



## Caravan charge

REGIONAL TOURISM KEY

Geoff Gwilym VACC CEO



In the whirlwind of talk about electric vehicles (EV) and the infrastructure needed to charge them, the Caravan Industry Association of Australia (CIAA) makes an excellent point.

The peak body of Australia's large caravan industry highlighted the need to help regional tourism operators connect with EV users.

According to the body, drive tourism accounts for 75 per cent of all tourism in regional areas. This means charging infrastructure and stimulating the accommodation sector to install charging points will be crucial to aid the recovery of regional tourism.

The association has called for a matched grants scheme for caravan parks and other regional accommodation providers to invest in charging stations that are suitable for charging all EVs.

CIAA estimates a \$3 million federal government investment would provide an additional 2000 chargers across 1000 caravan parks in regional Australia.

It makes sense.

Caravan parks provide the ideal site for EV charging points for travellers who base their driving holidays on where they can charge their vehicle.

COVID-19 has left many caravan parks without capital to invest in infrastructure upgrades. Government incentives can help rebuild regional tourism following a difficult two years and will ease the transition to EVs for regional communities dependent on drive tourism.

With 2000 caravan parks around Australia with the space to add EV chargers, the federal government should capitalise on the opportunity to fast-track EV usage and give a much-needed boost to regional areas across the nation.

So, here's hoping EV caravanning will be a realistic, affordable option for us in the not-too-distant future.

Prepared by Victorian Automotive Chamber of Commerce



## ROADSIDE ASSIST



# TASSIE TOURING COMPANION

IAIN CURRY GETS ANSWERS

WRITE TO MOTURING AT [CARS@NEWS.COM.AU](mailto:CARS@NEWS.COM.AU) OR PO BOX 2808, GPO SYDNEY, 2001

It's time to upgrade my much-loved 2008 BMW 320i. My new job involves Tasmanian country road driving, and the BMW isn't ideal for dirt roads or kamikaze wildlife. I've been leaning towards hybrid, plug-in or electric SUVs but miss the luxury BMW feel. Should I go with a cheaper Mitsubishi or Toyota RAV4 or wait for a luxury alternative when they're more affordable?

Polly Venning, email

The fact you're moving to a 14-years younger car and all the technology and cabin advances that brings should mitigate not being in a prestige brand such as BMW. I'd try a Subaru XV Hybrid S (\$40,790) as cabin quality and space are good (bar the small boot), while its sure-footed unsealed road manners and high riding position will suit Tassie's challenges. Its fuel economy is disappointing for a hybrid, though. The RAV4 Hybrid's economy is much more impressive, but it's sold out for several months. A Mitsubishi Outlander PHEV Exceed (\$56,490) is larger, nicely appointed and offers 55km of pure electric range. If your budget allows, the pure electric Volvo XC40 Recharge SUV (\$76,990) has 418km range, a luxurious cabin and all-wheel-drive.

### CUSTOM FITTING

I asked my Toyota dealership about buying a full-size spare wheel to replace my 2021 RAV4's space saver. I was told a full-size spare wouldn't fit the wheel well. I suggested he was wrong and to please price one. I was told \$1440 for one wheel. How does Toyota justify this price?

Gordon Schofield, email

It's the dealer who has arrived at that price, not Toyota Australia. I've been assured by RAV4 owners a full-size spare fits the wheel well, but you lose the boot's two-level floor height. Why not double check yourself? Jack the car up, take a

wheel off and try it in the well. Only the RAV4 GX is available with a full-size spare option. If you have the GLX, Cruiser or Edge there are genuine OEM 18-inch and 19-inch alloys available, although of different design to those on your car. If you can handle that, a single wheel without tyre costs from about \$200 to \$400.

### POOR RICH FOLK

Australia's Corvette pricing shouldn't be a shock to your letter writers Charlie Beecham and Norm Warren, just look at exotic European car prices here.

Trevor Smith, email



It's not completely fair to compare model prices between countries - taxes, differing specifications and economies of scale vary wildly. A Porsche 911 Carrera in the US is \$101,200 (\$140,000) while ours start from \$241,200. The 911 Turbo S Cabriolet is \$219,800 (\$305,000) Stateside, while ours is more than half a million. Who'd be rich in Australia, eh?

### BEEP BEEP

Ford has advised me the Traffic Sign Recognition (TSR) in its current Everest doesn't have an audible overspeed alert. It just has a small flashing icon on the dash, which isn't particularly obvious. At least an audible beep - it beeps for nearly everything else - would prompt a glance at the dash. Its omission seems ridiculous with ever more speed cameras, especially as it has beeped on previous Everests and Rangers.

Daryl Rowe, email

"It beeps for nearly everything else" is a key point here. Modern cars beep to such an extent -



### DURABILITY DILEMMA

We bought a used 2014 Ford Kuga from a Ford dealer. It had 130,000km on the clock and we travelled less than 20,000km before the transmission failed. The Ford dealer quoted \$10,000 for parts only; a transmission specialist said it would be \$6000-plus. My wife and I are pensioners and find it hard to see what's the best way to go.

Brian O'Connor, email

That's a crippling bill for a car likely not worth much more than \$10,000. Some Ford dealers offer three-year used car warranties, just double check yours. If the dealer offers no assistance, try Ford's customer care on 133 673 and ask for goodwill assistance. The mileage and age of your Kuga won't help your cause but being sold used by a Ford dealer should. Perhaps ask if they'd pay parts and you the labour? Read the Ford Owner Customer Service Charter on Ford Australia's website on complaints procedures - it also has a handy list on where to seek legal advice in your state if you're unhappy with the outcome. Best of luck.

chastising every minor transgression - we often turn off audible warnings or simply ignore them. Personally, I'd prefer head-up displays were more commonplace. This is where you see speed on the windscreen using peripheral vision, so never need take your eyes off the road. I agree the owner should have a say in how most driver assist systems operate. If you want beeps as well as flashes to let you know you're over the speed limit, you should be able to choose.

### ANGLE GRINDER

Re: speed bumps, our village in Knoxfield, Victoria, has nine on the main access road. They're at a vicious height so I've adopted the 4WD practice of taking them at an angle; the front wheels take the "bump" one at a time. This greatly reduces the shock and should make suspension last longer.

James Wilson, email

It's the same move adopted by drivers of low ride-height sports cars. As a teenager, I stupidly lowered my car and was the clown holding everyone up while negotiating speeds bumps at 2km/h. Nothing like the sound of your exhaust grinding into bitumen bumps.

### TAKE CARE OF THE PENNIES

Re: the owner of the VW Touareg V8, surely if one can fork out \$150,000 for a car they can afford \$140 roadside assistance for a year. About 40c a day?

Dave Goon Pan, email

Fair, but the owner may have been entitled to free roadside assist when servicing with VW. People don't get wealthy paying for things unnecessarily. I bet even Elon Musk quibbles if he's charged twice for tomato sauce at Macca's.

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