



Auto is open

KEEPING VICTORIANS MOVING

Geoff Gwilym VACC CEO



So Melburnians have endured yet another lockdown, and this one was especially tough.

Stage 4 may have lasted 'only' two weeks. But try telling that to a business owner who has fixed rental and staff costs at a time when they can't trade or when trade is restricted.

To make things worse, there is no rental assistance or JobKeeper anymore. It's perilous out there with many businesses on the brink of closure.

Fortunately for the automotive industry it has largely been business as usual during lockdown. As an essential service, businesses were able to offer service and repair as normal while vehicle and parts retailing were restricted to 'click and collect' operations.

Restrictions have now been lifted, so all aspects of the auto industry are at your service.

If you want to buy a car or motorcycle, or even a tractor, you can. If you need new wheels or tyres, you can get them fitted. If you need a service, you can get it. If your vehicle is accident damaged, you can have it repaired.

Auto is open.

VACC is playing its part by supplying its members with reliable information to help keep businesses compliant and all staff and customers safe.

With QR code registration now mandatory when visiting Victorian businesses, and with distancing requirements and the wearing of face masks (where required) in place, you can visit your automotive professional with confidence.

As I said, auto is open. So go out there and get what you need.

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

Share your thoughts ceo@vacc.com.au



EV DEBATE RAGES

IAIN CURRY GETS ANSWERS

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

The recent article about costs of hybrid and electric cars does not explain the whole picture about life cycle costs. Hybrid replacement batteries can be up to \$10,000 or more and what about the cost of charging electric cars? What's the real cost please and how does this stack up against conventional engines?

Andrew Weightman, email
There's no one-size-fits-all equation to determine if a hybrid, plug-in hybrid or full electric vehicle makes sense to different car buyers. The full life cycle costs and environmental impacts vary depending on how you charge batteries (sometimes it's free), how and where you drive, annual kilometres travelled, how long you keep the car, etc. Are you going to save money by buying an electric car or plug-in hybrid? In most cases, no. Or at least not for a very long time. EVs will cost less in future due to economies of scale and improved battery tech, while replacement battery costs should drop too.

PREMIUM PROBLEMS

My 35,000km Subaru Outback Premium, owned from new, is just out of warranty. I've recently replaced the steering wheel as it was peeling and unsightly and now I've lost access to satnav, voice control and phone pairing. I've emailed Subaru detailing these issues and they've not had the courtesy to reply.

Ian Allmand, email
Get in their ear on the phone. Customer relations are on 1800 226 643. If it's just out of warranty, ask for goodwill repair on the infotainment. If you've serviced at Subaru's dealer network, remind them what a loyal customer you are. There's been a



spike in peeling steering wheels recently. Alcohol-based hand sanitisers - we've been using them a lot recently - are most likely the cause. Goodwill replacement steering wheels have been reported.

JUST PLANT IT

Re "What is Normal?" I had the same jerking and hesitating problem under light throttle in my 2019 Subaru Forester. The Subaru service centre reset my transmission computer which made things slightly better, but also if you press the accelerator a little harder - it's a fly-by-wire rather than cable connection - the injectors deliver the correct amount of fuel, making stop-start driving easier. My issue actually went away after a few months; I believe the computers learn your driving style and adjust.

Max Sailes, email
Thanks for sharing your experience, Max. I hope it works for affected drivers, but I don't think that's a reasonable solution on Subaru's behalf. Different people from the same household - with different driving styles - often drive the same car, so it's not really a practical solution.

THE BIG FREEZE

My 2019 Kia Sorento has Apple CarPlay connectivity problems. At first it happened



NO CHANGE?

My year-old 2020 BMW X2 has travelled just 4000km. I'm surprised it doesn't need an annual oil change but BMW uses condition-based servicing and suggests the oil change is at 24 months or 25,000km, unless the car says it needs to be earlier. Should I do an oil change now or trust the system? BMW charges \$330 for an oil and filter change outside their schedule.

Robert Ius, email
As long as you use the correct oil, no car is going to complain about having more regular oil changes. If it's just oil and filter, I'd get an independent garage to do it for about half that BMW quote. Personally, I'd trust BMW. Your car uses BMW's (expensive) Longlife 5W-30 oil, and if BMW boffins say it's good for 24 months or 25,000km, I'd trust them.

once every two to three months, now it's happening weekly. When driving, the screen freezes. Unplugging the phone sometimes gets it working again, but the dash goes into reboot mode. Kia can't find anything wrong with it and told me I could use one of my (limited) free software updates but I was hoping to save them. Have you heard of this problem before?

Adam Shipway, email
I've experienced numerous glitches with this tech. First up, change your connecting USB cable and ensure your phone software is up to date, but it sounds like updates need to happen to your Kia. Call Kia and tell them you'd appreciate a software update without burning up a free one. If the problem persists, make a warranty claim.

THE REAL THING

Re the reader with a shuddering Mercedes, it reminded me of a friend whose Merc developed a rattling when cornering. It was finally solved when they discovered a Coke bottle under the front seat left there by his grandchild!

Melva Stott, email
Ah, if only all car problems were resolved so easily.

VOICE OF REASON

Re huge car owner's manuals, if you store one in the glovebox it renders the space useless for other items. I typically store mine in the boot with the spare tyre, but even these are often too cramped. I'm sure smart designers could easily accommodate these manuals in a tray under the front passenger seat?

Graham Sandy, email
Isn't it nice to hear some common sense? Our Skoda Fabia had a storage tray under the passenger seat, and that's exactly where the manual went..

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