



Volume 16 Issue 1 January 2015

In this issue:

- Lesley Yates joins the AAAA National Office
- Applications open for the Australian Auto Aftermarket Awards 2015
- **NEW** AAAA Member Service – Trade Practices Hotline
- AAAA Networking Event Victoria
- Last Chance to Secure Expo Show Bag Sponsorship
- A Win for Australian Car Owners – Vehicle Data Sharing becomes a Reality
- AAAA Welcomes Senate Inquiry into the Future of Australia's Automotive Industry
- LED Light Bar Regulation Changes
- Ozaccom+ - Australian Auto Aftermarket Expo 2015 - Travel & Accommodation Provider

Lesley Yates joins the AAAA National Office

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Lesley Yates in the role of Senior Manager Government Relations and Advocacy based in the AAAA National Office in Melbourne.

Lesley has specialised in government policy, public policy, government relations, organisational growth, economic development, investment attraction and governance for the last twenty years and was previously the Managing Partner of the Radno Group, a management and business consulting firm providing strategic advice to companies, government and the community services sector.

Lesley's success in policy influence, growth and economic development is due to her unique blend of experience in both the public and private sectors: twelve years as a business owner, four years with a top-20 publicly listed company (AGL) and over ten years in management and executive roles within the Victorian Public Service.

She has extensive non-executive Director and Chair experience on government and not-for-profit Boards, and throughout her career, she has developed a range of business networks and relationships with government and industry bodies including industry

associations, research and regional economic development agencies. Lesley has a reputation for high-level strategic thinking and she is well respected for her project management and her ability to design and deliver industry and consumer advocacy campaigns.

Lesley is also well known to many at the AAAA as her former consulting firm Radno has provided us with extensive Government relations support and strategic advice over the last 7 years and her input has been instrumental in many of the successful outcomes we have achieved in this area over that time. Lesley's appointment will give us the ability to take the next big step in the evolution of the AAAA government relations and industry advocacy strategy with the objective of supporting and growing our industry and we have a range of exciting new initiatives underway which we will provide further information on in the coming weeks.

Lesley can be contacted on Tel (03) 9545 3333 or Email: Lesley@aaaa.com.au

APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN for the Australian Auto Aftermarket Awards 2015

The Australian Automotive Aftermarket Association (AAAA) has revised and expanded its popular biennial aftermarket industry awards program to recognise companies and individuals who set the benchmark for excellence in our industry.

Run in conjunction with the Australian Auto Aftermarket Expo, to be held from 16 to 18 April, 2015 in Melbourne, applications for the Awards program are now open for entries from organisations and individuals, across a wide variety of marketing, manufacturing, product and service award categories.

The Awards program was reviewed and we have streamlined the entry process and expanded the program.

Award entries are invited from AAAA members engaged in manufacturing, re-manufacturing, wholesaling, distribution, mechanical repair and modification services, and retailing of all vehicle parts, accessories, tools, equipment and services,

excluding products exclusively used in the manufacture of original equipment.

For the first time, entries in the Most Innovative New Product category are welcomed from companies not exhibiting at the Expo, however to cover administration costs, non-exhibitors are charged a \$500 fee to submit two product award entries. There is no fee for Expo exhibitors.

We encourage all members to visit the dedicated Awards website www.aftermarketawards.com.au and **submit your entry before Friday 20 February, 2015.**

The Australian Auto Aftermarket Innovation Awards will be presented at a breakfast on Thursday 16 April, and the Australian Auto Aftermarket Excellence Awards will be presented at a Gala Banquet that evening. With over 1000 industry representatives attending the combined events, these award presentations will be the pinnacle of the 2015 Australian Auto Aftermarket Expo.

We wish entrants all the best for their submissions and look forward to seeing you in April.

NEW AAAA Member Service – Trade Practices Hotline

We are pleased to announce the launch of a new **FREE** AAAA member service, the **AAAA Trade Practices Hotline**. Working in conjunction with CCA Compliance Solutions, this service will assist businesses in identifying and meeting obligations under the Competition & Consumer Act and Australian Consumer Law. Members can access this **FREE** specialist hotline on **1300 369 703** for all your competition law and consumer law compliance advice.

This service will provide the following benefits to members:-

- A dedicated **telephone hotline** service for all AAAA members – **1300 369 703**
- Advice on key areas of **consumer law compliance** to include warranties, refunds (rights and obligations), consumer guarantees, consumer compensation for loss and damage etc.
- Advice on key areas of **competition law compliance** services relating to rights and obligations concerning competitive conduct.
- Regular educational **articles** in our publications.
- CCA can also provide **additional trade practices compliance training** for your company (additional costs associated).

For further information on this new FREE AAAA Member Service please call 1300 369 703.

AAAA Networking Event Victoria

You are invited to join fellow AAAA members on **Monday 16th February** for an industry networking event.

Stuart Charity, Executive Director of the AAAA will update members on a range of industry wide initiatives including some exciting recent developments.

Guest Speaker David Parkin is one of the best business/motivational speakers in Australia engaging all types of audiences with his passion – “Powerful, intelligent and compelling”. David relates his experiences to the world of business through working with numerous and varied organisations and corporations. His accomplishments as a football player and coach are outstanding and he is one of just six coaches to have coached over 500 AFL/VFL games.

Not to be missed ... numbers are limited so make sure you register early.

For further information and a copy of the registration form please email Briana at admin@aaaa.com.au or download from the events section of the website, www.aaaa.com.au.

Last Chance to Secure Expo Show Bag Sponsorship

As a result of unprecedented demand for sponsorships at the Australian Auto Aftermarket Expo in April, the only major sponsorship still available is the show bag sponsor. Limited to confirmed AAAE exhibitors, this exclusive package provides you with the opportunity to have your brand walking around with the 10,000 trade visitors that will attend the Expo over the 3 days of the exhibition. The Expo is the premier showcase of the Australian auto aftermarket industry and time is running out to secure this exciting sponsorship opportunity.

For further information contact Michelle Vizzutti on (03) 9545 3333 or email michelle@aaaa.com.au.

A Win for Australian Car Owners – Vehicle Data Sharing becomes a Reality

The Choice of Repairer campaign launched in 2009 achieved its aim when peak industry bodies signed a voluntary agreement on 15 December 2014 to make vehicle data sharing a reality.

The Agreement on Access to Service and Repair Information for Motor Vehicles was signed by five organisations representing key industry and consumer groups – the Australian Automobile Association, AAAA, Australian Automotive Dealer Association, Australian Motor Industry Federation and the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries.

AAAA Executive Director Stuart Charity said the agreement facilitated by Federal Minister for Small Business Bruce Billson is a victory for common sense. This agreement ensures independent repairers can access all information required for the diagnosis, body repair, servicing, inspection, periodic monitoring, and reinitialising of the vehicle, in line with the service and repair information manufacturers provide their authorised dealers and repairers.

AAAA launched the Choice of Repairer campaign because independent repairers want to give the best service to their customers and repairers were concerned that car owners were being disadvantaged by either a lack of some data or the difficulty in getting the data.

The parties have agreed to give Australian vehicle owners rights similar to those enjoyed in Europe and the USA. The accord creates a level playing field enabling independent aftermarket workshops to compete with the car company authorised dealerships.

The agreement is a win-win-win for all parties. It promotes consumer choice for owners of 17 million vehicles – particularly those in regional areas where there are fewer dealerships. It helps 22,000 small workshops remain business. And the vehicle manufacturers will earn a fair price for the data that they share.

Agreement safeguards

This agreement is based on the principles that consumers should be able to choose who maintains and/or repairs their motor vehicle and that motor vehicle and motor vehicle component manufacturers, Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs), have a right to protect intellectual property and be paid for sharing vehicle repair and service data.

The agreement also obliges repairers to acknowledge the importance of obtaining and using the repair information provided by OEMs to ensure repairs are carried out correctly to assure the safety of consumers.

The accord establishes guidelines for the operation of the agreement under a steering committee, which will meet at least once each year and provides for a dispute resolution process. The steering committee will include one member of each signatory organisation with the ability to access professional mediation by an agreed third party, if the signatory parties are unable to resolve a dispute internally.

Parties to the agreement also acknowledged that the emerging vehicle telematics technologies enabling increased transmission and use of data relating to vehicle use, performance and diagnostics presents emerging challenges for all stakeholders. To address these challenges, the parties will implement a process to develop protocols relating to vehicle data access and ownership with progress to be reported in 12 months.

The AAAA recognised that as time marched on, so too did the technical complexity of modern vehicles – they are now computers on wheels. To provide consumers with an open and competitive service and repair market, we knew that independent workshops must have access to the data required to keep customers safe and mobile.

The AAAA acknowledges the significant work by all signatory parties to the agreement in achieving this historic outcome for the automotive industry. We also thank Minister Billson for his outstanding leadership on the issue, as well as the Commonwealth Consumer Affairs Advisory Council and the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission for their commitment to resolving this critical consumer issue.

AAAA Welcomes Senate Inquiry into the Future of Australia's Automotive Industry

In its submission to the recently announced Senate inquiry into the future of the Australian automotive industry, the AAAA will deliver the message that the automotive aftermarket can play a key role in absorbing some of the excess capacity, skills and knowledge that become available as the shutdown of the Australian domestic passenger vehicle sector plays out.

AAAA Executive Director Stuart Charity said the aftermarket has always been independent of vehicle manufacturing. For decades, governments considered only the car makers when designing automotive industry policy. Australia's aftermarket parts, service and repair sectors have been left in a policy vacuum.

This means about one third of Australia's \$108 billion automotive industry has been neglected. We see this new Senate inquiry as an opportunity to ensure that policy makers understand the value that Australia's automotive aftermarket adds to the community and to the economy.

The automotive aftermarket is expanding internationally and Australia is part of that growth story. We will tell the inquiry that Australian aftermarket manufacturing has taken the initiative by creating innovative products and generating export sales in highly competitive international markets.

For example, Australian aftermarket manufacturers have built a strong reputation for high quality performance, racing and four wheel drive parts and accessories. These and other Australian aftermarket products are generating almost a billion dollars of export sales a year.

Cutting ATS is a lost opportunity

The Federal Government proposal to cut \$500 million from Automotive Transformation Scheme (ATS) funding over the 2015 to 2018 period, and terminating all automotive industry assistance on 1 January 2018, would be a lost opportunity to assist the remaining original equipment (OE) auto parts manufacturers to transition and to thrive in new fields, and for aftermarket manufacturers to take advantage of strong global demand for Australian products.

Currently the ATS excludes the manufacturers of automotive aftermarket parts from accessing the Scheme. We will advocate that the ATS funding should be maintained and the scheme's intent and eligibility should be re-examined and re-designed.

We will argue that ATS eligibility is too narrow and has led to market distortion and competition inequity. It effectively paid the OE sector to compete against the aftermarket, which is nonsense. We want to make sure that any new initiatives coming from this Inquiry treat auto parts manufacturers equally, because both the aftermarket and the OE parts manufacturers make meaningful contributions to our economy.

With appropriate government policy, our energetic aftermarket will further expand innovation, manufacturing and exports, while continuing to employ – rather than waste – critical existing automotive capital and labour.

Maintaining the skills and technology

Australian aftermarket and OE parts manufacturers have successfully proven they can meet international quality standards. It is vital that we support Australian auto component producers as a method of retaining our skills in creating high quality manufactured products and delivering them on time in complex production environments.

These skills are required to continue growing our automotive aftermarket and to feed into other high technology industries.

For the inquiry terms of reference please email Lesley@aaaa.com.au.

LED Light Bar Regulation Changes

Due to an anomaly in the Australian Design Rule 13/00 there has been a number of States and Territories that have been unsure whether or not LED light bars are legal for use on Australian roads. Following significant AAAA lobbying, Queensland was the first State to change their regulation and allow legal use of these products, and we are now pleased to announce all other States and Territories have followed suit. Please go to <https://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/safety-and-road-rules/vehicle-safety/fog-and-driving-lights> to view VicRoads advice, and this same advice (regarding LED light bars) is now consistent nationally.

If you have any further questions, please contact the AAAA National Office on 03 9545 3333

Ozacom+ - Australian Auto Aftermarket Expo 2015 OFFICIAL Travel & Accommodation Provider

For all your travel and accommodation needs for the 2015 Australian Auto Aftermarket Expo, contact our official provider for this event, Ozacom+ toll free (from Australia) on 1800 814 611. There are so many hotel and apartment options around the Melbourne Exhibition Centre and Ozacom+ have negotiated some fantastic rates, all of which are within a 15 minute walking distance of the Centre.

NB: If you receive correspondence from another provider be aware it is not supported by the Expo. **We can confirm that Ozacom+ are the exclusive travel and accomodation provider for our event.**