



## Rural neglect

DEALERS LEFT OUT IN THE COLD

Geoff Gwilym VACC CEO



I spend a lot of time in workshops and dealerships across Victoria, and one thing I have learned is farm machinery dealerships are every bit as sophisticated as new car operations.

The same can be said for motorcycle and commercial vehicle retailers. So, it was disappointing to see the introduction of an automotive section into the Franchising Code of Conduct that only applies to new car dealers.

Leaving farm machinery, motorcycle, and commercial vehicle dealers out of franchising reforms could threaten their survival, cause significant local job losses and leave the people they service without crucial equipment.

That is why these dealers need to be included in the franchising reforms enjoyed by new car dealers.

The government omission is puzzling, as the infrastructure requirements, capital expenditure, and business model for farm machinery, motorcycle and truck dealers is immense.

The new regulations do not apply to all franchise motor vehicle dealerships, only those that come within the definition of a 'new vehicle dealership agreement', which refers to dealerships that predominantly work with new passenger vehicles or new light goods vehicles or both.

Franchise agreements dealing with farm machinery, motorcycles, and trucks will not be captured under the new provisions. Consequently, these sectors won't be afforded the same level of protection under the franchising code that new car dealers enjoy.

The government has created two regulatory regimes for dealing with automotive franchise dealerships. One that is comprehensive, the other which is not, and it is the predominantly rural and regional businesses that miss out.

Farm machinery dealers — and by extension their customers — deserve a fairer playing field.

Prepared by Victorian Automotive Chamber of Commerce



### IAIN CURRY GETS ANSWERS

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

We'd like a demo or low mileage SUV costing up to \$45,000, normally just for two of us to use in the city. We're keen on an SUV due to having two hip replacements. We find their seat height makes life easier.

Kingsley Butcher, email

For city life a petrol-powered small SUV would best suit. They have the height for easier entry and exit yet aren't cumbersome to drive or park. No doubt an ex-demo appeals due to new car shortages: many don't want to wait months for delivery. Your budget is decent, so for SUVs available now I'd consider a Mazda CX-30 G20 Touring (about \$40,000 drive-away) which is a polished all-rounder with a leather lined cabin and ample safety and tech. For more prestige try a low-kilometre Audi Q2 35TFSI, BMW X1 or Volvo XC40 — there are a few clogging up dealerships. Wildcards? Try the Peugeot 2008 or larger 3008 for a beautiful cabin and chic city style.

### TYRE MISER

You recently quoted a car tyre expert who suggested running 40psi — typically higher than factory settings. I agree as I've used between 36 and 40psi for 30 years in many different cars. My company Ford Falcons averaged around 90,000km on their first set of tyres, my 2005 Ford Territory 90,000km and my 2014 Subaru 92,000km. I find it critical to rotate tyres every 10,000km to even



things up. The only disadvantage running higher pressures is the ride can be a little harsher.

Stewart Eldridge, email

Car owners with "high performance" tyres wearing out after 15,000km are cursing you right now, Stewart. Yes, AMG owners, we hear you. You're spot on — tyre rotation is key. It should happen during your annual service, or tyre shops sometimes give free rotations for customers who've bought a complete new set.

### FAKE NEWS

My partner owns a 2018 Nissan Qashqai, and on the internet I read the timing chain needs replacing at five years/160,000km. I seriously hope this is false. I'd hate to think of the cost of replacement.

Bob Carson, email

The Series II Nissan Qashqai launched in December 2017 exclusively with a chain-driven 2.0-litre petrol engine. A belt-driven diesel engine was available in other markets, and it needed its cam belt changed every five years. That may be the reason for the internet misunderstanding, and

shows why it's best to get information from Nissan rather than a website. I've checked Nissan's capped price service schedule and there's no mention of your timing chain needing replacement before 120,000km or 12 years. No need to panic.

### LIGHTS ARE OFF

How is it possibly safer that many new vehicles, when indicating to turn a corner, have that side headlight not working? At the very time you might need proper illumination into that corner, especially at night, you don't have a headlight.

Mark Galgsdies, email

Unless I'm much mistaken, you're confusing daytime running lights (DRLs) with headlights. DRLs are permanently lit on many modern cars, and they turn off when you use the indicator to increase the visibility of the turn signal. Headlights, when turned on, remain illuminated when the indicators are working. There can be a problem when a driver (or their auto headlight sensor) hasn't turned the headlights on at dusk. The DRLs aren't sufficient to light the road.



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