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Vale – Keith Richardson

It is with great sadness that we must advise that Keith Richardson lost his brave fight with cancer and passed away in late January. Keith held a range of senior roles in his 27 year career with Kmart Tyre and Auto Service, most recently General Manager Merchandise & Marketing. Keith was a devoted family man, a talented and loyal member of the team and had a strong passion for our industry. Keith was also a terrific supporter of the AAAA and was an instrumental player in our Choice of Repairer campaign providing a range of technical and strategic advice and participating in many of the Ministerial meetings.

The AAAA National Council and staff send our thoughts and condolences to Keith's family, friends and all the Kmart Tyre and Auto Service team at this difficult time.

Vehicle Data Sharing in the Media

On Friday 29th January AAAA Executive Director Stuart Charity was interviewed by John Faine on his top rating morning radio program on ABC 774 on the topic of vehicle data sharing and the introduction of electronic logbooks.

To listen to the snippet from the podcast go to:
<http://www.aaa.com.au/data/Stuart%20Charity%20interview%20with%20John%20Faine.m4a>

It's Your Turn to Help the Choice of Repairer Campaign – Do You have 5 Minutes to Email Your MP? – We NEED You!

Go to <https://youtu.be/9TDIYW0Wxh0> to see why the Federal Government should Act!

In recent meetings, Federal Members of Parliament have commented on the value of hearing the stories from their own local automotive repairers about what is happening on a day to day basis including inconvenience for our customers, the waste of time, disruption to business and cost of not having access to data to diagnose and repair cars.

This cartoon and video clip has been designed for you to forward onto your Federal local of Member **with your own message attached**.

Whilst we have kept Federal Members advised of what's happening, it is vital for you to take some direct action by telling your many stories **directly to your local Federal Member of Parliament**.

A good starting point would be to simply look up the local MPs email address (contact us if you are not sure who that is) and drop them a line telling them of a recent event including the make and model of the car. Or you could do a quick calculation of how many hours a week is taken up by work arounds or chasing information from dealers or manufacturers and then multiplying it by 52 weeks.

It Is Important to keep your email short and to the point and make it personal, talk about your business, include the number of people you employ, if you have an apprentice and how many years you have been in business.

It is important that you send you letter by Monday 15th off Feb and would be ideal if you can send it off immediately to support the campaign. Go to <http://www.aaa.com.au/data/Repairers%20Draft%20Email%20to%20MP's.docx> for an example of an email.

Could you please send a copy to us, or drop us a quick email telling us that you have contacted your MP?

The **Voluntary Heads of Agreement for Data Sharing** is now over 12 months old and it's time to tell Government that we tried it their way and it's not working – we need a mandatory solution, the same as Europe and America. Nowhere in the world does a voluntary agreement work. The car companies are not going to voluntarily share information even though we are prepared to pay a fair price for the subscription service.

We are doing all that we can, but there is no substitute for a broad-base campaign. When you write to your local MP you are writing as a local constituent and an employer. If drafting an email is time consuming, then just give your local MPs office a call.

Any and all approaches would be highly valued. To the repairers that have already written to their local MPs, we thank you sincerely – it's already making a difference and more people doing this will make a bigger difference.

It's your turn to help, please don't leave it up to someone else - we are closer now than we have ever been – all the signs are looking good if we can harness some more voices, we can help tip this our way.

AAAA Networking Event Victoria

We invite you to join fellow AAAA members for an industry networking event on **Monday 15 February** at Bells Hotel in South Melbourne.

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

Lesley Yates, AAAA Government Relations & Advocacy Manager, will present Automotive Aftermarket & Government Regulation – a story of narrowly avoided fails, lemons, fiascos, and flops. In our industry, there is always a relevant government review, a regulation change, a major inquiry or a day-to-day decision that affects our businesses and our livelihood. We keep an eye on all of these, all the time – across every state and territory, and nationally. How is it that these regulatory processes go off the rails so often? What is it about our industry that leads to some of the most ill-informed and poorly-drafted regulations, and is this specific to our industry only? Lesley is going to share her top 5 list of regulatory fails – laws and regulations affecting our industry that you will not believe were about to be introduced before AAAA found out and circled the wagons.

For further information or to register your attendance please email admin@aaaa.com.au

\$30 Million in Grants Now Available to Manufacturers in Victoria and SA

Federal Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science Christopher Pyne has announced the opening of applications for a new grant round under the Next Generation Manufacturing Investment Programme.

The programme supports businesses that are investing in capital projects to establish or expand high value manufacturing operations in South Australia and Victoria. Activities that may be funded under the programme including purchasing (or constructing), installing and commissioning new machinery and equipment, as well as associated training and adaption or extension of premises to accommodate the equipment.

Eligible businesses are able to compete for grants between \$500,000 and \$2.5 million, to up to a third of their total

project costs. Applications to Round 2 of the programme are open from 29 January until Monday 18 April.

More information is available at business.gov.au/NextGen

More Australians aged 80+ drive than 18-24 year-olds

Australians aged 80-plus are now more likely to drive than 18-24 year-olds, the latest national data from Roy Morgan shows.

Over the past eight years, the proportion of Australians aged 80+ who get behind the wheel has steadily increased—while 18-24 year-olds have become less inclined to drive. For the first time, in 2015 the oldies surpassed the youngsters as the more likely group to drive: 69% of 80+ (up from 59% in 2007) compared with 68% of 18-24 (down from 72%).

Even working in from the bookends, all older groups are now more likely to drive than their younger counterparts: 75-79 year-olds are now more likely to drive than 25-29 year-olds (85% vs 78%), while both 65-69 (91%) and 70-74 year-olds (87%) have surpassed the 30-34 group (85%).

In 2007, driving incidence peaked at 93% of people aged 35-49; the peak is still 93%—but today it's among 50-64 year-olds. Australians aged 16 or 17 are also slightly less likely to drive than they were eight years ago (37%, down 1% point).

Please go to <http://www.roymorgan.com/findings/6645-australians-start-driving-older-finish-later-december-2015-201601280405> for further information.

Senator Muir meets with AAAA members in Warragul to discuss vehicle data sharing

Recently Australian Motoring Enthusiast Party Senator Ricky Muir met with a group of 25 representatives from AAAA member businesses in Warragul which provided the Senator with the opportunity to hear first-hand the issues surrounding the lack of access to the information and data from car manufacturers required to service and repair modern cars.

Senator Muir demonstrated a strong grasp of the issues at play and committed his full support to the AAAA's push for the Government to introduce a mandatory code of conduct for vehicle data sharing to ensure that Australia's 13.5 million car owners retain their preferred choice of repairer. We welcome Senator Muir's support to help resolve this critical competition policy issue and look forward to further engagement over the coming months with the Senator and other key Members of Parliament to restore a level playing field in our industry.

For more information please go to <http://www.aaaa.com.au/data/Final%20MUIR%20MEETS%20COUNTRY%20MECHANICS%20AT%20WARRAGUL.pdf>

AAAA vehicle dynamics test program leads to change in national regulations

Extensive testing conducted by the Australian Automotive Aftermarket Association (AAAA) in the United States earned Federal, State and Territory Government acceptance for modifications made under the owner certified section of the National Code of Practice covering alterations to a vehicle height.

The successful test regime on five popular vehicles using suspension kits from a range of Australian suppliers proved that minor modifications to vehicle height have no adverse impact on the operation of the Electronic Stability Control (ESC) unit.

AAAA adopted the same test used by all vehicle manufacturers and major component suppliers around the world to simulate vehicle dynamics for the development and testing of new chassis system components, engines, power trains, drivelines, suspension and vehicle electronic control systems.

Technical reports from the AAAA tests presented to Federal, State and Territory regulators showed the test vehicles all met Australian Design Rule (ADR) 35 requirements for ESC operation. Each modified vehicle had a 50mm – raised or lowered – modification to its suspension and was tested against an unmodified original vehicle.

AAAA Executive Director Stuart Charity said the industry program to dispel the notion that small changes to the ride height of a vehicle have a negative impact on ESC operation is a win for common sense. “Throughout this program, we worked closely with regulators nationally. Using ADRs as the performance benchmark, and using internationally recognised test procedures and testing facilities ensured complete transparency,” said Stuart Charity.

“As a result of this AAAA initiative, the National Code of Practice has been amended to remove reference to ESC testing requirements from Section LS of Vehicle Standards Bulletin (VSB) 14. We thank the Federal, State and Territory authorities for their input to this successful project.

“By securing a nationally approved self-certification process for minor vehicle modifications, we have eliminated the need for additional and redundant testing and cut the red tape burden on Australian businesses and vehicle owners.

“This is a great outcome for industries such as agriculture and mining that must modify vehicles to make them fit for purpose for special work duties. It is also more convenient and cost effective for private car owners who want to improve the off or on road capabilities of their vehicles,” said Stuart Charity.

Aftermarket displays due diligence

Stuart Charity said the modified vehicle ride height test program is a result of the AAAA commitment to due diligence in ensuring the engineering integrity of the

products sold by its members. “This test regime for ESC compliance was an AAAA member led initiative,” he said.

“To learn how these issues were being addressed in other countries, we engaged with a range of international experts. Among them was the Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA) in the USA, which has established a vehicle dynamics program led by their Vehicle Technology Vice President John Waraniak who was invited to Australia in 2014 to present to the Australian regulators.

“AAAA then negotiated with the regulators on the range of different vehicle types to be included in the test program. With a path forward identified, local aftermarket businesses contributed \$120,000 to fund the testing program with the balance of the cost of the testing provided by the AAAA.

“We tested four vehicles in the USA and one in Australia, all fitted with Australian aftermarket suspension components,” he said.

Globally recognised independent organisations were employed to conduct the tests. Link Engineering in the USA tested a 2013 Camry, 2014 Toyota Land Cruiser 200 Series, 2015 Jeep Wrangler and Chevrolet SS (Commodore). Bosch tested a Ford PX Ranger in Australia. The final report was compiled by another independent USA organisation, Advanced Controls Engineering Consultants.

The Camry and Chevrolet SS were lowered 50mm, while the Land Cruiser, Wrangler and Ranger were raised by 50mm. No modifications were made to the vehicles’ original equipment ESC systems.

Tested according to regulations

All vehicles were tested in two configurations – the base OEM version and a vehicle modified in accordance with the Australian owner certified requirements under the National Code of Practice for Light Vehicle Modification – Vehicle Service Bulletin 14.

All five modified vehicles:

- Easily passed the performance requirements of ADR 35.
- Demonstrated compatibility with the control authority of the OEM electronic stability control system.
- Worked in harmony with the OEM ESC system to prevent any rollover potential in the extreme conditions of the tests.
- Did not demonstrate any “nuisance activations” of the ESC system during any test manoeuvres.

In most cases, the performances of the modified vehicles were in the same range and axis as the OEM version. This indicated that the modified vehicles demonstrated no deviations in the intended handling characteristics of the vehicle.

In some extreme instances the modified vehicles were actually more compliant with ADR 35 requirements than the base vehicles. As expected, the ESC systems on the

raised vehicles engaged slightly earlier or more often and used slightly more brake pressure than the base models – due to their higher centre of gravity.

“However, in all cases the measurements recorded were well within the normal operating capabilities of the vehicles’ ESC systems and ADR 35 requirements,” said Stuart Charity.

“This study by independent testing authorities definitively demonstrates that a properly engineered kit for lowering or lifting vehicles by 50 mm will maintain compatibility with an OEM’s ESC system without tampering with the electronic controller.

“Such minor modifications meet the safety performance requirements of ADR 35. This AAAA member initiative now provides vehicle owners with the enhanced off or on road characteristics they want, while maintaining the original safety capabilities of their vehicles’ ESC system,” said Stuart Charity.

Exhibit on the Australian National Pavilion at Automechanika Frankfurt

For over 30 years, Automechanika Frankfurt has successfully brought together suppliers of automotive products and interested buyers. This truly international aftermarket event attracts over 135,000 trade visitors from 180 countries around the world. 2014 saw 4,600 exhibitors from 74 countries displaying the latest trends and developments in the automotive industry on over 305,000 square metres of exhibition space.

The AAAA is once again offering members the opportunity to exhibit as part of the Australian Pavilion at Automechanika Frankfurt to be held from 13 – 17 September, 2016 and with only a couple of stands left, now is the time to book your space to avoid disappointment.

For more information about this event and the Australian Pavilion please contact Michelle Vizzutti on 03 9545 3333 or email michelle@aaaa.com.au

Australian National Pavilion at Automechanika Dubai 2016

The AAAA are once again offering you the opportunity to exhibit as part of the Australian Pavilion at the 2016 Automechanika Dubai, which will be held from 8-10 May, 2016. Automechanika Dubai 2015 included over 1800 exhibitors from 59 countries and more than 30,000 visitors from 134 countries making this the primary aftermarket event for the Middle East and North Africa.

Dubai has become a central trade hub for the automotive industry in the Middle East and North Africa. It is now significant in serving the needs of fast growing markets throughout the Middle East, Central Asia, North and East Africa. The prevalence of Australian built vehicles throughout the region has greatly grown the profile of Australia as a quality manufacturing nation.

For over 10 years, the AAAA has assisted members interested in exhibiting in the Middle East and we will again in 2016. This will include bulk purchase of exhibition space and accommodation, pre-visit support, in-market functions and close liaison with Middle East based Australian Government Representatives.

For further information please email rob@aaaa.com.au.

Australian Auto Aftermarket Conference 2016

We have had a fantastic response to the AAAA Conference Sponsorship packages since their release. With only a few sponsor packages still available, we recommend that you respond quickly to these sponsorship opportunities to avoid disappointment.

We would like to express our sincere thanks the following sponsors for their support of this event:

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Details relating to the final speakers and structure of this one-day are to be released soon.

Editorial Deadline for the March Edition of the Australian Automotive Aftermarket Magazine

The March Edition of the Australian Automotive Aftermarket Magazine will focus on Brake & Clutch, Auto Electrical & Lighting, and Tools & Diagnostics.

This is an excellent an opportunity to promote your business to a highly targeted audience!

The ability to supply editorial to the Magazine for consideration is a free member benefit. To find out more, please contact Allan Edwards on 03 9372 9125. If you have any relevant new products, product updates, services, events or industry news please send 200-300 words in a Word or Text file, plus a picture by the 19th February 2016 to editor@aaaa.com.au.

For all editorial and advertising deadlines please download a copy of the 2016 Media Guide from www.aftermarket.com.au