



Choice of repairer

NEW LEGISLATION PROTECTS DRIVERS

Geoff Gwilym VACC CEO



In great news for motorists, groundbreaking legislation to mandate the provision of motor vehicle service and repair information to Australian automotive workshops has passed the Senate.

This world-leading legislation fulfills a government commitment for a mandatory scheme. It compels vehicle manufacturers to share technical service and repair information with all qualified Australian repairers from July 1 next year.

Work is already underway to assist the Department of Treasury in designing information-sharing scheme rules.

Peak automotive organisations (including VACC), manufacturers, information providers, and the Treasury will work collaboratively to finalise the rules, mechanisms, and processes to implement the scheme smoothly in 2022.

I congratulate the Morrison Government, notably the Assistant Treasurer and Housing Minister Michael Sukkar, for championing and seeing the legislation through.

Mr Sukkar recognised the need for a practical solution and persisted despite sometimes seemingly insurmountable odds.

Our policy leadership is again highlighted as one of the few global jurisdictions to legislate a fair and balanced outcome for consumers and automotive businesses.

The passage of the legislation through the Senate culminates a decade-long odyssey of trial and error, voluntary agreements, inquiries and investigations, submissions, advocacy representation and finally a recommendation by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission in 2017 for a mandated solution.

Automotive service and repair businesses will have strengthened rights to repair Australia's 20 million-strong fleet by accessing service and repair information from manufacturers and data providers at reasonable prices.

Motorists will also know their chosen repairer has access to critical service and repair information.

Prepared by Victorian Automotive Chamber of Commerce in the interest of better motoring.

Share your thoughts
ceo@vacc.com.au



OUT OF REACH FOR SOME

IAIN CURRY GETS ANSWERS

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

Our 2021 Subaru XV's tailgate goes up very high. We can only just reach it and it nearly hits our garage roller door. Subaru told us it can't be adjusted. Any advice?

Janet Fraser, email

Replacing the gas struts to something shorter will be expensive. Instead, if you Google "Subaru rear gate assist handle" there appears to be a genuine Subaru strap for pulling down an XV's tailgate: about \$120 including postage looks typical. But you could probably DIY one by drilling a little hole in the tailgate's plastic and bolting on a generic strap handle. Other Subaru owners have fitted a glazier's suction cup to the inside of the rear glass and attached a little rope to that, or simply put a cane in the boot and used it to hook the boot's grab handle.

WRONG RON

In the UK, MG states E10 fuel is fine to use in the MG HS 1.5T. MG Australia says only 95 RON can be used, not E10. It's the same engine and I'd like to try it. Should I?

Nick Horton, email

No. It's not for you. The UK has higher quality fuel than us: its E10 has an octane rating of 95 RON. Here in Australia, it's typically 94 RON. E10 is so called because it contains up to 10 per cent renewable ethanol to reduce CO2 emissions. The UK's standard grade petrol is 95 RON while ours is a crummy 91 RON, and from this year the Poms will actually have only E10 coming out of their standard petrol pumps.

TWO SMART

Re smart keys, if I put my smart key in the same pocket as my smartphone my Jeep Grand Cherokee refuses to unlock when I



touch its door handle. When I separate them a small distance, all is well. This could help anyone suffering similar issues.

Rob Staplehurst, email

Aren't electronics fabulous? We never had such problems with metal keys and payphones.

NO CLARITY

Re VW T-Cross poor radio reception, our 2021 VW Passat also had abysmal AM reception. Our previous Passat was fine. VW Australia told us it's only a problem with South Australian local radio stations. We've had two VW courtesy cars, one had the same problem, the other was fine. I've asked VW to fix or replace my radio, as without it working it's not fit for purpose.

Max and Elaine Dyason, email

Re VW T-Cross poor radio reception, our 2017 VW Jetta had the same issue described by Bill and Ann Prior. After four months with no help from VW's customer assist and excuses from our VW dealer, a different VW service adviser suggested the metallised film window tint could be the cause. I finally got them to remove the rear window tint at their cost and the problem was solved. Excellent reception.

Mark Chalmers, email



STATS DON'T LIE

People won't be buying Chinese cars now. There's a big push back against anything made in China because of the coronavirus. I've heard this from everyone I speak to. Charlie Beecham (again), email
I've received many "colourful" letters about not buying Chinese cars but the statistics are against you. Sales of Chinese cars in Australia tripled in the first six months of this year and the MG brand has overtaken a number of established names to be entrenched in the top 10.

Excellent email, Mark. Volkswagen Australia's solution given to us was to stream the radio stations, but this is why owner advice is so welcome. Yours could genuinely solve the problem.

FEAR THE FUTURE

People would be mad to buy an electric car or a hybrid. The technology is advancing so fast, today's models would be obsolete in a couple of years. Buy petrol and stay safe! Battery replacement costs are astronomical and who is to say they'll last as long as claimed?

Charlie Beecham, email

Ah, nothing gets people fired up quite like electric cars. Yes, the tech is advancing, but not so quickly as to render older EVs irrelevant. In 2014 a Tesla Model S's battery gave a range of 500km: the just-launched Mazda MX-30's range is a little more than 200km. The next big leap in battery performance will be solid state batteries replacing current lithium-ion types - they're lighter, carry more power (therefore range) and charge faster. Solid state batteries should be less prone to capacity loss over time, but even today's batteries typically have a warranty of eight years: far longer than the warranty on most car engines. Buying petrol isn't that safe, especially if legislation against them tightens - as is being seen in many countries in Europe.

FROZEN OUT

Like many of us living in the southern states, winter brings ice on the windshield. With all the bells and whistles in new cars these days, why isn't the windshield washer reservoir heated? This would melt the ice in no time.

Frank Valenti, email

There's your million-dollar idea Frank and you've just put it in the public domain! Actually, it's been done before - Volvo, BMW and Porsche for example have had such a system. It actually heats water on its way to the jets or at the jets to prevent them freezing. Anecdotal reports suggest firing hot water on the screen doesn't make much difference. Heated windscreens plus an antifreeze washer additive is the preferred, more reliable method.

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