

AMIF leaders reaffirm their opposition to the deregulation of new car imports

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Members of the Australian Motor Industry Federation (AMIF) today reaffirmed their opposition to the Federal Government's intention to deregulate the importation of new vehicles in to Australia.

AMIF members, representing the Australian automotive industry, met in Melbourne and were unanimous in their opposition to the proposal. They opposed the relaxing of restrictions for new vehicles for the following reasons:

1. Affordability – if the Federal Government is intent on improving vehicle affordability across all sectors of the community, it should focus on reducing all taxes on vehicle purchases, including the Luxury Car Tax. AMIF asks why should some vehicles be considered luxury when more elite items, including yachts, art, fine wine, aeroplanes and jewellery are not?
2. Detail – there has not been enough detailed information, provided to the automotive industry, to convince it that restrictions should be relaxed. Cheaper vehicles for all may be a blue sky statement, however, dealers, retailers, parts suppliers and importers require specific information about their role, responsibilities and accountability.
3. Industry impact - new vehicle dealers and automotive repairers will be expected to operate in a system where they have little information about the nature of the system and have not been fully engaged in its design.
4. Choice – what is the true motivation for the deregulation? With 65 brands available to consumers in Australia, no one is crying out for more vehicle types. With free trade agreements, competition barriers have come down, resulting in record low vehicle prices in Australia. Competition in the new car industry is already intense.

The Federal Government claims it has consulted broadly for the last twelve months to ensure it strikes a balance between appropriate safety standards and consumer access to vehicles at the lowest possible cost. Throughout consultation with the Productivity Commission, the Competition Policy Review, and the Motor Vehicle Standards Act Review, AMIF members, individually and as a group, have submitted that Government must not deregulate the importing of new vehicles. Today, we reaffirm this position and recommend, in the strongest possible terms, that Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, Jamie Briggs, meets AMIF to consider the realities of this proposal as soon as possible.

Signed by

 Richard Dudley, CEO, AMIF	 Geoff Gwilym, Executive Director, VACC	 Greg Patten, CEO, MTA-NSW
 Stephen Moir, CEO, MTA-WA	 Paul Unerkov, CEO, MTA-SA	 Peter Donovan, Executive Director, MTA-NT

*AMIF members include VACC, TACC, MTA-WA, MTA-SA, MTA-NSW and MTA-NT