

# LOOKING FORWARD AFTER A DEFINING YEAR

We've recently completed the Australian Automotive Aftermarket Association Annual Report for 2021/22 and presented the results at our AGM in late October

Looking back on financial Year 2021/22 allowed us to take stock of how far we have come as an industry, to appreciate the significant accomplishments of the AAAA, and to reflect on the transformative law that started a new era for the automotive aftermarket.

In many ways, FY21/22 was another challenging year, with Omicron variants and isolation rules impacting on staff availability and record floods occurring across New South Wales and Queensland.

Despite these challenges, we were proud to continue providing industry leadership and valued support to our members. We were also buoyed by the continued high consumer demand and optimism across the retail, service, repair and modification sectors throughout the year.

The centrepiece of our accomplishments was the delivery of the Motor Vehicle Information Scheme (MVIS) – a defining moment for the automotive industry.

The new law, which started on the 1st of July 2022, was the successful culmination of years of dedicated AAAA work championing mandatory data sharing on behalf of the industry. The game-changing law allows independent repairers access to all vehicle manufacturers' service and repair information at a fair price. The scheme is fundamental in sustaining the work of independent repairers and promotes fair and open competition while the law ensures consumers can have their vehicle safely maintained and repaired by the workshop of their choice.

Part of this incredible achievement was the creation of the Australian Automotive Service and Repair Authority (AASRA) to operationalise the law, and the creation of the AASRA Portal for independent repairers to access vehicle information. The AASRA Portal went live on the 1st of July 2022 and is available for all automotive technicians to join at <https://aasra.com.au>

Alongside our important MVIS work, we ramped up efforts leading the fight to address the unprecedented industry skills shortage, which included the launch of the ground-breaking Apprentice Survey. The nation-wide survey provided invaluable insights into the apprentice journey, has increased awareness of the issue and could help shape future government policy.

With the Government announcing their strategy on the Zero and Low Emission Vehicle (ZLEV) transition and knowing the aftermarket will be deeply involved in this future, we advocated for education pathways for the next generation of technicians and for training support for our current workforce.

Our advocacy took place across the country on a multitude of other industry issues. Countless

meetings, flights and online meetings with state and federal vehicle regulators, industry associations and other stakeholders allowed us to advocate for positive outcomes beneficial to the survival and growth of our member businesses.

The Australian Auto Aftermarket Expo, co-located with the Collision Repair Expo, is our premier industry event and made a welcome return in 2022 after being delayed a year due to the pandemic.

Despite challenges relating to the Formula 1 GP changing their dates resulting in a direct clash and uncertainty due to potential government restrictions, we are extremely proud of our team's ability to successfully run Australia's largest automotive Expo under trying circumstances. The event was applauded by visitors and exhibitors alike, and we received fantastic feedback about the quality and value of the event for all involved.

From a financial and membership position, the Association recovered ground previously lost due to pandemic impacts. We are proud to say that our membership retention rates remain at an all-time high level of 98 percent, and total membership numbers increased by nine percent up to 2,842 – the highest number on record. These positive indicators illustrate how much members value the AAAA for support, representation, advocacy and business services.

Our direct member services continued to serve and grow members' businesses including our highly valued Legal and HR hotlines, industry leading market research, the updated AAAA Car Parc Data Tool, and our free to industry Workshop Health Check.

The Auto Innovation Centre (AIC) continued to expand its offerings and now services dozens of aftermarket companies wanting to fast-track their product development. This AAAA led initiative has great upside potential for the AIC's continual growth given its unique, industry leading capability.

## Outlook

As we look forward, we will keep investing our time, effort and resources to better serve our members and our industry. With revenues bouncing back and membership levels stronger than ever we are channelling more resources towards our industry's greatest challenges – the Skills Shortage, and the exciting industry transition to ZLEV. We are also expanding our membership and administration teams to better support our growing membership base.

We are committed to visiting more members in more regions, and connecting more independent workshops and automotive aftermarket businesses



with the strengths and services of the AAAA. We have ambitious plans to grow our membership, because there is strength in numbers for advocacy and collaboration, and because we are determined to keep supporting and growing the industry.

We are excitedly preparing for Autocare 2023, taking place across the 9th and 10th of June in 2023 at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre. This convention is a not to be missed technology, skills and training event for workshop owners and managers, technicians and apprentices. Autocare 2023 will feature a one-stop exhibition of the latest products, services and tech, along with a comprehensive hands-on training program led by national and international experts.

With the worst of the pandemic impacts hopefully behind us for good we will use the foundations we have built and the lessons we have learned over the past year to push forward. Our goal remains to optimise the current and future automotive playing field for our members and our diverse, innovative and skilled aftermarket industry.

Our members are central to everything we do, and their unwavering support enables us to continue to shine the light on our incredible industry and fight for what is right for the aftermarket. Your continued membership and support is integral to our shared success. Together we can and do make a difference.



Stuart Charity  
Chief Executive Officer