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Government to scrap Luxury Car Tax on 're-imports'

The federal government has published its draft legislation to see Luxury Car Tax scrapped, but not on new cars.

Cars which reside in Australia and have been sent to another country for restoration which values them over the LCT threshold of $66,331 (2018-19 financial year), are subject to double-dose tax when shipped back home despite paying GST in the process.

Vehicles, according to the government's exposure draft, will see removed the "inconsistency in tax treatment of refurbished cars in order to align with Australia's trade obligations with its foreign trading partners."

It's a tease for virtually every peak body in the Australian automotive industry after years demanding action on abolishing the proper impost on new cars, including EVs.

Hundreds of classic and vintage vehicle owners have taken drastic measures, finding indefinite second homes for their rare and irreplaceable relics to avoid paying LCT. This means both state and federal governments have missed out on revenue.

The Australian Automotive Aftermarket Association (AAAA) welcomes the changes but admits, "It's not everything we hoped for, but it's a start," says executive director **Stuart Charity.**

"Essentially some consumers were being double-hit by GST and LCT and this revision is a step in the right direction," he says.

Concerns were raised by the Australian Historic Vehicle Interest Group which submitted to the treasury earlier this year that, as an example, historic vehicle events like Motorclassica, which "delivers an economic impact of A$9.2m to Melbourne over four days" was concerned about an "ever diminishing pool of cars" caused by LCT.

The AHVIG surveyed 410 members who jointly own $21 million worth of restored vehicles stored here and overseas that are worth more than the threshold.

As a result, AHVIG told "the Government would earn at least $4,394,000 in GST on the importation" of those vehicles.

AHVIG member and also former AAAA executive director **David Wright** tells AutoTalk the financial impact of LCT may not be what the wider new car industry wants, but the secondary tax has been bigger

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Door ajar for used EV imports to Australia

The door has been opened to allow some used imported electric vehicles and hybrids into Australia.

Changes to the Specialist and Enthusiast Vehicles Scheme (SEVS) will allow importation of new and used EVs that are not already brought to Australia by established brands, subject to certain criteria.

One of those criteria includes allowances for bringing in more energy efficient drivetrains, that is EVs and hybrids.

SEVS can be assessed only by build date; not clashing with sell dates in Australia, Australian Imported Motor Vehicle Industry Association (AIMVIA) vice-president **Kristian Appelt** says.



Kristian Appelt, AIMVIA

"Discussions we're having are to push for 'Environmental Vehicles' under the SEVS criteria, based

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New policy to spark government change

The Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce is applying pressure to a pre-election state government about the biggest issues facing the automotive industry.

With thousands of hard-to-fill automotive trade vacancies strangling small businesses due to a growing skills shortage, the VACC has launched its election campaign calling on government – or opposition – to listen and respond to "one of the biggest trade employers in Victoria".

The VACC wants to see the $2 billion of gross domestic profit Victoria's 1400 dealerships contribute every year made less difficult for the 18,300 staff employed, by modernising the Duties Act 2000, before businesses "succumb to further consolidation or closure."



VACC chief executive officer Geoff Gwilym.

VACC chief executive officer **Geoff Gwilym** has told stakeholders, media and government, including roads minister **Luke Donnellan** and VicRoads representatives, that the automotive industry, especially franchised dealers, face dire consequences if left unchecked.

"We are going to run out of people to fix cars in Australia – it's that simple," he says; "because we've dimmed the lights on automotive trade," Gwilym says.

Issues among the VACC's "Better Business. Better Victoria" election campaign begin with the recognition of the skills shortage in automotive retail, servicing and repair businesses and the vocational promotion of apprenticeships to support the 16 million vehicles on Australia's roads.

"I don't know what to tell the world about our once-leading vocational training sector for automotive trades," he says.

"Our members want to get labour from overseas out of pure desperation because the kids coming out of high school aren't interested or taught to be interested in the auto trade," Gwilym highlights.

The VACC wants to see better support and incentives for employers to hire – and keep – automotive apprentices, both male and female, while increasing the funding to programmes in schools to capture teenagers' enthusiasm.

According to the VACC, students consider an automotive trade around age 14 but lose interest by the end of high school, about age 18.

Dealerships and other automotive businesses will receive support in the form of an appeal for a raised payroll tax threshold to $850,000 per annum, which will stimulate employment and encourage investment.

The VACC says it's also vital for Victorian dealerships to join the call to state and federal government to make changes to the Fair Trading Act which sees franchised retailers forced to sign "unfair contracts" where "small dealership businesses can't afford to negotiate and tell us they're just signing it anyway," Gwilym reveals.

Other issues in the VACC's election campaign include dismal data-sharing systems effectively allowing service station fuel theft to continue, double stamp duty paid by dealers and consumers on demonstrator vehicles, insurance companies squeezing the profit out of body and paint repair shops, and the 35,000 tonnes of automotive plastic that is sent to landfill every year because auto recyclers are forced to bury it. "Australia is the only developed country not to have a national policy dealing with end-of-life vehicles," the VACC points out.

The same issues around anti-competitive business practices and disregard for the Franchise Code of Conduct have been in discussion with the Australian Automotive Dealer Association at a federal level.

"We are in discussion with opposition government as well as the current government, and we're happy to in order to protect our members," Gwilym concludes.

One managing director from a major franchised dealership group in Melbourne with 12 brands, 10 showrooms and two LMCTs, says the current situation is choking dealers.

"Continuing on the track we're on will no longer be viable," they explain, "If these dealer agreements don't change this is not a sustainable industry."



Automotive businesses need apprentices, but often can't take the financial risk, the VACC says.

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Watchdog Takata data reveals proactive brands

Regulator data records show which brands are ahead on replacing Takata airbag inflators.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission has revealed prior to July 1 when the recall became mandatory, Holden and Nissan had over 300,000 airbags to replace, with Toyota, BMW and Subaru trailing.

As of June 30, Holden has 328,445 Takata airbags needing rectification work carried out by its dealer network, followed by over 345,000 Nissans, more than 192,000 Toyotas, 184,000 BMWs and over 161,000 Subarus.

Mercedes-Benz had nearly 117,000 cars on the waiting list which had not been replaced before the July 1 mandate, as did Volkswagen with 102,000 unactioned airbags, Ford had 89,000 cars to deal with, Mitsubishi 69,300, Audi around 40,100 and Skoda 17,600. Jaguar Land Rover sat with just 17,400, 3000 Citroens and 1200 Teslas (and not forgetting 331 McLarens) are still on Australian roads with Takata airbags.

The most proactive manufacturers have been Honda, Mazda and Toyota, albeit with the greatest volume of vehicles to recall. Prior to the July 1 mandate, Toyota has cleared over 390,000 vehicles, Honda sits at nearly 325,000 (with 112,000 airbags also awaiting replacement) and Mazda at over 246,000 (46,700 to go).

New South Wales has replaced the most at over half a million, while Victoria has swapped over 448,300 of the deadly Takata inflators.

Queensland has replaced over 326,000, Western and South Australia has rectified more than 162,000 and 103,000 that respectively, while Tasmania has just 39,200 to go, the ACT 30,100 remaining, and the Northern Territory has 11,452 to remove.

Over 14,580 high-priority "Alpha" inflators have been replaced, but 19,500 remain in circulation. There are also still over 150,000 airbags, including Alpha, that are awaiting confirmation from manufacturers whether they are still on the road.

ACCC deputy chair **Delia Rickard** says the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries has launched an effective easy-to-use website to identify vehicles, warning motorists not to be complacent about having airbags replaced.



Delia Rickard, ACCC deputy chair

"The website provides an easy place to enter your car's number plate to check if it's affected and I encourage everyone who owns a car to visit this site," she says.

"Our greatest concern remains around the Alpha airbags, which can still be found in almost 20,000 cars," Rickard explains.

"Make no mistake, these airbags can kill and our advice is for consumers to check our website to see if their car is affected by this recall. If your car contains an Alpha airbag, it should not be driven.

"Don't ignore or delay responding to a letter or call from your car's manufacturer asking you to have your airbag replaced." ■



Door ajar for used EV imports to Australia

Continued from page 1

on emissions – hybrids, EVs, plug-ins, fuel cell vehicles. Because of the price of new EVs being high, you won't get a high uptake."

Appelt says to get EVs into the market quickly a price tag around $25,000 to $30,000 is needed.

"We want to get more used (EV) cars into the bottom end of the market so people can get a feel for them, understand them, see them and this improves demand, and makes them viable to sell new in dealerships."

He says $25,000 would get a nice Nissan Leaf with a 30kWh battery, while he expects the new Nissan Leaf - due next year - could be in the high $40,000s.

The Leaf qualifies under the current SEVS (June 1, 2013 to September 2017, after Nissan stopped selling them here) and the same build dates will qualify under the new SEVS as proposed.

"With the Renault Zoes now on sale in dealerships, we can't bring it in now because it would clash," Appelt explains. "But we could theoretically bring in used Zoes from the UK once they stop being sold in Australia, and that would rapidly increase EV uptake and subsequent market demand for a new EV.

Appelt believes many importers will have a mix of EVs and hybrids available, alongside new EV dealers.

"Australia buys/sells three times the number of used cars than new cars, but look how new cars are going at the moment – sales have seldom been better. If new EVs sell well, then second-hand imported EVs will sell strongly, and vice-versa.

"The proposed new SEVS legislation is about finding better numbers in the market."

Appelt says EV availability in Australia is "horrendous".

"What is available brand new from a dealership to the average consumer who isn't an EV enthusiast is either incredibly expensive and almost unattainable, or is effectively only available to fleets through lease programmes."

"We're telling government that EVs and their inherent benefits are too important to not allow us to import them - and if consumers want an EV we should be allowed to sell them one.

Appelt says AIMVIA members are undergoing a huge shift in the process of buying a used import, to make it as seamless and consumer-focused as a typical dealership as far as showrooms, servicing, warranties and recalls are concerned, but in used imported EVs - not new cars.

The SEVS criteria for more energy efficient drivetrains is "the exciting part for us", Electric Vehicle Council Australia chief executive officer **Behyad Jafari** says.

However, just because a vehicle is on the list doesn't guarantee it will get into Australia.

Any nominated vehicles will have to go through a process to meet certification and regulations before being allowed in, including having been on the international market a minimum of three months.



Behyad Jafari, Electric Vehicle Council

For that reason – and the fact that a number of imported vehicles are already in Australia – Jafari doubts it will lead to sudden vehicle price rises.

Adopting a "wait and see" approach, Jafari also says it's unlikely to cause intensified competition overseas in markets like Japan and the United Kingdom for vehicles which, in some cases, are already heavily in demand.

While he expects the changes will bring an increased number of affordable EVs, Jafari says it's not a silver bullet for Australia's EV industry. "We still need a national target to drive EV uptake."

He says the changes made under the Road Vehicle Standards package of Bills 2018 could see more movement on importing used EVs next year.

Benefits can also include market testing to determine demand for EV brands and models, with a two to three-year time frame allowed for distributing a particular type of vehicle which has passed the procedures.

Jafari says various organisations may be able to help, with some interest likely to be shown by vehicle importers in New Zealand as well.

"No-one is really doing this in Australia yet, and companies in New Zealand will know if it can be done there."

He's optimistic the door is now ajar to allow a wider range of EVs into Australia and says that's got to be good for the EV industry.

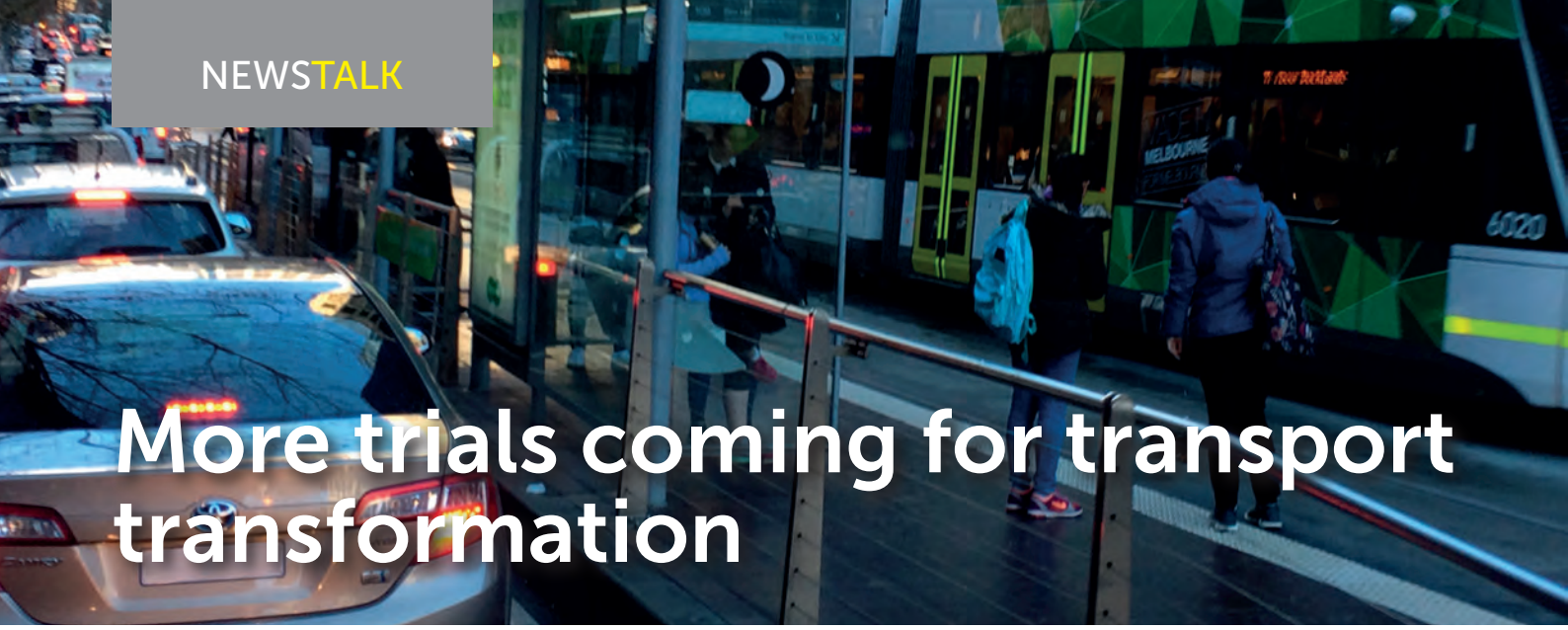
"Expansion of the SEVS is a great opportunity for early adopters and enthusiasts to import EVs that have not made it to Australia," JET Charge director Tim Washington says.

"But as an industry we need to focus on suitable buying experiences for the mass market, who may be unwilling to go through something like the SEVS.

"We also need to ensure that EV charging standards, to the extent possible, is consistent between vehicles imported under the SEVS and those brought in by manufacturers directly.

"For example, the industry is now set on using Type 2 for AC and Chademo or CCS2 for DC charging. It would be a shame if vehicles brought in under the SEVS clouded this now settled approach."

EVtalk
Keep up with the Electric Vehicle industry news
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More trials coming for transport transformation

The concept of mobility as a service has been on the lips of automotive and transport public relations for many years now, and yet looking out your office window, little has happened.

It's pitched as an evolution of transport that will make everything an efficiency utopia of Newton's Laws of Motion, where nothing is wasted, no mistakes are made and everything moves in harmony.

For the majority who will use such a synchronised system for moving around, in sobering reality, even the chief executive of Intelligent Transport Systems Australia, **Susan Harris,** believes it will never be a blanketing ecosystem.



Susan Harris, Intelligent Transport Systems Australia

"There will always be the people welded to their cars," she acknowledges, "there's a stickiness in people's behaviour."

"But there is a large majority who are time poor and looking for change, the regular commuters who sit in traffic, squeeze on to the tram and those who miss their train. People who are open to change and look for a new way to get around."

"There are also people reasonably happy with public transport but want it improved. Then there are provincial areas which need significantly improved transport options."

ITS has published its major research project findings that show, as Australia debates the implementation of road-user charging, consumers are twice as likely to prefer pay-as-you-go schemes than to have unlimited access akin to mobile phone plans.

According to their 4000-strong survey, 40% of people under 30 would take mobility services compared with 14% of over 65 year olds. Bus and train remain the most popular form of transport and cycling the least.

Harris says there is a misconception that traditional vehicle ownership is under threat from the mobility as a service future, despite the fact 80% of those surveyed own one or two cars, of whom 60% estimate to spend less than $100 on transport costs.

"We're looking at giving people an alternative to conventional ownership problems – like the costs," she explains. "A system which compliments public transport but still provides an opportunity for personalisation."

The latter is clearly a direction the automotive industry wants to exploit, with numerous OEMs readying themselves by having a suitable business model in play when the time comes. Harris says the bus industry is ripe for change and predicts all modes will have to find a solution.

"We want rich competition and an ecosystem of varying types of transport," she says. "People don't always want to share, and there's an incentive to pay more for that premium service. So carmakers will make sure they're always selling something – Mercedes-Benz and BMW are looking at a certain type of MaaS for that reason."

ITS's survey found pay-as-you-go transport has a 30%-46% predicted adoption rate, indicating automakers could be on to something if they get their vehicles in front of users.

Harris says people are more likely to use personalised mobility from carmakers for social journeys such as eating out or having a night on the town, rather than for work-week commuting.

In May, the National Transport Commission released its *Regulatory Impact Statement on the Safety Assurance of Automated Driving Systems*, which looks to set legislation in place to tie responsibility of autonomous driving systems to the right parent company or individual.

Harris says we should expect to see more university and fixed-arena style autonomous shuttle trials in the immediate future before technology is at the capacity to handle the complexity of live traffic environments. These and other similar projects are needed short-term to familiarise people with the idea of mobility services.

"The bus industry is ripe for change; the taxi industry has already begun to grow and adapt thanks to Uber, and the automotive industry will do the same because it has to. We're all losers in an inefficient and ineffective transport system," she concludes.

The sixth Australian ITS Summit is at the Sydney Convention Centre on August 28-29. ■



Bus industry 'ripe for change' in a MaaS future.



TSI Group eyes Australian expansion

TSI's new management team are Raju Bhana, Tracey Atkins and Simone Vidal

Automotive software business TSI Group is looking at expanding its Australian operation.

The company currently has an office in Sydney.

The New Zealand-headquartered company says it sees plenty of room to grow its presence in Australia, across all their products.

"There's a wealth of knowledge we can offer to our future Australian customers," SAM general manager Raju Bhana says.

"We have many of happy customers on both sides of the Tasman, with plenty of untapped potential in Australia right now."

The group is attending several trade shows in the country, to showcase products and new offerings.

These include the Australian Automotive Dealer Association (AADA) National Dealer Convention and Expo on the Gold Coast from September 4-5 and Xerocon in Brisbane from September 4-6.

The company is also taking a team approach to its new management structure.

Tracey Atkins has recently taken on the role of Systime general manager, looking after the Autoline DMS and IMS products, while Raju Bhana is now SAM general manager, leading the workshop and fleet management system side of the business.

The pair, together with group financial controller Simone Vidal, collectively have almost 60 years with TSI and are now responsible for group decision making.

It is a good change for the business, and is working well, Atkins says.

"Previously decisions were made on a business unit basis. Now a group approach exists that leverages a broader knowledge base resulting in much better decisions.

"It's about sharing ideas, across both our businesses and our products, to ensure that our customers and industry associates benefit from the broad understanding of the market that we collectively share.

"What functionality can we add? We are constantly looking at ways we can improve our customers' business and enhance their experience, including developing partnerships with third-parties.

Bhana says TSI's focus on customer service has strengthened since the new leadership structure.

"Our KPIs are still in place. We are constantly reviewing our internal processes using KPIs and metrics to ensure the very best level of responsiveness for our customers."

"It's all about personal service. We have sales people on the ground and a support team with some of the best experience in the industry".

Atkins has been with the company for 28 years, Bhana for 20 years and Vidal for 10 years.

Retention of staff is one of the main reasons for TSI's success, Atkins says.

"We've gone from 11 staff to 52, with offices in Auckland, Christchurch and Sydney."

TSI has been in its current building for 10 years, occupying the entire ground floor for the last 12 months following a round of renovations.

"It's an area conducive to customer support, complete with specialised sound proofing," Atkins says.

"We are proud of the enhanced working environment our team now has and confidently look forward to delivering unexpected value to our existing and new customers in the years to come."

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Adventure fashion sells like no tomorrow

The four-wheel drive market in Australia has arguably never been more popular or as lucrative, and it's on the rise. But dirt, diesel and diff-locks are, like the warmest of Katmandu duck-down jackets, different to the majority, especially when you add water.

The question to dealers and carmakers is whether you're providing adequate directions for use, if at all.

It's a billion-dollar "niche" which in the 2017-18 financial year saw over 89,000 4x4 dual-cab utes sold, roughly 72% of the light commercial segment. Another 36,000 4x4 wagons were sold, approximately 14% of the booming SUV segment.

However VFACTS figures are slightly diluted as two-wheel drive variants of some wagon models are not isolated in data reports.

This excludes soft-roading Subaru Outbacks, Nissan X-Trails and various on-demand all-wheel drive SUVs – we're only talking hardcore off-roaders with low-range gearsets and heavy duty hardware designed for the treatment undertaken at the Melbourne 4X4 Proving Ground in Werribee.

That billion-dollar industry extends to companies like four-wheel drive accessories giant ARB which reported a 7.2% sales increase to $383 million in 2017 over 2016, and that's just one brand. Inspiring a whole new generation of adventurous off-roading enthusiasts include TJM, Ironman 4X4, Piranha and a host of camper trailer manufacturers.

But for every new 4WD dual-cab ute bought in the last year, from the thousands of business and government fleets of 4x4 Hiluxes, Rangers, D-Maxes and Colorados to the evergreen LandCruisers and company, there are still tens of thousands of older, more rudimentary off-roaders out there, hitting tracks every long weekend.

These are often the first choice for cash-strapped young drivers, but it's increasingly common for a shiny new 4x4 work ute to come with P-plates.

Do they know the first thing about how to use their work-and-play 4WD, or even the second thing? Are dealers handing over the keys with minimal imparting of knowledge, and does the buyer fully understand the 4x4 they're putting their lives into? How many manufacturers offer proper guidance on how to handle the latest off-road weapon, or are consumers, young or old, being left to their own devices?

For this story, a dual-cab 4x4 ute was the optimum choice for understanding how dealers selling in this popular segment could be leaving customers high and dry in the hand-over.

The Four Wheel Drive Victoria association agreed to *AutoTalk* participating in a corporate proficiency course, typical of any private or occupational off-road driver to take to better understand the principles behind going bush, without the bashing.

The first part of 4WD Victoria's proficiency course is theory – a chance to stop and think about what you're doing with your vehicle. Basic concept course instructors **Ian Blainey** and Amarok Club of Victoria's **Mat Mason** explain that doesn't come as standard with off-road driving nearly as much as it should.



(Left) Ian Blainey and Mat Mason deliver off-roading 1-0-1.

"The most important tool to use is your brain," Mason begins. "Planning sets you apart from an amateur who spends lots of money on their car, because you don't have to go far to find a dangerous situation."

Blainey acknowledges the stigma of mud-tyred, bush-bashing, diesel-chugging off-roading from the outset.

"Four-wheel drives get bad press through the news, social media and YouTube. Your job as drivers is to make sure it's not you," he tells our small group of five.

The aim of the course is to create safe, responsible four-wheel drivers, a quick search on YouTube will reveal a long list of complacent, over-confident or totally unaware track-trekkers who ruin their vehicles, demolish tracks and put lives at risk.

Our group was a mixed bag, from a drab V6 petrol Mitsubishi Pajero to the shiny new V8 200 Series LandCruiser, and the awesomely analogue Land Rover Defender to the dependable, reliable and robust D-Max. An equally juxtaposing set of expectations in our drivers was present too. The 200 Series owner of six months was a young Asian guy who didn't speak much English, had zero experience but was excited to see Australia; the Defender owner just wanted to get properly acquainted; another was planning a trip to Cape York and the Flinders Ranges.

"You don't need to be a mechanic to own a 4WD, but knowing the basic principles helps you understand how and why they work," Blainey says.



Bruce Kerr offers 'sweeping' advice on how to see your angles.

The theory reminds you how inherently different 4WDs are to regular passenger cars, despite marketing telling consumers they "drive like a car" or have "car-like handling" when it's categorically wrong and potentially misleading.

"They're heavier, taller, vision-impaired, they're slower, and they all behave differently. Some have endless grip, others don't and if you're spinning wheels, you've lost control, which means you haven't learned what your 4WD's capable of," Blainey explains.

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Australia's unofficial king off-road strolls through the proving ground .

Continued from page 8

Mason reminds us that simple things like ABS performance changes from bitumen to gravel, something easily neglected before even reaching the gnarly stuff.

"Test your ABS for braking distance on gravel, because it won't be the same as on the road," he says, keeping in mind the age and heavy level of modification – and additional weight – is added to most 4WDs.

"Many vehicles are built for going off-road and look like the driver knows what they're doing, but they still get bogged because of something as simple as the wrong tyre pressures or poor technique," Mason elaborates.

"You need to monitor constantly, learn what suits your vehicle in certain conditions," he advises.

Tyre pressures are a constant reminder during the two days, a dedicated perennial thread designed to explain the basic understanding and remind us at every situation to be thinking about tyre pressures. Not only that, but what goes down, must eventually come up.

"An air compressor is the first piece of equipment, along with a fire extinguisher and first-aid kit, you should buy," Mason adds.

The practical day starts early in the gorge of the Werribee river at the Melbourne 4x4 Proving Ground where a hot cup of instant coffee is paired with understanding basic recovery gear, load ratings, U-shackles and understanding the harsh reality that even the most basic recovery can – and sometimes does – end badly.

Four course instructors include leader **Bruce Kerr,** who starts the day reminding novice 4WD owners to get familiar with their engine bay, approach and departure angles and get on the ground to understand exactly what's what under the belly of the beast.

"Get to know what your engine bay looks like," he says opening the pristine cavity where the D-Max's 4JJ1 is clearly fresh off the boat. Moving to the Pajero is lesson in contrast. Cables should be secure, hoses need to be fixed and shouldn't rub, routinely check for leaks. Kerr suggests taking a photo of your fan belt, so in the event it breaks and needs replacing hundreds of miles from the nearest authorised dealer service department, you can fit the spare belt you've brought.

"Get down and have a look at what will hit first up front, how much clearance you have to clear objects in the middle – including what we call 'sacrificial side steps', then look at how your rear tow bars are going to touch at the back. Try the broom test to look at the angles," Kerr explains.

Talk quickly turns to tyres, one of the ultimate campfire topics of opinionated debate. Owners should consider whether to opt for light truck tyres with stronger sidewalls compared with highway tyres



Campfire lore will tell you this usually happens the other way around.

for less rolling resistance when touring.

While on the ground, there is contention among 4x4 clubs and experts around vehicle manufacturers making "recovery points" hard to distinguish from simple "tow points".

"You need to know whether they're classed as a recovery point or simply a tow point because they can look very similar but have very different load ratings," Kerr warns.

"If you try to do a recovery on a basic tow point, you can damage the vehicle, or yourself if something gives," he says.

Touching on the all-important snorkel, an easily overlooked aspect of the air intake systems, is that they're very high-quality accessories made virtually impervious over decades of R&D.

"It's their fitment that lets them down, when they're not sealed and installed properly – just one teaspoon of water will kill a modern diesel engine," Kerr explains to five sets of synchronised, raised eyebrows.

Before heading into the course proper, we conduct a basic recovery using a snatch strap, with meticulous, tidy execution to show how such a scenario should look, sound and behave.

"Always have a leader, ideally the most experienced person, who calls the shots and directs the recovery. Once a recovery is 'live' nobody should step or walk over the strap, but unfortunately some people still do," Kerr says.

Obviously, in the thick of an off-roading expedition, conditions are rarely perfect, which is why all four instructors will effectively say the same thing about practicing the basic skills and principles learned in the course.

"Getting experience by joining a 4WD club and going on trips is one of the best ways to learn from other experienced drivers in all conditions," Kerr says.

"Taking a 4WD proficiency course will give you the underlying skills and an understanding of principles, but you need to experience the variable nature of off-roading, and keep your thinking cap on," he says.

Test one is learning to ascend a steep gradient, stop, and in reverse use compression engine braking in conjunction with left-foot braking to maintain full, calm control of the vehicle in the highly-likely event you get stuck and have to



Underdog petrol-manual Pajero impresses.

descend backside-first.

"Losing control of the vehicle at this critical point is potentially fatal," Kerr makes clear. "Most drivers at the point of becoming stationary instinctively jump on the brakes, which makes sense in regular two-wheel drive bitumen driving.

"But in this scenario you're likely to just slide down the hill in slippery conditions, or you can tip the car backwards," he says.

The Pajero driver, we learn afterwards, has practiced over and over in his driveway and despite having the oldest vehicle, nailed the exercise almost perfectly, apart from stalling. The 200 Series look remarkably composed for its girth, and its novice driver was composed and so proud of his

Continued on page 10

Dealers urged to insure against the unexpected

OneSure Insurance Services is encouraging those in the motoring trade to protect their businesses against unpredictable events.

"Whether you're involved in sales, service or repairs, parts, accessories, fuels and lubricants, risk protection is critical in this rapidly expanding industry. One growing area of risk that can threaten dealerships and associated businesses is having its computer systems hacked," according to OneSure general manager **Mal Llora.**

"A typical car dealership is a big enough business to make a hacker's efforts worthwhile, particularly when the sensitivity of some of the information kept in its archives is considered.

"Think about the details that live in the dealership management system (DMS) and customer relationship management (CRM) application. You may think that your dealership will never get hacked or suffer a security breach, then maybe it's time to think again because computer hackers play no favourites."

Natural disasters are another issue that need to be protected against, says Llora.

"Where would you be if a major fire or storm caused substantial damage to your business, resulting in property or stock loss as well as loss of trading income for a long period of time?



Mal Llora

"Would you have the funds to pay on-going costs for the business such as mortgage repayments, wages, rates, electricity or rent to name a few?"

OneSure prides itself in providing a high level of expert insurance advice so dealers have the right type of protection in place, Llora says.

"We understand that every motor dealer is different, therefore, the insurance policy should be flexible enough We can arrange a motor dealer's policy to suit your individual requirements. OneSure can also assist with Insurance premium funding and WorkCover premium funding. ■

Adventure fashion sells like no tomorrow

Continued from page 9

efforts, he had several goes at it.

Next is an ascent over logs designed to pull the rug of traction out from under any vehicle, which it did successfully to the Pajero and Defender which mistakenly approached straight-on, rather than at an angle to allow one wheel over each log at a time. This keeps at least one front and one rear wheel gripping while the other side traverses the obstacle.

It's then a decline over an uneven, rocky slope aiming to get drivers thinking about their approach, breakover and departure angles, which drivers might find causes them to clench in places only one's imagination can fill in the blanks.



Defending the rivers and roads, whatever the cost may be

Lateral rollover and wheel articulation are also tested, which naturally includes understanding what it takes to flip a 4x4 onto its lid, while also putting traction control, limited-slip differentials and low-range gearbox into somewhat strenuous positions.

A 100-metre trench drops wheels into ruts impossible to avoid, allowing wheels to hang in the air, which resulted in the Defender's suspension hangers letting go an almighty bang that sounded like Elma Fudd during "Wabbit Season". Thankfully it was nothing to worry about.



State licensing systems don't test off-road competency, yet a third of our roads are dirt.

At the back of the proving ground is a set of hill climbs and sadistic declines, one of which is concrete and set at a devilish 45 degrees. This section tests two things: Hardware and resolve. Once you start your descent, the aim is to draw on that left-foot compression braking, known as "driving through the brake" to offer the vehicle three forms of speed retardation – engine/drivetrain, brakes and hill-descent control. It's a skill residents in Baldwin Street, Dunedin should practice every day.

There are plenty of other sections of this course which allow more placid driving allowing you to practice a variety of other techniques such as allowing water to drain post-river crossing, traversing a mock sand pit in a tight series of turns, muddy sections to practice throttle modulation and even a flock of resident geese to avoid. And the tedious, obligatory re-inflating of your tyres when it's all over.

All the fun stuff associated with owning a 4WD is worth every cent, and the marketing behemoth is in overdrive, telling consumers to go out and see places and enjoy the great outdoors.

But do your customers have the skills they need to survive? As consumers buy more of them, both new and second-hand, the risks and likelihood of coming off worse for wear increase.

Are dealers, manufacturers and the aftermarket putting customers in washing machines they seldom know how to use safely and effectively without leaving a trail of destruction. Are you equipping your customers, or throwing them in the tumble dryer?

***AutoTalk Australia* thanks 4WD Victoria for their support with this story.** ■



Australian Historic Vehicle Interest Group committee member and ex-AAAA executive director David Wright.

Government to scrap Luxury Car Tax on 're-imports'

Continued from page 1

than it seems.

"The latest amendment will effect very few vehicles, yes, but its impact was significant on high-value vehicles where LCT was applicable to the current market upon re-entry to Australia after specialised repairs or restoration," he says.

Aston Martin Works in Newport Pagnell, UK, and Ferrari Classiche in Maranello, Italy, plus a plethora of American muscle car restorers are just a few of the destinations classics are sent before returning with thousands in LCT applied upon return.

Wright explains that the result is good for the classic car sector, but the government's misconstrued rationale for removing LCT indicates it's still not perfect.

"Disappointing was the Government's response to our submission, saying the LCT was introduced to correct an inequity that applied when the GST was introduced in 2000," he says.

"What this explanation completely overlooked was that wholesale Sales Tax has never been applicable to second-hand cars and historic vehicles are clearly second-hand," Wright explains.

"A summary of the relevant changes to wholesale Sales Tax and the introduction of the GST was appended to our submission and it was obvious that this had not been taken into account."

AHVIG cites in its submission to treasury, **Wolf Grodd** guru from restoration business Sleeping Beauties, with a list of 12 cars worth $11 million, which clients want to import and have him restore.

LCT would be A$3.5 million, with a further GST component of $1.1m, the submission states, with Grodd's restoration work costed at $4.3 million. A World War II-borne Mercedes 650K would cost A$1 million to restore, and employ four people, full-time for three years.

Wright says "abolishing LCT is revenue neutral on restored imports," but argues it's about more than money.

"Vehicles – vintage, classic or otherwise – which can never be replaced, are leaving Australia and aren't coming back because of LCT. We have to protect our historic vehicle industry at a national, legislative level because we can never replace it."


ANCAP chief executive James Goodwin says LCT on new cars needs the boot.

Australasian New Car Assessment Programme (ANCAP) chief executive **James Goodwin** says the LCT scrappage is great for the small number affected, but misses the target. "The bigger concern is that LCT is still being applied to tens of thousands of the safest and most technologically advanced vehicles on Australian roads," he tells *AutoTalk*.

"This is a sensible move to address what I would describe as an administrative oversight and will be welcomed by the small number of people who would have been impacted," Goodwin explains.


AIMVIA vice president Kristian Appelt loathes LCT in all forms.

ANCAP says it, like the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries (FCAI) and the Australian Automotive Dealer Association (AADA), is still waiting for the impost on new cars to be taken seriously as the nation's road toll sits at 1222 for the year ending June 2018.

"It [Luxury Car Tax] is quite simply a tax on safety and innovation," Goodwin continues. "Even when the tax is not applied to vehicles, its existence can reduce the standard of safety equipment fitted to vehicles at the LCT threshold price point, which is a very poor outcome for the whole community."

Australian Imported Motor Vehicle Industry Association vice- president **Kristian Appelt** says Luxury Car Tax should never have applied.

"They're correcting something incorrectly executed in the first place," he says.

"A vehicle built long before LCT is certainly never going to deserve the tax added, and spending money to restore such a car has no bearing on new car manufacturing which LCT was designed to protect," Appelt adds.

"Paying GST for the vehicle, GST for the parts, GST for the shipping, GST for the insurance, the historic registration, the tyres, the oil and on your phone bill, does not deserve another giant impost just because you increase its value," he says. ■



Buyers beyond borders

The 2018 digital buyer is prepared to travel great distances or purchase sight unseen – but just how far and where?

It's no secret that buyers are more discerning than ever before, and the latest carsales insights uncover the true extent they're prepared to go to secure their ideal set of wheels.

One of the effects of digitising much of the search process is that buyers are now more willing to travel great distances to visit a dealership that offered a better price, value for money or had the perfect purchase option in stock.

In 2017, purchase intenders surveyed in *The Journey to Vehicle Ownership* research whitepaper revealed that they would be happy to travel up to 70km to visit a dealership.

This evolution in buyer behaviour and blurring of market areas opens up significant selling opportunities and has implications for the way dealerships and OEMs best market and list their stock.

Exploring past local areas

The median distance travelled by buyers to dealerships for new and used vehicles between $20,000-$100,000, is now 44.26km, as revealed by the latest carsales data.

Tellingly, the more expensive the vehicle, the greater the buyer's willingness to travel.The median distance travelled for vehicles with a sticker price in excess of $100,000 was more than 3x greater than those enquiring on vehicles in the $20,000-$30,000 price band.

Extending the search interstate

Carsales data between April 2017-March 2018 uncovered that 18.75% of enquiries placed on dealership stock items priced between $20,000-$100,000 were placed by buyers in a different state or territory.

Higher price bands experienced a higher percentage of interstate enquiries.

In New South Wales and Victoria, over 40% of enquiries from buyers on vehicles priced $100,000-plus were placed on interstate vehicles. In Queensland and Western Australia, over 60% of enquiries in this price band were placed on interstate vehicles, while more than 80% was recorded in South Australia. In Tasmania, over 95% of enquiries in this price band were placed on vehicles located on the mainland, with Victoria receiving more than 35% of these enquiries.

Five tips to maximise conversion of interstate enquiries

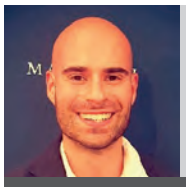
1. Professional photos and insightful comments

Professional photography and video help buyers make a more confident enquiry or purchase decision, drawing attention to key details about your stock item that differentiate it from other listings.

Ensure that you complement your professional photography with comments that highlight services that facilitate an interstate purchase, such as Australia-wide trade-ins and delivery.

2. Detailed inspection report

With a credible inspection report, interstate buyers can make an informed decision to purchase a vehicle safe in the knowledge that it has been given the all-clear by an independent specialist mechanic.



By **David Toscano**
trade marketing content producer – carsales

3. Transparent history report

Vehicle history reports tick the boxes that concern buyers including a written off check, stolen check, warranty check, odometer check and more.

With a comprehensive history report, buyers can be assured about the true origins of the vehicle.

4. Add extended warranty

Stock listed with a warranty can appear as a more trustworthy and easier purchase proposition, as buyers can feel greater peace of mind knowing they are protected from mechanical breakdown for a specified time.

Adding a warranty to your stock items also has reputational benefits by clearly communicating your confidence in the quality and reliability of your stock.

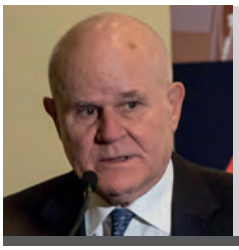
5. Timely customer contact

Enquiries convert when buyers are contacted quickly and equipped with everything they need to make an informed purchase decision. 34.1% of enquiries on Carsales converted to sale at the dealership – on the actual vehicle or another with the same dealership – within 14 days.

Dive into the full state-by-state analysis by visiting https://public.tableau.com/profile/carsales#!/



Forecasting the future



By **David Backhall,**
AADA chief executive

Al Gore was a high achiever.

A Harvard graduate who served in the Vietnam War, he not only occupied the second most important political office in the United States – the vice-presidency – but also jointly won the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize for his work on climate change.



Al Gore, 45th vice president of the US 1993-2001

The whole world watched his live presentations and saw the movie *An Inconvenient Truth*. This may be the first and likely only time the Nobel Committee has awarded a Peace Prize for a PowerPoint presentation – and a movie!

In the late 2000s, Al Gore made a series of high-profile statements suggesting that the Arctic sea ice could be completely gone by the northern summer of 2013 or 2014.

Clearly, the sea ice is still with us in 2018 and clearly, Al got it wrong.

I mention this not to vilify Al Gore – more than any other individual he placed the risks of climate change on the global political agenda. The failure of his prediction simply highlights the difficulties of forecasting even relatively near-term outcomes.

We see many predictions in the media that jump the chasm between "guesstimate" and accepted fact too quickly.

The automotive industry seems to be a happy hunting ground for a disparate cast of characters prepared to take a fly at calling the future for our business – and the visions they deliver are invariably dystopian – no headlines in forecasting good news apparently.

These observations are generally made from comfortable chairs in academia, the media or some think-tank, far removed from the uncomfortable reality of selling cars to consumers.

Take a glance at the many differing predictions around the adoption rates for electric vehicles, the soon-to-be-catastrophic intervention of on-line direct vehicle sales, the rapid rise of autonomous vehicles, the exponential explosion of ride-sharing and car-sharing – forecasts that are often accompanied by strident warnings about the imminent demise of the franchised new car dealer.

Unquestionably, these trends are out there. But are the dire conclusions being forecast by some commentators the only outcomes? We've shown over many years that new car dealers are a resilient, inventive and entrepreneurial group of business people – doomsday forecasters take note!

At AADA our proactive and engaged stance with policy makers and legislators will go a long way towards equipping dealers to manage whatever challenges materialise from the many trends already in play.

Visit us at **www.aada.asn.au** for more information on our policy agenda and other initiatives. Also, explore **www.dealernomics.aada.asn.au**. Our proprietary economic analysis tool provides our new car franchised dealers with significant grass-roots political leverage with our MPs.

Finally, we invite you to check out the 2018 AADA Convention on the Gold Coast in September *(www.aadaconvention.com.au)*. With the deputy prime minister as our headline speaker and other leading industry and political figures already confirmed, no dealer or interested industry observer should miss this premier industry event. ■

New car sales bottom-out in winter

Australian new car sales in July 2018 have slumped 7.8%, in spite of the same number of days to close deals and get customers over the line.

On average, there were 277 more vehicles sold every day in July 2017 compared to last month – resulting in just 85,551 cars finding new homes, 7203 fewer than last year, according to VFACTS data provided by the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries.

Passenger vehicle sales are down more than 20%, shy 7425 over July 2017, and SUVs while still strong took a 1% hit (only 354 sales short), although light commercials managed to claw a 0.1% gain over July 2017 – just 19 vehicles.

Every manufacturer in the top 10 sales race held their ground from June: Toyota on 128,769 sales for the year keeps Mazda and Hyundai at bay.

Toyota **Hilux** sold five more units more than July 2017 making it the only percentage gain until position six on the top 10 models list – the Hyundai i30 – which did 2.6% better than last year with 2178 sales. Top-selling Hilux beat **Ranger** for second (down 4.1%), **Corolla** third (down a massive 19%), **Mazda 3** (down 0.9%), Toyota **LandCruiser** in seventh place (up 11.1%) and **RAV4** eighth (up 6.7%), the Volkswagen **Golf** (up a staggering 60% on July 2017), and Nissan **X-Trail** in 10th (up 9.6%).

Matching the models in sales figures this month, every state recorded stagnant sales except for Tasmania which managed a decent 5.9% increase at 1457 sales.

The biggest loser in percentage was the **Northern Territory** (down 18.8% or just 172 sales short) compared with July 2017; but **New South Wales** was down 2945 sales (down 9.6%), **Victoria** tripped (down 6.3%) losing 1663 sales, **Queensland** was down 1073 sales (-5.8%), **South Australia** down 641 sales (-11.3%) and **Western Australia** dropped 610 sales (-8.1%), and the **ACT** was exactly 180 sales short of last year's efforts (only 1301 versus 1481 July 2017).

Further losses were seen in large cars, down 56.3%, mid-size passenger cars, which lost 31.3% on July 2017, sports cars were gauged 38.2%, and upper large passenger cars stalled 46.1% against last year's numbers.

Some redeeming gains were found in the smallest packages, with micro cars leap-frogging 31.8% over July 2017, and small SUVs managed to hang in there for 3.4% over last year, while the ever-popular 4X4 pick-ups kept the heat on for a 6.4% improvement, joined by the upper large SUV category which hold 4.1% over July 2017. ■



The biggest surprise came in mirco car sales performance.

Top 10 Brands



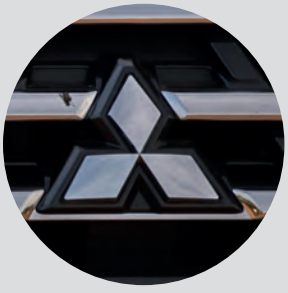
1. Toyota 128,769



2. Mazda 68,264



3. Hyundai 57,004



4. Mitsubishi 49,779



Less is more

Isuzu Ute sells blunt instruments in a time of value luxury, and let's not pretend here – the new D-Max is still a sledge hammer in an operating theatre – and it takes me back.

I once drove a snorkelled 70-series LandCruiser troop carrier through Gippsland floodwaters up to the windscreen, and learned to drive in a tank-like bronze GQ Patrol in the Victorian High Country, and both came to mind when driving the D-Max.

When you see the asking price, initially it seems a little high for such a no-frills ute. But the fact you can find decade-old Isuzu light trucks for sale with hundreds of thousands of km on them, with new bodies fitted, for similar money, it suddenly becomes less about the number, and more about what you're getting for it. Not to mention how much Toyota's updated 79-Series costs even today.

There's another Japanese ute-maker which sells and sells on a reputation, but has been having some issues recently. But when it comes to dependable, robust trucks, with the demands put on their engine components, Isuzu is the leader.

Updated features on the revised range include an effective, simple sat-nav that, while sitting behind a glare-prone screen, is much more responsive than the last version (less yelling and prodding), and a decent reversing camera with a nice wide view.

Bugbears include the lack of reach adjustment to make up for one's lack of verticle-ness, I can live without CarPlay/Android Auto (even if some can't), and while I know "it's coming" with the Mazda partnership's next-gen D-Max range, no adaptive cruise or AEB must be mentioned for fleet buyers' sake as the vehicular workplace is increasingly under scrutiny from WorkSafe.

Entrusting one's life in their ute at a 45-degree incline, in the middle of the bush, or miles from any service department, every squeeze of the D-Max throttle feels like you're barely asking that N-Series 4JJ1 diesel engine to elevate its heart rate. And that's important. This means you're doing more with; less wear, less strain, less risk. Truck motor in a ute; bloody brilliant.

Throwing the D-Max into the Melbourne 4x4 Proving Ground, to be frank, it barely noticed. What proved impressive was that ease with which it handles most challenges, particularly the log challenge, designed to throw off opposing wheels to lose traction.

The hill descent control is genius and absurdly easy to use, especially when using the "drive through the brake" technique to overlay three forms of speed reduction and avoid mishap. Keen to look for a chink its armour, the LS-U D-Max was sent on repeated descents of the proving ground's steepest slope to make sure it wasn't a fluke. What let the D-Max down was the squidgy, smelly, fragile component enjoying the addition of leather seats and the simple cabin layout.

Said fleet (and private) buyers will appreciate the longer service intervals at 12mth/15,000km and the 4x4's increased GVM of over three tonnes and payload on all variants of more than one tonne. The 4x4's Gross Combined Mass, of both car and trailer, is an impressive 5.95t.

That indefatigable six-speed gearbox makes remarkably smooth changes, useful for not jiggling around your strapped or tied-down payload, and the use of new-blend steel in the suspension means using three instead of five leaves, which means chiropractors will see fewer D-Max owners in for herniated discs. ■



Sometimes a hammer is all you need.

Top 10 Brands *continued*

5. Ford 41,924

6. Holden 36,541

7. Kia 35,751

8. Nissan 33,987

9. Volkswagen 33,450

10. Honda 32,523

2018 sales in July

Top 10 Medium Cars under $60K



1. Toyota Camry
13 17



2. Mazda 6
276



3. Skoda Octavia
188



4. Ford Mondeo
140



5. Volkswagen Passat
129



6. Subaru Liberty
120



7. Hyundai i40
67



8. Hyundai Sonata
67



8. Kia Optima
57



10. Honda Accord
18

Top 10 Medium SUVs under $60K



1. Mazda CX-5
2233



2. Toyota RAV4
1853



3. Nissan X-Trail
1603



4. Hyundai Tuscon
1490



5. Honda CR-V
1058



6. Mitsubishi Outlander
1033



7. Kia Sportage
1003



8. Subaru Forester
591



9. Volkswagen Tiguan
562



10. Ford Escape
452

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July 2

New car-buying intentions drop

The number of Australians who intend on buying a new car has dropped.

From March to April this year, 66,000 Aussies dropped off the new car-buying intention radar according to Roy Morgan's Automotive Currency Report research.

The report reveals 2.268 million people were intending on buying a new car before 2022, a slump from the 2.334 million measured in March.

July 3

ANCAP humanises vehicle safety with "choice"

The new Australasian New Car Assessment Programme publicity campaign is asking car buyers to make a choice between a safer newer car or an older unsafe one.

The aim of "Safer Vehicle Choices Save Lives" is to get consumers actively thinking about the vehicle they pick as the deciding factor in their own safety.

Two video commercials depicting human drivers Anne and Michael as crash test dummies with face-painted ANCAP logos crashing into each other in the 1998 and 2015 Toyota Corollas that were spectacularly crashed together in 2016.

July 5

Sales slowing? New cars down in June

It is unclear if demand or the supply chain is to blame for June new vehicle registrations dipping – the market down 8.2% overall.

The market for the month totalled 15,172 vehicles, down 1313 year on year. Overall sales remain up, by 0.5%, year-to-date according to registration data released tonight by the Motor Industry Association.

Registrations of 9725 passenger and SUV vehicles for the month of June were down 456 units on June 2017, a decrease of 4.5% and registrations of 5447 commercial vehicles were also down for the month, by 357 units (down 6.2%) on June 2017.

AHG 'disappointed' with scrapped deal

It's back to the drawing board following the unsuccessful sale of ASX-listed Automotive Holdings Group's (AHG) AU$400 million refrigerated logistics business.

Chinese group HNA were in negotiations for eight months to purchase the logistics branch but cancelled the deal this week due to delays and "liquidity problems".

AHG would have made AU$280 million from the sale. Its shares dropped around 10% following news of the termination.

Arresting developments in Queensland for Kia Stinger

The Sunshine State's highway patrol have launched a fleet of Kia Stingers to replace ageing Commodore and Falcon pursuit vehicles.

The 50 Stingers will be used in Queensland's Road Policing Command in 330 V6 guise and will be rolled out into service between now and December, meeting all the requirements of a performance police vehicle.

July 9

'Irresponsible lending' in indigenous communities

The Australian financial services royal commission has heard of unethical vehicle loans being offered to Aboriginal communities.

ASIC senior policy analyst Nathan Boyle has told the royal commission that in the 2011 aftermath of Cyclone Yasi, "predatory" vehicle lending saw naive members of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander communities charged extreme interest rates.

"In Yarrabah, outside Cairns, consumers were being given loans that almost from the first repayment they couldn't afford it," he says.

July 10

Shell chief beckons fossil fuel ban

Shell Anglo-Dutch group chief executive **Ben Van Beurden** is encouraging the UK to bring its 2040 fossil fuel ban forward.

***The Guardian* reports Beurden has encouraged the move, as British ministers, local government and environmental lobby groups appeal for a 2030 deadline, which the Shell Ango-Dutch chief executive says would help the oil and gas giant with its investment decisions.**

Bold change to Holden retail strategy

GM Holden will give consumers $500 if they test one of its cars but buy elsewhere.

Launching the initiative this week with prime time TV advertising, Holden is vowing to give consumers a $500 Visa prepaid card if they test drive a current model-range Holden and buy a different vehicle in the same VFACTS category within 30 days of testing, and runs from July 8 to August 31.

Cloned key-fob costs NZ dealer

A tech-savvy thief has gone to great lengths to steal one of Genuine Vehicle Import's (GVI) fleet.

GVI general manager Hayden Johnston says a young male stole the grey 2007 Mazda Axela from the Auckland dealership on Friday last week without even needing the key-fob.

"From surveillance footage, it looks like he has cloned the transponder frequency and simply pushed the unlock button on the door handle and driven the car away," Johnston says.

July 11

Nissan finds incorrect emissions data at Japanese factories

Incorrect emissions data from car exhaust tests conducted at Nissan's Japanese factories have been discovered, the company says.

Emissions and fuel economy tests "deviated from the prescribed testing environment", the BBC reports.

Nissan didn't reveal how many cars were affected but promised to initiate a comprehensive investigation.

Isuzu Ute growth supports technical competition

Sales performance from the only two models in Isuzu Ute's range is keeping bigger brands on their toes.

With a 10% year-on-year increase of D-Max and MU-X

Continued on page 18

Continued from page 17

sales from June 2017 to June 2018, the former in 4×4 outsold Nissan Navara, Mazda BT-50 and Volkswagen Amarok last month.

D-Max also came second to Toyota Hilux and beat Ford's Ranger down to third in 4×2 sales, while the ute-based MU-X has overtaken Mazda's CX-9 for fourth most popular large SUV in 2018.

Commodore returns to active duty

South Australia Police have approved the all-wheel drive Commodore for official duties.

Holden will supply at least 100 RS V6 ZB Commodores for general and highway patrol work to replace current VFII models.

Silver cars be will trialled for general traffic duties, white will be trialled for general work, and black cars will be used in "special traffic fleets".

July 12

More disruptors to new vehicle retail system

Cars & Co is promising to shake up the traditional dealership sales model.

Aiming to circumnavigate consumers around the manufacturer-dealership convention of negotiating with sales people, Cars & Co will do it free of charge.

The concept offers consumers the promise of the lowest possible price negotiated on their behalf, alleviating the time spent visiting dealerships.

July 13

Hyundai, Volkswagen have nothing to hide'on customer feedback

Only Hyundai Motor Company and Volkswagen AG have said they would share confidential customer feedback data.

A news.com.au enquiry with 11 automakers based in Australia reveals only Hyundai Australia and Volkswagen Australia would be willing to reveal their private Automotive Research Committee customer feedback information, under the condition others reveal theirs.

July 16

Hybrids and EVs on buyers' interest list

More than half of Australians looking for a new car are tempted by a hybrid or pure electric vehicle.

Roy Morgan research shows of the 37,000 drivers surveyed 51.6% say they would consider a hybrid vehicle in their next purchase, up from 48.7% in 2015.

However, diesel remains the more popular petrol-alternative with 45.5% considering one as of May 2018.

NRMA second most-trusted brand in Australia

The NRMA has been declared the second most trusted brand in Australia by an open-ended and unprompted survey of roughly 4000 Australians between October 2017 and April 2018.

Roy Morgan research has ranked the National Roads & Motorists Association behind Aldi, but above Bendigo Bank (third), Qantas (fourth), Bunnings (fifth), Kmart (sixth), ABC Network (seventh), IGA supermarkets (eighth), Australia Post (ninth) and ING Bank (10th) for trustworthiness.

July 17

Renault dealers now selling Zoe privately

The all-electric Renault Zoe is now available for private retail sale from select dealerships.

Renault dealerships across Australia will sell the Zoe Life for a recommended retail price of $47,490 and the Zoe Intens for $49,490 (excluding dealer delivery or statutory costs).

Australia's oil and gas industry will automate early

The Australian fossil fuel industry is predicted to be among the first to adopt artificial intelligence systems.

GlobalData says the O&G market's "strong overall decline" in value from 2013 to 2017, due to crude oil price drops, is an indicator of the need for adaptability.

July 1

Suzuki joins Hyundai, VW in customer transparency vote

Suzuki Australia says it would be open to making confidential customer research data publicly available.

Following an enquiry published by news.com.au asking 11 major carmakers whether they would share confidential customer feedback data from the Automotive Research Committee, Suzuki Australia says it too would join the minority.

Hyundai US opens showroom on Amazon

Hyundai Motor Company of North America has opened a digital showroom inside online retail giant Amazon.

A standalone cyber showroom space has been virtually unveiled on Amazon.

Vietnamese car company to debut in Paris

A new Vietnamese car company promises to bring "world-class vehicles" to the global market, starting with an SUV and sedan.

VinFast will manufacturer its vehicles in northern Vietnam with design input from Italian design houses Pininfarina, ItalDesign and Torino, and a global debut at the Paris Motor Show in October, 2018 before going on sale in Vietnam in 2019.

July 20

Toughest penalties for NSW drivers using phones

Drivers caught illegally using their phones while driving in New South Wales will cop five demerit points.

As of September 2018 the new laws will be felt by motorists, including motorcyclists and truck drivers, caught using their phone while driving by any means other than it being in a fixed cradle or operated using hands-free options.

July 23

US dealers could be squashed under Trump tariff

New car dealers in the United States are expecting sales to take a hit if president *Donald Trump's* imported vehicle tariff succeeds.

***The Wall Street Journal* reports dealers are readying themselves for a 25% tax on foreign-built vehicle sales, which would cover nearly half of all 2017 US sales.**

July 24

Long-term paint shop worker 'unfairly dismissed'

A sacked paint shop worker at Toyota Australia's Altona factory was "unfairly dismissed", Fair Work has found.

Adrian Tainsh has been awarded $70,000 in compensation by the Fair Work Commission due to unsubstantiated claims of inappropriate personal relationships with

Continued on page 19

Continued from page 18

co-workers.

July 25

AHG appoints new CFO

Automotive Holdings Group (AHG) has promoted senior business development manager Adam Irving to the role of chief financial officer.

AHG managing director John McConnell says Irving is an "outstanding candidate" and has played a "major role" in business development since joining the company in 2010.

VACC pushing governments to spark industry change

The Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce is applying pressure to a pre-election state government about the biggest issues facing the automotive industry.

With thousands of hard-to-fill automotive trade vacancies strangling small businesses due to a growing skills shortage, the VACC has launched its election campaign calling on government – or opposition – to listen and respond to "one of the biggest trade employers in Victoria".

July 26

Purchase price counts against EVs

The purchase price is a key reason Australians are not rushing to buy a new electric vehicle (EV), according to a new report from RACQ.

The report, which covers a range of internal combustion engine (ICE) cars sold within Australia as well as the Toyota Prius, BMWi3, Mitsubishi Outlander and Tesla Models S and X, compares purchase costs as well as loan repayments and interest against depreciation in value, plus running costs of registration, insurance, fuel, maintenance/repairs and tyre replacement.

EV fans converting conventional vehicles

An increasing number of electric vehicle fans are converting their fossil-fuelled transport to electric.

More than 300 home-built EVs are around the country, the Australian Electric Vehicle Association (AEVA) says, with interest rapidly increasing.

July 30

Haval ranking high in distinguished company

Chinese carmaker Haval has placed itself among titans of the automotive industry.

In the Brand Finance Auto 100 report, listing the most valuable global automakers, Haval is celebrating its 16th ranking above Ferrari, Kia, Mazda, Mitsubishi and Tesla.

July 31

Regulator nabs Europcar on alleged excessive charges

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission is taking Europcar to task over allegations of excessive payment surcharges imposed on customers.

The claims are made regarding 96 Europcar outlets owned and operated by the company outright, excluding the 30 franchisees operating in Australia.

Continued on page 34

THE DIARY

AutoTalk New Zealand's group editor Scott Morgan looks at the month gone by on **autotalk.co.nz**



July 2

New vehicle manufacturers 'outstanding' during alpha airbag recall - Faafoi

The automotive industry and government agencies are working together to get the alpha Takata airbag problem sorted out, consumer affairs minister Kris Faafoi says.

As of May, 50,806 of the 103,819 of the alpha-affected vehicles have been completed, leaving 53,013 still to complete – although the total number affected is somewhat fluid as vehicles are either added or subtracted from the list.

July 9

Court ruling goes against Continental Cars

Continental Cars is considering its legal options after a High Court decision which ruled the company has to pay $130,000 to a former customer.

The ruling centres around its Ferrari dealership in Newmarket, Auckland, where customer Martyn Thompson thought he had purchased a Ferrari F12 Berlinetta.

All the HOT NEWS every day as it happens

autotalk.co.nz

July 12

Biosecurity awareness needs work - O'Connor

Biosecurity minister Damien O'Connor is pushing for a better public understanding of biosecurity threats, like the brown marmorated stink bug.

According to a survey done as part of the Biosecurity 2025 programme, more than 60% of New Zealanders have a good understanding of biosecurity and think it is important.

July 18

Used car price drop offset by petrol hike

An influx of used cars following the stink bug crisis has seen prices drop, new Stats NZ figures show.

Used car prices fell 3.3% in the June quarter.

July 20

Alpha airbag recall deadlines 'too tight'

The used import industry is still working with its new vehicle counterparts to sort out the alpha Takata airbag compulsory recall issue.

But the timeframes set by consumer affairs minister Kris Faafoi are making it tough, Imported Motor Vehicle Industry Association chief executive David Vinsen says.

July 23

Mitsubishi's NZ dealers part of global rebrand

Mitsubishi dealers around the country are in for a fresh new look with the marque adopting an updated brand identity globally.

The global dealer rebrand will encompass 5000 dealerships worldwide.

Optimistic outlook for Australian EV uptake

Almost two-thirds of Australians may own an electric vehicle (EV) within a decade.

That's what a Jaguar commissioned survey in its *Driving Australia Forward* says.

The report indicates one in five Australians of driving age think they will buy an EV within the next two years.

Almost 84% of buyers want to own an EV at some time in their lives.

EVs represent about 0.2% of total sales, and a Roy Morgan survey suggests that only 55.7% of Australians are seriously considering buying some form of electrified vehicle, *RenewEconomy* says.

Other forecasts, such as Bloomberg New Energy Finance, predict that 40% of light vehicles will be electric by 2040, while the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) recently forecast that half of all cars would be electric by about the same time.

Jaguar's forecasts could mean Australian car dealers may be selling an average of 1.2 million EV or PHEV cars annually over the next 10 years, nearly double what the AEMO expects.

About 43% of millennial respondents say they want an EV, compared to 34% of baby boomers, the Jaguar report says.

Men are also more likely to want to buy an EV as their next car, at 42% compared to 27% of women. About 38% of people surveyed say they want an EV "a lot".

Cost remains a key factor, as Jaguar Land Rover Australia marketing director **Kevin Nicholls** admits.

"While Aussies clearly see the benefits of electric vehicles they're still hesitant about the price – 75% said that if electric vehicles cost the same as their petrol equivalent, it would be their next car purchase," he says.

Australia is reportedly seven to 10 years behind the rest of the world in EV uptake, blamed mainly on a lack of EV policy and purchase incentives.

In May, Jaguar asked the Australian government to provide the local auto industry with a clear path to help boost EV uptake.

"Australians are ready for electric vehicles, and the industry is too – now we need the federal government to do their bit and present their framework," Nicholls told RenewEconomy.


Jaguar's I-Pace.

Nicholls says the I-Pace SUV will be available in Australian Jaguar dealerships in November, starting at about A$119,000, plus on-road costs.

Many Australian consumers may wait for more affordable models, such as the Nissan Leaf, the Hyundai Ioniq, Kia Niro and the Tesla Model 3, RenewEconomy says.

Jaguar says education and public awareness are key, with EV interest rising by 8% once EVs' environmental benefits are known.

Another report suggests EV uptake in Australia is hindered by dealer reluctance, often leaving EVs out of sales pitches due to lack of staff training and because of reduced profits through less maintenance and repairs.

EVs and hybrids on buyers' interest list

More than half of Australians looking for a new car are tempted by a hybrid or pure electric vehicle.

Roy Morgan research shows of the 37,000 drivers surveyed, 51.6% say they would consider a hybrid vehicle in their next purchase, up from 48.7% in 2015.

Pure EVs were on the radar of 36% of those surveyed since 2015 – which rises to 55.7% when including hybrids – however, diesel remains the more popular petrol-alternative with 45.5% considering one as of May 2018.

Hybrids have the lowest buyer consideration for those earning below $30,000 annually (49%), but for incomes over $200,000 the interest rises to 65%.

Pure EVs show a similar trend, going from 32.7% (sub-$30k wage) to 51.9% for $200k-plus earnings.

Diesel peaks at about 58% at the $150,000-200,000 salary but declines above that level, whereas hybrids and pure-electric continue rising.



However, petrol remains top consideration at 68.5% above $200,000 annual earnings.

Roy Morgan industry communications director **Norman Morris** says attitudes towards non-petrol vehicle options have changed.

"Those alternatives considered more environmentally friendly than traditional petrol engines have seen increased consideration, especially as major car brands continue to invest in making those alternatives more affordable and accessible," he says.

"There are notable demographic differences in who would seriously consider buying hybrid and electric vehicles, with the wealthier consumers more likely to seriously consider them, while diesel was more likely among middle/higher-income consumers," Morris adds.

"Vehicle purchase intention can be influenced by fuel consideration. However, this is a long-term indicator and, to date, despite their high consideration among adult Australian drivers, both hybrid and fully electric vehicles comprise less than 1% of the vehicle car park," Morris says.

"The challenge will be to convert this intention to vehicle sales."

EV target needed

The Electric Vehicle Council wants Australia's federal government to set an electric vehicle target.

It says there's no overarching EV policy at the federal level.

The council uses annual EV registration figures and a "Tesla estimate" to gauge EV uptake.

But its chief executive officer **Behyad Jafari** is pressing state, territorial and federal governments for more EV data, especially on a monthly basis.



Behyad Jafari.

Jafari says it's difficult for the EVC to get national and monthly figures.While some monthly EV statistics could be obtained through a paid subscription service, the council doesn't have the budget for it.

He says the federal Government should have monthly EV figures it can provide to the council.

About all the council has to go on, other than annual figures, several surveys and some projections, is statements like that from energy minister **Josh Frydenberg** saying an EV "revolution" would see one million of them on the road by 2030.

The EVC says it's difficult to do more detailed studies without the necessary data.

Jafari notes that New Zealand has monthly EV statistics available to the public through its Ministry of Transport website. These show the registrations of all EV classes from new and used pure electric to hybrid, and light to heavy vehicles, plus the total fleet size (8696 to the end of June).

The total fleet number provides an indication of each year's goal of doubling EV numbers until the New Zealand Government's target of 64,000 EVs by the end of 2021 is reached.

New Zealand's 8000 EV goal for the end of 2018 has already been exceeded, with next year's 16,000 EV target well on track.

The EVC released a state of the nation report on EVs in June, showing 2284 EVs sold in Australia in 2017.

It adds that a majority of state and territory governments have either announced or are developing an overarching EV policy framework or strategy.

The report, The state of electric vehicles in Australia: Driving momentum in electric mobility, also noted EV sales in government fleets is limited, contributing to only 3% of total sales.

That prompted the EVC to ask governments to do more, particularly with incentives to address cost and model availability.

Tritium lands another deal

Australian company Tritium has signed another deal, this time with NKM Mobilitas of Hungary to supply 12 Veefil-RT 50kW DC fast chargers as part of a new electric car charging network planned across Hungary.

NKM Mobilitas is a subsidiary of National Utilities, the state Hungarian utilities provider which supplies gas and electricity to 4.2 million households.

By the end of 2018, it plans to install 100 e-chargers under the name of Mobiliti across the country, in co-operation with local government and municipalities.

The latest Tritium signing follows deals announced this year which include supplying around 40 DC fast chargers for the NRMA's rollout of an EV charging network across NSW and the ACT, and agreement to supply its world-leading 350kW high-power chargers to the Ionity network in Europe.

In Hungary, the EV market is small, comprising about 6000 of the country's 3.8 million cars. But it is growing rapidly, with EV sales representing 5.1% of all new car sales in the first quarter of this year.

EV owners are supported by subsidies and incentives from the Hungarian Government, including grants, free car registration and reduced or free parking.

Mobilitas managing director **Szabolsc Balogh** says mainly companies are buying EVs at the moment, with 80-85% of the charging done in homes or underground parking garages.

"Only about 5% of charging points are located on autoroutes or motorways, with the rest in public areas," he says.

Tritium's fast chargers will be installed in strategic locations across Hungary in the second half of 2018.

The Veefil-RT 50kW DC fast charger can charge an average EV to 80% within 30 minutes. The chargers are up to 25 times more powerful than any home charger.

Mobiliti is also looking into charging solutions for B2B customers, including retail networks, shopping centres, bank offices, delivery businesses and transporters.

Tritium recently announced the opening of its European headquarters service centre and assembly operation in Amsterdam to support its growing European customer base.

It includes a training and accreditation unit for technical servicing and customer support.



From left, IT operations leader Tamas Binder, Europe Tritium sales general manager Jeroen Jonker, NKM Mobiliti's Szabolcs Balogh, and Tritium business development general manager operations Europe Manuel Fernandes.

Australia may lead li-ion battery recycling: CSIRO

Australia could lead the world in reusing and recycling lithium-ion battery waste.

That's according to a new report from the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), titled *Lithium battery recycling* in Australia.

About 3300 tonnes of lithium-ion (li-ion) battery waste is produced annually in Australia, of which only about 2% is recycled, *Manufacturers' Monthly* reports.

This waste from electronic and household devices, plus electric vehicle batteries, is growing by 2% annually.

The CSIRO report says that if recycled, 95% of waste components of li-ion batteries could be turned into new batteries or used in other industries. By comparison, of the 150,000 tonnes of lead-acid batteries sold in 2010, 98% were recycled.

Most of Australia's battery waste is shipped overseas, and remaining waste put in landfill - leading to potential fires and environmental contamination.

An effective recycling industry could stabilise global lithium supplies to meet consumer demand, the report adds.

CSIRO has research under way on processes for recovery of metals and materials, development of new battery materials, and support for the circular economy around battery reuse and recycling.

"As a world leader in the adoption of solar and battery systems, we must responsibly manage our use of lithium-ion technology in support of our clean energy future; CSIRO has set out a pathway to do this," CSIRO battery research leader **Dr Anand Bhatt** says.

He says Australia can draw additional value from existing materials, minimising environmental impact, and establishing a new industry in li-ion re-use/recycling.

Australian Battery Recycling Initiative chief executive officer **Libby Chaplin** says the report comes at a critical time.

"Currently we are racing towards a world where lithium batteries are a very big part of our energy supply, yet we have some real work to do to ensure we are able to recycle the end product once it has reached its use-by date."

The report also suggested research, government and industry, work closely to develop standards and best-practice solutions.

The 2017 Commodity Research Book Battery Raw Material Review says global consumption of lithium carbonate is expected to grow from 184,000 tonnes in 2015 to 534,000 tonnes in 2025, mainly through rapid adoption of electric vehicles, e-bikes and energy storage systems.

A Victorian business is reported to the first in Australia to recycle li-ion batteries. *Envirostream Australia's* A$2 million facility at New Gisborne, north of Melbourne, recycled 240,000kg last year.

A ban on sending e-waste to landfill in that state is due to be implemented.

Hydrogen cars the future – debate

A panel debate about hydrogen cars being the future will be held in Sydney.

The final part of a three-series forum around energy is titled "Hydrogen cars will be the future, not battery cars. Fake news?"

The event is hosted by The Warren Centre at the University of Sydney, School of IT, Darlington, on August 23, 7.30am-9.15am.

Panellists are likely to include Electric Vehicle Council Australia chief executive officer **Behyad Jafari**, Hydrogen Mobility Australia chief executive officer **Claire Johnson**, Hydrogen BOC general manager **Alex Dronoff** and Hazer non-executive director **Andrew Harris.**



Claire Johnson.

The panel will debate the merits of the options.

Both Toyota and Hyundai seem to have a bet each way on the issue, organisers note.

Hydrogen is being touted as a range extender, particularly for heavy transport, but the infrastructure still needs to be sorted.

Visit ***www.thewarrencentre.org.au*** for more information.

EV working group considers freight impact

An Electric Vehicles Working Group has been formed by the Australian Logistics Council (ALC) to consider the full impact this rapidly-evolving transport solution will have on the movement of freight in the years ahead.

The group's initial membership will include representatives from Linfox, Woolworths, DHL Australia, Australia Post and a number of other ALC member companies.

"It is important to recognise that electric vehicles will have an enormous bearing on the future shape of Australia's freight logistics industry," ALC managing director **Michael Kilgariff** says.

"This makes it vital for policymakers to focus on ensuring Australia has the right infrastructure and regulatory framework in place to permit the heavy vehicles of the future to continue delivering our mail, groceries, medicines, business supplies and online purchases every day," he says.

"The formation of this Electric Vehicles Working Group is part of ALC's commitment as an industry leader to ensure the continuing efficiency and safety of this industry as Australia begins the shift from internal combustion engines to newer technologies."



Michael Kilgariff.

A recent study by Energia on behalf of the Australian Renewable Energy Agency and the Clean Energy Finance Corporation anticipates that by 2030, up to half of new cars sold will be EVs.

"There is every reason to believe that similar changes will also occur in the heavy vehicle industry – and we need to be preparing for that change now," Kilgariff says.

"The ALC Electric Vehicles Working Group will promote the financial, social and environmental benefits of electric vehicles to industry and governments."

The group will also be charged with developing policies that promote greater manufacture and uptake of electric heavy vehicles in Australia, in the interests of greater national supply chain efficiency and safety.

Contact ***admin@auslogistics.com.au*** to join the group.

Hitachi to deliver autonomous mining trucks

Hitachi Construction Machinery has signed a deal with Australian mining company Whitehaven Coal to develop an autonomous haulage system.

Whitehaven Coal, Australia's largest independent coal miner, is using the initiative to support its operations in northwest New South Wales.

The autonomous haulage system aims to reduce safety hazards and enable better mine efficiency.

A fleet of Hitachi EH5000AC3 trucks are being planned for operation at Maules Creek coal mine with the development of infrastructure to support autonomous capability.



Driverless mining trucks are coming from Hitachi.

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Request a demo for access to our VIP party

First production Mini PHEV confirmed for Australia

Mini Australia confirms the Countryman S E All4 will be available here from the second quarter of 2019.

The plug-in hybrid S E All4 is the first of its type to wear a Mini badge and has around a 40km expected electric range.

The hybrid system comprises a 1.5-litre, three-cylinder turbocharged petrol combustion engine, which drives the front wheels.

This engine develops peaks of 100kW and 220Nm and drives through a six-speed Stepronic automatic transmission.

A synchronous electric motor powers the rear axle, via a two-stage, single-speed transmission. It produces a 65kW power peak, with 160Nm of torque that is instantly available.

Combined output is rated at 165kW, enabling a 0-100km/h time of 6.8 seconds, while an electronically-controlled interaction between the two power units enables all four wheels to be driven when required, maximising traction.

In normal driving, the Countryman S E All4 relies solely on the electric motor, at speeds of up to 80km/h. From this point, the combustion engine is gently engaged, ensuring a continued flow of smooth, responsive power at all speeds.

Located underneath the rear seat, the lithium-ion battery pack offers 7.6kWh gross capacity.

Using the supplied charging cable, the S E All4 can be charged using a standard domestic socket. This method charges to 80% in three hours,15 minutes.

Customers can also purchase a Mini Wallbox, which can be installed at a place of work or home. Using it, the same recharge is completed in two hours, 15 minutes.

The battery pack carries a six-year, 100,000km warranty.

A toggle switch inside, marked eDRIVE, enables the driver to switch between drive modes to ensure the right blend of performance and efficiency.



The Mini Countryman S E All4.

In MAX eDrive mode, the Countryman S E All4 relies on pure electric power at speeds of up to 125km/h.

The default AUTO eDrive blends combustion and electrical power, allowing pure electric driving at up to 80km/h.

A Save Battery mode biases power supply towards the combustion engine, allowing the battery pack to recharge on-the-fly.

Pricing and specification will be confirmed closer to the launch.

Warranty and servicing packages are offered. All new Minis are covered by a three-year/unlimited kilometre warranty.

Renault Zoe now for private sale

The all-electric Renault Zoe is available to purchase by private customers, Renault Australia says.

It was previously only available to fleet buyers from late 2017.

Renault dealerships across Australia will sell the Zoe Life for a recommended retail price of $47,490 and the Zoe Intens for $49,490 (excluding dealer delivery or statutory costs).

Renault Australia has expanded its EV dealer network to now include four dealerships nationally.

These are Sydney City Renault, Barry Bourke Renault in Melbourne, Unley Renault in Adelaide and Melville Renault in Perth. A second dealership in Melbourne and Sydney, along with EV specialists in Brisbane, Canberra and Hobart will be added later.

All have undergone specialist training in sales and service to ensure they are ready to engage with customers and answer questions about electric cars, while promoting the benefits of driving such vehicles.

"At Renault Australia we're excited to be taking this next step in the introduction of electric vehicles in Australia," managing director **Andrew Moore** says.



The Renault Zoe is available to private buyers.

"As at the end of June 2018, our sales to fleet customers this year have surpassed our initial sales projections.

"Along with demand from customers, we've experienced positive interest from within our dealer network of existing Renault dealers who wish to expand their product offering and become Renault electric vehicle specialists."

Globally, one electric car sold in every five is a Renault with 170,000 customers owning a Renault Z.E. (zero emissions).

The Zoe is the best-selling EV in Europe.

In 2017, Renault posted 38% growth in EV sales in Europe, with a 44% increase in Zoe registrations and a 23.8% market share.

The Renault Nissan Mitsubishi Alliance is a world leader in EVs and Groupe Renault has been the leader in Europe for the past four years.

As part of Renault's Drive the Future 2022 plan announced in October 2017, Groupe Renault committed to having eight pure electric and 12 electrified models as part of its range," Moore says.

"We look forward to being at the forefront of the inevitable move towards electric vehicles in Australia utilising clean, renewable energy sources to power our transportation."

Senate EV committee plugged in

The new senate select committee on electric vehicles says its "plugged in and ready to charge".

Led by senator **Tim Storer**, the committee comprises deputy chairman **Kim Carr, David Bushby, Janet Rice, David Smith** and **Dean Smith.**

Its brief is to enquire into the use and manufacture of EVs in Australia.

More specifically, the committee has been charged with investigating EV uptake economic, environmental and social benefits; opportunities in EV making, supply and value chain services;



Kim Carr.

measure to help accelerate EV uptake, and how federal, state and territory governments can combine to support EV uptake and supply.

"With the right policies and incentives we can create local jobs, generate economic growth, and deliver cheaper and greener vehicles to consumers," Storer says.

As part of its enquiry, the committee is seeking submissions from anyone interested in issues relating to electric cars. These can include industry, academics and regulatory agencies.

Submissions closed on July 27, although the committee says late submissions may be considered.

It expects to report back on October 17.

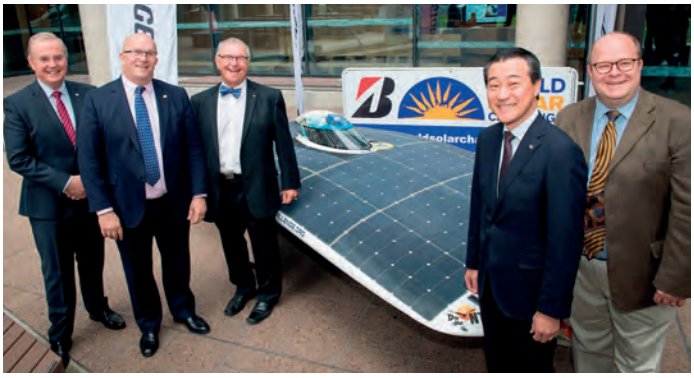
A website is under development on ***www.aph.gov.au***, while the committee can be contacted via its secretariat through email, ***electricvehicles.sen@aph.gov.au*** or phone **02 6277 3439.**

World Solar Challenge 2019 entries open

Entries for Australia's 2019 Bridgestone World Solar Challenge are open, with new regulations for next year's event now released.

About 45 team registrations from more than 20 countries are expected.

Bridgestone Corporation continues as the title sponsor of the biennial event, next running on October 13-20, 2019.



From left; Bridgestone Australia and New Zealand retiring managing director Andrew Moffatt, David Ridgeway, Chris Selwood, Ken Oyama and SA Tourism Commission chief executive Rodney Harrex.

It's become the world's foremost solar technology and advanced engineering challenge, with teams competing to create sustainable innovative solar-powered electric vehicles able to travel 3000km from Darwin to Adelaide.

The challenge has already received its first entry from the Australian Technology Network (ATN), a group of five universities from around the country banding together for the event for the first time.

"With the announcement of the 2019 regulations, the wait is over for the teams whose industrial design students are developing their concepts in anticipation of one of the world's greatest adventures," event director **Chris Selwood** says.

"Next year's event sees an evolution of the disruptive changes introduced in the last event which teams will need to apply to their concept."

The event is owned and managed by the South Australian Tourism Commission, on behalf of the South Australian Government.

Tourism minister **David Ridgway** says Bridgestone Corporation has been part of the solar challenge for six years and is a "perfect fit" because of its commitment to advance innovative technologies, support for global communities and its pledge to reduce environmental impacts.

Bridgestone Corporation brand strategy and communications director **Ken Oyama** says the partnership plays a significant role in Bridgestone's ongoing CSR contributions.

Meanwhile, an Australian team won the 2800km American Solar Challenge in July, the first international solar crew to do so.

The Western Sydney University's electric vehicle Unlimited 2.0 won four of the five stages in the race across four US states from Nebraska to Oregon.

Unlimited 2.0 did it in 37 hours 55 minutes – about 16 minutes quicker than second-placed the University of Michigan team.

Western Sydney University finished sixth in the 2017 World Solar Challenge and plans to have a new solar car in the 2019 event.



The Western Sydney University team after winning the American Solar Challenge.



Hybrids remain popular.

EV sales dip in July, but are still rising overall

Electric and hybrid vehicle sales took a dip in July.

A total 92 electric vehicles were sold in July 2018, compared with 123 in June.

Most of the EV sales (40) were in the non-private passenger category, according to the VFACTS monthly industry summary. This compares with 25 for the same time the previous year.

This segment was down slightly on the 49 EVs sold in June 2018, most of the EVs likely to have gone into fleets.

The private passenger market recorded 22 sales compared with 31 last month, with only 10 recorded for July 2017.

SUV private electrics numbered six, down on June's 15 and even July the previous year which had eight sold.

Non-private electric SUVs were better at 23 sales in July, compared with 28 in June, and 19 for July 2017.

Only one EV sold in the light commercial non-private sector.

Hybrids did better than electrics, recording 889 sales in July. That was down, though, on the 1344 recorded in June.

Non-private passenger hybrids led the way with 516, though down even on the same month last year when 600 sold.

Private passenger hybrids recorded 246 compared with 425 in June and just 10 in July 2017.

In SUVs, non-private sales totalled 75 (111 in June) and private hybrid sales were 52 (70 in June).

Winter can traditionally be a slower time for vehicle sales, and overall the number of hybrid and electric vehicles are increasing.

However, not all state and territory Motor Vehicle Registries (MVRs) identify hybrids separately.

NEW VEHICLE SALES BY BUYER TYPE AND FUEL TYPE
JULY 2018

	Month		YTD		Variance +/- Vol. & %			
	Jun 18	Jun 17	2018	2017	MTH	YTD	MTH	YTD
ELECTRIC								
Passenger Private	22	10	156	103	12	53	120.0%	51.5%
Passenger Non-Private	40	25	300	167	15	133	60.0%	79.6%
SUV Private	6	8	75	115	-2	-40	-25.0%	-34.8%
SUV Non-Private	23	19	225	225	4	0	21.1%	0.0%
Light Commercial Non-Private	1	0	6	1	1	5	-	500.0%
Sub Total	92	62	762	611	30	151	48.4%	24.7%
HYBRID								
Passenger Private	246	183	2,190	1,419	63	771	34.4%	54.3%
Passenger Non-Private	516	600	4,409	4,569	-84	-160	-14.0%	-3.5%
SUV Private	52	41	408	351	11	57	26.8%	16.2%
SUV Non-Private	75	69	603	466	6	137	8.7%	29.4%
Sub Total	889	893	7,610	6,805	-4	805	-0.4%	11.8%
TOTAL	**981**	**955**	**8,372**	**7,416**	**26**	**956**	**2.7%**	**12.9%**

EV TALK DIARY

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



July 2

New Ford boss has EV credentials

Kay Hart, who is Ford Motor Company's new Australia and New Zealand president and chief executive, comes from an electric vehicle (EV) background.

She replaces Graeme Whickman, who has left the company after 20 years to take up a new opportunity.

Hart, based in Melbourne, was Ford's global battery electric vehicle (BEV) manager, distribution and digital experience.

July 5

Tritium deal for 100 European charging sites

Australia's Tritium has been selected to provide 100 high-power charging (HPC) sites across Europe.

Ionity, a joint venture by several key car makers, has chosen Tritium as its technology partner for the construction of the sites in Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Norway and Sweden.

July 6

EV target needed

The Electric Vehicle Council wants Australia's federal government to set an electric vehicle target.

It says there's no overarching EV policy at the federal level.

Senate EV committee plugged in

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Led by senator Tim Storer, the committee comprises deputy chairman Kim Carr, David Bushby, Janet Rice, David Smith and Dean Smith.

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EV working group considers freight impact

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The group's initial membership will include representatives from Linfox, Woolworths, DHL Australia, Australia Post and a number of other ALC member companies.

July 11

Women will drive switch to EVs – study

Highly educated women are an untapped but potentially lucrative market for electric vehicle sales.

That's because they have greater environmental and fuel efficiency awareness than men, according to a new study by researchers at the University of Sussex and Aarhus University in Denmark.

July 12

Cheaper batteries and more renewable power will boost EVs – report

Falling battery prices and growing use of renewable energy like solar and wind will pave the way for soaring electric vehicle uptake.

That's the expectations outlined in Bloomberg New Energy Finance's forecast – *New Energy Outlook 2018.*

Estimates show lithium-ion battery prices decreased by about 80% between 2010 and now.

July 13

Hydrogen cars the future – debate

A panel debate about hydrogen cars being the future will be held in Sydney.

The final part of a three-series forum around energy is titled "Hydrogen cars will be the future, not battery cars. Fake news?"

July 16

Hybrids and EVs on buyers' interest list

More than half of Australians looking for a new car are tempted by a hybrid or pure electric vehicle.

Roy Morgan research shows of the 37,000 drivers surveyed, 51.6% say they would consider a hybrid vehicle in their next purchase, up from 48.7% in 2015.

Renault Zoe now for private sale

The all-electric Renault Zoe is now available to purchase by private customers, Renault Australia says.

It was previously only available to fleet buyers from late 2017.

Renault dealerships across Australia will sell the Zoe Life for a recommended retail price of $47,490 and the Zoe Intens for $49,490 (excluding dealer delivery or statutory costs).

July 17

Australia may lead li-ion battery recycling - CSIRO

Australia could lead the world in reusing and recycling lithium-ion battery waste.

That's according to a new report from the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), titled "Lithium battery recycling in Australia".

July 20

Kia Niro EV likely in Australia

Kia has officially put the Niro electric vehicle on sale in South Korea.

The Australian arm of Kia Motors tells *EVtalk* the prospects of bringing the Niro EV remain uncertain, but possible.

July 23

Optimistic outlook for Australian EV uptake

Almost two-thirds of Australians may own an electric vehicle (EV) within a decade.

That's what a Jaguar commissioned survey in its *Driving Australia* Forward report says.

July 25

Australian team wins US solar race

A Western Sydney University team has won the American Solar Challenge (ASC), becoming the first international and first Australian solar car crew to do so.

Their electric vehicle Unlimited 2.0 won four out of five stages of the gruelling 2800km race across four US states from Nebraska to Oregon.

July 26

Purchase price counts against EVs

The purchase price is a key reason Australians are not rushing to buy a new electric vehicle (EV).

That's according to a new report from RACQ.

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Cheers to big ideas for sustainable transport

Carlton United Breweries, one of Australia's biggest beer makers, is thinking about how it can reduce its emissions footprint while also saving on freight costs.

CUB announced early this year it is transitioning itself to renewable solar energy to power as much of its processing facility and head office buildings as possible.

But while many big companies might leave it there, the 115-year-old brewery which "uses beer to make Carlton Draught" and makes writing feature stories on a Friday afternoon just a little more exciting somehow, CUB is looking for emission-cutting ideas in its transport operation.

Speaking to *TransportTalk* recently, CUB vice-president of productivity and sustainability Jan Clysner and manager of logistics and procurement David Engel have plans to start taking carbon out of the enormous freight task.

Beer is a $17 billion-dollar industry in Australia. At least $2.5 billion is gurgled down in every pub across the country, from as far north as the Torres Hotel on Thursday Island in Queensland, as far west as the Shark Bay Hotel in Denham, WA, as high as the Cabra Pub in New South Wales at 1488m above sea level, or as remote as the Innamincka Hotel in South Australia – beer needs to be trucked.

To help reduce CUB's own consumption – of energy that is – the company has pledged to smash its footprint by 25% by 2025, running as much of its brewery and corporate building off renewable solar power as possible.

"We're not strictly off-the-grid so to speak, because we're still connected to it, but there are plans to get to 100% renewable," Clysner says.

"The biggest portion is an off-site solar farm, the remaining is on-site; it's not yet announced but it will come, allowing us to produce that 100%."

Over the next 12 years, CUB will use 74,000 megaWatt hours of electricity from Germany's BayWa.r.e - whose solar farms are being built in Sunraysia country, Mildura, in Victoria which, arguably, sees as much sunlight every year as anywhere else in Australia.

Solar panels will also adorn the roofs of breweries in Abbottsford, Melbourne, Yatala, Brisbane, and Hobart's Cascade site to further reduce its temptation for coal.

"At the height of production, energy is consumed immediately and we have to be responsible," Clysner says with a clear tone that this venture matters.

"We don't want to just paint buildings green, we do it when it makes economic sense. And those two things, renewable energy and economy makes sense," he says confidently.



L-R: CUB vice president of productivity and sustainability Jan Clysner and logistics and procurement manager David Engel.

Not wanting to rest at solar energy, the brewery has also had a focus on lowering its use of water – the primary component of beer.

Where it once took six litres to make one litre of beer, Clysner says the Yatala brewery in Queensland is now down to 2.4 litres per litre of beer, making it the parent company's most water frugal brewery in the world. It's a huge feat considering roughly 90% of the water used to make beer is consumed outside the brewery, mostly in growing the raw materials from seed.

Citing the United Kingdom's recent success running for 1000 hours without coal, and with the business operating under four pillars – water, agriculture, packaging and carbon - Clysner says it's only a matter of time before the company's transport footprint needs to be sorted out.

"Lowering our carbon footprint is our number one priority," he says passionately, "At the same time, we're not going to wait for the perfect solution yet we're not going to develop our own solution."

"As for all these Tesla Semis and such, a lot is coming, but not a lot is here. I'd like to see it moving quicker."

Logistics and procurement manager **David Engel** says the company is looking for partnerships with universities, start-ups and small businesses, and innovators to proactively help develop ideas which can reduce that freight footprint.

"Short term we're focusing on the internal kitchen, things like modal mix of rail, road, sea; optimising our mileage – things we can do now and

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Cheers to big ideas for sustainable transport

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overlay the sustainability impact there," he says as an example.

"Longer term we're certainly talking to people about biogas, technology which we know has CNG trucks available now – the big challenge is the step change from



Moving beer: It's a big job. Very big job. Doing it without fossil fuel is an expensive job.

diesel to CNG isn't significant, it's when you go with CNG using biogas," Engel explains having clearly done his research.

Beyond fossil fuels, Engel and Clysner are also watching the Tesla and Nikola space with bated, yet calm breath.

"Our parent company Anheuser-Busch," Clysner reveals, "has ordered 40 Tesla Semis in the US, and we also want them in Australia, but the answer up until now has been, 'Good, great, but not yet'."

"Someone needs to make a decision and ask, 'Can we do pilots in Australia?', 'Why can't we?', 'Is it availability?'," he suggests. "Depending on those answers, does that mean we talk to Tesla, Nikola, Volkswagen, the OEMs – because we can – and this means I can lean on our global contacts to get the ball rolling."

"I know you don't have a lot of snow in Australia, but once you start the snowball, it gets bigger and takes off," Clysner jokes, albeit with a realistic undertone keen to get things happening.

Both Clysner and Engel acknowledge, with the emergence of a viable commercial hydrogen fuel cell network expected to start in back-to-base operations, CUB's use of on-site hydrogen could overcome that need to return to base.

"Obviously the challenges of going battery-electric, like range and recharge time, are certainly overcome with fuel cell, the big challenge is the network. From an electricity perspective, it's everywhere," Clysner says.

"Electric trucks won't be perfect for a while, particularly the Tesla Semis, but evolution will work on that."

In order for that evolution to continue, Clysner says a catalyst is needed.

"Somebody needs to break through the 'chicken and egg cycle'," he explains. "We're not in the engine-building business, so we won't do this ourselves, but we can work with suppliers to create and push that demand."

"Electric trucks maybe won't work for the bigger haulage tasks, because you lose payload weight in batteries - we would need smaller lighter trucks to shift the same amount. So the end-of-line deliveries to pubs, bars and outlets, that's where smaller trucks will work. It means a double-gain in carbon reduction and noise limits."

"And then also in the US we're talking along the lines of hydrogen fuel cells which will be really big. We're not the kind of company that's going to wait for the perfect solution, we're going to make steps along the way as much as we can."



CUB sees a light at the end of the tunnel for its fossil-fuel-dependent freight task.

For CUB that means finding technical alliances in workshops, study groups, innovation hubs, students and professors, as well as commercially vested industry businesses keen to make changes in how transport is fuelled.

"We're asking, 'Are you ready to do pilot X-Y-Z? Because we are'," Clysner says to groups interested in fossil fuel alternatives.

"We can drive that industry here in Australia. We won't change the market per se, but we can help it evolve quicker."

"We haven't had any major conversations with our partners, although some are more open to it than others. Going forward it's part of our decision-making process, so yes, there's conversation with trucking companies on the commercial side, on service and making sustainability work in the relationship as well. These elements will decide how we move forward with other companies."

Clysner says working hard enough can also make economic sense for CUB's existing partners.

"It's about picking the right partners," he says, which might be something of an explanation for CUB's continued freight partnership with Linfox, not only Australia's biggest privately-owned transport operation, but also one that has been talking about alternative ways to power its fleet in the recent past.

"Even the network issue for fuel cells is not necessarily an issue for us because all our beer leaves from a brewery, goes to a distribution centre, and then goes to a customer's warehouse. There aren't a thousand different combinations we're doing, so those within a day's range – Does it make sense to set-up a hydrogen station at their own facilities? Possibly."

Using the Toyota Mirai as a yardstick, with roughly 7kg of hydrogen offering nearly 700km of range to a driver, it's virtually on the limit of how far any person is going to drive in a typical day. Clysner and Engel agree, compared with truck driver logbook requirements, this certainly presents a solid case.

"People had the same thinking, and some still have, with electric cars, if a car does 300-400km with a full battery, how often do you do a solid 400km driving in a car in a year?"

"We have to ask to which portion of my network is it the best solution. Electric-only is surely not the best solution for us given the substantial distances in Australia, but it might be the best solution for this portion," Clysner's says.

"Companies move at different speeds - the ones that are moving with us are the ones that will get our business because with the size we have, we can not only make a difference, it makes sense to stay ahead."

Keen to make a genuine step in the right direction, Clysner and Engel are equally keen to stay ahead by getting the industry excited to make sustainable decisions, not just waiting for legislation.

"There's no reason a mature market like Australia can't make steps forward to reduce carbon. There's no reason

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Cheers to big ideas for sustainable transport

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Australia can't go beyond just smart fleet management," Clysner says.

"If we don't do anything, it's going to go even slower. I strongly believe it takes one to start moving and others will follow. We're happy to go first and be part of the leaders."

"You don't want the government coming along with a stick because when things are forced, it doesn't mean it's done in the best way."



Hops go in, beer comes out. But without the best truck fleet in the business, taps run dry.

With gargantuan volumes of liquid to move across the country, whatever this duo decides to do in order to shift CUB's dependence on carbon production to move its commodity, there is always an underlying realism in their thinking.

"Potentially some things may fail, but that's okay, we'll try something else," Clysner says, "If we don't fail, we'll scale."

Engel says: "It's about finding that game-changer which is in that alternate fuel, and the big challenge for us is the availability of that technology in a market like ours."

CUB knows it will not be able to reach those targets by 2025 with current-market technology, so they're creating a platform to facilitate ideas by reaching out to non-traditional players. One in Australia, and in other countries where parent company Anheuser-Busch is present, to then consolidate and take the best solutions.

"We'll identify a best potential company in Australia, do the pilot in Australia, and if that solution works, take them to scale," Clysner explains.

"I hope we get electric and hydrogen trucks in Australia because by the time everybody's confident enough to scale it up, we'll be into version one, two or three, and the benefits will be realised - just like smartphones," he adds.

"A lot of innovations are expensive at the start. Hydrogen is very early days for us, and there's nothing running around here yet, but it looks very promising," Clysner admits in closing.

"The fact you can fill a fuel cell truck up like a normal truck and drive the distance of a normal truck – how close can you possibly get in normal operation and still get that environmental benefit?

"We're not afraid to take pilot tests with electric vehicles or biogas, we're looking into those. The easy part is saying my next policy agreement."

The CUB 100+ Accelerator programme is tendering out to small Australian tech businesses for ideas in logistics, transport, efficient use of carbon, fuel and mileage saving, and engine and truck manufacturing partnerships, but for packaging, to help break through and fine-tune solutions.

"With our size, if one truck goes wrong in a pilot, my boss won't like it, but it'll be okay, we can run that risk because priority number one is to lower carbon," Clysner concludes.

"To be successful in carbon reduction we have to pick the right partners, that includes some traditional ones who are open, and some newer, younger ones because we don't always know what's coming."

Staunch truck sales start new financial year

The majority of commercial vehicle brands recorded monthly sales improvements over July 2017 figures in contrast to the waning sales in automotive.

Isuzu retains its iron grip with 838 July sales and a yearly tally of 5557, a 25.1% and 23.8% improvement respectively.

Second-placed **Hino** notched just shy of a 14% gain over July 2017 with 465 sales for the first month of the new financial year, with a 3125 sales 13.4% better than this time last year.

Daimler-owned **Fuso** also deserves praise for keeping 12.6% ahead of last year's July sales and 10.5% ahead of the yearly sales figures this time in 2017.

Heavy vehicle sales were strong, evidenced by **Kenworth's** 20% (218 units) sales gain for July adding to its 19.6% annual sales, keeping **Volvo Group** and Isuzu's heavy-duty sales efforts in second and third place respectively.

The Swedish brand racked up a hefty 15.8% (172 units) July sales increase over 2017, and the Japanese truck maker was close behind with a 14% (152 units) self-improvement. Volvo's 1181 yearly sales and Isuzu's 1020 yearly sales lead fourth-placed **Mercedes-Benz**, which sits with 103 July sales and 663 yearly heavy-duty sales.

The three-pointed star claws back dominance in the light duty vans segment, with 162 July sales stamping a 37.2% improvement over July 2017, and the 1436 yearly sales staying a massive 41.3% above last year's yearly results.

Second-placed **Renault** also managed to increase its July and yearly sales figures at 92 (21.1%) and 764 (22%) ahead, keeping **Ford** in third place, **Iveco** in fourth, **Fiat** in fifth and Volkswagen in sisth – all of which recorded impressive July 2018 and yearly increases over 2017.



TRANSPORTTALK DIARY



Transporttalk Australia editor Scott Murray looks at the month gone by on **www.transporttalk.com.au**

July 4

Trucks on crash test agenda

The Australasian New Car Assessment Programme is undergoing early preparations to conduct light commercial truck crash testing.

The independent ANCAP is expanding its scope of the new vehicle market to include light and medium duty trucks from 3.5 tonne and over, which would include volume models from some of the biggest manufacturers in the segment including Isuzu, Hino, Fuso and Iveco.

ANCAP chief executive **James Goodwin** has officially told the fleet managers of Australia and New Zealand the high-mileage, unrated fleets of heavy-lifting trucks should join the nations' near-100% covered new passenger vehicle markets.

Truck driver receives highway guardian award

A truck driver who assisted at a major accident last November has been recognised for his actions.

George Athanasiou has been given the Australian Trucking Association's (ATA) Bridgestone Bandag Highway Guardian award.

July 10

EV working group considers freight impact

An Electric Vehicles Working Group has been formed by the Australian Logistics Council (ALC) to consider the full impact this rapidly-evolving transport solution will have on the movement of freight in the years ahead.

The group's initial membership will include representatives from Linfox, Woolworths, DHL Australia, Australia Post and a number of other ALC member companies.

Sprinter fuel-cell van planned

Mercedes-Benz has revealed a concept Sprinter fuel-cell van as part of the German car maker's expansion of its eDrive@Vans strategy.

The hydrogen fuel cell is expected to add longer range and lower weight, opening up new opportunities for commercial use, the company says.

July 11

Elders plays down bid for PGG Wrightson

Australian-based agribusiness Elders says it has not made "any definitive proposal" to acquire New Zealand agricultural supply company PGG Wrightson.

It issued the statement to the Australian Stock Exchange on Tuesday following a report in The Australian that Elders was looking to raise A$300 million towards the purchase of NZX-listed PGG Wrightson.

Next stage of vehicle standards consultation

Late July will see the next phase of the Road Vehicle Standards Act consultation process begin.

The Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities has told the Heavy Vehicle Industry Association (HVIA) three consultation groups have been established.

July 12

DAF launches 3D online truck configurator

Dutch truck manufacturer DAF has released new online 3D technology to create the perfect heavy vehicle set-up.

The 3D truck configurator displays all available axle configurations and cab variants and factory options.

The configured truck can then be shared directly with the dealer and the body-builder to reduce workshop lead times.

July 13

Hitachi to deliver autonomous mining trucks

Hitachi Construction Machinery has signed a deal with Australian mining company Whitehaven Coal to develop an autonomous haulage system.

Whitehaven Coal, Australia's largest independent coal miner, is using the initiative to support its operations in northwest New South Wales.

July 17

Queensland turns green for truck safety

Heavy vehicles using Queensland's Burnett Highway will be able to make safe roadside stops thanks to Installing special "3 – 2 – 1" green reflectors.

Motorists and truck drivers will be safer after green reflector posts are installed 500 metres before a rest stop to provide tired drivers with early notice of rest areas.

July 18

Trucking Association partners with Logistics Council

The Australian Trucking Association is supporting the Australian Logistics Council at this year's supply chain safety conference with major changes in the Heavy Vehicle National Law coming.

The September 5-6 Supply Chain Safety and Compliance Summit will be held at the Melbourne Park Function Centre with the trucking peak body sharing hosting duties with the Logistics Council, addressing expanded Chain of Responsibility standards, and a new Registered Industry Code of Practice master code for heavy vehicle safety.

July 23

Penske awards master technician prize

David Willis has been awarded the 2018 Detroit Master Technician title.

The competition, run by Penske Power Systems, recently held its final in Brisbane.

July 24

Overloaded vehicles on VicRoads' radar

VicRoads has announced it will be on the hunt for oversized and overloaded trucks with suspicious loads.

Vic Roads Transport Safety Service officers issue 227 defect notices for trucks every month in Victoria, on top of an average of 232 individual non-compliant driver infringements.

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