



High price

POOR POLICY

Bruce McIntosh
TACC State Manager



I love my cars, but I am afraid some of these dream machines are getting way beyond my – and the average punter's – reach.

Here's a case in point.

Recently, Mercedes-Benz in Germany set a new record of A\$204 million for a 300 SLR Uhlenhaut Coupe, one of only two built.

But what is really interesting about this 'racing car for the road' is that it's 66 years old and has had only one owner – Mercedes-Benz.

Now, if this car lived in Tasmania, having never changed hands, it's possible it wouldn't have had a roadworthy inspection since its original sale in 1956.

I don't have a problem with people owning and enjoying older cars, but this highlights a ridiculous piece of legislation currently enacted in Tasmania where vehicles can be sold and purchased without being 'run over the pits' – regardless of age or condition.

The Tasmanian Department of State Growth has a solid roadworthy inspection system, however, it is limited to vehicle re-registration. No such inspection at sale or purchase time.

Ridiculous.

The rate of fatal crashes per registered vehicle is four times higher for vehicles aged 15 years or older, than for vehicles aged five years or less.

And the harsh reality is Tasmania has the worst safety record of any state, with 6.6 deaths per 100,000 population.

Now, as a fellow motorist, I understand mandatory roadworthies may not appeal. It's another responsibility, another cost.

However, it seems to me the only way to go. When it comes to road safety, clearly there's a higher price to pay if we do nothing.

Thoughts?

Prepared by Tasmanian Automotive Chamber of Commerce



ROADSIDE ASSIST

THE WAITING GAME

We all know popular car models have demand outstripping supply and long wait times, but as someone looking to buy a new dual cab ute, it's been amazing seeing how different brands inform potential customers. With so much choice, buyers do lots of online research first, but some brand websites don't mention delivery wait times, just to "contact your local dealer". Others should look to Ford as it has clear, plain-English information on its website about the new Ranger, and which grades have a nine-month wait and which grades I could get far sooner. This straight talking has won me as a customer.

Lee Bawden, email

Car companies have had ample time to get clear messages on their websites about potential wait times due to production/shipping delays. That said, it's obvious most genuinely don't know when cars will arrive due to endless disruptions – it's vital they don't dish out misleading information. Ford's website's details about wait times are commendable, although I note Ranger information hasn't been updated since June. With massive interest around the new Ranger, I'd expect it to be updated more regularly.

DENT ON ARRIVAL

Re: last week's Mazda tailgate paint blistering, one of the main reasons this happens is pre-delivery damage repairs. People would be amazed how many new cars need fixing after suffering panel damage pre-delivery.

Darren Holmes, email

I'll take your word for this – it sounds like you have personal experience. You'd expect an honest car dealership to disclose if there's been pre-delivery damage requiring repair but virtuosity can go missing in some businesses. If this was the cause of the Mazda paint problem, I can't imagine the selling dealer will belatedly own up to it.

BAD PADS?

I own a Hyundai Elantra and read your reply last week about Bendix brake pads. I requested these instead of the pads Hyundai service uses. I was told Hyundai's pads are more appropriate and if I didn't follow the dealer's advice it would be against my service history if something happened in future. What's your opinion?

Diane Quinn, email



IAIN CURRY GETS ANSWERS

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

Was the dealer suggesting that if you don't fit Hyundai's pads your warranty would be void? Unless the Bendix pads cause damage to the brake rotors and you try to claim a warranty repair on them, that's nonsense. Bendix provides original equipment (OE) equivalent pads for your Elantra. If you want them on your car because they're Australian-made or think they'll be longer lasting, that's your choice.

RATTLE BATTLE

My 2013 Holden Calais V6 has had an engine rattle for years. It starts when I pull away and lasts to about 1400rpm. Holden advised the dealer to check the auto transmission drive plate and flywheel, but had no success locating the problem. The service manager was surprised it hadn't dropped a conrod big end such was the noise. They worked on the car, the rattle remained and now it looks like Holden's dropped me. Has any other owner experienced this insidious noise and can advise where it may be coming from and what to do?

John Hoban, Townsville.

Holden enthusiast forums reveal numerous complaints about V6 rattles and knocks. Reported causes are many and the fact you've been driving for years with the rattle shows it's not a major engine failure. GM says the last contact it had with you was in 2017 on an unrelated issue. It says it has "reached out" to you and is waiting to hear back. Given the car's well out of warranty, that's a great result. If you have no joy, I'd suggest visiting an independent mechanic specialising in Holdens.

WARRANTY CHECK

I'm considering buying a new vehicle through a car broker. If I have a warranty issue, who is responsible? The car broker or the dealership the broker buys it from?

Rob King, email

I checked with a Victorian Automotive Chamber of Commerce (VACC) spokesman who said: "Whether new or used, the vehicle manufacturer should always bear the burden on manufacturer warranty claims. Vehicle brokers act as an intermediary at the time of purchase and are not ordinarily included in warranty issues. Brokers do however have strict and lawful obligations to follow, including declaring to the consumer all commissions they make from each deal."

BRAKE SAVER

Our 2018 Mitsubishi ASX has a CVT gearbox. When approaching a stop sign or red light I

have a habit of changing down gears to aid braking. Am I doing the right thing?

John Hilton, email



Using engine braking is a useful technique on a long mountain descent to avoid cooking your brakes, and isn't a bad thing for coming to a stop in town too. A CVT has no gears but many are designed with "steps" to mimic gear shifts. Really, the computer is just jumping to another spot on the powerband. If this helps you slow down in town, do carry on.



I see many Teslas and other EVs on the road but don't think they're the answer for our future. Many catch fire, have poor range and are severely overweight due to heavy batteries. They're not cheap to recharge either. I'll stick to petrol powered cars thanks.

Peter Russell, email

In my two decades as a motoring writer, electric cars has been the topic that's most polarised car enthusiasts. There's a lot of misinformation and propaganda surrounding EVs but their ability to be "greener" than a petrol/diesel vehicle to build, charge and recycle is highly nuanced. Reliable sources have presented data showing EVs are less likely to catch fire than petrol vehicles, but EV fires are more challenging to extinguish. Some EVs have limited range, others offer 500km or more – that's plenty. Yes, they're heavy, but cost-wise I've found home charging EVs markedly cheaper than refuelling petrol cars. EVs aren't for everyone right now, but many car makers have already committed to a pure electric future.