

# PLAYING OUR PART IN KEEPING AUSTRALIA MOVING

**We want to take this opportunity to congratulate all of our members on how you have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic and your efforts in keeping Australia's essential workers and services on the road, during this unprecedented health and economic crisis**

While working around the clock to advocate for the industry and provide members with critical and practical support and advice, the AAAA has been encouraged to see how the industry has quickly adapted to the changes thrust upon it.

Faced with a once in a century global pandemic, we have seen many of you quickly innovate and adapt; leading your staff, serving your customers, protecting your business, and upholding best practice health and safety standards.

Because of these efforts our industry remains open for business and you should all be proud of the role you are playing in keeping other industries and people moving.

Of course, it is stating the obvious to say that COVID-19 is having a big impact on customer volumes and revenue right across our industry. However we believe that much of this downturn in activity has been as a result of public confusion about what is and is not open and what you can and cannot do under the various restrictions imposed in each State and Territory.

Collectively we are hurting but it is not consistent across the country – workshops of the same size are equally likely to be booked out till the end of the month, or struggling to stay open. But everyone is affected in some way. It is impossible not to be.

To ensure the AAAA has a strong understanding on how hard this crisis has hit our industry, we have just completed a national survey. I can tell you that early results are that yes, it is having a big effect that will take some time to recover from – but people are remarkably optimistic about the recovery period. They are saying that in three to

six months they will be back to the same level as before this event occurred. To learn more, see pages 12-13 of this magazine.

And we have a great deal to be optimistic about. All the economic indicators that normally drive demand for aftermarket parts and services are pointing to a relatively rapid and sustained recovery once we are through the other side of this crisis.

For many of our industry's customers it may seem counter intuitive to be thinking about these matters when their cars are not being used as much as usual. However, people can only defer a service on their vehicle for so long, and vehicles sitting idle for long periods can produce their own set of risks.

The dramatic decline in kilometers travelled during March and April is starting to turn around as people get back to some level of normality in their lives, and this pent up demand is already starting to translate into increased workshop volumes.

Other factors are also likely to aid in the recovery. The combination of lower petrol prices and the need for continued social distancing will mean that many people will favour private cars over public transport for the foreseeable future. And in the medium to long term, airline travel and border restrictions will see more people going on driving holidays.

Further to this, two successive years of sharp declines in new car sales with no recovery in sight means that people are holding onto their older vehicles longer which will drive increased demand for our products and services into the future.

Here at the AAAA, our team remains committed to doing everything we can to support you as we navigate through these challenging times together, and help you ride the recovery phase. A real problem is that we are all being bombarded with information at a time when we are facing significant challenges in our professional and personal lives, so it is sometimes difficult to sort through all the noise.

To simplify this challenge, we have been working extremely hard to provide the tailored information, services and assistance that you need to make informed decisions. Our dedicated COVID-19 resource area for members



contains a huge range of information including webinar videos, fact sheets and information on Government Assistance programs, Fair Work Act obligations, mental health advice for employers and employees and marketing resources.

Our now regular industry-specific member webinars have also been incredibly popular and enable participants to receive useful and timely business information from industry experts and ask questions.

Our partnership with Industry Legal Group has also seen an unprecedented influx of calls and emails to both our Legal and Employer Assist hotlines and the ILG team have proven to be an incredibly valuable member benefit during this crisis. Members wishing to speak to them can contact ILG on 1300 735 306.

To access our AAAA COVID-19 resources, login to the AAAA Members Area and enter your login details. If you are not sure what these are, please email [admin@aaaa.com.au](mailto:admin@aaaa.com.au) and we will provide them to you. Once logged in click on 'Resources' and then 'COVID-19 Business Resources.'

Looking forward, we are starting to see some positive numbers when it comes to infection rates and we are also beginning to see some light at the end of the tunnel in the messaging from Governments. As every day passes, we get closer to the end of this crisis.

While it may seem a long way away now, we are optimistic our industry will bounce back strongly and quickly from this. So continue to stay positive and informed, and make sure you access our AAAA support services.



**MARK PEDDER**  
Chairman

**STUART CHARITY**  
Chief Executive Officer