



Make the move

TWO-WHEELER LIFE

Geoff Gwilym VACC CEO



Working in the automotive industry, I rely heavily on data to inform decision-making. Whether I am commenting on industry trends in the media, educating motorists or talking shop on THE GRILLE podcast.

For example, in the first quarter of 2022, motorcycle sales figures – as published by the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries – clearly show motorists' taste for motorcycles, scooters and off-highway vehicles (OHV) have wavered.

A total of 24,338 motorcycles, scooters and OHVs were sold between January and March. This represents a decrease of 10.7 per cent on 2021 figures.

I'm a little surprised.

With many Victorians still choosing to hit the road in private vehicles due to COVID-19, motorcycle sales spiked in the last few years.

I saw that trend continuing – after all, two-wheelers have a lot of allure.

For starters, they are an attractive option for commuting and recreational use.

Motorcycles contribute to easing road and parking congestion. And let's face it, no one is going to say 'no' to a smoother trip home. In fact, I reckon if the State Government is serious about Melbourne's grid-locked traffic, it should actively promote powered two-wheelers as part of the solution.

And these machines are not going to be left behind in the EV revolution. This year when the Prime Minister opened the new VACC House in North Melbourne there was a ripper Savic Motorcycles C-Series on show as he cut the ribbon. The bike really is something to behold and everything an electric option should be – smooth, sturdy and effortless to ride.

Think about it. Freedom and autonomy have never been more highly valued, and automotive will continue to cater accordingly.

Prepared by Victorian Automotive Chamber of Commerce



WORKING BUDGET

[ROADSIDE ASSIST]

I'm a mobile car detailer considering updating my work vehicle. The LDV T60 Max dual cab ute looks good but what can you advise about its quality and reliability?

Jim Mantzi, email

The Chinese T60 Max Luxe looks good, rides well, has decent 160kW power and strong features from only \$39,490 drive-away (cheaper T60s are sold out). It has a 5-star ANCAP rating but this is from 2017 and it lacks many modern safety aids; the engine's thirsty and not too refined, while a 5-year/130,000km warranty's average at best. I've had a few letters from LDV owners highlighting reliability and quality issues, but to be fair they've been addressed under warranty. Check out the SsangYong Musso as a value alternative, but for your job do you really need a dual cab 4x4? I'd consider entry-level (around \$40k) new Ford Ranger or Isuzu D-Max 4x2 utes – they're safer and smarter – or more car-like VW Caddy or Hyundai Staria-Load vans.

DATA DUMP

Re double dipping, for plug-in hybrids (PHEVs) being charged a distance-based road user charge because they might be using electric, why not download a car's software via the OBD2 port records to see which motor has been used? Updating a car's software to record such data shouldn't be difficult.

Michael Maloney, email

In an ideal world this could be a solution, but it comes down to time and cost. Some car owners struggle to tune a radio let alone download and interpret driving data. A workshop would no doubt have to do it, and there'd be a cost involved ... adding to the road user charge. Instead, we could be like the rest of the world and hold off on these disincentivising charges until the majority have transitioned to EVs/PHEVs.

AUSTRALIAN MADE

Re brake dust problems, I replaced the substandard rotors and pads on my wife's Holden Cruze for quality Australian DBA and Bendix items. It's eliminated the brake dust on wheels issue and it now has excellent braking performance.

Ken Brown, email

IAIN CURRY GETS ANSWERS

WRITE TO MOTURING AT
CARS@NEWS.COM.AU OR
PO BOX 2808, GPO SYDNEY, 2001

A cruel person may say Cruzes don't have a brake dust problem because they're always broken down, but I'm not going to stoop that low. Anyway, nice to see Aussie-manufactured car parts coming so highly recommended.

PERFECTLY CAMOUFLAGED

Re brake dust, you mentioned a few years ago your race car had grey alloy wheels – the same colour as brake dust – so the mess was well hidden.

Bruce Mitchell, email

Well remembered, and it's still great advice! My colleague David says he knows of Porsche owners who option \$30,000 ceramic brakes purely to minimise brake dust. My way is better for your wallet.

FINDING THE TRUTH

Re Dash cams, I'm surprised you consider them a Big Brother tool. I'm 70 and have dash cams in my car and motorhome. Why? Society, especially traffic police and insurance companies, assume when an accident involves we 'mature' drivers, it's because we've had an 'episode'. Recently I had a collision with a P-plater who merged into my lane without a head check and only dash cam footage saved me from being held responsible. As for Big Brother, unless I put the footage onto the internet, nobody else has access to it.

Miles C Pitman, email

Great to hear your dash cam footage proved so



BEHIND THE TIMES

With used cars increasing in value where do we stand on insurance? My agreed value policies have payouts far less than the current actual cost of replacement. Market value as per Glass's Guide is a joke.

Sharon Thomas, email

I've done a little experiment. I own a 2017 VW Golf 110TSI manual with 50,000km. On used car websites, similar cars are listed between \$22,500 and \$26,000. Illustrating how ludicrous used prices are, I paid \$23,990 drive away for the Golf five years ago. Seems I'd have to pay similar today to replace it like-for-like. Its current agreed value is \$16,200 with my insurer, but I can elect any figure between \$12,000 and \$22,360. Guess I need to update its value, and I suggest you contact your insurer and do likewise. If their agreed value parameters are too low compared to current market value, try a more bespoke insurer like Shannons.

useful in your case. Unquestionably, what they capture can be hugely effective in determining an accident's cause. My beef is if car companies were compelled (or chose) to have dash cams built-in. Who would be able to access the footage and when? Police? Government? Insurance? Car manufacturers? Like facial recognition tech for 'safety' it's a slippery slope. I'm happier if dash cams remain aftermarket and the owner retains all footage rights.

COATS OFF

I love my 2017 Mazda CX-9 but six months ago I noticed the paint's clearcoat was starting to bubble and peel on the tailgate. The damage is now quite extensive. My Mazda dealer told me my out-of-warranty claim has been denied and I'll not receive any compensation for the repair. Mazda Australia simply referred me back to the dealer. My previous vehicles – a Nissan and Hyundai – saw no paint deterioration during the same amount of time, nor have my husband's Ford and Isuzu. I'd have expected better customer service from a prestige brand like Mazda, and for its paint to have withstood our conditions.

Shae McCunnie, Broken Hill

Mazda Australia won't comment on individual cases, but I asked whether the paint warranty was longer than the car's general warranty (only three years in 2017), and if they could offer any explanation/solution for the damage. A spokesman said the paint warranty was also three years and "for recommendations on paint maintenance we would encourage all owners to refer to their owner's manual." Not terribly helpful. You can contact NSW Fair Trading (13 32 20) as under Australian Consumer Law products must be of 'acceptable quality' – its website lists your rights and ways of claiming for repairs.

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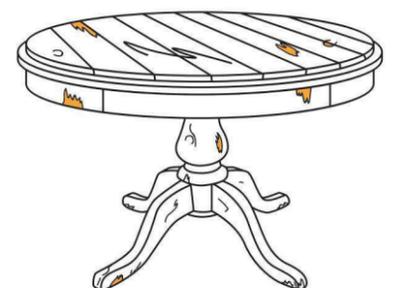
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