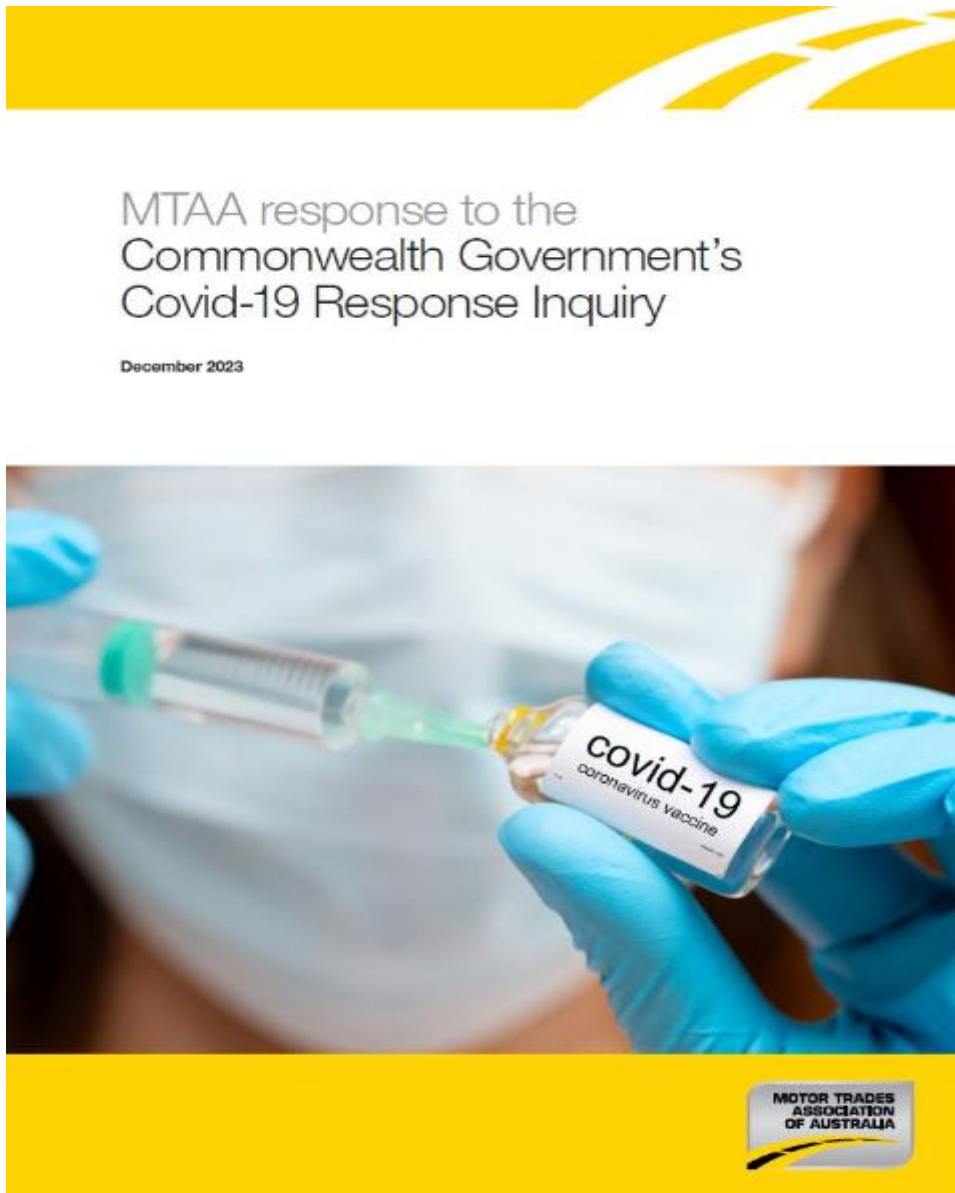


### Motor Trades Association of Australia (MTAA) submission to the COVID-19 Response Inquiry

VACC/TACC members are advised the national body representing VACC/TACC members, the Motor Trades Association of Australia (MTAA) entered a submission, on behalf of members, in response to the Australian Government's [COVID-19 Response Inquiry](#) (the Inquiry). Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese announced the Inquiry in September 2023 with the intention to develop recommendations aimed at improving Australia's preparedness for future pandemics.

It is worth highlighting MTAA was the *only* automotive industry group published on the Australian Government's submission website.

You can view the submission by taking this link:



## **About the MTAA submission**

MTAA regards the Inquiry to be a breakthrough moment in MTAA and VACC's longstanding advocacy for specific automotive industry protections in the instance of another pandemic or black swan event. Many members of the Victorian automotive retailing sector, who survived the period 2020-2022 remain in recovery mode as a direct result of over complicated and severely limiting trading policies imposed by Federal and State Governments.

VACC witnessed first-hand the hardship experienced by so many members across the state of Victoria during the pandemic, hence the MTAA submission was largely driven by VACC members' experiences, who faced the most severe trading restrictions in the world. In aggregate, Victoria was locked down for approximately 270 days.

Important to note, the MTAA submission is the only submission to be published by the Australian Government from an automotive industry group. Members are invited to review the range of published submissions available on the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet's dedicated Inquiry website [here](#).

## **As part of the submission, MTAA recommended:**

- That the automotive retail sector be regarded a vital and essential stakeholder with a permanent position on any future advisory body administered by the National Coordination Mechanism (NCM).
- That the Commonwealth takes sole responsibility for industry support mechanisms during any future pandemic or major national event.
- MTAA seeks the support of the Independent Panel, and the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, to have automotive retail participants declared by the Federal Government and the NCM, as an essential service in the event of future pandemics, natural catastrophe, or black swan event.
- Exempt automotive dealer franchises and large automotive retailers from any future staffing and turnover thresholds associated with future pandemic business relief payments and apply a methodology of applying relief under a profit assessment scheme.
- Ensure all automotive retailers are eligible for any future Federal Government or state subsidies related to pandemic relief payments, regardless of their ANZIC code.
- That the Independent Panel recommends that it is a priority to review processes related to the arrival of imported vehicles to speed the route to market.

## **Next steps**

MTAA and VACC look forward to engaging with the recently announced consultation process led by the Australian Government. This will provide an in-depth analysis of the issues that severely affected Victorian businesses during, and after, the pandemic shutdowns.

VACC thank the MTAA and VACC members for their contributions.

Please feel free to contact me, Dr Imogen Reid via [ireid@vacc.com.au](mailto:ireid@vacc.com.au) with any queries regarding the submission.

**Dr Imogen Reid**

Lead, Strategy and Policy