



Tech info sharing

FAIR REPAIR

Bruce McIntosh
TACC State Manager



From 1 July this year, car manufacturers and other automotive data providers will be required by law to share motor vehicle service and repair information with independent repairers and registered training organisations at a fair market price.

Thought that was already a given? Think again.

Now, it's obvious why this is a big deal for independent repairers, but what's in it for motorists?

Well, for starters they will likely get their serviced or repaired car back sooner.

Independent repairers will no longer have to bend over backwards trying to source key information or vehicle data. It will be at their fingertips. So, no more unnecessary delays.

Did you know that 70 per cent of the vehicle repairs done in Australia are performed by independent repairers?

Well, it's true. And up until now, your local independent mechanic has not been on the same playing field as car manufacturers and their affiliated repairers.

That is where the implementation of the data-sharing scheme will really benefit motorists – they are already going there! And now they are going to get an even better experience.

Industry peak bodies like TACC and its Victorian counterpart, VACC, have been pushing for this basic right on behalf of independent repairers for years. Some thought it would never happen.

And to make sure it's done right, the Australian Automotive Service and Repair Authority has been formed. It's an industry-based, not-for-profit organisation made up of peak body representatives.

At this time, the scheme only covers passenger and light commercial vehicles manufactured after 1 January 2002 so there's still work to do.

There's no denying this change is a huge step in the right direction.

Prepared by Tasmanian Automotive Chamber of Commerce

Presented by **Bendix**
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ROADSIDE ASSIST



NO WIGGLE ROOM

IAIN CURRY GETS ANSWERS

WRITE TO MOTORING AT
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We tested a Toyota C-HR Hybrid, were happy to proceed with the purchase, but had a chore negotiating a final price with the salesman. He said he was only authorised to discount \$500. I walked away when I was asked to write down a price I was willing to pay. Should I pay a broker to negotiate for us or go back and speak to the dealership boss? What's a good price? Shaun McGrath

Toyota hybrids are in strong demand and short supply. Dealerships have little need to do discounts or promotions, so \$500 off wasn't bad. A broker won't help your case. A C-HR hybrid's waiting time is about a year, so don't delay ordering if you want one. Your quote shows you've optioned a window tint for \$347 and ceramic paint protection for \$947. I'd ditch those immediately to reduce your bill. If you think you need either when you get your car, get a specialist to do the work instead to save money.

BLINDED BY THE LIGHT

Is lighting the most unregulated aspect of automotive specifications? I see unusual colours like violet and green in oncoming cars' headlights which are very dazzling. Is this car manufacturer indifference, ineffective police enforcement, or both? Bruce Watson, email

On the contrary, lighting is incredibly regulated. Ever more new cars have LED, HID or even laser lights. They appear much brighter than traditional halogen headlights and, as you've discovered, can have a colourful tint to them. Positively, they better light the road and use less energy. They can dazzle when misaligned or dirty, though. When fitted to utes, pick-ups and SUVs – the vehicles most Aussies buy – these retina-burning lights are exactly at eye level for those in hatchbacks or sedans. Numerous readers have written in complaining of headaches attributed to such headlights. Perhaps regulation hasn't kept pace with technology?

WHO WANTS TACOS?

Re: tachometers, if you tow or off-road they're still incredibly important. Just ask a truck driver. With fuel heading towards \$3 per litre, a light foot and watching your tacho to shift up earlier will save you dollars at the bowser. Peter Lion, email

Re: tachometers, I have a Mitsubishi Triton six-speed auto and observe its tacho all the time. At about 90-95km/h the box stays in fifth;

when I speed up to 100km/h it moves to sixth and will stay there. Observing this saves fuel, reducing over-revving and wear and tear. I wouldn't buy a vehicle without a tacho. Paul Burgess, email



There may be no choice in future, as there are no tachometers in electric cars. The rev counter will join the ashtray, cassette deck, wind-up windows and chokes in the list of "old car" things we can tell our grandkids about.

FILLING THE VOID

The imminent departure of the internal combustion engine appears to be hyped when you consider Europe is having a rethink and countries like China are set to exploit opportunities and fill the gap. What are your thoughts? Peter Penglis, email

You only need listen to every major car company to see EVs are full steam ahead. Jaguar will be EV-only and Mini just plug-in and EV by 2025 (three short years away); Ford says it will sell only all-electric models in Europe by 2030 and Mercedes-Benz is moving towards a fully EV line-up the same year. The biggest players (Toyota and Volkswagen) aren't being tied to a set date, but each is investing billions in EVs. Chinese electric cars make up about half of all EV sales globally and reported strong pre-orders for the BYD Atto 3 (from \$44,990 drive-away) show Chinese EVs are ready to fill the void of "affordable" electric cars.

KEEP IT SIMPLE

I loved your comment about drivers' information priorities in 2022 (Spotify, vegan cafe locations), but what I'd like to see is new cars with features older drivers can understand without asking their children to explain it. We can afford cars with the bells and whistles but most are of absolutely no use to us. We just want safety and comfort. Patricia Davies, email

I hear this a lot. Many buyers believe they're paying inflated prices for equipment they don't want or need. Examples would be lane-keep assist, stop-start tech, wireless phone charging, heated rear seats and puddle lights. I agree, you don't want to foot the bill to replace a digital dashboard or electric handbrake you never wanted in the first place.

UNLOVED BOX

I'd like some information about CVT transmissions as I'm thinking of buying a Mitsubishi Outlander. Reading letters in Roadside Assist, and your responses, they don't have a good reputation. Vic Maloney, email



CVTs get bad press because they're often a bit whiny and their single-speed nature removes driving joy. In something like an Outlander that's not as important as, say, a Subaru WRX, and the Mitsubishi CVT isn't too bad at all. Positively, they weigh less than most conventional automatics and help fuel economy. Depending on who you ask, they aren't as reliable as normal auto gearboxes, cost more to maintain and can be damn expensive to replace.



COMICAL QUOTE

The inside layer on my 2019 Toyota Prado's infotainment touchscreen cracked after a hit. It still works using steering wheel controls, but Toyota says it can't be repaired by simply replacing the screen glass. Instead, I've been quoted \$11,000 for a new complete unit! I've seen an "upgrade" unit costing \$950 online, would that be a better option? I feel Toyota is having a laugh at us. Nicole Jensen, email
Hang on. Eleven grand? Does that include a new engine too? Where do dealers come up with these crippling figures? Head directly to a car audio specialist. They'll fit you a far better head-unit than the Prado's mediocre unit. The aftermarket infotainment will include Apple CarPlay and Android Auto – some 2019 Toyotas didn't include this.