



Cash for clunkers

WHAT ABOUT THE FINE DETAIL?



Geoff Gwilym VACC CEO

Daniel Andrews recently announced a new pilot program to get people in regional Victoria out of their old vehicles and into new ones — a cash-for-clunkers scheme. Great, you might say. But some questions need to be answered.

In principle, I have no issues with any scheme that sets out to ensure consumers are driving the safest possible vehicle.

But how will vehicles be defined as 'old' or 'unsafe'? And how will vehicle owners be transitioned across to newer, safer vehicles?

The announcement also raises the issue of how 'clunkers' will be treated once they're taken off the road.

I'm concerned about pop-up operators who prey on government-funded programs.

Lack of consistency and government oversight allows backyard recyclers to prosper, to the detriment of the legitimate vehicle recycling industry.

I urge the government to engage with industry to ensure illegitimate program brokers don't arrive on the scene to gouge consumers out of their hard-earned money.

On a positive note, it would be great to get the average age of the Australian vehicle fleet down under nine years. Currently it's 10.4.

But if the Victorian Government is really interested in getting people into newer and safer vehicles then it should drop stamp duty on new-vehicle purchases where the trade-in is over nine years old.

The same goes for Luxury Car Tax. A car costing \$50,000 attracts \$2100 in duty, for example. Putting that money back into the pockets of Victorian families makes a lot of sense to me. How about you?

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

Share your thoughts
ceo@vacc.com.au



ICON FOR SALE

[ROADSIDE ASSIST]

IAIN CURRY GETS ANSWERS

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

I've owned my 52,000km 2013 Holden VF Commodore SV6 manual since new. It's holding its value well and they aren't building them anymore. Should I sell it or keep it, and what do you think it's worth in a private sale? I could get a new car, but I hate SUVs.
Terry McMahon, email

If you were madly in love with your VF you'd not consider selling it, so I'd say cash in. Used car prices have surged during Covid, and there's fever around used Commodores — as you say, they're now consigned to history. A desirable low-kilometre, full history manual SV6 like yours could fetch \$25-30,000. That's a decent chunk of a new Mazda6, Toyota Camry, VW Passat, Skoda Superb or even Kia Stinger's price — fine sedan alternatives to an SUV.

WRONG BOTTLE

I recently traded my diesel Peugeot for a petrol Hyundai. I have several bottles of diesel injector cleaner I'm reluctant to throw out. Could I use it in the petrol car with no ill effects?
David Bowen, email

The very fact it's a specialist diesel injector cleaner suggests not. Call the product manufacturer (number will be on the bottle) to confirm, but it's just not worth it for the sake of \$30 or so. Gift your cleaner to a neighbour with a diesel ute. God knows many could use it.

WARNING SIGNS

The "Check Engine" dash light sometimes comes on when I'm driving my '94 Mazda3, but goes off when I turn it off. The engine sounds fine and it's not overheating, shall I ignore it? The car's not worth an expensive repair.
Lucy Fischer, email

An engine light on can mean disaster, but could be something as simple as a dodgy sensor or loose fuel cap. See if an independent mechanic can quickly diagnose it, this shouldn't cost much. The repair may be simple, and could help your Mazda live another 25 years.

NOT OK COMPUTER

My 2015 Kia Sorento diesel's great, but I find its fuel usage readout is generally 10 per cent optimistic compared to the actual figure I calculate when filling the tank. For example, a readout of 8.8L/100km will actually be 9.8L/100km when manually calculated on filling up. The odometer readout is exactly correct against highway kilometre checks. Do your road tests report an actual fuel use calculation or the car's indicated readout?
Bevan Harris, email

As we sometimes only get a day on a car launch it's not practical to perform the 'DIY' fuel use calculation. I've done it with long-term test cars, and like you, found the car's economy readout to be optimistic, but usually only by a few per cent. Variables affecting testing include temperature (fuel tanks expand in warm weather), driving conditions, the fuel's energy (how much ethanol is in it, for example), and how well maintained the engine and fuel system are. I'd take your car's readout as a guide, not gospel. If you travel 15,000km per year and average 7L/100km with fuel costing \$1.30 per litre, your annual bill is \$1365. If your readout's 10 per cent optimistic, it's \$136.50 extra per year. Not insignificant, but when compared to other car bills, not worth losing sleep over.

ANTI-TOYOTA

I'm perplexed at your pro-Toyota responses. Proclaiming a new vehicle as being wonderful with only 5000km on its clock is a bit rich. How do we know what faults there are when it's so new? The reliability and resale of Toyotas is questionable indeed; journalists never seem to get off their chair and sniff



My wife is interested in a small or medium SUV priced between \$20,000-\$30,000. What do you suggest to replace her Mitsubishi ASX? What about a Haval H2?
Gene Oh, email

A Skoda Kamiq. It won our 2020 Car of the Year for good reason. It's \$27,990 drive away (\$29,990 with auto gearbox) and is a 'large' small SUV like your ASX. Well built, spacious, economical and, for a small SUV, an excellent drive. Lots of safety kit and goodies like auto tailgate, radar cruise control, wireless phone charging, dual zone air con and virtual cockpit show it's bang up to date. Also try a Kia Seltos S with safety pack (\$28,290 drive-away) — its seven-year warranty trumps Skoda's five. As for the Haval H2, its value has piqued your interest. There's good equipment and warranty for the \$22,990 drive-away, so go and test one. But depreciation, not many dealerships and — in my opinion — build quality no match for Kia's or Skoda's — would rule it out for me.

around in the real world to see what's going on. Our experience is a 130,000km RAV4 with failed shock absorbers and water pump (nine hours labour), a HiLux with terrible fuel economy, bumper rust and transmission failure, and a seven-year-old LandCruiser with seized engine. Confounded? You bet.

Jim Stanfield, email
I'm not surprised your Toyota opinion has soured with such experiences. We can only report as we find with new vehicle reviews, and if the RAV4 is a damn good new car we'll say so. No crystal ball can tell us how reliable they'll prove over time, but this very page gives owners the chance to highlight the reality. We champion long warranties giving the consumer better protection. Well done Mitsubishi, Kia, MG, SsangYong, Haval and Isuzu. Audi, BMW, Jaguar, Land Rover and Porsche — must do better.

TOWING CONFUSION

I have a 2015 Ford Territory diesel and am thinking of buying a caravan. I don't know if it would be a suitable tow vehicle as the towing limits are confusing.

Rob Smith, email
You'll have to discover if your Territory was fitted with Ford's heavy duty towpack — this included a towbar, towball, wiring and load-levelling kit. It will be in your paperwork or give Ford your VIN and they'll advise. A standard Territory tows 1600kg with a maximum towball download of 160kg. With heavy duty towpack it's 2300kg/230kg if it's rear-wheel-drive and 2700kg/270kg if all-wheel-drive. They're a good tow vehicle, but buy a caravan to suit these limits.

buy search sell .com.au

Welcome to Australia's leading network of trusted local classifieds
To place business advertising 13 11 13 or buysearchsell.com.au

Motoring

Cars Wanted

CASH

FORDS & HOLDENS 1970's

Any condition-xaxbxc-vbvkyl 'valiants

All chrome bumper cars Statewide pick up

Phone: 0409 096 225

Private collector/Restorer

Caravans & Motor Homes

DATSUN WANTED

240K 1973 - 1977

SKYLINE 1978 - 1985

280ZX

MOBILE: 0411 813 795

Caravans Wanted

Any condition. Anywhere

0417 373 338

buy search sell .com.au

Call 13 11 13

buy search sell .com.au