



## Fuel misery

### YOUR NEXT MOVE MATTERS

**Bruce McIntosh**  
TACC State Manager



So, you are facing the dreaded on-the-way-to-work low-fuel-dilemma or, alternatively, you rock up to a service station after a hard day at the office.

Cars pack the forecourt. It's raining and you're distracted as you drive up to the first free bowser. There's no driveway attendant, so you just grab the nozzle and start pumping.

Next minute you realise – it's the wrong fuel in your car.

Diesel into a petrol engine car or vice versa, it's every driver's worst nightmare.

Hopefully, this doesn't happen to you. But if it does, stay calm and whatever you do, do not get in your vehicle and start the engine.

Far smarter people than I design engines to run on certain types of fuel. If the wrong fuel goes in and the engine is run, catastrophe will shortly ensue. Make no mistake, this will involve an expensive repair.

So, if you find yourself in this embarrassing situation, tell the console operator straight away then seek help to push your car to a safe place on the edge of the service station forecourt and wait for your chosen mechanical professional to arrive.

Arranging for an automotive repair professional to safely drain your fuel tank and responsibly dispose of the contaminated fuel is an absolute must.

Alternatively, you may need a tow to a TACC workshop. Remember, not all roadside locations provide a safe or practical environment to make a rectification.

Once the cleanup operation has been carried out, you can then fill up your car's tank – with the correct fuel this time – and be on your way.

This is a costly mistake, but not as costly as driving off and waiting for your vehicle to fail.

Happy motoring and, remember, TACC members are only a phone call away.

Prepared by **Tasmanian Automotive Chamber of Commerce**

Presented by **Bendix**  
Partnered by **DENSO**  
**THE GRILLE**  
thegrillepodcast.com.au



## ROADSIDE ASSIST



# OFF THE SHOPPING LIST

### IAIN CURRY GETS ANSWERS

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

**Mazda Australia not responding to Jesse Gibson's letter about the CX-9 seat belt warning sensor is disgusting. Not as much an individual case as a case for concern. I'm soon replacing my eight-year-old car. Mazda was at the top of my list but now it's not included.**

Norm Warren, email

Mazda Australia is not obliged to respond to media requests about individual cases or complaints, but it is typically the only brand that does not. We welcome official statements from car brands as it gives owners and potential purchasers correct and timely advice, especially regarding safety issues.

### TIGHTEN YOUR BELT

**I own a 2.4-litre petrol Mitsubishi MQ Triton single-cab ute. It's almost six years old and done only 33,000km. The Mitsubishi service manager recommended I change the timing belt soon, which costs about \$1000. How long should the timing belt last? Should I change it to be on the safe side?**

Robert Turner, email

Diesel Tritons use a longer-lasting timing chain, but petrols like yours have a timing belt. Mitsubishi's maintenance schedule says the belt should be replaced every 90,000km and you're a long way from that. There's no mention of it being a time-based replacement. That said, perhaps seek a second opinion. A snapped belt will lead to catastrophic engine failure. Your dealer may have noted damage to your belt, expediting the need to replace it.

### GRAND PLANS

**My friend is selling his well maintained 150,000km 2013 Jeep Grand Cherokee. I'm interested in it for a trip up north, mainly sealed roads but the occasional off-road section. My friend expressed concern selling it to me as he recently replaced a tyre pressure monitor sensor and the key fob and is worried the car's electronics may be failing. Do these systems have limited life spans? Are there any used alternatives for around \$25,000 for my planned use?**

Graeme Stewart, email

To allay your fears, get a diagnostic scan on the Jeep to pick up any issues. A single sensor failing isn't cause for alarm. As with any 10 year-old car, things do start going wrong, but a pre-purchase inspection and regular servicing is good insurance. Do you need a massive Grand Cherokee? For your budget and mild off-roading I'd consider a Subaru XV, Forester or Outback. All are younger, more

economical and corner better than the Jeep. That said, the Grand Cherokee will take you much further off-road.

### HEAVY HAULING OVERHAUL

**If all cars are going to become electric what about interstate trucks? Will battery range last for thousands of kilometres or will trucks disappear?**

Wayne Nikitin, email

We'll have diesel trucks crossing our giant country for a long time yet. General consensus is future trucks will be hydrogen fuel-cell electric vehicles (FCEVs), which convert hydrogen gas to electricity to power motors. Last year Daimler Truck partnered with Volvo Group with the aim of having a 40-tonne FCEV truck with 1000km range in production by 2025. Unlike battery electric vehicles, FCEVs can be refuelled as quickly as diesel trucks. Hyundai's Xcient Fuel Cell heavy duty trucks have already amassed 3.5 million kilometres since being introduced in Switzerland in 2020.

### GONE TOO SOON

**Our daughter's 2013 Mitsubishi Outlander needs a replacement CVT gearbox after 157,000km. It's very costly. What's a CVT's typical life expectancy?**

Philip Barrell, email

Your daughter's first job is to contact Mitsubishi Australia (not the dealer) and request goodwill assistance for repairs. The car's long out of

warranty but if it's been serviced correctly the CVT shouldn't pack up after 157,000km. You've nothing to lose by asking for goodwill help. A CVT should last the life of the vehicle, but we can all argue how long that should be. If Mitsubishi won't help, go to an auto transmission specialist to properly diagnose the problem. It may be repairable, saving you from a crippling expensive replacement.

### SOFT ROADING ONLY

**I'm considering an all-wheel drive or 4WD for the occasional trip to Fraser Island, perhaps two or three times a year. On my list are a Nissan X-Trail, Hyundai Santa Fe or Renault Koleos from 2018 onwards. The only off-road driving it will do is traversing Fraser.**

Noel Desmond, email



None of the above. You need proper ground clearance and low-range four-wheel-drive or you'll get bogged. Buy a vehicle to suit your everyday driving life, not for the occasional trip to Fraser Island. Instead, for trips to Fraser, you can rent a Suzuki Jimny for \$330, a Toyota HiLux for \$370 or a LandCruiser for \$415 per day from the island's resort.

### CLOCK'S TICKING

**I own a 2010 Honda Accord V6L and have been trying to reset the clock for the end of daylight saving. The Honda dealer said there was a worldwide problem with the GPS. They'd fix it for a small fee or I could wait until August and it may automatically fix. Is this a furphy?**

Waine Pickering, email

Justin Lacy from Honda Australia confirmed there's a global issue affecting GPS on some vehicles (typically 15-20 year-olds) with AVN navigation systems. Here's the science: "When the GPS time signal format changed on January 1 2022 due to the GPS Epoch rollover, the GPS time signal was incorrectly judged by the navigation unit... producing the time display error." Honda has no control over the GPS Epoch rollover, but the mistake is "expected to correct itself automatically" during the next GPS Epoch rollover in August. I'd just use your watch until then.



### SAFETY NOT FIRST

**I've been researching reviews on the MG3 as I'm interested in buying the 2022 model. What's your opinion? My major concern is safety.**

Shane Gaynon, email

If safety's your major concern, leave the MG3 alone. It has no ANCAP safety rating and hasn't been crash tested. As it's Australia's best-selling city car, this is disappointing and concerning. The MG3 is cheap (from \$18,990 drive-away), has good inclusions and impressive ownership prospects, so I understand the appeal. Making cars safe costs money and this is reflected in what we pay. For similar money to the MG3, albeit without the features, the \$18,490 drive-away Kia Picanto S is a better bet.