

ADVERTISING FEATURE



Zero emissions mission

VICTORIA HAS SET A DATE



Geoff Gwilym VACC CEO

So, the State Government has pledged to halve Victoria's greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 — a move that makes the Federal Government's silence even louder.

Central to the plan is offering motorists a \$3000 subsidy when buying new zero emissions vehicles (ZEVs) — specifically a car — in a bid to dramatically increase ZEV sales to 50 per cent.

It's a good move, but conditions are in place.

There are fewer than 7000 ZEVs currently registered in Victoria. The State Government's subsidy announcement should significantly increase that number. However, the cheapest ZEV passenger car in the local market is \$43,990 and the subsidy is capped at the luxury car tax threshold of \$69,000. That means only five models meet the criteria.

Another aspect of the Andrews plan is a road-user charge. The 2.5 cents/kilometre for ZEVs (two cents for plug-in hybrids) has been criticised by some industry groups. But if a motorist uses the roads, they should help pay for the build and upkeep of this much needed infrastructure.

The road map to a greener state includes a pledge to power all government-owned enterprises by renewables from 2025. There are also budgets to reduce agricultural emissions and increase the uptake of ZEVs for public transport use.

The government will increase its fleet of ZEVs by purchasing 400 new cars and build more charging infrastructure at a cost of \$19 million.

VACC will be sitting on the government's expert panel to ensure good policy and infrastructure decisions. Getting industry in the driving seat is crucial if Victoria is to meet its target.

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

Share your thoughts
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IAIN CURRY GETS ANSWERS

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

I recall Suzuki Jimnys hitting the market in 2019 for around \$24,000. I recently made an inquiry to Suzuki Queensland and was told prices now start at \$32,000. I've inspected one and that's a lot of cash for not much car. At the same time, the Mazda CX-5 is advertised at under \$34,000 drive-away. I know they are for different purposes, but the Mazda looks far better value. I want the Jimny to replace my HiLux but have been told the wait list is until December, and I'm concerned price gouging may be happening. Would it be better price-wise to source a Jimny interstate?

Tim Bryant, email

Your concerns about price rises are valid. The Jimny launched at \$23,990, rose to \$25,990 in February last year and now the company says "the national RRP is currently \$28,490 plus on-road costs". Based on previous experience, that latest price rise may be passed on to people who signed a contract for \$25,990. Suzuki Queensland is a different operation to Suzuki Australia, but I don't think you'll get a cheaper price interstate. Sounds like you've been quoted a drive-away price. Unless you're a Jimny tragic, walk away — the car is simply not worth that money and there's no guarantee it won't cost even more by the time it's eventually delivered.

HISTORICAL CLAIMS

In MG's television adverts they claim "97 years of experience" to build up their reliability claims. The MG Rover group went in to receivership in 2005 and was bought by Chinese company Nanjing Automotive Group (which merged into SAIC in 2008) so its claim is totally false. The motoring world needs to be protected from companies making these false claims in order to gain some sort of respect.

Mike Lucas, email

You're right, the British MG marque and its trademarks were bought by Nanjing, which to be fair, was formed in 1947 and was China's oldest carmaker. Does the purchase entitle the new user to trade on the brand's history? You'd have to say yes. BMW owns the Rolls-Royce brand, while Volkswagen owns Bentley and both embrace the history of those marques.

UPSIZING

My daughter's having her third child and has asked my help to choose a large seven or eight seater. It must be safe, good value, reliable, have reasonable servicing costs and good warranty. We've considered a Kia Sorento GT-Line, Hyundai Palisade, Mercedes GLB 250 or new Toyota Kluger.

Nunzio, email

The Kia Sorento GT-Line, above, is the best large family SUV I've tested in recent years. It's \$64,290 drive-away or \$3000 more for the diesel all-wheel-drive — worth it if your daughter plans longer trips. Its seven-year warranty trumps the others and its specification and luxury are superb. The Palisade's a bit of overkill size-wise, so look at the smaller Santa Fe instead. The Mercedes is pricey and cramped in this company. When the Kluger arrives in June it should be excellent and the Hybrid will be very economical.

PARKING NOT FINE

My 2020 Ford Ranger has Active Park Assist where it parallel parks automatically. On using it the sensors didn't pick up a parked ute's alloy tray, which lightly scraped a side guard before I could hit the brakes. Ford Australia said it was my fault, they couldn't find fault with the vehicle.

Brad Davis, email

The TV commercials may suggest otherwise, but as you found, this technology is not foolproof. The reality is when faced with trickier scenarios — such as high up ute trays — the sensors don't pick them up. Ford covers itself by saying: "Driver-assist



We want to upgrade our 2012 Subaru Outback with a newer model. We want to do a lot of driving around the back roads of Australia, including unsealed stuff. Should we get the brand-new model or a used 3.6R model?

Lorraine Eagles, email

I understand the draw of the now retired 3.6R. Its powerful and satisfying 191kW/350Nm six-cylinder petrol is far more potent than the new Outback's 138kW/245Nm four-cylinder. But if you're planning big distances the new model makes more sense. It uses 7.3L/100km versus the 3.6R's 9.9L/100km, services are every 12 months/12,500km versus every six months and the new car's cabin class, safety and infotainment are a decent jump over old. A two-year-old 3.6R is \$45,000 — the same drive-away price as a 2021 entry-level Outback. It's the pragmatic rather than fun choice, but I'd go the new car.

features are supplemental and do not replace the driver's judgment."

BLOCKED RADAR

A disadvantage of radar cruise control is when an inconsiderate driver on the freeway cuts in front or slows after overtaking. Do drivers not know how to use their mirrors?

Lindsay Cooper, email

Just when you're serenely going along with radar cruise some idiot cuts in, your car picks it up and jolts on the brakes. It is annoying. If only safe driving distances were as heavily policed as going a few kilometres over the limit.

STITCH UP?

My wife's Mitsubishi Outlander just had its four year/60,000km service and it cost \$500 more than the old capped price services. I was also told my rear brake pads had only about 2000km remaining, and they'd need replacing for \$280. An independent mechanic quoted \$140 for the same job, but he looked and said the brakes were still in excellent condition. I reported this to the Mitsubishi service manager and he said he'd alert the service adviser to it. So much for good customer service.

John Watts, email

Eventually all cars need a more comprehensive service than just oil and filter. Your 2017 Outlander 4WD had capped price servicing for three years at \$250 a pop. A 2021 model has 10 years of capped price servicing. The first five years/75,000km cost \$299 each, then the six year/90,000km jumps to \$699. This is because spark plugs, air cleaner, brake fluid and differential oils are replaced — if you check your invoice it should list similar work on your 2017 model. As for the brakes, your experience demonstrates why seeking a second opinion pays dividends.

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