

[**ROADSIDE ASSIST**]



GAS REPAIRS

IAIN CURRY GETS ANSWERS

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

I bought a Ford Endura ST-Line in June this year. Three months later the coolant completely emptied and it was towed to a Ford dealer for repair. Since then, the coolant keeps disappearing and needing top-ups. I finally got the car back after two weeks' evaluation and was told a fault had been found, the EGR valve leaking internally. What is EGR and should I be concerned?

Colin Paine, email

It's exhaust gas recirculation, there to reduce emissions of oxides of nitrogen by recirculating some of your engine's exhaust gases back into your engine for combustion. Practically every new car has it. Such a leak, while not uncommon, shouldn't be expected in a car that's done 8000km, as yours has. Ford must fix this for you under warranty and will give you a loan car while the work's done.

THEY DON'T MISS YOU

It's been many moons since I was in the market for a new car and I'm curious about on-road costs. You write the VW Touareg 190 TDI is \$79,490, or about \$88,000 drive-away. That's \$8510 extra! Could I get a break down of costs please?

Jock Pasaros, email

Volkswagen's online price calculator isn't revealing a price breakdown at present but here's a similar example from Mercedes-Benz. In NSW, the GLC 300e SUV has a recommended retail price of \$79,725, working out at \$88,373 drive-away. Dealer delivery is \$2750, registration \$1098, stamp duty \$3300 and luxury car tax \$1949. My colleague David McCowen says: "We prefer to give an estimated drive-away price in our reviews as the registration and stamp duty can vary between states by up to \$5000 in this level of luxury vehicle." Those charges are hard to stomach, especially the money-grabbing luxury car tax.

DOCTOR'S ORDERS

Re how to stop a car if the driver has a heart attack. Your response contained useful advice but missed perhaps the most important point: has the reader discussed with his doctor whether he's still safe to drive regularly?

Paul Parramore, email

Good point. Regular testing of health, sight including peripheral vision, reactions and road rules should be mandatory for all drivers, especially the elderly. Each state has different requirements, adding to the confusion. NSW requires drivers over 75 to have annual medical assessments and, at 85, pass a practical driving test every other year. In Victoria, rather worryingly, the driver personally decides if they're no longer fit to drive. That's potentially disastrous.

SAVE THE EIGHT

I have a 2011 Toyota LandCruiser 200, the fifth



HOT AND BOTHERED

I'm concerned about engine oil temperature in my Subaru XV. It goes up a few degrees when overtaking and on steep inclines goes from 97C up to 112C. Subaru told me not to worry unless the warning light goes on. I contacted Valvoline (supplier to my Subaru dealer) and was told that above 100C oil loses some protective qualities.

Ian Whannell, email

I contacted Subaru Australia and was told: "Normal operating temperature is approximately

90-110C but when the car is under load such as going uphill or overtaking it may increase above 110C, then drop when back in normal driving conditions." I also checked with an independent mechanic and he says: "Oil temperature above 110C would be fine. Oil these days copes with much higher temperatures without a problem — think how hot it gets going through a turbo bearing on full noise." You're right to stay vigilant, as many drivers never watch their gauges, but I'd relax in your case.



'Cruiser I've owned. I've travelled more than a million kilometres in them across Australia with zero problems, not even a flat tyre. I've been learning about the new 300 Series due perhaps by the end of 2020 — will Toyota drop the V8 for V6 petrol and diesel engines? Surely Toyota Australia is not dumb enough to alienate customers who want the V8 for its effortless unstressed power and reliability? What's going to power the 300 Series?

Brad Midson, email

A million kays with not ever a flat tyre?! You should buy a lotto ticket, Brad. Toyota Australia's being tight-lipped on the next-generation LandCruiser but we do know a hybrid will be in the mix. What becomes of the current 4.5-litre V8 turbo diesel remains to be seen but I agree with you, to not provide a replacement would turn off rusted-on faithfuls like you. If a new V8 comes, it no doubt will be smaller and more economical but a V6

turbo diesel could be preferred. We'll have to wait for news ahead of the LandCruiser 300's launch.

HEADING OUTBACK

I'm looking at buying a 2015-16 Subaru Outback 2.5i with about 100,000km for about \$20,000. Is this a good choice and what problems could I encounter?

Norman Yaffe, email

That's the right sort of money for an Outback of that age and mileage and I'd say it's a decent choice. I like the Outback's all-round abilities; comfortable, good passenger and cargo space, talented off-road and they feel well screwed together. Negatives are services every six months, so check the previous owner has strictly adhered to this. The continuously variable transmission can be a bit whiny and some owners are reporting electrical problems. A 2015-16 example will be just out of warranty, so have an expert check over any potential purchase.

DROP THE DOWNSHIFT

Re the 2019 VW Polo with burnt clutch. The same happened to us in our Hyundai Excel — kudos to Hyundai, they replaced it under warranty. The service manager advised us to drive it like an automatic. That means no downshifting when slowing, as I'd always done over the decades.

Paul and Lisa Brew, email

I guess they don't build clutches like they used to. I'll continue to heel-toe downshift in my manual 1980s Peugeot ... what could possibly go wrong?



Buyer beware

DOUBLE STANDARDS IN USED CAR SALES MEAN YOU COULD BE ON YOUR OWN

Geoff Gwilym VACC CEO



I'm constantly astonished at the volume of used cars bought and sold privately in Australia each year.

It's estimated that out of the total pool of used cars sold annually — about 3.8 million — nearly 60 per cent, are transacted by the owner either online or through other seller-to-buyer channels.

Representing VACC new and used car dealers in Victoria, I continue to remind government of the hurdles placed before industry when selling used cars, compared to the apparent no-holds-barred conditions for private sellers.

This is simply not fair.

While consumers fight hard for protections, such as Australian Consumer Law and statutory warranties, they apparently throw this anxiety out the window when buying a car from someone they have never met, who doesn't run a legitimate car sales business, and who may have a myriad of motives for shifting their lump of metal.

Used car dealers must meet rigorous regulatory burdens when running their businesses — such as being a licensed motor car trader, which includes a criminal history and identity check, as well as submitting detailed business plans and financials to Consumer Affairs Victoria. They are also required to guarantee a clear title and check for any recalls before proceeding with a sale. All while competing with the 60 per cent of the market that is not required to meet these obligations.

From where I sit this just doesn't seem right. If the industry is bound by statutory consumer protections, why shouldn't everybody else who's selling their car?

Think about that next time you're searching for a used car.

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

Share your thoughts
ceo@vacc.com.au

