

[ ROADSIDE ASSIST ]



SHADES OF GREEN

IAIN CURRY GETS ANSWERS

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

In your Hyundai Kona Electric review, you refused to charge it with a domestic plug as that "defeats the zero emissions point". The implication is green energy is used at fast charge stations. I don't know about Queensland but public fast charging stations in Victoria use grid power, just like in the home. Perhaps in future, government may mandate that fast charging stations use solar and wind power backed by batteries.

Tino Vescovi, Kona Electric owner  
Excellent point. I've charged EVs at my solar-only office: great for the conscience but boy it takes a long time. Regarding Queensland's Electric Super Highway public charging stations, the official line is they use "green energy either through direct green energy credits or offsets, making them a carbon neutral and pollutant-free transport option". Bit wishy washy, that. At the Coochin Creek/Bruce Highway (near Brisbane) charge station, I was surprised to see solar panels installed but not connected. There's work to be done.

STEER CLEAR

I'm thinking about buying a 4x2 Great Wall Steed twin-cab petrol ute as they're \$20,000 drive-away. I've heard the brand's not so good. What are the pros and cons, and any alternatives for the same price?

Greg Henderson, email  
My colleague Grant Edwards and I tested the Steed in 2017. Edwards wrote the article and declared it: "The worst car I've ever driven." Positives? It's cheap, five-year warranty's OK and payload is more than a tonne. Negatives? It has a two-star ANCAP rating, gutless heavy-drinking engine, woeful steering and terrible resale value. The only \$20,000 4x2 dual cab's I can recommend are on the used market.

LEFT-LEANING

We bought a used 2014 Kia Sorento, which has a steering pull to the left. I assumed a wheel alignment would rectify it. My local tyre shop told me they ran out of adjustment before the correct caster could be achieved. A second tyre shop found the same. My brother-in-law has a 2015 Sorento, which also pulls to the left. It's bizarre a modern car has inadequate adjustment to correct suspension geometry. It detracts from an otherwise great car.

Peter Storie, email  
I didn't notice a pull during my Sorento test, certainly nothing extraordinary, but other owners have had similar findings to you. A Kia spokesman says the Carnival had a known issue (now rectified) but this is "not something endemic to the Sorento" and there's "no known problem with the car". He says a problem could arise using a non-standard tyre, or if previous

alignment was incorrect. He advises using a Kia dealership with "proper measures and equipment". This looks your best bet — but insist they drive your car first so they experience the problem.

MISSED THE CUT

I was surprised Toby Hagon's article on seven-seat SUVs didn't include the Mazda CX-8, as it's been rated best family car elsewhere. People may be put off by it being diesel only but I've heard a petrol one may arrive in the near future.

Dominic Cutroni, email  
Why wasn't Holden's Acadia included in your seven-seater guide? It was top of my list, so should I reconsider my options?

James, email  
Toby Hagon replies: "The CX-8 is expected to arrive with a petrol engine some time this year. As most seven-seater SUVs spend most time in the city and suburbs, a petrol engine makes more sense. Mazda's CX-9 got ahead on our shortlist due to its more spacious body too. As for the Acadia, it's one of the most convincing current Holdens, and certainly worthy of consideration. But the extra grunt of the Mazda's turbo engine and classier interior edge it ahead."

CRACKING RESULT

I bought a new Jeep Cherokee Overland in 2014. After a year, noticed wrinkling in the driver's seat Nappa leather surrounding the Overland badge. I regret not reporting it at the time, as by

2018 the wrinkling had turned to cracking and the badge started peeling away. It had done only 37,000km, and the passenger side seat (usually occupied) hadn't suffered the same. I asked FCA (Jeep) for assistance but a goodwill fix was rejected as it was out of warranty. I was hoping Jeep was genuine with its desire to be more responsive to loyal customers.

Ian Gill, email  
The seat damage is unsightly, the sort you'd see on far older, higher kilometre cars than yours. After I contacted FCA, they've reconsidered your case,



and spoken to you to "better understand what could have caused the damage as we haven't seen anything like this before". FCA's now covering the replacement bill, an excellent response from them and a great result for you.

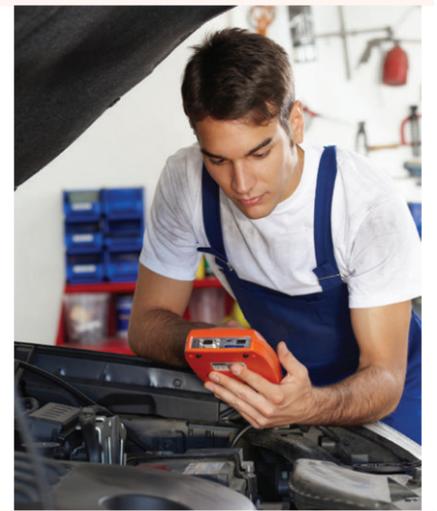


MOVE ON UP

I've thoroughly enjoyed my 2014 VW Golf but am now after something with smallest footprint but riding a little higher. I've test driven the new Mazda CX-30 and found its 2.5-litre a better drive than the turbo Golf. How does the CX-30 shape up against the Kia Seltos? What other options are there?

Gail Bastian, email  
See our CX-30 cover story. The smaller CX-3's a

great drive but minimal boot and rear space mark it down. I rate the Seltos as the new small SUV benchmark for value, style, packaging and warranty. Make sure you test one, then at least one more — a Skoda Karoq or Hyundai Kona perhaps — before committing. If you love your Golf, it may be worth waiting for Volkswagen's T-Roc small SUV. It's due in April but can be ordered now.



Data codes and car health

FAIR INFO SHARING IS GOOD NEWS FOR CONSUMERS

Geoff Gwilym VACC CEO



Maintaining and repairing vehicles today requires a lot of diagnostics analysis, and access to data codes that determine the way your engine and the other systems in your car perform.

Accessing vehicle information has been contentious for some time, with independent mechanics claiming they're sometimes denied access by vehicle manufacturers.

As vehicles become increasingly complex and digitally-driven this means that all vehicle repairers — dealerships, mechanics, body repairers and others — need to access manufacturer codes and repair information to fix and recalibrate vehicles.

Even new parts often need the DNA code from the manufacturer so that they can communicate properly with the vehicle's electronic and data systems, and work correctly and safely. The part needs to tell the vehicle it's the real deal because a lack of coding can sometimes disable a whole system. It's important stuff where your vehicle is concerned.

Work is currently under way, in government, to build legislation that will enable all mechanics and other repairers to access the same information for vehicles. This means consumers will know that wherever they take their car the same level of vehicle data will be available, at the new-car dealership or with their local mechanic.

That's good news for you because it's you that ultimately decides where to have your vehicle serviced and maintained. Having a fair system of vehicle service and repair information sharing ensures you'll be confident your local business will have everything required to do so.

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

Share your thoughts  
ceo@vacc.com.au