

autotalk

THE VEHICLE DEALER'S NEWS SOURCE

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Auto Franchise Code: Patience is a virtue

The Australian Automotive Dealer Association continues to wait patiently in Canberra as the department of industry, innovation and science has focused on recycling, space and teaching STEM.

While important, the automotive code which has been in its inception, conception and embryonic stage for over two years, and according to her news feeds, federal MP **Karen Andrews** hasn't spoken to the issue since March.

The consultation process into automotive franchise retailing closed in February and *AutoTalk* reported in September the legal counsel for the AADA is vehemently offering additional information to the department advising that the draft bill needs to be a standalone proposal in an ideal situation.

However, there are whispers through the corridors of Parliament that could see another two-year wait for a full-bodied, long-legged automotive franchise code of conduct.

AADA chief executive **James Voortman** says the notion of another two years is hard to stomach.

"We are trying to



James Voortman

give as much input and advice to the department as possible, and the minister has said that we can expect draft regulations by the end of the year. We have been told that a new standalone automotive code for our industry could take significantly longer than a schedule to the existing code, for our industry has to be written from scratch, another two years has been suggested," he says.

We think there needs to be a balance between getting a timely resolution and a set of regulations with teeth which levels the playing field for dealers," Voortman explains.

We have listened to the government on their suggestion of an annexed code under the existing franchise legislation, but because it will be the first ever industry annex to a code we would need more detail," he highlights.

"We completely understand the frustration for our dealer members out there who have been more than patient, giving us feedback and supporting the cause – and we pass that same gratitude onto the rest of the automotive industry for trying to make it a fairer and more equitable system – it's just a matter of waiting for more detail from the Government," he continues.

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Dieselgate settlement 'beggars belief'

Federal Court Justice **Lindsay Foster** gave the consumer watchdog a scathing assessment of its agreement over Volkswagen's Dieselgate scandal in October.

He lambasted the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission for accepting the auto giant's \$75 million fine which Foster describes as "not a lot of money for Volkswagen".

Foster says based on the "scale, impact and deliberateness" of Volkswagen's emissions-cheating misconduct and the ACCC's acceptance of their account "beggars belief".

He dismissed Volkswagen's position of being unaware of the emissions testing defeat device, asking, "Doesn't that mean that the corporate governance of this very large corporation was hopeless, because this decision to build these engines in the way they did is a massive enterprise in itself?"

The *Sydney Morning Herald* also reports Foster mocking the ACCC's counsel in regards to accepting the settlement proposal,

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Justice Lindsay Foster

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Government confirms data-sharing

The federal government has confirmed a mandatory servicing and repair data-sharing scheme will become law in one of the biggest changes to the automotive industry.

Assistant treasurer **Michael Sukkar's** office has released a statement confirming the "Coalition Government is committed to progressing the design of a mandatory information sharing scheme for motor vehicle service and repair information".

Where countless independent workshops and repairers have had to access information from overseas, disguising themselves as dealers from Europe or the US, the new scheme will include conditions such as mandating that independent repairers must be able to purchase all service and repair information car manufacturers share with their dealership networks.

Sukkar says the laws will form "part of our commitment to support appropriate commercial dealing and competition in the new car retail supply chain for the benefit of both small businesses and consumers".

It's the biggest affirmation the automotive industry has officially had from the government since Sukkar announced his support for the programme at the 2017 AutoCare convention in Sydney for the Australian Automotive Aftermarket Association.

"It will also remove grey areas in the current voluntary arrangements by explicitly setting out a list of safety, security and environmental information that must only be released to appropriate businesses as well as clear criteria for access," the minister's statement says.

The AAAA's chief executive **Stuart Charity** says it's a long-awaited win for both the automotive industry and

consumers, and that he will be "reading every word" of the draft bill to ensure aftermarket business are charged "a fair price" for their data access.



Stuart Charity

"This is an incredible result for our members, who came to us with their concerns, put competitive rivalries aside and fought alongside us to have the law changed for their customers, their businesses and the wider industry," he says.

The Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce has been at the forefront of a long campaign to bring about change for consumers and automotive service and repair businesses.

"VACC, along with its national body the Motor Trades Association of Australia, worked hard to gather insights and case examples from businesses, including independent repairers, new-car franchised dealers, motor body repairers, and dismantlers and recyclers, on how restricted access to critical vehicle manufacturer service and repair information hampers consumer choice and contributes to an uncompetitive and unfair playing field," chief executive **Geoff Gwilym** says.

VACC arranged business and workshop visits for many parliamentarians and stakeholders, analysed international jurisdictions, and engaged experts from the US to assist in preparing a draft Code of Conduct.

Through the Motor Trades Association Australia, VACC facilitated an industry Heads of Agreement, and provided com-

prehensive submissions to parliamentary inquiries and investigations by government departments, agencies and regulators, including the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC), of the need for stronger government intervention.

Charity explains the association has worked "tirelessly" to push for government action to address the "important competition issue".

"We have personally met with over 75 federal MPs, facilitated hundreds of workshop visits by MPs all around the country and had countless early morning and late-night discussions with ministers and other industry stakeholders," he says.

The AAAA has also passed gratitude to fellow stakeholders, some of whom were once staunchly opposed to the idea of sharing proprietary OEM servicing and repair information with aftermarket workshops.

"This has been an industry wide effort and I would like to acknowledge the invaluable role played by automotive industry associations, Motor Trades Association of Australia (MTAA), Australian Automotive Dealer Association (AADA), Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce (VACC), Australian Automobile Association (AAA), and the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries (FCAI)," Charity says.

"I'd like to personally thank the assistant treasurer Hon Michael Sukkar for his leadership on this issue and commitment to introduce a mandatory data sharing law that will benefit small businesses in the automotive service industry as well as every Australian car owner," he adds.

AutoTalk understands an exposure draft could be ready as early as December. ■



Geoff Gwilym

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Economic smoke signals: Distrust, skewed wealth, evolving consumers

The latest survey report from Roy Morgan reveals some key indicators regarding why new car sales figures continue to tumble.

Despite the report indicating automotive is among the higher trust industries on a "Net Trust Score" with the public along with retail, supermarkets, insurance, services and tourism, the economic situation in Australia is drastically skewed in favour of the wealthy.

According to the report, the top 10% of Australia's wealthiest population holds more than 47% of that wealth, which has increased by roughly 10% since 2007.

However, it doesn't mean Australia is entirely worse off because 90% of the population is wealthier than it was in 2007 as the Global Financial Crisis loomed, where actual net wealth was once \$4.5 trillion, it is now at more than \$8.6 trillion.

But the reality for consumers, and potentially their inability or reluctance to buy new cars, can be found when using a median Consumer Price Index adjusted figure, which finds Australians are 2.2% poorer.

Part of the problem lies, according to chief executive **Michelle Levine**, with the issue Australians have in the institutions they trust such as the Royal Automobile clubs and PayPal, versus the ones they firmly distrust like big banks, oil companies and certain insurers like CGU or Youi as presented in the report.

The survey found all levels of government, local, state,

federal, and many of their departments such as Centrelink and the Australian Tax Office, are deemed untrustworthy.

"We keep trying to rid ourselves of the evils in the world around us, but yet we're all distrusting of governments as the regulators to change things," she says.

"Trust is the foundation of all human connections, but distrust causes customer churn, it impacts on engagement and retention – it is a bellwether for a sustainable future," Levine explains.

In the gender pay gap, women have continued to gain wealth, both in real terms and compared to their male counterparts.

Where women once had an average personal net wealth of \$236,000 in 2007, at 80% of their male equivalent's wealth (\$296,000), in 2019 it has risen to 88% and sits at \$393,000.

This suggests women now more than ever are likely to have a stronger influence on vehicle purchasing decisions, given there are now more women in full-time employment now than in 2007.

Roy Morgan's wealth research also finds removing the super-wealthy from the average figures shows most people's wealth has gone down – as opposed to incremental wage/earnings increases which differs from wealth.

Australia's primary wealth is in the property market at around \$6 trillion, but so too is its biggest proportion of total personal debt which stands at \$1.2 trillion, including 69% of that (\$847 bil-



Michelle Levine

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Auto Franchise Code: Patience is a virtue

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Voortman, whose experience includes as a key member of a federal minister's advisory team, says for the AADA annexed legislation is somewhat breaking new ground.

"The concept of an annex is unfamiliar territory for us, and it needs to cover future distribution models, such as the agency model being considered by some OEMs," Voortman concludes.

Minister Andrews tells *AutoTalk* the draft bill will be under the AADA's tree before Christmas.

"Draft legislation will be available for industry consultation before the end of the year at which time relevant stakeholders will be informed," she says.

"The Morrison Government is committed to implementing regulatory reforms to automotive franchising arrangements to make the system fairer for consumers, dealers and manufacturers," Andrews explains.

Andrews reminds the industry the reforms will not be optional and passes her appreciation to all parties who've had input over the last two years.

"The Government is focused on making the reforms mandatory, as they will provide for more transparent and co-operative end of term and capital expenditure arrangements," she continues.

"Stakeholders including the Australian Automotive Dealer Association, the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries and the Motor Trades Associations have been engaged as part of the process and their contributions have been very important in shaping the proposed reforms," Andrews adds.

At the September AADA Convention,



Macpherson Kelley law firm national director **James Sturgess** said it's imperative the automotive code does not become annexed under the franchise code.

He stressed that "an annexed code is a watered-down code" and suggested the tussle getting it over the line the way dealers want and need it, has only just begun.

"The AADA has done an amazing job getting the code to where it is now, but the next battle is going to be even harder – if the [federal] election had gone the other way, it would've been easier," Sturgess explains.

"This [Morrison] government needs to give this real priority, they're saying the right things ... But keep the code separate," he adds.

HWL Ebsworth Lawyers lead partner **Evan Stents** says dealers need mandatory buy-back terms, minimum-tenure clauses with minimum notice; and stresses the importance of the code's design to be handled by the right ministerial department.

"There are eight standalone industry codes already out there already, there's no reason our industry needs to be sharing a code that doesn't work," he begins.

"We need to make sure we future-

proof our code so it's not restricted just to franchising only," Stents explains.

Stents says the current franchising code of conduct falls under the treasury, but suggests dealers should be working with the department of small business.

"If we have a standalone, it may well come under the auspices of the department of small business which is a much better fit than treasury," he says.

Stents says the inner workings of the automotive code will be a "devil in the detail" situation going forward for the association.

"The government is saying it doesn't want to mandate buy-back obligations, but they're already in place within the dealer agreements, but the only reason dealers have those vehicles in stock is because of the requirements by OEMs in that same agreement," he explains.

"It's a bit of a 'furphy' to say a dealer must give reason to terminate the agreement, because the OEMs are under a no-fault arrangement and don't have to give reasons to dealers when they don't renew the dealer's franchise," Stents says.

"Dealers generally often enter into an agreement with more than one term, as a right of renewal, but it's an illusory right and off the back of that right investments are made thinking there's more than one term," he continues. ■



Karen Andrews

Dieseldgate settlement 'beggars belief'

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saying "you're actually on the same side".

Foster says the decision will remain for the court to decide, but suggested the \$75 million penalty should be "multiples of that amount".

Rubbishing the notion Volkswa-

gen's corporate governance "just had no idea what was going on", Foster suggests, "Someone had to know about it; someone had to write the cheques".

VW senior counsel **Garry Rich** said the penalty "sends a very, very clear message ... of how seriously this court

considers contraventions".

However, Foster tells Kirk, "You don't have to agree with things that are completely wrong", telling Rich, "It's not any contravention, it's contraventions of this magnitude and standing." ■

Taxing to extinction

The Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce has sounded a warning that Melbourne's automotive industry is starting to echo in all the wrong ways.

The chamber has found a fifth of Melbourne's metropolitan automotive small-medium businesses have closed since 2014 as land tax skyrockets by 130%.

The *Sydney Morning Herald* reported in April land tax is one of Victoria's largest treasury troves, shovelling \$3.1 billion into the state vault, but the impost is killing Melbourne's automotive trade.

The results from a VACC survey finds "overwhelmingly" the increase in land tax is dramatically affecting automotive businesses, chief executive **Geoff Gwilym** says the Andrews Labor government has this information.

"We call this a hollowing out effect and we've alerted the government to this," he says, having sent the personal accounts and data of automotive businesses on the verge of insolvency, closure, bankruptcy or relocation directly to treasurer **Tim Pallas**.

"Particularly over the last four years more and more automotive businesses are selling out of metropolitan areas, and moving out further, or shutting down completely."

Gwilym says there are several member businesses telling the VACC they're about to close because they cannot afford to pay increasing land tax.

"We've done a study of local government areas around metropolitan and in some cases the removal rate of businesses in automotive is up to 25%.

"Metropolitan Melbourne has 22% less automotive businesses than it did four years ago," Gwilym highlights.

Roughly 20 VACC member automotive businesses encircle the Melbourne CBD within just a 2.5km range, including Carlton, North and South Melbourne, Richmond, Kensington, Southbank and Abbotsford.

Less than a kilometre's difference and

that number grows to 50, according to the VACC's member locator, including franchised dealerships, independent mechanical workshops, tyre retailers and auto electricians.

Tony Sanchez, who owns and runs ALS Automotive in South Melbourne, has been in his current property since 2012, has seen the cost to run his humble workshop go stratospheric.



Geoff Gwilym

"My land tax bill has gone from \$2500 to \$23,000 in just seven years, and I've argued with the State Revenue Office that I'm still doing that same as the last 40 years – fixing cars," he tells AutoTalk.

"My business has grown, I do employ people now, but I make no more money from being in the premises and it's totally unfair they should tax me based on the potential it had should I sell it," Sanchez maintains.

ALS Automotive, a 420 square-metre premise, is neighboured by an even larger Spencer Panels business whose primary clients include warranty work for major OEM brands like Subaru, Volkswagen, Suzuki, Peugeot and Renault, and insurance giants IAG and RACV, just two doors down but with roughly four times the street frontage. Between them is an eight-story apartment block.

"I'm expecting it to go up again next year because they [revenue office] base it off the City of Port Phillip council rates, which have also gone from \$1500 to \$10,000 per year," Sanchez explains, bewildered and somewhat deflated.

"This is why I've raised the problem with the VACC – nobody's asking for favours, just for the state government and councils to be more reasonable and obliging to small businesses who pay everything and have never missed anything," he attests.

"It makes it really hard; I employ four people and had to let a fifth person go

recently which is tough having to explain that you just can't afford someone," he reveals.

Sanchez will be 65 before Christmas and employs two young mechanics and a third with a family, but he refuses to let the situation dampen spirits.



Tony Sanchez

"I'm working harder with less staff, but the good thing is I can do it, and the ones I do have left I'm honest with and we don't pretend the

situation isn't difficult – we just find a way to keep going and making our customers happy, some of whom are several generations of family still coming to us," he says optimistically.

Pallas has been criticised by the automotive industry for rapidly introducing the Victorian "super luxury tax" on new vehicle sales over \$100,000 this year, which came into effect from June 30.

The VACC communicated directly with Pallas saying the super tax would only tighten the economic grip around the automotive retail sector's neck.

"We're urging the state government to think about land tax which in some areas of Melbourne has gone up 130% in two years.

"We're telling them you're going to tax the automotive industry out and the services will go with them," VACC says.

"When you're trying to attract consumers into metro areas around Melbourne, they won't come if there are no services."

The new VACC data is the chamber's further attempt to prevent the collapse of even more automotive industry.

"You could say building apartments and growth is pushing businesses out, but the problem we can see is at some point you'll be in metro Melbourne having to drive 10-15-20km out to get your car fixed," Gwilym spells out.

"That's not good for car use, it's not good for road use," he adds. ■



Selling battery recycling

The CSIRO has already begun detailed investigations into how electric vehicle batteries can or could be recycled in a long-term sustainable future not too far away.

Speaking to *EVtalk* at Nissan Australia's charging infrastructure trial announcement in Melbourne this month, CSIRO's **Christopher Munnings**, the team leader for electrochemical energy systems and high efficiency thermal technologies says the organisation is working hard on establishing such an ecosystem.

"We're starting to look at battery recycling in detail – a lot of it depends on their chemistry because a lot of EV batteries contain high amounts of cobalt and that's quite a valuable commodity," he begins.

"The cost therefore is less than throwing it away, you make money off the scrap, and when you look at other technologies there's less value; but essentially a battery is a big box of aluminium and copper, metals that are profitable to be recycled," Munnings explains.

Together with research director for low-emission technology, **Dr David Harris**, Munnings says the

challenge is helping recyclers develop a systematic approach to removing those components in a similar way to the recycling of old lead-acid batteries or tyres.

"We need to help recyclers come up with novel ways of collecting those batteries, being quite big helps so you're only collecting one or two components.

"How do they maximise the value in removing those materials – graphites at the moment aren't recycled because they're difficult to remove," Munnings reveals.

Graphite is one of three naturally occurring carbon materials on Earth and is used 40 times more in an EV Li-ion battery's production than lithium. Graphene is a single-atom sheet of carbon which

was only discovered and developed as early as the mid-2000s and is the focus of significant research because it's unique ability to help batteries charge quickly and sustain that charge for longer – Samsung announced in early 2018 it would use the material in its phone batteries.

Graphene is unfortunately dif-

icult to harvest and the purification process produces waste, but it is 40 times stronger than diamond, 100 times lighter than aluminium and is 140 times more electrically conductive than lithium – which is why it has the potential to revolutionise EV battery energy density.

"Graphites are valuable, not as a raw material but in a battery, it is, and we have a very active programme looking at all those challenges," Munnings adds.

Harris says they need to establish who and what the recycled components are being recycled for; the process needs a second-life demand.

"Are you recycling it back to the battery manufacturers who make the same thing, or are you recycling the components to other opportunities which can vary depending on where you are in the world," he asks.

"The other side is whether these materials are the things you recycle straight away into their next second-life use," Harris adds.

"Before you get to the point of pulling the battery apart, you need to know what the next purpose is, and potentially whether it needs to be pulled apart at all," he explains.

According to the CSIRO, Australia produces roughly 3300 tonnes of lithium-ion battery waste, of which only 2% is recycled and growing by 20% per year; it's expected our lithium-ion battery waste will exceed 100,000 tonnes by 2036. ■



L-R: Christopher Munnings, Dr David Harris.

Pedestrian detection not infallible

The American Automobile Association has performed independent testing of pedestrian detection within autonomous emergency braking systems which reveals it may not save lives.

While acknowledging the features "are not intended to serve as a substitute for an engaged driver", the investigation has found, among other results, at 48km/h, three out of four test vehicles failed to reduce the impact speed by at least 8km/h.

The testing reveals pedestrian detection systems were "significantly challenged" when they encountered a child while travelling at 32km/h by only avoiding an impact 11% – or just over one in 10 occasions – using aggregated results.

When test vehicles were presented with a pedestrian while exiting a right-hand bend in the road, none of their autonomous emergency braking functions managed to mitigate any impact speeds during five test sequences per vehicle.

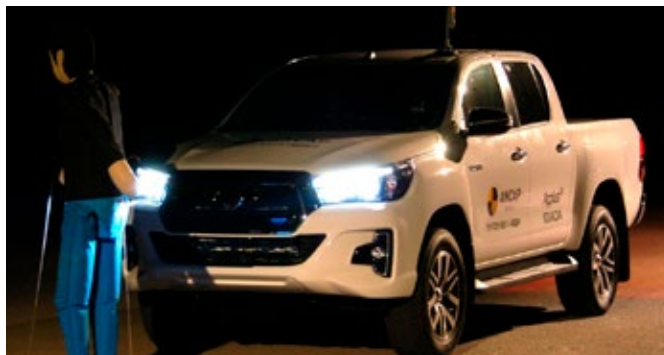
Only one in five collisions were

avoided when two pedestrians were encountered walking at the roadside, although the study does not indicate whether the pedestrian dummies were walking toward or in the same direction as the vehicle.

EuroNCAP and ANCAP testing of pedestrian detection systems uses a dummy rig travelling in the same direction as the vehicle, where on the recently scored Audi A6 for example, with the system operable between 10-85km/h.

During the day the vehicle was rated as "Good". However, in night scenarios, the Audi was also scored as "Marginal".

ANCAP communications and advocacy director **Rhianne Robson** tells *AutoTalk* drivers must never be



Rhianne Robson

complacent about these relatively new safety assist technologies.

"It is important that consumers are aware that AEB and other collision avoidance systems are provided to assist the driver in emergency situations, not replace the driver.

"ANCAP plays a key role in educating the community on the availability and benefits of these technologies, as well as their limitations," Robson says.

ANCAP says despite the potential drawbacks, the technology remains essential for people's on-going safety in and around vehicles in future.

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Yet there are still those among us who have never felt the need to change lanes or who are simply having too much fun – seemingly, **Adam Pollock** fits into both those descriptions.



Andy Pollock

He's the dealer principal for Healesville Toyota in Victoria, the last of the brand's impressively thorough dealer network before the beginning of the state's High Country.

Can you think of a more brilliantly positioned Toyota dealership? The foothills of some of the steepest, hardest, most gruelling off-road terrain in the entire country, with an ARB dealer right across the road. It's sure genius.

It's also the region known for growing some of Australia's best wine, the Yarra Valley.

Adam celebrated 10 years running the modest little dealership in the tourist hotspot known also for the Healesville Sanctuary and the also-award-winning Four Pillars Gin distillery.

It's been said time and again in the

automotive caper that the local dealership is often one of the cornerstones of rural and regional communities, tipping money back into sports clubs, nearby schools, employing young locals and literally keeping them mobile during times of crisis like bushfires or floods.

When Adam took up the mantle of dealer principal in 2007, not only was the Global Financial Crisis not far away (small towns are often hit hardest by economic struggles), but the 2009 Black Saturday bushfires would come terrifyingly close to the town.

Despite the hard knocks, Healesville Toyota continues to keep locals moving, like funeral director **Gavin Heritage**, a young local tradie Brandon who was just 10 when Adam first met him, and return LandCruiser lovers **Michael** and **Ann** who bought their first GXL from the same dealership back in 1997.

The business makes a good point on its well utilised and properly executed Facebook page, with an image of four 79-Series LandCruisers lined up in the waiting bays, captioned: "You'd think we only sold LandCruisers here".

It's hard to think of a more appro-

priate location for a Toyota dealership right before heading up into Marysville and Lake Mountain for the snow season, and beyond that, the bluffs, tracks and ruts into the Great Dividing Range – the places LandCruisers are built to tackle.

Most dealership Facebook pages are filled with the same giant bow atop the bonnet and an awkward smile, but Healesville Toyota's has plenty of two-way traffic with owners posting photos of their exploits.



"Phil and Jacqui are on the road with their new LandCruiser 200 Sahara which they had converted to a dual cab," they say.

And closer to home, during what was a record snow fall this winter, **Travis** and **Mandy** ventured to Lake Mountain during an epic snow dump and decided to share it with their local

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Three decades of dependability

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Toyota dealer.

The **Young** family sent in photos filling up their Sahara diesel V8 at \$2.08/litre ... somewhere out there in the middle of nowhere, while "**Brendan and Chelsea**" also sent in a '79-Series GXL at sunset' photo, but from exactly where they wanted to be – Fraser Island.

How many people think of sharing their journey through life with a car dealer? Plenty judging by what appears to be a very active Toyota community.

"They went to great lengths to book in our 2015 Prado in for its 50,000km service," local **Fletcher Lehmann** says.

"When you are booked out for 2-3 weeks, you know that you are in the right place," the director of Maroondah Auto Electrics says.

Repeat customers also appear to be something of a staple, as local **Bec Chandler** adds.

"We are up to our 5th purchase from Healesville Toyota now," she says.



"The team truly go above and beyond for their customers and always make us feel welcome and respected," she compliments.

The Pollock family has been selling Toyotas to Healesville and the surround-

ing area for 30 years, and two years ago invested into major sponsorship of the Healesville Senior Football Ground.

Perhaps it's easier than first thought to see why Adam hasn't gone anywhere. ■



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Dealers essential for Carly subscription platform

Fears new car subscription services would see the convention dealership retail model up-rooted couldn't be more misguided.

Vehicle subscription business Carly, which recently announced it has signed on Hyundai Australia to supply assets, needs the franchised dealer network.

Part of ASX-listed Collaboration Corporation's portfolio which includes DriveMyCar, MyCaravan and Mobilise, Carly has already begun substantially partnering with several major dealer groups and respective OEM franchisor brands.

Chief executive **Chris Noone** tells *AutoTalk* more good news is coming as there are plenty of big brand names they're in discussions with, and many irons in the fire.

"We can't announce who those other partners are yet, but we're talking to a number of providers and subscription is certainly a hot topic at the moment," he begins.

"With the decline in car sales and the banking royal commission results, consumers are looking at alternative ways to get access to vehicles, and dealers and OEMs are looking for ways to meet that need," he says.

But don't think this is another nail in the dealer's retail business model coffin, because it could be the best decision a dealer makes.

"We're not circumnavigating the dealer because the car still comes from the dealership," Noone says.

"This is another way of presenting the car to the customer because a lot of people are on contract work now, they might take an extended holiday, they

change jobs, lifestyles change.

"If you buy a sports car now and have twins in nine months' time, you're going to look pretty stupid, but also people are thinking carefully about where they're spending money now as their lives change," Noone says.

Carly is being offered as an opportunity for dealers to add value to their business model, by taking advantage of their existing I-Motor services which give them the ability to offer Carly subscription on their website.

Noone says dealers can stop chasing the lowest possible price on sales, and it means no more turning to the service department profits for ad-hoc promotions and savings.

"Manufacturers are still going to make cars, dealers are still going to distribute them, we're just providing a different way to get to those customers.

"Dealers and OEMs love digital, but the current retail model still requires consumers to physically enter the dealership to access vehicle ownership, but this is an opportunity to put unsold assets to use by offering them as a true subscription without having to leave the couch," Noone highlights.

Car subscription enables franchised dealers to seamlessly introduce a new revenue source to their dealership by providing their customers with the opportunity to subscribe to the newest vehicles on sale.

It also means dealers can play to their advantage in a shaky economic climate where finance is harder to approve after the Hayne Royal Commission.

The concept leverages web traffic

already visiting a dealer's website and requires no additional marketing expenditure, appropriate given several industry experts have said they're encouraging dealers to spend more on digital marketing. Carly could be one of those opportunities.

Noone says his firm has not just come up with a good idea, but ploughed ahead without any investment and technical forethought.

"It's not as easy as slapping a 'subscription' sticker on a car and saying, 'Come and get it,'" he points out.

"There's a lot more you need to do; we have over 10 years' experience doing long-term car rentals.

"We do a live hand-over with the dealer or an agent, an inspection is done on the vehicle, we've developed an app that manages the inspection to include details and pictures, which is uploaded to our system, and when it's returned we can cross-check no damage has occurred," Noone explains.

He says a great deal of troubleshooting has gone into the business model before testing it at commercial scale.

"One of the most important things we do is verify customers before they get into the cars," he reveals.

"We've spent years honing our processes, investing in the platform, to make sure it works really well, really quickly and gets the maximum conversion without annoying customers by saying 'We'll get back to you'," he says.

Carly says its verification has even seen publicly reported incidents which

Continued on page 12



Chris Noone

Dealers essential for Carly subscription platform

Continued from page 11

have been helped or reduced by the operation's extensive vetting and security screening of applicants.

Unable to find a verification platform around the world which suited their needs, Noone decided to build their own.

"It's called Peer Pass and allows us to integrate third-party services and our own technology as well," he says.

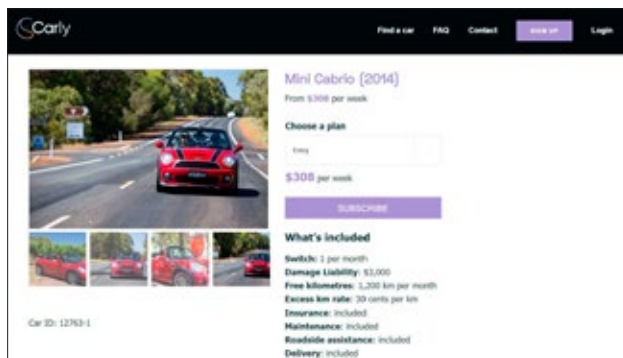
"It means we can verify driver's licences, Medicare cards, passports, we can do credit checks and potential fraud.

"If we feel the customer is not going to be suitable or not able to make payments or can't look after the vehicle, we won't process that subscription," Noone explains.

The commitment to get the business, its programs and its technology matured and ready to implement for clients is Carly's edge, Noone says.

"It's hard to launch this out of the box as an OEM and/or dealer because you don't have the benefit of experience," he says.

"That's why Hyundai has partnered with us because we have the track record – every question they threw at us we said 'Yes, we've come across that before and here's what we did in that instance and what we've done to mitigate that going forward'," Noone reveals.



Is subscription a dealer's new best friend?

To most of us it would feel a momentous occasion and a proud achievement to sit in the room meeting with a major automotive brand showing keen interest in your arguably game-changing enterprise.

But for Noone, stepping into the room with Hyundai was more about being "in the zone", having all Ts crossed and Is dotted.

"We knew when we launched Carly earlier this year that this was exactly what was needed, but we had to wait until the right moment for the market to be ready; that is for consumers to want subscription and for the industry to have the incentive to look at subscriptions," he concedes.

"It was great to get the deal with Hyundai, but it's even better to make it work, delivering it back to our partners and our kick is getting cars out the door.

Noone says there are other players in the space offering what appears to be advertising as a subscription service, but has all the hallmarks of a typical finance model.

"When you see an Australian Financial Service licence number on their website and you dig further to find their product is locking customers into a long-term, multi-year, payment scheme with high break costs

on a contract, that's just financing and not subscription," he warns.

"Generation-Y, which is getting around the 40-year age, is aware that life can change as soon as six or 12 months; it's not like the old days when your life changed in increments of 10 years and you had a different car for each era," Noone says.

"Consumers want to have flexibility and a true subscription service offers that."

Carly announced back in June it would collaborate with the Sutton dealer group in Sydney by supplying vehicles for the subscription program.

The arrangement with I-Motor means Carly subscriptions can be readily added to over 700 automotive dealer websites managed by I-Motor.

Noone says we'll just have to "watch this space" as even more news comes out in the near future. ■

Pedestrian detection not infallible

Continued from page 11

"The systems fitted to vehicles use cameras, sensors [radar/lidar] or a combination of both to detect a potential crash, and ANCAP's independent testing allows consumers to see how different systems perform across a range of vehicle makes and models and in differing conditions," Robson highlights.

"To encourage the uptake of advanced collision avoidance technologies, ANCAP has been assessing the effectiveness of AEB systems on new cars entering the market since the start of last year, and of the 57 vehicles

tested by ANCAP – with the exception of two models – all have been fitted with autonomous emergency braking technology.

"Of these, 53 models [93%] have been fitted with advanced AEB systems capable of detecting and either avoiding or minimising the effects of a crash with a pedestrian and/or cyclist," Robson says.

The AAA's test declared: "Evaluated pedestrian detection systems were ineffective during night-time conditions".

The vehicles tested were a Chevrolet Malibu, Honda Accord, Tesla Model

3, and Toyota Camry.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports in 2017 nearly 6000 pedestrians were killed in vehicle crashes with 75% of pedestrian fatalities occurring at night, compared to 21% during daylight, just 2% at dusk and 2% at dawn.

"Never rely on pedestrian detection systems to avoid a collision," the AAA reminds.

"These systems serve as a backup rather than a primary means of collision avoidance." ■



Motorclassica makes more than economic sense

Celebrating 10 years of bringing together car lovers of all ages and economic circumstance, Motorclassica has defied critics, politics and risen, despite the failures of Australia's wider automotive industry.

In the current political and economic climate where trade is in jeopardy, tensions between state and people grow tighter, and businesses – especially in the automotive caper – find making ends meet harder by the week, Motorclassica continues to inspire.

No less startling with its stunning location: Melbourne's heritage listed Royal Exhibition Building, this event is more than just a weekend gawping at polished chrome and getting ideas – it's an institution which supports an enormous economic contribution.

Of particular highlight each year is the effort car brands like Mercedes,

Porsche, BMW, Mini, Jaguar go to in order to keep not only their loyal followers engaged, but to tease upcoming new models, or completely reveal them for the first time to the public.

Since Motorclassica began in 2009, at another time of economic uncertainty both here and abroad, roughly 18 various models and their respective local teams have ripped the silk off their next big thing.

Speaking exclusively to *AutoTalk*, Motorclassica director **Paul Mathers** says people's fascination with the history of cars transcends politics, bureaucracy and economic segregation.

"The classic car movement internationally has grown exponentially over the last 10 years, and the big motor shows might still exist but all the others have closed down," he says.

"When we started Motorclassica, there was no real significant Concours event in Britain, now there's three or four and all are very similar to us by attracting new car launches particularly from brands with a history and a story to tell," Mathers points out.



Paul Mathers

He admits the event met resistance early on because of its appeal to become commercial, but Mathers says to become sustainable and gain industry-wide support, it couldn't have worked any other way.

"If we can keep brands and dealers inspired and show the value this show offers, then we'll continue to grow and be successful – which means we can curate great collections like this," he says.

"We have to make money through the door, through exhibitors and sponsors, because you're talking about an event which costs three-quarters of a million dollars to put on, you can't do

Continued on page 12



Mercedes celebrates 125 years of motorsport



Classic cars start conversations: Mathers.



Inspiration is worth every cent invested.

Motorclassica makes more than economic sense

Continued from page 13

that at a club level without being stuck in a Maccas carpark or the local sports oval," he explains, not trying to be disrespectful to the smaller communities of enthusiasts.

"Those grassroots events are great because the classic car movement needs that, but around 30% of the Concours this year are interstate – this event is national and to bring one of these Bentleys over here from Perth cost a bloke \$21,000," he exclaims.

For all the big-ticket entrants, Mathers says there are also countless low-key, leather-faced DIYers who do things on the cheap, dropping lots of small amounts of their hard-earned money into trailering their pride and joy across the country just to compete.

With the launch of several new vehicles into the Australian market from the likes of Alfa Romeo, Alpine and Mercedes-Benz supporting the event, plus trade organisations and restorers, exotic car dealers like Lorbek, Duttons and Zagame exhibiting, Mathers says it hasn't always been plain sailing.

"Back in 2009 when we started this, there was a large portion of the car

community that was sour and said it'll never happen, and then when we did, they said it'll never happen again and it went on for a few years," he reveals.

"There was a negative attitude against it being a commercial event, but it has to be commercial, and slowly those naysayers have become advocates," he says.

Mathers says Motorclassica works because it appeals to enthusiasts of every era and doesn't simply pit brand against brand for sales.

"When we came out motor shows were in decline – just two years after we started the Australian International Motor Show was gone – and then there was a couple of abandoned attempts to revive it which never work; Motorclassica has grown despite all of that because it makes people smile," he explains.

"The Bolwell brand, which has launched the new Nagari 500, has been around for 50 years, Mini is celebrating 60 years, Citroen hitting 100 years, and a massive global brand like Nissan is celebrating their heritage, but we also have this underground movement where small companies are

producing really high-spec machines which is pretty cool.

"Motorclassica has evolved to be all-encompassing of the motoring industry – everybody talks about the death of the Australian car manufacturing, but there are lots of cottage manufacturers like Brabham creating really exotic cars which defy that," he says.

Mathers says he's been dismayed by the pressures facing the classic car industry recently which could have broken a less passionate community.

"This year's been particularly hard – the asbestos issues in bringing old cars into Australia means we're losing more cars than we're gaining.

"The drop in the Australian dollar hasn't helped because the British and Americans are buying up our cars, so the pool gets smaller, and we're not able to grow it because of the asbestos issues which makes people scared about importing cars they might own overseas here," he stresses.

"The Luxury Car Tax affects that as well, in the new car market the Super Luxury Tax in Victoria has added massive cost to new cars which is passed

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Aussie sports car Bolwell Nagari 500 debuts

Motorclassica makes more than economic sense



Continued from page 14

onto consumers and dealers who are all hurting – the market is really, really challenging and we're bloody lucky we've got brands here supporting us and thinking outside of the box to counter these challenges."

As the founder of Motorclassica who has tirelessly brought not only swarms of people from interstate and overseas into Melbourne, but also pulled media attention and encouraged the automotive industry to unite, Mathers says it's the cars that do the publicity.

"People are united by this passion, interest and history – we're so linked up together today but still so distant, texting at the dinner table – Motorclassica brings people together to have conversations," he says.

"It breaks down barriers, strangers can talk to each other, kids talk to

grandparents; it's a beautiful thing."

Despite reasons to be furious, Mathers always wears a smile and is quick to modestly heap praise on those who support the event, rather than take it for himself.

"The fact we've got entrepreneurial OEMs here to celebrate their 50-year history is very appropriate and it does wonders for their brand," he says.

Dealers can learn from this event as brands reveal special editions and promote limited-run versions of vehicles selling through their showrooms. Rare kitted-out Fords and Holdens of a bygone era, exotic supercars, quirky low-volume single-model brands, revived marques and even engineering marvels like race cars, prototypes and concept cars all have a place at Motorclassica, as well as in people's hearts.

Motorclassica has seen mates judge the best vehicles in the concours, it's seen car brands launch new and prominent models to the mar-

ket, and it's a chance for kids, teenagers and boys-trapped-in-men's bodies to get up close to their dream cars.

Motorclassica and the thousands of tiny classic car events held across Australia – the community itself – supports an immense network of spray painters, panelbeaters, mechanics and engineers; old hands whose skills are a dying artform; they keep businesses big and small open, they support wrecking yards and online traders, attending swap meets on long weekends.

"Once upon a time, tribes would sit around a campfire telling stories, and it was about passing down history; Motorclassica is one of those events that brings people together," Mathers concludes.

"It doesn't matter if you're a millionaire or a shift worker with one classic car – those two people can have a conversation." ■



Never miss an opportunity with “always-on” advertising



By Gavin Cox,
Managing Director,
AdTorque Edge

Consumer behaviour is ever-changing, and in the automotive industry it is becoming increasingly evident that, unless dealers adapt with customers' expectations, they will be left behind.

We've all heard the stats: 93% of car purchases today are digitally influenced; customers are researching more so can have as many as 130 digital touchpoints before they purchase a vehicle; and dealership visits have dropped from five per sale to two.

So, how should dealerships be advertising in this tough, competitive market, to ensure they are reaching potential customers before their competitors do?

The answer is, to be “always on”. Dealers need to shift their mindsets away from traditional marketing and ad-hoc online campaigns, and establish the key building blocks to implement an “always on” advertising strategy that continually targets customers, reaching them earlier in the purchasing cycle. Such practices have proven to be more effective and to deliver greater bang for their buck.

It all starts with a search ...

When a customer is considering a new vehicle, or even when they are just interested in a make of car, the first thing they are likely to do is search in a browser. Search Engine Marketing enables a business to appear at the top of search results based on the keywords typed by and geographical location of the user.

A dealership's messages and listings are vital at this stage, as with the right offer and clickable conversion points, such as a click-to-call phone number,

a customer is able to easily become engaged and interact with the business.

Display network and social advertising also play an important role in getting a dealership's brand in front of potential customers, as well as retargeting those who may have shown some earlier interest.

The sophisticated targeting capabilities of big digital players (eg, Google, Facebook, Microsoft etc.) allow advertisers to narrow down the audience that sees an advert. This means that only those presenting key behaviours of a good quality prospect are shown the advert, equating to a higher chance of conversion.



Video is a powerful selling tool, particularly in the automotive industry, as it gives customers a detailed view of vehicle from the comfort of their own computer. From 2016-2019, Google reported a 65% increase in watch-time of test drive videos on YouTube. They also found that 72% of people attributed a portion of their car purchase decision to online video.

Not only do these findings highlight the importance of dealerships producing video promotions of their vehicles, they also point to a highly engaged audience on whom paid video advertising

can be extremely effective.

Programmatic video ads - such as Youtube's TruView - run before or mid-stream of an online video, and can present an opportunity to convert then and there through action buttons such as “visit a website”, “schedule a test drive” or “learn more”.

Their targeting capabilities are based on users' digital behaviours including searches, app downloads and video views, which, like all signal and touch-point audience-building, makes for a highly qualified group of prospective customers who are seeing the ads.

Always be present and visible

Today's customer is curious, demanding and impatient. They want instant gratification, which is why, when looking to purchase, one in three Smartphone users end up buying from a brand other than the one they intended.

This means, that if your dealership is presented to a customer at the right time, and is providing the information that they want, they are highly likely to engage you rather than one of your competitors. But, the converse is also true, and competitors could be taking business from you.

So how do you ensure you never miss an opportunity? The key is to be always on.

Gone are the days of running short sale campaigns and ad-hoc promotional offers. This strategy no longer works for the modern consumer who is on the internet 24 hours a day, searching, researching, scrolling and viewing.

The only way to ensure that you never miss an opportunity is to be ever-present: Always running digital advertising through a variety of channels. The messages can be changed and the audiences optimised, but never let your advertising sleep, because search never does. ■



Win on Sunday, sell Monday

After losing local full-scale vehicle manufacturing and the tenuous relationship it gave motorsport fans to the Commodore and Falcon, with the return of the Mustang as a full-blown Bathurst front-runner after decades of obscurity, it seems Ford has found again, and backed, a winning formula.

But half a century ago a very different beast was roaring down Conrod Straight, built by blokes in an ordinary tin shed known only as "Lot 6" in Melbourne's Thomastown industrial precinct, back when asbestos was everywhere, speed cameras didn't exist and **Bon Scott** was still a kid.

This was Ford's real sales strategy.

The Mustang today is consistently the best-selling sports car in Australia by far, with 3584 sales this year, despite being down over 30%.

It outsells closest category competitor the Mazda MX-5 nine times, and with Commodore only on 5100 sales (down over 35% in 2019) - for a motorsport connection to road cars, the Mustang is it.

On the morning of the Bathurst 1000 in October, *AutoTalk* had the opportunity to chat with some of the unsung heroes behind what was the original Ford legend, long before it had an official name.

The expression "win on Sunday, sell on Monday" was the driver of Australia's formerly two biggest car brands, back when Monaros, Kingswoods and Toranas sold hand-over-fist for Holden and the Falcon was the must-have Blue Oval.

A crew of six men, brought together by the special vehicles' manager **Al Turner**, was tasked with building the fastest tin-top racing car Australia had ever seen. The legends. The GT-HO Phase I, II & III race cars.

Robin Searls started as "a gopher" cleaning tyres and fetching burgers

before a stint in the US as an apprentice doing development for Ford's racing division called Kar-Kraft.

He'd caught wind of Ford Australia wanting to go motor racing.

"I'd done a lot of work on the Cleveland engine in the US for development on the Boss 351 Mustang of '71, but they brought that engine here in late 1969 to put into production first," he tells *AutoTalk*.

"It wasn't a large team with only five others on the floor working with their own job on each of the three race cars, one doing brakes, one doing gearboxes, a couple doing engines," Searls explains.

Lot 6 for those who don't know, was the equivalent of Dick Johnson Racing Team Penske building the most extraordinary V8 Supercar under complete secrecy from the rest of Ford's organisation.

There was no public recognition, no giant glowing sponsor logos out front or gift shop racks of merchandise, you certainly couldn't watch uniformed engineers building next month's highly-strung machine like today.

This was motorsport warfare. No leaks, no sharing with loved ones - the first rule of Fight Club type of thing.

"It was called Lot 6 and it was all hush-hush because you don't want your competitors knowing anything, and if you weren't one of the inner sanctum crew, you didn't get in the gate," he reveals.

"Even top knobs from Ford head office would come down and knock on the gate and got told to go away," Searls says.

"When you got to the race track, everybody was looking over your shoulder, photographers, recordings - it was much easier back then with no mobile phones - but we kept to ourselves because you were always trying to get

an edge over the competition to win," he concedes.

Searls, known as the "fuel man", says the idea to chill the 20-litre drums of fuel before filling up the larger Falcon fuel tank (versus the smaller Torana tanks) was their cunning idea to drastically shorten time spent in the pits at Bathurst.

Selling cars and the glory of victory depended on it, which is why Lot 6 existed and was commonly working under lights strictly until midnight.

"Every second we saved made life easier for **Allan Moffat, Bo Seton, "Gibbo" (Fred Gibson)** and other drivers out on the track," he says.

"We never envisaged the work we were doing would create a legend still there 50 years later," Searls says.

"We used to work in cubic inches back then and nowadays we joke that race teams work with cubic money; it is very different, but people still buy cars today because of what we did," he surmises.

The Phase III GTHO was the fastest four-door production car in the world in its day and there's an entire generation of car buyers today who will never forget - even if they never knew - what **Robin, Al Turner, Ray Kennedy, John Gowland, Ian Stockings, David Thurlow, Peter Jeffery, John Mapstead, Colin Russell, Geoff Sharpe, John Wynne, Alistair McNaughton, Bill Santuccioni, and Brian Mackellin** achieved behind closed doors.

It was their efforts that took **Leo and Ian "Pete" Geoghegan, Bo Seton, "Gibbo", John French, Bruce McPhee and Allan Moffat** to the greatest racetrack in the world - Mount Panorama.

It wasn't just **Scott McLaughlin** and **Dick Johnson** who won on Sunday to sell Mustangs on the Monday morning. ■



Robin Searls

Economic smoke signals: Distrust, skewed wealth, evolving consumers



Continued from page 4

lion worth) which is the result of owner-occupied mortgages.

Fortunately, asset wealth is growing faster than our debt.

Levine says in the moment of hurting new car sales – an unintended collateral victim of a flailing property market – the automotive industry needs to focus on what customers want – or don't want.

"The critical point for the car industry is consumers' move away from things to experiences," she says.

"People are less defining themselves by having things, and more on the experiences they're engaging in and I think with cars it's going to be a downward trend."

"Where does the manufacturer and dealer sit as the model changes from owning to using; at the moment Toyota is so ubiquitous when you think 'car', and other brands need to be in that visibility space is incredibly important," she advises.

Levine says the economy could be facing early symptoms of a Global Financial Crisis in terms of consumers' reluctance to splash out on big-ticket purchases like new cars.

"In the US car companies just couldn't sell cars during the GFC, so one brand realised people were too scared to buy a car they couldn't pay for and therefore get a bad credit rating," she highlights.

"So that brand allowed people to lease the car with the arrangement to buy back the car at an agreed rate if the customer lost their job.

"What is the next strategy the car companies and dealers can do to recognise where peoples' fears are and address that?" she asks.

Mid-year the Center for Automotive Research in Germany predicted global new car sales would drop from 83.7 million in 2018 to 79.5m in 2019, and says the market isn't going to recover to last year's figures until 2022. ■

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365 Roadside Assistance chief executive Peter Richardson (left) with Toyota Financial Services head of insurance Ian Slater.

Dealers at the core of 365 Assistance's network

A next-generation technology platform, focusing on delivering a customer-centric experience, is taking on the automotive industry.

365 Assistance was selected as Toyota Financial Services' (TFS) national roadside assistance partner after a competitive tender process. Now one year into a contract with TFS, 365 is continuing to build strong, ongoing partnerships with major OEMs and dealer groups.

"We believe in consistent approach, and we have strategically aligned our vision to dealers across Australia," Roadside Assistance chief executive **Peter Richardson** says.

"365 is an agnostic next-gen tech platform and service operation, and the way we look at dealers and servicing are integral to us. Without the servicing relationship with the dealer, you don't have a customer."

"We understand virtues and we make sure everybody that comes 365 has a positive experience."

Working with 365 allows dealers in locations across Australia to work and have a voice with the 365 network.

With the launch of its new Uber-style Roadside Assistance app, it enables the 365 repair network to pinpoint exact driver location to create the fastest provision of services in the market.

Richardson says 365 has been building in the driven-Uber-style motoring and financial services space and takes opera-

tions in the industry to the next level.

Its Uber-style provider network platform gives providers flexibility such as choosing rates, picking the job allocation and receiving ongoing industry support.

"The result is we need to further our continued investment into our platform," Richardson says.

"In our view, having a 365 in one place of operation limits us in terms of time it gets to the clients, and secondly, it's expensive and not an efficient means of supporting customers spread across Australia."

Richardson does not see this as the way of the future and does not support the dynamics of the industry.

365 Assistance originally started with a retail focus to motor traders, but quickly realised the missing opportunity in the market was not on the retail side, but to align to businesses to needed to support custom-

ers.

"The retail sense is a well-understood and accepted challenge and there are players in the market who do this reasonably well," Richardson says.

"We're not a traditional roadside assistance provider, rather, we approach our vision as being a solutions tech specialist partnering to drive business to business, and as part of this journey we've invested heavily in IT."

"This strategic shift now means we

have developers who sit in-house building IoT infrastructures such digital platforms, communication cycles, payment gateways and mobile apps on behalf of our partners including Toyota Financial Services and more location-specific dealer groups."

Richardson says he sees a bright future in this space.

"We are beginning to see success now and understanding where our niche fits. Roadside assistance can no longer be transactional, it needs to be a more focused solution."

"Dealers and OEMs are at the core of this."

365's key point of difference would be that it is not transactional and invests in IT.

"We are investing in technology and will have some exciting announcements in the coming months," Richardson says.

He spills that there will shortly be a home assistance option, which will be the same as roadside assistance, further leveraging power in the environment.

"We are using major support partners to provide home assistance."

A rewards program will also be offered in an app, allowing access to rewards like petrol, restaurant and clothing discounts to reward customers.

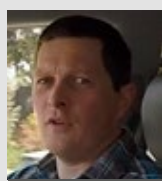
A number of completely new projects, with TFS and other brands, is in the works, as well as plans to expand overseas – first stop New Zealand. ■



Peter Richardson



Don't cut down tall timber



Scott Murray,
Editor

If you're not familiar with the very under-rated song from Australian rock royalty Skyhooks, then you may not fully understand the wonderful dichotomy of the Nissan Patrol.

Here in Ti-L form, at a chin-de-scending \$98,000 driveaway, when it's not your two-metres-wide "luxo four-bee-four" you're trying to thread through cramped suburbia, it can be easy to forget to breathe.

The last Nissan Patrol yours truly drove was mum's long-wheelbase MQ tank which we dubbed the "Bronze Bullet" because once it was up to speed, you sure-as-heck didn't want anything to step out in front.

Matching its horizontal presence is its length, surpassing more than five metres of garage space without the 3.5-tonne tow bar which you'll certainly smack a shin on if you are half as clumsy as me.

Unfortunately, the outgoing Y62 Patrol doesn't get much in the way of colour choice; it's titanium silver, gunmetal grey, obsidian black or a charcoal-ish Nutella-like hue called "Rich Brown".

In the name of transparency, the Patrol's off-road repertoire remains untested because, like the real world

of an off-roader not permanently based in suburbia's outer-rim and beyond, I simply didn't have time to get it off the blacktop – with exception to a short strip of gravel road leading to a park in Anglesea.

What a weekend visiting this blink-and-miss-it seaside town along the Great Ocean Road offers is a chance to take the usual cubic metres of one's household stuff needed for keeping a one-year-old alive and "happy".

So Big Pat spent 95% of its loan time – courtesy of Nissan Australia – on bitumen, which offered plenty of opportunity to grow not only accustomed to it, but unexpectedly fond of it.

Unlike the rest of Grey Nomad Australia, I'm not psychologically married to the Toyota LandCruiser and let's face it, not all marriages are healthy, sustainable or destined to last.

Patrol sales have been doing surprisingly well this year, improving 44% for 1458 reported units (VFACTS); admittedly it's a 10th of what its direct rival is doing, but only one has DPF problems.



Patrol Ti-L offers LC Sahara performance with change.

Like the LC, Pat has an enormous cavern where your 12 kitchen sinks can travel in supreme comfort, or half that if you need to use the third-row seats, which fold up and down with a firm but fair-enough clunk. They're thickly padded, covered in leather and there's even curtain airbags to protect little scones from side impacts. Not that you'd likely feel much unless you're being T-boned by an Abrams.

The seven-speed auto may be delivering 560Nm of torque down the drivetrain, but using all 298kW doesn't kick in until 5800rpm, so when you belt the throttle, yes, it is like launching the Delta IV Heavy, but gliding through traffic reveals a short, rev-happy wait time before changing up.

Unable to ignore that colossal 5.6-litre V8, it would save a little bit of fuel money changing gear sooner, but I guess if you're buying one of these 2.5-tonne-plus continent-crossers, those drops of fuel might as well be in the ocean.

Sitting like a lord in what feels like Picard's Galaxy Class chair, you tower over hatchbacks and look down at project managers in their Hilux Rogues, and casually switch on the heating or cooling function depending on the temperature. It's impossible to not find or readjust to a comfy position.

You're surrounded by an engaging command centre of mixed leather and faux wood that absolutely has not gone out of style in my book, so long as

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Don't cut down tall timber

Continued from page 20

you're in touch with the way the world was before brushed aluminium and gloss black gear selector shrouding.

The ratios in the electric steering rack are on the lighter side, making virtually zero effort of directing its bow according to the sextant (sorry, satnav) which is surprisingly accurate for an old OE system not offering Android CarPlay. I love the inclusion of a CD player and continue to praise a car-maker which leaves it there just in case. The integrated headrest DVD screens are also old school but praiseworthy, likewise the 12 drink holders throughout, charging ports all over the joint and tri-zone climate.

Conscious of the potential for inter-desert travel, Nissan has stuck UV-reducing glass in the first-row doors, and when the sun goes down the auto-levelling xenon headlights cut through the night.

As you power down the highway, it feels more appropriate to play composer **Hans Zimmer's** theme from *Crimson Tide* than actual songs, because unless you've got the cruise control set, it's so easy to temper the USS Alabama's snarling powerplant.

Should anyone try to commit mutiny and remove you from the driver's seat, they wouldn't be surprised if you reacted like **Captain Ramsey** - it'll do 0-100km/h in about seven seconds for goodness sake. That's the kind of power you want a calm, rational Lt Cmdr **Ron Hunter** in charge of.

Filling the 140-litre tank with premium 95RON might seem expensive at \$1.50/l - that's \$210, thank you kindly - but when you look at the 900km range, consider how much gear/children/kitchen sink you can shove into this thing (750kg of payload FYI) with a



A 700mm wade depth makes flooded roadways mere puddles.

potential 3.5 tonnes of braked caravan/boat/meteorite behind, to a total seven-tonne gross combined mass, it's very affordable.

And when yet another 200 Series rolls up beside you at the servo, you can smile to yourself knowing you're 35mm taller, 215mm longer, 25mm wider, 47mm higher off the ground and, thanks to Toyota's recent announcement, you'll always remember you're in what will soon be one of the only petrol V8 luxury off-roader wagons that isn't a Range Rover.

Negotiating small roundabouts can be a little embarrassing when you have two goes getting around, as too is having to reverse-park the gargantuan Alabama into the cabin's tiny slot where a regular car might park at the Anglesea Big4. This isn't a criticism; it's preposterously good fun.

It feels like the whole campsite is watching, but fortunately Nissan's 360-degree birds-eye camera helps you avoid touch-parking (or simply flattening) the clapped-out Fiesta beside, and stops you turning the cabin into the Cairns Marlin Marina.

Essentially, the Patrol will undoubtedly match the LandCruiser Sahara

going toe-to-toe, but let's face it; they seldom actually go as far as the brochure's CGI backdrops entice you to go. And for those that do, you can fit all the Safari4x4 snorkels, ARB bull-bars, Warn winches and Rhino Rack roof trays you like with the 20 grand you saved. There are even people with the nerve to fit a Harrop supercharger because they upgraded the meteorite to a moon.

If you have a personality you will be happier with the characterful, interesting and odd-one-out Nissan Patrol, otherwise you can simply follow the nomadic herd into a potential DPF depression.

But going with the crowd, being part of the louder majority doesn't mean there isn't a place for the tall timber. The 60 Series Patrol first arrived in 1951, like the Toyota, and going on Australian sale in 1960, it was the first vehicle to cross our Simpson Desert.

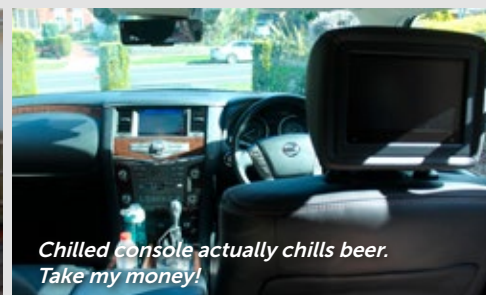
Australian society might have a cultural xenophobia for the tall poppies, yet we regard Skyhooks as one of the greatest rockbands in our history, and one could argue Australia wouldn't be what it is without either, nor wonderful machines like the Nissan Patrol. ■



Serious off-landers should watch for low-lying important bits.



Base model Ti offers 360 camera for mooring.



Chilled console actually chills beer. Take my money!



October sales see history repeating

Even Shirley Bassey's golden voice couldn't put a glint in the eye of Australia's new car retailers who must be asking "Where Do I Begin?" as big spenders stay away from dealerships.

The Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries described a "lax market" on the publication of a 5.3% drop in October 2018 reported sales, and October 2019 just recorded another decline of over 9%.

FCAI chief executive **Tony Weber** says the inability to secure vehicle loans has devastated dealers to lose 78,000 sales over last year.

"While the drought and other domestic conditions are impacting the market, our key concern is the effect over-regulation of the financial sector is having on new vehicle sales," he reports.

"The FCAI and our members have been concerned about the risk-averse approach to lending in Australia for some time and see improved access to finance as a key to driving economic growth in 2020," Weber explains.

Sales in all three major segments have been hit yet again, with the typically most popular segment, SUVs, losing 3%, and the formerly glorious passenger market has been kicked in the guts again, losing over 15% of its October 2018 reported sales.

Light commercial vehicles lost what could be described as the sales equivalent of a ladder and two sheets of plaster off the roof on the freeway - down 11% on last year's October reported sales.



Tony Weber

Private sales are depressed by a further 5.2% over October 2018 which was also a shocker month that saw a 12% slump against October 2017 figures.

Government and business fleet buys are also in retreat, down 17.5% collectively against October 2018.

Number one seller **Toyota Hilux** might be sold as "unbreakable", but its 3516 reported sales couldn't crack its October 2018 results of 4401 reported units sold and took a 20.1% thumping in the dealership, with only the **Corolla** taking a bigger hammering of 20.5%.

Ford's Ranger is down 10%, **Hyundai i30** managed to gain 8.2% on reported October 2018 sales, **Toyota's RAV4** in fourth appropriately enough was up 34.8% followed by a Toyotathon of a forementioned **Corolla** in fifth, and **LandCruiser** in sixth thanks to a 6.6% gain on October 2018 to the tune of 2101 reportedly sold units.

Kia Cerato stays true to form with a 36.5% gain in reported sales - 1827 versus 1338 last year - and the **Mazda CX-5** held on in eighth place after a 14.6% fall, meanwhile **Hyundai's Tucson** is up 10.7% to hold **Nissan's X-Trail** (down 3.2% over October 2018) to tenth place.

All brands held a stalemate in the top 10 rankings with **Toyota** tack-welded in first, **Mazda** moored in second, **Hyundai** heeled in third, **Mitsubishi** fourth, **Ford** firmly in fifth, **Kia** sixth, **Nissan** seventh, **Volkswagen** vexing ninth-placed **Holden** as it holds on and holds back **Honda** honourably taking up the rear. ■

Top 10 Brands



1. Toyota 16,988



2. Hyundai 7,455



3. Mazda 6,370



4. Kia 5,062

Top 10 Brands continued p23

2019 sales in October

Top 10 SUV Small under \$40K



1. Mitsubishi ASX
1,517



2. Hyundai Kona
1,367



3. Mazda CX-3
1,216



4. Nissan Qashqai
891



5. Toyota C-HR
780



6. Honda HR-V
777



7. Subaru XV
703



8. Suzuki Vitara
462



9. Hyundai Venue
386



10. Mitsubishi Eclipse Cross
375

Top 10 SUV Large under \$70K



1. Toyota Prado
1,513



2. Toyota Kluger
1,087



3. Isuzu Ute MU-X
672



4. Mitsubishi Pajero Sport
574



5. Ford Everest
553



6. Hyundai Santa Fe
551



7. Mazda CX-9
526



8. Subaru Outback
436



9. Kia Sorento
376



10. Volkswagen Tiguan Allspace
361

Top 10 Brands continued



5. Ford 4,891



6. Mitsubishi 4,811



7. Volkswagen 4,220



8. Nissan 4,011



9. Holden 3,086



10. Honda 2,761



The Tesla Model 3 seems to continue having an impact in the latest EV sales.

Tesla Model 3 still influences EV sales

The Tesla Model 3 still appears to be having an impact on EV sales in Australia, latest VFACTS figures indicate.

More than 2400 were expected to be delivered in Australia in September, and although Tesla doesn't reveal exact amounts, the October figures tend to show that while the number of Model 3 sales may have slowed it's still helping push EV sales along in the passenger categories.

For instance, private passenger EVs increased from 14 in October 2018 to 69 in October 2019 (up 392.9%) and rose in year-to-date (YTD) sales from 208 in 2018 to 381 this year – an 83.2% increase.

Likewise in the non-private passenger category, electrics and plug-in hybrids (PHEVs) went from six in October 2018 to 53 in October 2019 – up 783.3%, and increased YTD from 346 to 428 (23.7%).

But hybrids continue to make big strides, dominating EVs in many categories.

In the private passenger sector, hybrids chalked up 456 sales in October 2019 as against 289 for October 2018 (57.8%) and went from 3111 to 5339 in YTD comparisons – up 71.6%.

For non-private passenger vehicle sales, hybrids soared from 669 in October 2018 to 1267 in October 2019 – up 89.4%, while YTD sales went from 6501 in 2018 to 10,823 in 2019, a 66.5% increase.

EVs and hybrids also carry on the

trend in the SUV categories.

Electrics and PHEVs go from 32 to 75 (134.4%) in October comparisons for private SUVs, increasing YTD as well from 145 to 678 (367.6%).

Hybrids here went from 61 in October 2018 to 567 in October 2019 – up 829.5%, while YTD sales soared from 564 to 4090 – a 625.2% jump.

In the non-private SUV sector, electrics and PHEVs also rise from 39 in October 2018 to 75 in October 2019 (92.3%) and from 436 to 879 in YTD comparisons (101.6%).

Hybrids took off in this SUV category also. They went from 70 in October 2018 to 459 in October 2019 (555.7%) and YTD from 807 to 2922 (262.1%).

The only other electric/PHEV sales sector shown is the light commercial non-private category which went from three in October 2018 to just one in October 2019 (down 66.7%), but increased slightly YTD from 14 to 25 (78.6%).

However, the figures also show most diesel and petrol vehicle sales in the various categories continue to decline.

In releasing the latest VFACTS figures, the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries (FCAI) chief executive **Tony Weber** says new vehicles have now seen the 19th consecutive month of decreasing sales in the Australian market.

October 2019 sales were down 9.1% overall compared to October 2018. ■

NEW VEHICLE SALES BY BUYER TYPE AND FUEL TYPE						OCTOBER 2019			
	Month		YTD			Variance +/- Vol. & %			
Total Market	2019	2018	2019	2018	MTH	YTD	MTH	YTD	
ELECTRIC									
Passenger Private	69	14	381	208	55	173	392.9%	83.2%	
Passenger Non-Private	53	6	428	346	47	82	783.3%	23.7%	
SUV Private	75	32	678	145	43	533	134.4%	367.6%	
SUV Non-Private	75	39	879	436	36	443	92.3%	101.6%	
Light Commercial Non-Private	1	3	25	14	-2	11	-66.7%	78.6%	
Sub Total	273	94	2,391	1,149	179	1,242	190.4%	108.1%	
HYBRID									
Passenger Private	456	289	5,339	3,111	167	2,228	57.8%	71.6%	
Passenger Non-Private	1,267	669	10,823	6,501	598	4,322	89.4%	66.5%	
SUV Private	567	61	4,090	564	506	3,526	829.5%	625.2%	
SUV Non-Private	459	70	2,922	807	389	2,115	555.7%	262.1%	
Sub Total	2,749	1,089	23,174	10,983	1,660	12,191	152.4%	111.0%	
TOTAL	3,022	1,183	25,565	12,132	1,839	13,433	60.9%	110.7%	

AUSSIE TALK DIARY

AutoTalk Australia's editor Scott Murray looks at the month gone by on autotalk.com.au



October 1

ACCC urges regulated transport infrastructure spend

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission is urging governments to take a regulated approach to how it allocates and spends transport infrastructure.

ACCC chairman Rod Sims has told the Australasian Transport Research Forum the spending framework needs to directly result in safety and community outcomes.

October 3

More details for electric Volvo XC40 SUV

Volvo has revealed new features to its electric XC40 SUV.

Unique to the electric XC40, a front-load compartment located under the front hood provides around 30L of extra space.

October 4

AutoNexus gains Suzuki logistics business

Suzuki Australia has signed on with AutoNexus as the small-car brand's logistics and supply chain partner.

The fleet of Suzuki's press and marketing fleet as well as dealership stock delivery will be prepped, delivered stored and fitted-out as required by AutoNexus.

October 7

FCAI pushes for faulty Takata airbags checks

Eight million Australians have checked if their vehicle is fitted with a faulty Takata airbag.

On October 4, 20,000 vehicles involved in the Takata airbag were declared "critical".

Pedestrian detection potentially dangerous

The American Automobile Association has performed independent testing of pedestrian detection within autonomous emergency braking systems which reveals it may not save lives.

While acknowledging the features "are not intended to serve as a substitute for an engaged driver", the investigation has found, among other results, at 48km/h three out of four test vehicles failed to reduce the impact speed by at least 8km/h.

October 8

Holden dealers to honour Colorado free long-term servicing

Holden dealer customers will be given a seven-year free servicing schedule on the 2020 Colorado 4x4, Acadia and Trailblazer but the dealer association warns car brands to think before getting carried away with promotions.

Any customer's 4x4 Colorado or Acadia/Trailblazer SUV bought or ordered before the end of the year will receive the \$3000 incentive in addition to Holden's standard five-year unlimited kilometre warranty.

October 9

VACC: VicRoads must block Takata registration

The Victorian Automobile

Chamber of Commerce says Victoria's roads authority must act now to prevent injury or death resulting from a faulty Takata airbag.

The VACC says VicRoads needs to follow other states in blocking re-registration of vehicle VIN numbers identified as having a Takata airbag fitted and not yet replaced by a dealership.

Car dealership to spend \$200k on safety culture after death

A car dealership in Australia will spend A\$200,000 improving its health and safety culture after a man died at the scene in 2015.

Farm hand David Jenkins was crushed to death by an improperly repaired horse float from Wagga Motors.

Nissan Australia 'wants' Titan Down Under

Nissan Australia managing director Stephen Lester says the local market is ready for the full-size Titan pick-up truck.

Speaking to AutoTalk at a product event today, Lester says the production of Titan may be restricted to right-hand drive, but a new relationship the brand has made with Premcar could change that.

First five star for SsangYong

The Australasian New Car Assessment Program has awarded SsangYong its first five-star safety rating.

The Korando has been given an overall score of 88% in adult occupant protection, 86% in child occupant protection, 68% in vulnerable road user protection, and 72% for safety assist performance.

October 11

Joy to the world: Motorclassica's decade of economic contribution

The Motorclassica event

celebrates 10 years of bringing together car lovers of all ages and socio-economic circumstances, but 2019 has been hard on the classic car industry.

Speaking exclusively to AutoTalk, Motorclassica director Paul Mathers says people's fascination with the history of cars transcends politics, bureaucracy and economic segregation.

October 14

Royal commission could force consumer spending increase

New car buyers financing their next new car could be forced into a higher interest rate or to shop overseas if point-of-sale exemptions are made law.

The Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce and Australian Retailers Association are warning the industry and legislators that the Hayne Royal Commission's report recommendations to ban point-of-sale exemptions (POSE) could shift further costs to consumers.

October 15

Ford Australia manufacturing plant breathes new life

Ford Australia's Broadmeadows factory on Sydney Road in Melbourne's northern industrial precinct will make cars again.

Blue bloods who lament the demise of the Falcon and Territory in late 2016 will see the high-performance Mustang R-Spec built by Herrod Performance in a section of the old Ford heartland.

October 17

Judge condemns regulator's Dieselgate deal

The court approval sought by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission

Continued on page 26

Continued from page 25

and Volkswagen Australia has been met with judicial disapproval this week.

Justice Lindsay Foster has given the regulator a scathing assessment of its agreement accepting the auto giant's \$75 million fine which he describes as "not a lot of money for Volkswagen".

October 18

Subaru factory pause post-typhoon won't affect dealers

Subaru Australia says the company's 10-day factory shutdown in the wake of typhoon Hagibis shouldn't hurt its dealer network.

Director of public affairs David Rowley tells *AutoTalk* Subaru dealers won't notice any major stock droughts.

Regional NSW extends remote pink slip trial

Roads and Maritime Services will trial an extension of its mobile pink slip inspection

initiative for regional NSW.

The trial will be extended to include Wagga Wagga, Tamworth, Port Macquarie, the Blue Mountains and the Southern Highlands, but won't affect the fees involved with pink slip bookings, however, RMS says "call out fees may apply".

October 21

Regulator calls for strengthened consumer law

With 6.6 million consumer products still in circulation, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission wants the federal government to implement a "new safety duty".

The changes, the ACCC says, would enable the regulator to better enforce businesses to take "reasonable steps" to ensure their products are sold as safe, given 650 individual products – including cars and their component parts – are currently under voluntary recall.

October 23

Autonomous emergency braking adoption accelerates

The Australasian New Car Assessment Program says the adoption of autonomous emergency braking is the highest it's ever been.

In the last four years AEB has grown to populate 60% of new car models on sale today as a standard feature, up from just 18% in 2017 and only 3% in 2015.

October 24

Snails found in Mercedes shipments

Exotic snails have been found in shipments of 900 Mercedes-Benzes bound for Australian dealers.

The Department of Agriculture has said this week "heath snails" have been detected on board roll-on-roll-off vessels which are not under quarantine at Australia's major capital city ports.

October 25

Dealership bounced tens of thousands

A serial fraud has cost a Queensland dealer tens of thousands paying for a vehicle using a dodgy cheque.

Timothy Cuthbertson used a bank cheque amounting to the \$60,385 negotiated with the dealer in 2018, but it wasn't until the following day the bank reversed the deposit.

October 28

Automotive business hollowing out in Melbourne

The Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce has sounded a warning that Melbourne's automotive industry is starting to echo in all the wrong ways.

The chamber has found a fifth of Melbourne's metropolitan automotive small-medium businesses have closed since 2014 as land tax skyrockets by 130%. ■

THE DIARY

AutoTalk New Zealand's group editor Richard Edward looks at the month gone by on autotalk.co.nz



October 2

Scammers Nab More Than \$70,000

A scam has supposedly taken hundreds of thousands of dollars from dealerships across the country.

Hamilton's 4 Guys Autobarn has been a victim of the scam, with owner Monte Wells saying a group of scammers have taken \$73,000 from his company.

Used Cars And Commercials Lead Drop In Imports

Vehicle imports were down in September lead by a decline in used cars, vans and trucks, according to New Zealand Customs Motor Vehicle Statistics.

The total number of vehicles arriving in the country

for the month, including trucks and buses, was 23,893 compared to 26,063 in August.

October 7

Vehicles Set On Fire On Two Turners Yards

New Zealand's largest used vehicle company suffered from two fires last week at two of its Christchurch car yards.

Three cars from the Turners Cars on Detroit Place, Addington were set alight on October 3, at 10.10pm.

October 16

Survey Reveals Most And Least Reliable Cars

Consumer.org.nz has conducted a survey to see which cars are reliable, have the most satisfied owners, and which cost the least to maintain and repair.

The Nissan Leaf came out as overall best model, while the Ford Territory took out worst model.

October 22

Early Face Of Import Trade Dies Aged 94

A prominent former leader of the dealer trade, and spokesperson for the used import industry, John Nicholls, has passed away in Gisborne, aged 94.

Nicholls was chairman of the Motor Trade Association in the 1970s and split out the dealer division to become the Motor Vehicle Dealers Institute in 1975.

October 23

NZ Car Of The Year Announces Finalists

Among this year's New Zealand Car of the Year finalists, three out of the top 10 are electric vehicles.

The candidates are the Audi e-tron, Ford Focus, Holden Acadia, Hyundai Santa Fe, Jaguar I-Pace, Mazda 3, Mercedes GLE, Peugeot 508, Tesla Model 3 and Toyota RAV4.

October 25

Kiwi Auto Technician Wins Silver At Global Hyundai Olympics

An expert level technician from West Auckland Hyundai has come second at the 2019 Hyundai World Skill Olympics.

Held at the Hyundai Cheonan global learning centre in Korea, James George competed against 66 of Hyundai's automotive service experts from 51 countries around the world. ■

EV TALK DIARY

EVtalk Australia editor Geoff Dobson looks at the month gone by on www.evtalk.com.au



October 7

Cox Automotive studies electric adoption

Over 2500 consumers and 300 dealers have told Cox Automotive what they think about the adoption rate of electric vehicles.

Not only is Tesla recognised by 81% of respondents as an electric vehicle brand, it holds a superior lead over the 52% aware of Toyota, the 47% who recognise Chevrolet as an EV brand and the 42% who acknowledge Nissan.

October 10

Solar EV charging project begins

Nissan Australia is hosting a joint solar EV charging research project, funded through a \$210,000 grant from the Victorian Government's New Energy Jobs Fund (NEJF).

The solar charging stations from Delta Electronics, which include advanced technologies developed by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), are installed at Nissan Australia's national headquarters in Dandenong South, Melbourne.

October 15

Australia build for Uniti One EV?

The Uniti One electric car being built in the United Kingdom could be made in Australia as well.

The three-seater city-style car is expected to be delivered in the UK and Sweden in mid-2020 and may be also manufactured in Australia, Mexico, the US, India, Dubai and Georgia under a franchise model.

October 17

CAVs may increase road capacity and relieve congestion

Traffic congestion in Sydney and Melbourne is a hot topic, but connected and autonomous vehicles (CAVs) offer a potential avenue to reducing those woes, according to a report.

L.E.K. Consulting's report **Reducing Urban Road Congestion — Are Connected and Autonomous Vehicles (CAVs) the Answer?** was launched at the Brisbane leg of its Future Transport Series 2019.

October 21

Wagga mayor does EV dash to Sydney

Wagga Wagga mayor Greg Conkey is singing the praises of his council's all-electric Hyundai Ioniq after driving it to Sydney on October 14 and back on October 16.

He took it on the 850km business trip after being challenged to do so by sceptical councillors. ■

FUTURETRUCKING DIARY

Futuretrucking Australia editor Scott Murray looks at the month gone by on www.futuretruckingtalk.com.au



October 2

ATA slams Austroads truck width study

The Australian Trucking Association (ATA) says it's "bemused and concerned" at Austroads' decision to limit its study on the allowable width of trucks.

Austroads, the research organisation owned by the Commonwealth and state transport departments, has completed a study showing that allowable width of trucks could be increased safely to 2.55 metres, excluding attachments.

October 16

Truck fire figures 'not getting worse' but still costly

National Transport Insurance says truck fires may not be increasing in alarming numbers but it reminds the trucking and supply chain industry they are extremely costly.

Transport and logistics risk engineer Adam Gibson has told the Transport and Maintenance Conference in Melbourne this week engine and cabin fires are the most common starting point for destructive truck fires.

Australia to design three Lockheed Martin submarine components

Safran Electronics and Defense Australasia will design three important components for the next fleet of Lockheed Martin submarines.

A \$36.77 million contract will be carried out until May 2023 which will see Sydney-based Safran design the optronics search-and-attack mast, navigation radar and its data distribution equipment.

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transport.com.au

October 23

Truckies have their say on heavy vehicle law review

The Australian Trucking Association says the voices of truck drivers "have been heard loud and clear" in the first round national truck law review with the National Transport Commission.

ATA chief executive Ben Maguire says the campaign, carried out with transport publisher Big Rigs, had a great response with drivers engaged and willing to share their thoughts on the laws and what they would like to see fixed.

Tyre dump earns nearly half-million penalty

The Environmental Protection Agency has won its case against Used Tyre Recycling Corporation which failed to clean up over 9000 tonnes of used tyres despite warnings.

UTRC was handed a \$400,000 fine by the Stawell Magistrates' Court last week and director Matthew Starr was ordered to pay nearly \$40,000 in legal fees and a personal fine of half that.

October 24

Eaton to launch heavy-duty EV transmission

Power management giant Eaton is launching a new four-speed transmission specially designed for heavy-duty electric commercial vehicles.

The new transmission is being tested with major OEMs and is set to hit the market in 2022. A further announcement will be made at the North American Commercial Vehicle Show (NACV) in Atlanta, Georgia, USA from October 28-31.

October 29

Tow truck operations in the spotlight

A discussion paper on alleged shady practices and intimidating tactics in Queensland's tow truck industry is being released by the Palaszczuk Government.

It follows an independent investigation into the towing industry and measures carried out in 2018 by the Government to address community complaints about some operators undertaking private property towing. ■



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