

# MANDATORY DATA SHARING TO BECOME LAW

## In a landmark moment for the Australian automotive repair and service industry

It is with great pleasure that I share the news that the Australian Government will shortly introduce a mandatory data sharing law into Parliament. This is arguably one of the most significant moments in the long and proud history of the service and repair industry in this country.

The Australian Automotive Aftermarket Association (AAAA) alongside the independent service and repair industry has been fighting for this moment for over 10 years so to hear the words coming from the Assistant Treasurer's mouth was almost surreal.

The distinction of a 'law' versus a 'code' is important. The law will be Australia-wide and be binding on all car companies selling vehicles in Australia, eliminating any ambiguity by providing a clear set of rules that everyone must abide by. This legislation will ensure independent workshops have access to all of the vehicle service and repair information they need, at a fair price. This law will provide a level playing field in the sector and allow consumers to have their vehicle safely repaired by the repairer of their choice.

Ultimately, the law will ensure fair competition for small businesses and consumers.

This milestone is the culmination of the passion and hard work of a large group of people who believed in the cause and were prepared to go above and beyond to achieve this outcome. We also could not have done this without our members, large and small. They came to us with their concerns, put competitive rivalries aside and fought alongside us to have the law changed for their customers, their businesses and the wider industry.

Our Board members, current and past have provided the vision and determination to ensure the AAAA had the resources and clear direction to continue our fight and I thank every one of those board members for their contributions.

The announcement is also a huge moment for the team at the AAAA who have worked tirelessly to push for Government action to address this important competition issue.

The journey has been long and arduous. We have worked with MPs on all sides of politics and dealt with a revolving door of Ministers during this unprecedented period of political instability. We have personally met with over 75 Federal MPs, facilitated hundreds of workshop visits by MPs all around the country and had countless early morning and late-night discussions with Ministers and other industry stakeholders.

I'd like to personally thank the Assistant Treasurer Hon Michael Sukkar for his leadership on this issue and commitment to introduce a mandatory data sharing law that will benefit small businesses in the automotive service industry as well as every Australian car owner.

In addition to pushing for mandatory data sharing, our Choice of Repairer campaign has the objective of increasing community awareness around consumers' right to not only choose their repairer, but also know their new car warranty and servicing rights.

This has been an issue tackled industry wide and I would like to acknowledge automotive industry associations, Motor Trades Association of Australia (MTAA), Australian Automotive Dealer Association (AADA), Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce (VACC), Australian Automobile Association (AAA), and the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries (FCAI) for their contributions.

Although this is fantastic news, there is still work to be done. The wording of the law must reflect the intent of the law and ensure that car manufacturers are not able to wriggle though any loopholes that would prevent or restrict consumer choice and ultimately harm competition. This includes a fair pricing structure.



The timelines for the introduction of the legislation are not set, but what I can say is that we are confident of significant progress on an exposure draft by early next year and will be pushing as hard as we can from our end to have this law signed off and in place sooner rather than later.

Although this announcement on mandatory data sharing has stolen the spotlight, we have also recently held our 39th Annual General Meeting, announcing our Board for 2019 -20/21 which you can read more about on page 5 of this magazine.

Uncollected vehicles at mechanical workshops and outdated uncollected goods laws is another large industry issue receiving little attention, so please read our story on page 18 on what is sadly a common, frustrating and costly occurrence. We are also welcoming feedback from the industry.

I'd also like to acknowledge the overwhelmingly positive feedback we have received on our new AAAA logo – we are extremely happy with our fresh new look.

Finally, our members continue to report that the free AAAA Industry Legal Hotline (1300 369 703) and Employer Assist HR/IR Hotline (1300 735 306) are proving to be an invaluable service for those business, customer or employee issues that inevitably pop up from time to time. Simply quote your member number at the time of calling.

**As your industry body, we are here for you, so let us know how we can help your business or provide advice on broader industry issues by calling us on 03 9545 3333 or emailing [info@aaaa.com.au](mailto:info@aaaa.com.au)**



**GRAHAM SCUDAMORE-SMITH**  
Chairman

**STUART CHARITY**  
Chief Executive Officer