana, which paid homage to the 1991 BMW 5-series sedan Art Car created by South African artist Dr Esther Mahlangu.

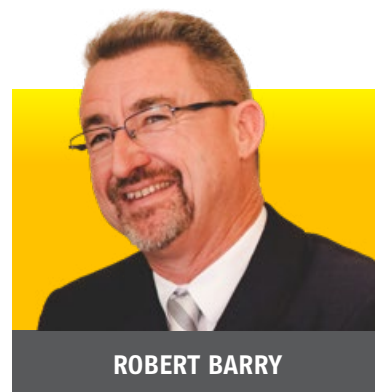
Mahlangu's artwork is displayed on the exterior of the BMW i5 thanks to no fewer than 1,349 sections of individually controllable E-ink film. The BMW iX Flow had 60 segments that could be individually controlled. The i Vision Dee had 240.

So, where did this journey begin for Clarke? As a 6-year-old who borrowed her dad's tools to build stuff, including a cubby house in the attic of their Sydney home.

Born in Sydney, Dr Clarke's mother is Chinese Indonesian, and her father is a Maori New Zealander from the East Coasts Ngati Porou tribe.

Educated at Saint Catherine's in Sydney, design and technology became Clarke's passion early in life.

A brilliant result in a year three maths test catalysed Clarke's new passion for STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths).



ROBERT BARRY

She studied for a bachelor's degree in mechatronics at the University of New South Wales and won a scholarship to Penn State University.

From there, Clarke quickly mastered the German language while completing her research doctorate – Telecontrol of Robots with Haptic Input Devices – at the Technical University of Munich.

The BMW Group desired her expertise in haptics and hired the newly minted Dr Clarke in 2007.

She says presenting the i Vision Dee at CES 2023 was a huge honour for her as an engineer, as usually, premieres of new concept vehicles are hosted by senior executives much further up the BMW Group hierarchy.

Clarke is incredibly humble about her achievements; she says the development of the E-ink technology and the application of it to the three concepts was a team effort, but she still tries to be "hands-on" from time to time despite having more of a management role.

It's always inspirational to meet people such as Dr Clarke, and I can't wait to see what's coming next.

Enjoy your reading this month.

Kindest regards,

Robert Barry
EDITOR AUTOTALK



DR STELLA CLARKE

USED CAR MARKET TIGHTENS AS SALES SURGE IN JULY

The July edition of the **Automotive Insight Report (AIR)** indicates that the used car market is tightening. Rising sales and falling listings are reducing the gap between demand and supply.

The monthly used car market data compiled by the Australian Automotive Dealers Association (AADA) and Autograb shows a 5.8% drop in used car listings to 285,133, while sales have jumped 11.6% to 214,588.

The average days to sell have stayed steady at 43.6 compared with last month, yet this figure is still marginally lower than June and is the weakest in the past 12 months.

"With the commencement of the new financial year, buyers have flocked to the used car market, taking advantage of better supply and lower prices as they try to escape the rising cost-of-living pressures," AADA chief executive **James Voortman** says.

"All states except Tasmania have experienced a drop in used car listings, while Northern Territory is the only state where sales remain sluggish, with a notable decline of 15.6%. However, this reduction in supply should be considered in the context of a significant increase in supply since the start of the year.

"Demand for used cars has strengthened across all categories, with passenger vehicles showing the largest growth, rising by 13.1% to 88,686. Meanwhile, the supply of EVs saw the most significant decline (16.1%), even as demand increased by 12.2%. This suggests that people are holding onto their EVs for longer, tightening the supply in the used EV market," he says

"One of the trends that seems to emerge from the start of the year is an increase in the proportion of cars being listed privately with a subsequent reduction in Dealer listings. Vehicles sold by Dealers have remained around the 40% mark, suggesting they are pricing vehicles to sell," AutoGrab chief commercial officer **Saxon Odgers** says.

"Retained values continue to decline with every vehicle segment across every age category experiencing a drop in value for the month," he says.

Small passenger vehicles have once



again proven to hold their value the best, with the Toyota Corolla and Toyota Yaris maintaining their top spots at 97.6% in the 2-4-year-old category and 96.7% in the 5-7-year-old category, respectively.

Meanwhile, the Suzuki Jimny continues to enjoy retained value, holding the top spot in the 2-4 (115.6%) and 5-7-year-old (115.8%) SUV categories.

AIR HIGHLIGHTS FROM JULY 2024:

- 214,588 vehicles were sold, an increase of 11.6% compared to the previous month
- Tasmania was the only state to experience an increase in the supply of used cars, rising by 0.3%, while the Northern Territory was the only state to see a decline in demand, falling by 15.6%
- 285,133 used cars were listed for sale

in July, experiencing a drop of 5.8% from the previous month.

- Sales in VIC rebounded to take the top position (14.1%), while ACT (+1.4%) and NT (-15.6%) were weakest in terms of sales.
- The average time to sell a used car is 43.6 days, the lowest over the past 12 months.
- Retained values continue their gradual decline, with passenger vehicles holding their value best in the 2-4 year age bracket (82.1%) and for the older 5-7 year category (68.1%)
- The Ford Ranger remains Australia's best-selling used car, followed by the Toyota Hilux.

USED VEHICLE INVENTORIES HIT A NEW HIGH

Ongoing high new-car sales have helped push dealer-used vehicle inventories to the highest level on record in **Cox Automotive Australia's (CAA)** retail database.

Cox Automotive tracks the retailer-used market closely, covering a majority of second-hand.

Australian dealers list cars, SUVs, and light commercials at any time.

Total inventory captured in CAA's database increased 5.7% in July 2024 compared to the previous month and is a significant 9.4% greater in size today than it was at this point in 2023.

Increased supply in the dealer-used vehicle market naturally correlates with the record-setting new vehicle market performance in 2024. The new and second-hand sectors are inextricably linked—older cars are usually swapped out for new ones.

The increase in inventory shows that the new supply of second-hand cars is outpacing consumer demand despite growth there, too. July 2024 sales of dealer-used cars were up a more modest 0.8% over June 2024.

Nevertheless, dealer-used vehicle sales in July 2024 still hit their highest point in a month since November 2020, almost four years. Year-to-date dealer-used sales are up 9.4%.

Robust used vehicle supply naturally compresses pricing, and the Cox Automotive Australia used vehicle Price Index declined a further 0.5% in July

over June, to 131.2.

A Price Index 131.2 denotes an average per-vehicle price increase of 31.2% since December 2019, when the index began, adjusted by MSRP and volume-weighted.

The index is now at its lowest point since February 2021, meaning, on average, used cars today are effectively selling on average for about what they cost three-and-a-half years ago.

But as has become a familiar pattern, price patterns over time vary across the used car fleet depending on age and vehicle type: Older cars remain more inflated than younger ones relative to pre-COVID, and traditional passenger hatches and sedans are more inflated than SUVs.

For example, the CAA price index on 2–4-year-old hatchbacks and sedans is 131.9, whereas the index for the same sorts of vehicles aged 8–10 is 164.3. This doesn't mean older cars are more expensive; they are more inflated relative to the end of 2019.

Traditional passenger vehicles are also more inflated than SUVs across the board, with respective average price indexes of 141.8 versus 123.4 – denoting an average 41.8% actual price increase versus 23.4%.

Why is this occurring? For one thing, older vehicles are inflated because cost-of-living challenges are driving up demand for older and more affordable vehicles, while SUVs of all ages depreciate more quickly than

traditional passenger cars because there is more excellent supply.

This latter point is reflected in the average Market Days' Supply of SUVs being 64 and the MDS for passenger cars being 62 days. To put this into more context, the inventory of used passenger cars is up 37% in the past two years, while the supply of used SUVs is up a more robust 50%.

Firm-performing used vehicle retailers sell their vehicles quickly, so it's essential to price them right. CAA data, however, shows that 40.2% of used cars are discounted online before sale, by an average of 7.3%, the highest discounting rate since May 2020.

This means four out of ten used vehicles sit on lots longer than needed because the initial asking price is out of step with the market, perhaps more reflective of the premiums seen in 2022.

Regarding the emerging used electric vehicle market, second-hand EV inventory is up 75% across the past 12 months and 202% over the past 24 months.

TOP 5 SELLING DEALER-USED VEHICLES IN JULY 2024:

- Ford Ranger: ↑ 23.3% YoY
- Toyota Hilux: ↑ 2.9%
- Toyota Corolla: ↑ 44.5%
- Toyota RAV4: ↑ 3.7%
- Hyundai i30: ↑ 4.6%



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MANHEIM AUCTION REPORTS IMPROVED VOLUME

In the wholesale used vehicle market, Manheim says its auction volume is now higher than in the past four years, with July sales up 65% year over year and 17% month over month (MOM).

Year-to-date (YTD) Manheim auction volume is up 43.9% and well ahead of target.

Average auction wholesale prices are at their lowest since July 2020, with the Manheim price index ending July 2024 at 132.1.

This is down 21.2% since the wholesale sector peaked in mid-2022, meaning wholesale used vehicles are more

accessible today for dealers.

July saw Manheim set a record for Fleet and Lease asset volume through the auction lanes, including a national LeasePlan and SG Fleet dealer-only auction of 150 late-model cars.

This reflected record sales in the new market and subsequent high turnover.

Fleet and Lease vehicle sales are now up 44% YTD, Dealer vehicles are up 50%, OEM vehicles sold at closed dealer-only auctions are up 75%, and Government vehicles are up 59%.

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SMART #1 BRABUS

LEI SHING HONG GROUP (LSH-AUTO) LAUNCHES SMART BRAND IN AUSTRALIA

Lei Shing Hong Group's (LSH-Auto) Mercedes-Benz network in Australia was selected as the exclusive retailer for the smart EV brand, and the official launch was held at its Brisbane dealership on August 28.

Through its partnership with LSH-Auto Australia, smart will offer premium all-electric vehicle sales, after-sales services, and other offerings to the market.

It says the launch of the smart #1 and #3 represents a key milestone for the

brand.

The move underscores smart's commitment to global development and expansion in Oceania. It wants to meet the growing demand for high-quality BEVs among tech-savvy urbanites in the region.

Excluding dealer delivery and on-road costs, the smart #1 Pro+ is \$54,900, the Premium is \$58,900, and the BRABUS is \$67,900.

The smart #3 Pro+ costs \$57,900, the Premium \$61,900, and the BRABUS

\$70,900, excluding dealer delivery and on-road costs.

"We are proud to introduce the smart #1 and #3 to Australia. As a brand always committed to exploring the best solutions for future mobility, smart vehicles are a perfect fit for the nation's eco-conscious and tech-savvy customers," smart Automobile's global chief marketing officer **Mandy Zhang** says.

We are excited to begin providing our

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JOHN GOOD

LSH AUTO MANAGING DIRECTOR

GLOBAL DEBUT FOR SMART #5 IN AUSTRALIA

On August 28, smart officially unveiled the all-new smart #5 Summit Edition and #5 Premium+ models at a world premiere event in Byron Bay, Australia.

Designed by Mercedes-Benz and continuing with design elements such as the panoramic roof and frameless doors, the smart #5 has a boxy and upright silhouette. Short front and rear overhangs remain a defining feature. The wheelbase has been maximised to 2900 mm.

According to the manufacturer, the #5 is not only the most spacious but also the most intelligent smart car to date. Its defining features include an airy

cockpit and a seamlessly integrated HMI, which harnesses an advanced AMD V2000 high-computing power chip.

The Adventurers' Collection package includes a roof light bar and electric trailer hitch, as well as underbody protection, a roof carrier, side steps, a side bag, and a side ladder.

The #5 will make its next public

appearance and China Premiere at the Chengdu Motor Show. It will be first launched and delivered in China within the year.



SMART #5



L-R JAMES KNOX, STEPHEN CAMPBELL, WAYNE BRYANT

GPC ASIA PACIFIC ACQUIRES APG

On September 2, Genuine Parts Company (GPC) acquired Australian automotive collision repair parts company Auto Parts Group (APG).

Melbourne-based GPC Asia Pacific will operate APG as a dedicated collision repair division alongside its existing automotive parts businesses, which include Repco, NAPA, Rare Spares, Sparesbox, and AMX Super Stores.

"Acquiring APG is a natural extension of GPC Asia Pacific's current operations," GPC Asia Pacific Group chief executive and managing director **Rob Cameron**.

"It enables us to extend into a large and resilient automotive industry sector, which will benefit from GPC's global scale and capabilities.

"GPC plans to further invest in APG's distribution capabilities, product range, and customer service capabilities, which

will deliver many benefits to APG's customers,"

The deal sees GPC Asia Pacific acquire 100% ownership of APG from the company's founder, **Stephen Campbell**, who determined GPC was the best home for his company's future growth aspirations, APG's 300-strong team, and its community of customers.

APG currently operates five distribution centres across Australia. Currently, it supplies more than 47,000 different product lines to around 3500 collision repairers.

GPC says APG's operations will continue unchanged under its ownership and will enjoy the advantages of GPC Asia Pacific's investment strength and global supply chain.

James Knox will continue to lead the business as Executive General Manager

of APG and become a member of GPC Asia Pacific's Automotive Leadership Team.

"Coupling APG's customer-focussed approach with GPC's planned investments in larger product ranges and distribution centres will significantly enhance the APG proposition," Knox says.

GPC Asia Pacific's purchase of APG is the latest in a series of significant Australian investments.

In June this year, GPC Asia Pacific opened a new 39,000-square-metre parts distribution centre in Broadmeadows, north of Melbourne. The automated facility is one of several expansion projects scheduled by the company.



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premium sales and after-sales services to Australians with Lei Shing Hong," she says.

"We are delighted to partner with smart, a pioneer in electric urban mobility, to bring the smart #1 and smart #3 models to Australia," LSH Auto Australia managing director John Good says.

"The Australian automotive market is more than ready for these innovative, forward-looking and visually stunning vehicles, which we know will excite

and thrill our customers," he says.

According to smart, it is poised to play a significant role in the region thanks to Australia's rapidly growing New Energy Vehicles (NEVs) market, bolstered by favourable policy and public support for environmental causes.

From 2022 to 2025, smart will bring an all-new model to customers each year, further enriching its all-electric product portfolio.

The smart R&D team leads engineering, research, and development for the

all-electric vehicle portfolio, with the Mercedes-Benz Global design team overseeing vehicle design.

It created the Smart #1 as a premium compact urban SUV and the Smart #3 as an SUV coupe, representing a larger and sportier interpretation of the same aesthetic.

Both vehicles have received Red Dot and iF Design awards and five-star safety ratings from China and Euro NCAP.



LESSONS LEARNT FROM AN AUTO-IT CAREER



ROGER PEFFERS

Following a memorable 25-year career with Auto-IT, well-known industry leader and company director **Roger Peffers** is stepping down from the business to enjoy a well-earned, self-imposed sabbatical.

Having spent 25 years establishing Auto-IT as a respected brand across Asia Pacific, South Africa, and Mexico, Peffers says it's time to tick a few things off the bucket list, including walking one of the nine routes of the Camino de Santiago walking track in Spain, which is a six-week commitment.

Following their trek across Spain, Peffers says he and his partner want to experience village life in the UK for around six months: "to be present in UK life and tackle one thing at a time." He says he wants to take some time out to reflect and consider his next career challenge.

Like many other senior leaders in the wider automotive industry, Peffers began his career as an apprentice mechanic on the workshop floor. He started and finished his apprenticeship with Avery Ford (Now Capital City Motors) in Wellington, New Zealand. From there, he moved to King Nissan, which then acquired the Toyota franchise.

Peffers was 25 years old when he was appointed as the service manager of Hutt Toyota in 1989. Following Les Reeves' retirement, he was appointed King Toyota group service manager in 1993.

"Computers were becoming increasingly important in dealerships. Toyota introduces an electronic parts catalogue, and the mechanics had to get their heads around it," Peffers says.

"I found myself increasingly running

the IT side of the business, installing and upgrading the Comsol dealer management system operated by the dealership," he says.

In mid-1999, Peffers was offered the opportunity to join Australian-based DMS provider Newmans Information Services (a Pentana competitor), seeking a country manager to run its New Zealand operation.

Newmans had recently acquired the Allied Information Systems subsidiary business from Mitsubishi Motors New Zealand, which supplied the dealer management system used by all the MMNZ franchisees in New Zealand.

Leading and building a DMS business is about people, processes, and the ability to forge great relationships, as well as understanding how to apply technology to solve business problems. "I felt the role played to my skills and my strong interest in all things I.T.," Peffers says. Twenty-five years on, it has proven to be a great decision."

MERGER FORMS AUTO-IT

Auto-IT was created in 2000 by merging two respected DMS businesses: Newmans Information Services and another Australian DMS supplier, KGM.

Peffers played a lead role in the company's exponential growth, including establishing the brand in new markets across Southeast Asia, among other regions, and New Zealand. The first challenge was migrating existing clients to the latest Windows system.

Building a team and organisational capability that would see Auto-IT become the premier DMS business in New Zealand is a source of much pride.

"However, seeing the growth in our people, I know I am leaving our customers in great hands," Peffers says.

Auto-IT's UNITS Automotive DMS supports several of New Zealand's best car dealerships, whilst agriculture and truck dealership customers use a similar system called EQUIP.

In 2008, Peffers became one of the five shareholders in the privately held Auto-IT business. He says global software company Constellation first

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approached Auto-IT in 2011 to buy it, but the shareholders declined it as Auto-IT was still in growth mode.

As the company expanded globally, part of that growth mode involved temporarily relocating to Southeast Asia, which provided a completely different business environment and a huge learning experience for Peffers and his team.

"It allowed us to challenge ourselves and build a better product," he says.

The focus on building great relationships has seen the Mitsubishi Motors franchisees in New Zealand, Armstrong's Motor Group, the Gazley Motor Group, and the John Deere franchisees retained as valued clients.

"In a highly competitive environment, we are proud that we have only ever had three customers leave us in 25 years", he says.

THERE ARE THREE PARTS TO SUCCESS (OR THE ONE-THIRD RULE)

Peffers says Auto-IT's success can be divided into good software, industry-based staff and support, and, most importantly, customers who embrace and want to drive the best performance from their DMS.

He calls it the one-third rule. And the support offered is the most critical.

"How do we respond when things go wrong? As we've seen from the recent CrowdStrike crisis, where a simple mistake in a software update brought down more than 8 million computers,

it can happen, and it will happen," Peffers says.

"I am reminded of the phrase 'It's the putting right that counts', made famous by Wellington whiteware retailer Alan Martin of L.V Martin & Son (Now Smiths City)," he says.

CYBER SECURITY AND THE IMPORTANCE OF BACKUPS

According to Peffers, the recent CDK Global ransomware attack in North America, which brought down 15,000 dealerships and resulted in more than \$1 billion in lost new vehicle sales, shows how dealers can be at the mercy of their IT suppliers, particularly those who used hosted solutions.

He says many dealerships operate their IT departments or have a third party managing their service, but cybersecurity remains a constant risk.

"Dealerships which use a third-party IT supplier must ensure they are constantly looking at the system's security – don't just assume it's being taken care of," Roger says.

"Hackers, such as those behind CDK Global's ransomware attack, target significant operations with hundreds of dealerships. A couple of years ago, crypto locking was rampant in Australia, where dealerships had to pay a ransom to unlock their systems. Still, there are easier ways for cybercriminals to obtain cash now.

"Dealerships need to check that their backups are working; don't become

complacent because it will do you a disservice. If something is accidentally deleted, it can be restored from a three-day-old backup.

"Don't leave it to the never/never because, without an operating DMS, it is tough to trade," he says.

THE FUTURE

Peffers says the sale of Auto-IT to Constellation Software Inc., part of the Perseus Operating Group, in February 2024 was prompted by the oldest of the five Auto-IT shareholders' desire to organise his affairs.

"The Perseus offer to buy the company outright was a nice exit for the shareholders but provided business-as-usual continuity for our staff and customers," Peffers says.

He says it's a fascinating time in the automotive industry with the recent consolidation among franchise dealerships.

"Independent family-owned franchise dealerships are almost becoming an anomaly," Peffers says.

He believes some of the larger privately owned Australian and New Zealand dealership groups have scaled up to a size that will make them more attractive to corporate buyers, particularly in the next decade when succession plans, or exit strategies are implemented.

CITROËN AUSTRALIA ANNOUNCES CESSATION OF NEW CAR SALES

Citroën Australia has announced it will support Australian customers' vehicle maintenance and servicing requirements from November 1, 2024, following the cessation of new vehicle sales locally.

This decision follows consultation with the retailer network, which carefully considers the current and future Citroën products available for the Australian market and how this aligns with evolving consumer demands and local market requirements.

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NISSAN AUSTRALIA HOSTS NEXT GENERATION OF AUTOMOTIVE PROFESSIONALS

Nissan Australia recently invited around 40 Victorian youth to its head office as an introduction to its award-winning Nissan Mentored Apprenticeship Program (NISSMAP).

It was an opportunity for the youth to gain insights into a career in automotive through NISSMAP while also spending time with vehicles such as the Nissan GT-R, Nissan Z, and Nissan Leaf.

NISSMAP launched in 2011 and has since seen some 600 young people complete an automotive technician apprenticeship through Nissan's service centre network – the fifth-largest dealer network in Australia.

"The NISSMAP program was started with a simple goal – to provide young women and men across Australia with the support, mentoring and skills they need to embark on an exciting career in the automotive industry," says National Dealer Training Manager **Alisha Gray**.

"In the 11 years since launch, it has achieved that and much more, reporting incredible qualification and staff retention rates and creating a new generation of enthused and engaged automotive technicians."

The NISSMAP program's unique approach to mentored apprenticeships has delivered tangible, real-world benefits to its participants. While the

average automotive apprenticeship spans four years, some 90% of NISSMAP participants qualify in just two years and eight months, such is the fast-tracking of skills and competencies they receive.

The retention rate is almost double the industry average of 49%, with 87% of NISSMAP participants retained in the industry.

The NISSMAP program operates in Victoria, NSW, QLD and WA, and an expansion into South Australia is expected over the next 12 months.



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"Whilst we acknowledge and celebrate Citroën's rich history in the Australian market, we must look to the future and consider the rapidly evolving, dynamic, and competitive nature of the industry and local market, alongside changing consumer demands," Citroën Australia general manager David Owen says.

"The decision for Citroën Australia to cease new vehicle sales was not made lightly; it was made after careful consideration of the current and future product available for our country, in the context of the local market and the preferences and requirements of Australian new vehicle buyers.

"Our dedication to putting our customers at the centre of everything we do remains resolute. We know there will continue to be Citroën owners in Australia, with many Citroën vehicles still on the road, and our passionate Citroën Australia team and retailer network are committed to supporting our customers' continued vehicle maintenance needs," he says.

Citroën Australia remains customer-focused and is ready to support their needs via 35 authorised Service Centres across Australia. Customers can search for their nearest authorised Service Centre at www.citroen.com.au.

At these authorised service centres, customers will continue to have access to factory-trained technicians, genuine parts, and the completion of applicable service and recall campaigns and diagnostic updates.

New vehicle orders placed by customers before November 1, 2024, will be fulfilled and delivered to Australian customers. The brand's comprehensive 5-year/unlimited km new vehicle warranty, Assured Service Pricing, and Pre-Paid Service Plans will remain unchanged.





QLD/NT DEALERSHIP GROUP TACKLES INDUSTRY SKILLS SHORTAGE



ALLISON MCKAY

The Pickerings Automotive Group network in Queensland and the Northern Territory is implementing a pioneering training program to address the industry skills shortage.

Pickerings has partnered with **FranConnect** to develop a comprehensive training and engagement system that provides sales, operations, and marketing solutions for multi-location businesses.

"We realised that our biggest challenges were staff turnover and employee engagement. We needed a robust solution," Pickerings Automotive Group chief operating officer **Allison McKay**.

"The training program we built now serves 800 employees across 30 locations and 24 brands – from Darwin down to the Sunshine Coast," she says.

According to FranConnect, rapid advancements in automotive technology and advanced diagnostics require new skills that many current workers need to gain. For many in the industry, training has not kept pace with changes.

Another concern facing dealerships is the geographical challenge of finding employees with specific skills in the regional area who are within travel distance of the dealership.

"With challenges around finding the right staff, we have decided to invest in our people and build our teams with the skills we want. It's a win for the staff as they get career and personal development, and a win for us and our customers as we are a people-focused business, and we now have the best people," McKay says.

"The training initiative we have implemented includes a mix of soft skills, hard skills, and compliance training tailored specifically for the automotive industry.

"This comprehensive approach is facilitated through 'Pick Hub', a customised learning platform. Our content is automotive-centric, addressing real-world scenarios our staff encounter daily," she says.

One of the features of the Pic Hub, housed on the FranConnect platform, is the Blast Training modules that cover both soft skills like customer communication and hard skills like operating dealership management systems.

Via FranConnect's mobile training platform, Pickering's staff can complete modules from their smartphones to train anytime, anywhere, and in a way that suits their needs and free time.

"When it comes to career progression,

we now have a structured approach, so all employees are aware of their career paths and have opportunities for growth within the company," McKay says.

"The training content was a fantastic team effort, and contributions from many departments, including Fixed Operations, Parts, and People & Culture, who have all worked hard to provide the information and ideas.

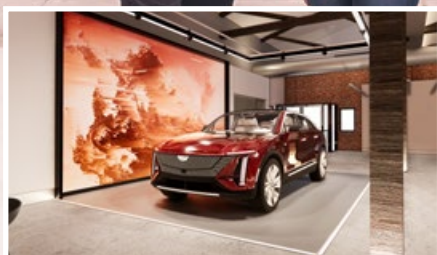
"If they want to move towns to a different dealership in our organisation, this is now an option when there are roles; they have transferable skills they can apply there as all of the training is now standardised across the organisation."

"At a recent dealer comparison meeting, our presentation on FranConnect and our training initiatives impressed other dealers. We're leading the industry in this comprehensive culture change," she says.

Pickerings Automotive Group plans to launch an academy offering certifications through Pick Hub.

"This academy aims to provide official qualifications and further support the development of automotive professionals," McKay says.

WORK BEGINS ON SYDNEY CADILLAC EXPERIENCE CENTRE



The location for Cadillac's entry point to the Australian market has been confirmed. Work will commence on the brand's debut facility in the heart of Sydney's inner south.

The country's first Cadillac Experience Centre occupies a designed open-plan space in the newly developed Rosebery Engine Yards retail and lifestyle precinct.

Tastefully incorporated into the heritage-listed site, the centre's 841-square-metre footprint offers Cadillac Australia guests an impressive suite of premium amenities.

These include a dozen branded parking bays (five secured/garaged and seven external), three undercover servicing bays, and multiple delivery bays alongside technician service facilities.

"It feels natural to bring Australia's first Cadillac Experience Centre to such a contemporary, open, and authentic space," GM Australia and New Zealand managing director **Jess Bala** says.

"It's a pleasure to invite guests closer to one of the world's great brands, where they can experience the luxury evolution of Cadillac firsthand.

"Rosebery Engine Yards has a rich heritage which arms it for the future,

with no shortage of simultaneous buzz about what's coming next – that sounds familiar to me."

The Cadillac Experience Centre was crafted with local design and architecture practice Gensler. The award-winning global firm was also responsible for designing Cadillac's first European showroom – an innovative space in Zurich, Switzerland.

"Even the most iconic brands need to speak with their customers in open, inviting, and thoughtfully physically crafted spaces," said Tom Owens of Gensler's Sydney office.

"That's what we've delivered alongside Cadillac at Rosebery, offering a window into the next generation of luxury and electric driving in Sydney's most transformative new creative hub.

"Both the Cadillac brand and the Australian design aesthetic have a strong affinity for bold and cutting-edge designs, so we saw a fantastic opportunity to blend the two seamlessly."

Flanked by other luxury brands such as LUNE Croissanterie, Rebecca Vallance, MJ Bale, Orotton, Zimmermann, Gelato Messina, and Camilla & Marc, Cadillac is the only

automotive retailer in the Rosebery Engine Yards development.

The Rosebery Engine Yards has been curated for ease of socialising, relaxation, and shopping and includes various food and beverage options.

Details such as original beams, artisan brickworks, exposed bolts, and other hidden gems invite the curious to inspect them closely.

It's an exciting time for the American marque in Australia. An array of next-generation models, headlined by the all-electric Cadillac LYRIQ luxury SUV, will arrive soon.

As evidence of Cadillac's commitment to a global rollout, the LYRIQ is being built in right-hand drive at Cadillac's Tennessee factory. Along with the C8 Corvette, it is another factory-produced RHD model from GM in Australia and New Zealand.

Cadillac's global image is based on the foundation of expressive luxury. It is built on the four pillars of Captivating Presence, Precision in Execution, Moments of Brilliance and Emotional Connection, displayed in Australia's first Cadillac Experience Centre.

AUTOSPORTS GROUP TO ACQUIRE STILLWELL MOTOR GROUP



VOLVO CARS SOUTH YARRA DEALERSHIP

Autosports Group Limited has agreed to acquire 100% of shares in B S Stillwell Motor Group Pty Ltd, known as the Stillwell Motor Group.

Autosports Group's wholly owned subsidiary, ASG Investment Holdings Pty Ltd, will manage the Stillwell Motor Group business.

The Stillwell Motor Group is a family-owned business founded in 1949 that operates BMW, BMW Motorrad, MINI, Volvo Cars, MG and Ducati dealerships in Victoria.

The purchase consideration consists of \$45 million for goodwill and approximately \$10 million for net

tangible assets, plant and equipment. The seller of the Stillwell Motor Group can elect to receive up to 15% of the purchase in the form of ASG shares to be issued for \$2.09.

The cash portion of the purchase will be funded by cash and new and existing debt facilities.

"The Stillwell Motor Group could not be more perfectly aligned to Autosports Group's luxury brand and primary metropolitan market growth strategy," Autosports Group chief executive **Nick Pagent** says.

"With the brands BMW, BMW Motorrad, MINI, Volvo, MG, and Ducati covering four Victorian locations and

contributing more than \$345 million in annualised revenue, the acquisition is expected to add approximately 13% to Autosports Group's annualised revenues upon completion.

"We thank the Stillwell family, BMW Group and Volvo Cars for their goodwill and support through the transaction," Pagent says.

"In our 75th year of direct ownership and operation of franchised motor vehicle and motorcycle dealerships, we are gratified to see our multi-award-winning dealerships join forces with Autosports Group Limited, a company which recognises our legacy and is well-positioned to drive future growth for the businesses," Stillwell Motor Group directors **Marianne Stillwell** and **Chris Stillwell** say.

"We want to acknowledge our staff who have served our customers and our long-term brand partners BMW Group and Volvo Cars with distinction," said the Stillwells.

Completion is scheduled for October 2024 and is conditional upon the satisfaction of certain conditions precedent, including obtaining consent from the relevant motor vehicle manufacturers.



TODD WILLING

FORD APPOINTS WILLING AS HEAD OF DESIGN

The Ford Motor Company has appointed Australian Todd Willing as its new Head of Design.

Willing has worked for the Ford Motor Company since 2003 and will now lead the design for Ford and Lincoln brand vehicles worldwide.

He replaced Anthony Lo, who departed the brand in May. Willing was the former global design director for Ford Model E.

His automotive journey began in high school as part of a work experience program offered by Ford's Australian Design Studio. He earned a bachelor's degree in industrial design from Monash University in Australia.

During his 21 years of service, Willing

has shaped many Ford vehicles, working on products destined for markets worldwide. He has had assignments in Japan, Germany, England, and the U.S., and he led the Ford Asia-Pacific design studio in Melbourne, Australia.

He was part of the design teams behind vehicles, including the 2007 Ford Mondeo, 2009 Ford Fiesta, and 2010 Ford Focus, and was the exterior chief designer on the 2017 Ford GT.

While serving as global design director for Ford Trucks and SUVs, Willing led teams responsible for the F-150, Super Duty, Ranger, Bronco, Maverick, Explorer and Expedition vehicle lines.

FCAI AND MTAA UNVEIL PLAN TO PROGRESS END-OF-LIFE VEHICLE MANAGEMENT

A study conducted by the **Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries (FCAI)** and the **Motor Trades Association of Australia (MTAA)** reveals a strategic pathway for boosting automotive recycling through a product stewardship scheme that will be released at the **Auto Parts Recyclers Association of Australia (APRAA)** conference at the Gold Coast.

The Outlook for End-of-Life Vehicles in Australia report draws on detailed research delivered jointly by FCAI and MTAA under a \$1 million grant received from the Australian Government's Project Stewardship Innovation Fund.

One of the largest motor vehicle studies of its type undertaken in Australia, the research identified options to enhance end-of-life vehicle (ELV) material recovery rates, avoid inter-state leakage of ELVs, and, importantly, reduce vehicle waste destined for landfills.

Approximately 850,000 motor vehicles reach the end of their life each year in Australia, generating around 1.36 million tonnes of waste. The industry recovers about 70% of this waste, leaving a substantial amount destined for landfills.

Australia's automotive manufacturers and retailers are committed to improving these statistics, enhancing end-of-life vehicle material recovery, and reducing landfill waste.

The FCAI and MTAA propose to build on work completed to date and collaborate with all levels of government and industry to make stewardship for end-of-life motor vehicles a reality.

The study highlights several industry challenges, including a fragmented recycling sector, a diverse vehicle fleet, and insufficient processing options for non-metal materials. The absence of a domestic vehicle manufacturing base further complicates material reuse efforts.

Australia's recycling and dismantling industry also lags behind leading global economies. While international schemes offer insights, no single global model fits Australia's unique context without significant adaptation.

The FCAI and MTAA will work together to explore a co-regulatory product stewardship scheme that incorporates successful elements from global models and adapts them to Australia's needs.



THIS WOULD INCLUDE INVESTIGATING INITIATIVES SUCH AS:

- Authorised collection and treatment facilities – Establishing standardised facilities with rigorous operating and environmental standards
- Certificates of Destruction (COD) – Implementing CODs to enhance vehicle tracking and support higher recovery standards
- National consistency – Developing a nationally consistent approach to vehicle recycling that aligns with best practices while addressing local challenges

To advance this initiative, the FCAI and MTAA will collaborate with industry and government to address critical issues, including standardisation, material recovery targets, funding models and a stewardship organisation.

Both organisations are committed to partnering with all stakeholders to develop and implement a product stewardship scheme that addresses current challenges and paves the way for future advancements in automotive recycling.

"The study presents a way forward for the sector and clearly shows the need for cooperation between the automotive, dismantling, recycling and waste management sectors and the different levels of government," FCAI

chief executive **Tony Weber** says.

"It will take time to progress this to a point where an ELV scheme is fully operational. However, as more vehicles reach their end of life every year, we believe the time for engagement on this important issue is now," he says.

"Our research reveals the necessity of modernising Australia's vehicle dismantling and recycling processes. The proposed stewardship scheme will streamline operations across the industry and address our unique challenges," MTAA chief executive **Matt Hobbs** says.

"This is a pivotal moment for us to enhance recovery efforts and reduce environmental impact as the industry moves towards a more sustainable future," he says.

"The proposed stewardship scheme is a significant step towards upgrading our vehicle recycling infrastructure. Our industry needs to improve recovery rates and adopt more effective practices in automotive recycling, but we need support to achieve this," VACC chief executive **Geoff Gwilym** says.

"We are eager to assist our members through this transition and assist them to capitalise on the opportunities that an end-of-life vehicle program will create for small to medium-sized businesses in particular," he says.



FROM FITTING TYRES TO STEERING SUCCESS: HEATH BARCLAY'S JOURNEY AT BRIDGESTONE

Set against the coastal backdrop of Noosa North Shore in Queensland, Australia, with engines revving and tyres navigating the terrain, **Heath Barclay**, managing director of Bridgestone Australia and New Zealand, discusses the evolving dynamics of the tyre industry and fleet management. The New Zealander, who now lives in Australia, was appointed managing director of Bridgestone Australia and New Zealand in 2022, leading a team of more than 2000 staff.

Leaving high school, he started his industry career as a part-time tyre fitter at the Dannevirke Firestone Tyre store in the Manawatu-Whanganui region.

In 1994, he joined full-time as the store's manager and attracted the attention of Bridgestone NZ (then Firestone). In 1996, he was offered a management cadet role.

Within Bridgestone NZ, Barclay went on to climb through the ranks, working in roles in marketing, consumer business, and general management.

He relocated to Australia in 2013 as the group general manager of retail and marketing, then served as associate director of sales and marketing and as a new member of the board before becoming sales director in 2017.

Speaking to AutoTalk in a convoy of Isuzu D-Max utes testing the new Bridgestone all-terrain AT002 tyres,

Barclay says his early engagement with the industry was purely coincidental.

"I started, I think, about 15 years old pumping gas," he says. The job quickly became a career when his knack for the industry led to a management cadet role with Bridgestone NZ in 1996, setting the stage for his future ascent.

Today, as the head of Bridgestone ANZ, Barclay manages an expansive operation of 550 stores and around a billion dollars Australian turnover.

His career trajectory through various departments—marketing, operations, and sales—has endowed him with a comprehensive perspective on the business.

Barclay shared insights into the company's strategic initiatives, particularly sustainability and fleet management. Bridgestone's approach to product sales and maintenance shows the industry's shift towards more sustainable practices.

"We sell around three million car tyres a year and about 500,000 truck tyres," he explains.

Bridgestone is increasingly focusing on data-driven solutions for fleet management. The acquisition of Web Fleet Solutions, formerly TomTom Telematics, marks a significant pivot towards utilising vehicle and tyre data to enhance operational efficiencies.

"It's really about getting the data from the tyre and the vehicle itself and then using that to make better decisions around tyre choice," Barclay says. And Bridgestone's operations extend beyond just tyres, he says.

"Many people who join us are blown away by just how complex the organisation is. Across Australia and New Zealand, we have owned stores, company-owned outlets, franchise networks and dealerships."

The diversified business model also supports a broad array of services, from retail to retreading, and the company has multiple retail brands, such as Bridgestone Select, Bridgestone Tyre Centres, Bridgestone Service Centres, and Tony's Tyres.

Bridgestone ANZ is adapting its product line-up to meet diverse consumer needs as the automotive market evolves with a growing preference for SUVs and light commercial vehicles.

"Different consumers use their vehicles for different reasons, so you've got to make sure that you've got a broad enough range of products to suit the needs of every single driver," Barclay says.

Reflecting on his journey through the ranks of Bridgestone, Barclay acknowledges the value of his hands-on experience.

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"Having experienced it first-hand gives you a different perspective," he says. This practical experience also informs his approach to leadership, particularly in understanding and addressing the needs of his staff.

"We do a lot of surveying of our staff, and I think given we have so many employees at the frontline of our organisation, we're adapting as we move into my kind of tenure in this role of how we connect more with our people and have them connected to the business better," he says.

"I have a natural affinity for the people in the stores doing the challenging work of three o'clock in the morning underneath a truck puncture or whatever.

"And communication and changing our method of communication to try and make sure that people are connected more with the organisations are things that we are embarking on now to do a better job of.

AutoTalk also asked Barclay how electric vehicles impact the tyre market with potentially different demands.

He says Bridgestone is responding with its new technology for future products, which involves removing weight from the tyre to improve and enhance rolling resistance.

Barclay says there is potential for the manufacturer to contribute to greater efficiency in electric vehicle operations.

"So, in terms of the life of the battery, the lower the weight of the tyre as a contributor will mean that you can get better range from an EV if you've got a lighter construction product on the vehicle.

"So as that EV range stretches into four-wheel drives and SUVs, then absolutely we're going to need more and more focus on the actual weight of the tyre."

WHAT IS THE AT002?

Bridgestone has introduced the Dueler A/T 002 to the New Zealand market, targeting the country's rapidly

expanding 4x4 and SUV segments.

Built in a 'passenger construction' rather than the more durable but heavier 'light commercial' format, the Dueler A/T 002 boasts an 80% on-road and 20% off-road capability.

The tyre features a modern hexagonal block tread design optimised for traction and braking performance across various surfaces, including gravel, sand, and light to medium mud.

Bridgestone has also incorporated advanced Nano Pro-Tech compound technology with high silica content, ensuring superior wet grip and enhanced safety under challenging conditions.

The initial range includes 14 sizes, compatible with popular models like the Toyota Prado, Ford Everest, and Subaru Outback. Bridgestone plans to expand this lineup to 20 sizes by 2025, further solidifying the A/T 002's position in the market.





JOEL GLEDHILL



ISUZU TRADE MATE PROGRAM TARGETS SME ABN HOLDERS

Isuzu Australia Limited (IAL) says its Trade Mate loyalty program, run in partnership with Qantas Business Rewards, is targeted to benefit small-to medium-enterprise ABN holders

Trade Mate members can earn one Qantas Point for each dollar spent on eligible parts and accessories. Qantas Points earned for business can be used towards flights, hotels, car hire, or 30,000 products on the Qantas Marketplace.

IAL national parts sales manager Joel Gledhill says Isuzu's Trade Mate offer is available on many Isuzu parts and accessories, including genuine parts. "Not only does Isuzu have a massive range of products, but we have some seven million parts in stock waiting to be shipped from our national parts distribution centre," Gledhill says.

"Offering a Trade Mate membership to earn Qantas Points is a great incentive for the price conscious to choose the best part for their vehicle."

"We understand that the requirements of our customers vary in terms of their servicing, but there's always the need for quality parts, ensuring vehicles are

well-maintained—avoiding interruption and maximising uptime.

"We've recorded that \$12 million of Isuzu parts are fitted to other truck brands through third-party service and repair outlets each year, highlighting the value of this reward program."

Isuzu Trucks has a broad selection of parts and accessories available for purchase from Isuzu dealerships and Authorised Service and Parts Outlets (ASPOs):

Isuzu Genuine Parts

Isuzu Genuine Parts are manufactured to strict quality standards to ensure a high level of performance and maximise future resale value. They are backed by a 12-month, unlimited-kilometre warranty to ensure peace of mind. When fitted by an authorised Isuzu dealer or ASPO, they come with a three-year parts and labour warranty.

Best Value Parts (BVP)

Isuzu offers a comprehensive range of Best Value Parts to suit many older Isuzu Truck models. BVP products are backed by a 12-month, unlimited-kilometre warranty, regardless of

the installer. The Isuzu BVP range includes products such as starter motors, alternators, drive belts, brake components, clutch components, and filters manufactured to high-quality standards. The range is continually expanding to keep up with customer requirements.

Isuzu Approved Parts

Isuzu has partnered with other truck parts and componentry brands to provide a range of trusted Isuzu-approved parts. Brands include Fuchs, Meritor, Narva, Fleetguard, Eaton, Hendrickson, Cummins Filtration, Allison Transmission and many more.

TRUCK OWNERSHIP REWARDED

"The Trade Mate program is all about supporting Isuzu customers in the long term while also showing that we're proud to stand behind the quality of our products," Gledhill says.

"We've received great feedback from customers who have embraced the Trade Mate program already, and they've unlocked some fantastic rewards for their business and their families," he says.

MTA INSTITUTE EXPANDS AUTO READY PROGRAM TO REGIONAL QUEENSLAND



The MTA Institute is expanding its Auto Ready program to the regions. High school students from across Cairns, Rockhampton, and Townsville will have the opportunity to get hands-on experience working with actual

vehicles while exploring the many career pathways available in the automotive industry.

During the five-day program, students undertaking the course will learn a range of tasks relating to using and maintaining tools and equipment, as well as identifying and inspecting the mechanical and electrical components and systems of light vehicles, all while under the guidance of MTA Institute's qualified Technical Trainers.

This nationally accredited program contributes three units of competency towards an AUR20720 – Certificate II in Automotive Vocational Preparation qualification, earning participants 1 QCE point.

The program is subsidised through the Queensland Government under the Certificate 3 Guarantee program. Training is provided fees-free for VET School students.

Initially held at the MTA Institute's state-of-the-art workshop in Brisbane, the Auto Ready course expanded its reach in 2022 to regional Queensland. Courses were held in Mackay and Dysart, and a partnership was formed with Glenmore State High School in Rockhampton to offer the program at the school's trade training facility.

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CRAIG BAILS

BAILS APPOINTED ARCA INAUGURAL CHAIR

The Automotive Repairers Council of Australia (ARCA) has appointed **Craig Baills** as its inaugural Chair.

This was ratified at a recent ARCA meeting, signifying a step forward for the council and the automotive repair industry.

Baills, owner and Director of Highfields Mechanical and Offroad and Hi-Mech Auto Solutions, brings 30 years of experience and success in the automotive industry. He also serves as a board member of the Australian Automotive Aftermarket Association (AAAA).

"I am honoured to be appointed ARCA's first Chair," Baills says.

"ARCA strengthens independent members through collective engagement, keeping workshops focused in a constantly changing landscape. I look forward to working

with our members and the broader automotive community to address the challenges and seize the exciting opportunities for our sector."

"We congratulate Craig on his appointment," AAAA chief executive Stuart Charity says.

"His extensive industry knowledge and passionate advocacy for repairers make him the ideal leader for ARCA. We are confident that ARCA will achieve further success for our repair industry under his leadership."

ARCA was formed by the AAAA and is dedicated to representing and advancing the interests of automotive repairers nationwide. With 1500 workshop members, including major chains and independent repairers, the council advocates for industry improvements, promotes best practices and aims for a sustainable future. ■

HEGGIE JOINS MELBOURNE MOTOR SHOW EXECUTIVE TEAM

The former head of operations for CarSales, **Matt Heggie**, has joined the 2025 Melbourne Motor Show executive team as the commercial partnerships consultant.

Heggie brings over 20 years of experience in automotive classifieds sales and operations.

Working through News Corp, Heggie worked as sales manager of CarsGuide and in various leadership roles encompassing automotive, retail, travel, entertainment, government, and employment industries.

Melbourne Motor Show director of operations Craig Phinn is leading the event's return following a ten-year absence from the motoring calendar.

"I'm absolutely thrilled to see Matt join the Melbourne Motor Show," he says.

"His wealth of experience both in motoring and operations for a global organisation means we'll be able to put on a motoring expo that will thrill car enthusiasts as much as it will mums, dads, and kids. I'm confident the Melbourne Motor Show 2025 will exceed our expectations," he says.

I am a great believer in the Australian automotive industry and have been

since the beginning of my career," Heggie says.

"I have a heartfelt passion for motoring, and being able to express that as part of the Melbourne Motor Show for 2025 is nothing short of fantastic. I look forward to putting on one of the best automotive events this country has seen in a long time."

The Melbourne Motor Show is the first motoring and automotive expo to be held in Australia since the demise of local manufacturing.

The show will be a two-day public event at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre from April 5 to 6, 2025. Organisers aim to attract 40,000 patrons to the inaugural event.

Over the April weekend, more than 120 OEMs and aftermarket suppliers will showcase their new products and provide interactive displays and activities across 20,000 square metres of floor space in "Jeff's Shed."

The organisers will make further announcements over the coming weeks and months, including details on exhibitors, manufacturers, and special guests.



MATT HEGGIE

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Locations and dates for Auto Ready's September intake include:

- Rockhampton | 16 – 20 Sept 2024 & 23 – 27 Sept 2024
- Townsville | 16 – 20 Sept 2024
- Cairns | 23 – 27 Sept 2024

Marcello Riotto, Director of the MTA Institute, emphasised the program's goal of introducing and exposing students to the mechanical side of the automotive industry.

"Given the vastness of the automotive industry, many school students are

unaware of the diverse and exciting career paths it offers," Riotto says.

"The automotive sector offers many rewarding roles, from light and heavy vehicles to auto electrical work, motorcycle maintenance, parts interpretation, body repair, refinishing, mobile plant operation, agricultural machinery, and beyond.

"This program intends to glimpse the industry's work environment, helping students make informed career decisions.

"MTA Institute is committed to supporting and building our future workforce. By offering hands-on training and real-world experience, we aim to inspire young minds and equip them with the skills necessary to jump-start their career in the automotive industry," he says.



STRONG DEMAND FOR NEW CARS IN AUGUST, EXCLUDING BATTERY-ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Australia recorded 98,328 new vehicle sales in August 2024, making it the second-best August result yet.

FCAI chief executive **Tony Weber** says this was a good result despite August 2024 being down by 10.6% from last year's August number.

"This is a positive result in historical terms, with August 2024 recording the second-highest August ever in Australia," he says.

"The outlier in the data is the 2023 number, which broke the previous best August result (2017) by 13.8%. To date, the market has been up by 5.3%. Once again, the new car market shows signs of resilience as cost-of-living pressures and interest rates continue to impact the economy," he says.

Consumer preferences for the types of vehicles they want to drive are demonstrated, with the passenger segment representing only 15.4% of the total market. The SUV segment represented 57.5%, and light commercial vehicles made up 22.9%, making these two segments more than 80% of the total market.

"Consumers continue to show a readiness to move into low emission vehicles with hybrid sales up 44.9% on August 2023 while sales of plug-in hybrid cars are up 119.8%," Weber says.

"However, in line with the experience in many global markets, sales of battery electric vehicles could be better. This is despite the increase in the supply of battery electric vehicles with more brands and EV models coming to the Australian market," he says.

Toyota was the market leader, with sales of 21,490 in August, followed by Ford (8890), Mazda (8263), Kia (6903), and Hyundai (6211). The Toyota RAV4 was Australia's top-selling vehicle, with sales of 6712 in August, followed by the Ford Ranger (5431), Toyota Hilux (4496), Isuzu Ute D-Max (2548), and Toyota Landcruiser (2504).

Sales in the Australian Capital Territory were down 21.9% in August 2023 to 1338; New South Wales was down 13.9% to 29,831; Northern Territory was down 8.1% to 911; Queensland decreased 7.5% to 21,310; South Australia also decreased by 2% to 6813; Tasmania decreased 13% to 1604; Victoria decreased 10.6% to 26,039, and Western Australia decreased 9.9% to 10,482.

The August 2024 market of 98,328 shows a decrease in new vehicle sales of 11,638 (-10.6%) compared to August 2023 (109,966). There were 26.8 selling days in August 2024 and August 2023, resulting in a decrease of 434.3 vehicle sales per day in August 2024.

The passenger vehicle market is down by 4170 vehicle sales (-21.6%) over the same month last year, the SUV Market is down by 5772 vehicle sales (-9.3%); the light commercial market is down by 1535 vehicle sales (-6.4%), and the heavy commercial vehicle Market is down by 161 vehicle sales (-3.8%) versus August 2023.

Market leader Toyota overshadowed second-placed Ford with a margin of 12,600 vehicle sales and 12.9 market share points.

TOP 10 BRANDS



1. TOYOTA 21,490



2. FORD 8890



3. MAZDA 8263



4. KIA 6903



5. HYUNDAI 6211

4X4 UTES

1

Ford
Ranger
5142



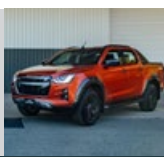
2

Toyota
Hilux
3851



3

Isuzu Ute
D-Max
1941



4

Toyota
LC-70
1062



5

Mazda
BT-50
1060



6

Mitsubishi
Triton
976



7

Nissa
Navara
673



8

Volkswagen
Amarok
595



9

GWM
Ute
565



10

LDV
T60
479



SMALL SUV (<\$45k)

1

Hyundai
Kona
1674



2

MG ZS
1576



3

Mazda
CX-30
1148



4

Mitsubishi
ASX
1025



5

GWM Haval
Jolion
931



6

Subaru
Crosstrek
766



7

Toyota Corolla
Cross
1470



8

Volkswagen
T-Roc
632



9

Mitsubishi
Eclipse Cross
582



10

Nissan
Qashqai
537



TOP 10 BRANDS



6. MITSUBISHI 5516



7. ISUZU UTE 3924



8. MG 3561



9. NISSAN 3376



10. GWM 3148

HYBRIDS CONTINUE SOARING WHILE BEVS FADE

Hybrids – including plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs) – continue to grow in popularity in Australia, while battery electric vehicles (BEVs) and fossil fuel vehicles generally decline.

That's according to the latest VFACTS figures showing total new electric vehicle sales for August 2024 were down by a half (50.8%) on the same month last year – or 3434 compared to 6964, and marginally up (1.4%) in year-to-date (YTD) comparisons (57,701 from 56,922).

That compares with hybrid sales up 44.9% for August 2024 (16,664 compared to 11,500) and 96% YTD or 116,316 against 59,334.

PHEVs are listed at 119.8% up for August 2024 (2644 from 1203) and 127.4% up YTD (13,076 from 5750).

Just one hydrogen-powered vehicle is recorded sold in August 2024 against two for August 2023, and 10 YTD compared with two for the previous YTD period.

Electrics were down 35.4% in August comparisons in the passenger category (1287 from 1991) but up 39% YTD (24,958 from 17,956).

Hybrids had a similar result in the passenger sector, declining 21.3% in August comparisons (3089 from 3924) but rising 78.1% in YTD figures (30,243 from 16,983).

PHEVs were up 28.8% (67 from 52 in August comparisons and 84.4% YTD (557 from 302) in that sector while petrol and diesel sales fell in monthly and YTD comparisons.

In the SUV sector, electrics were down (57.7% or 2102 from 4967 in August comparisons and 16.4% YTD or 32,471 from 38,843) while hybrids were up 77.9% (13,478 from 7576 in August comparisons) and 102.2% YTD (85,665

from 42,361).

Light commercial new vehicle electric sales jumped from 26 to 45 in August comparisons (up 73.1%) and from 123 to 272 (121.1%) in YTD comparisons, while hybrids went from zero to 97 in August and to 408 YTD.

The Electric Vehicle Council (EVC) August sales report shows just two brands – Tesla and Polestar.

The Tesla Model 3 appears the best seller with 1063 sold in August 2024 (up 6.93% on August 2023's 995 and up 10.81% YTD (14,602 compared to 13,177).

Tesla Model Y sales fell in August and YTD comparisons – 1330 from 2314 or 42.52% down and 13,499 from 13,646 or 31.29% down respectively.

The Polestar 2 recorded 62 August 2024 sales against 225 in August 2023, or down 72.44%, while YTD sales were 1103 compared to 1675 (down 34.15%).

The Polestar 3 had three sales compared to zero in August comparisons and 15 YTD sales.

The EVC says its monthly report only includes sales from some brands, and therefore does not capture the entire new vehicle sales market in Australia.

"All car brands are welcome to provide their data for this free, public report on a non-exclusive basis.

"Ultimately, the EVC's aim is for data to be publicly available for all Australian new vehicle sales, and it welcomes the support of more OEMs in achieving this goal."

The EVC also urges the Federal Government to establish a public vehicle sales dashboard as a free source of data to inform policy, planning and research.

"This report has been developed as an interim solution and will continue to be expanded and improved on in time."

NEW VEHICLE SALES BY BUYER TYPE AND FUEL TYPE						AUGUST 2024		
Total Market	Month		YTD		MTH	Variance +/- Vol. & %		
	2024	2023	2024	2023		YTD	MTH	YTD
ELECTRIC								
Passenger	1,287	1,991	24,958	17,956	-704	7,002	-35.4%	39.0%
SUV Private	2,102	4,967	32,471	38,843	-2,865	-6,372	-57.7%	-16.4%
Light Commercial Non-Private	45	26	272	123	19	149	73.1%	121.1%
Sub Total	3,434	6,984	57,701	56,922	-3,550	779	-50.8%	1.4%
HYBRID								
Passenger Private	3,089	3,924	30,243	16,983	-835	13,260	-21.3%	78.1%
SUV Private	13,478	7,576	85,665	42,361	5,902	43,304	77.9%	102.2%
Sub Total	16,567	11,500	115,908	59,344	5,067	56,564	44.1%	95.3%
PHEV								
Passenger Private	67	52	557	302	15	255	28.8%	84.4%
SUV Private	2,577	1,151	12,519	5,448	1,426	7,071	123.9%	129.8%
Sub Total	2,644	1,203	13,076	5,750	1,441	7,326	119.8%	127.4%
Total	22,645	19,687	186,685	116,266	2,958	70,419	15.0%	60.6%

THE TESLA MODEL 3 APPEARS TO HOLD TOP NEW EV POSITION IN AUGUST.