

National Electric Vehicle Strategy Submission

A WHOLE-OF-LIFE APPROACH TO EV OWNERSHIP

SUPPORTING THE UPTAKE OF EVs



CONTENTS

Who we are	3
Independent repair and EVs	4
Supporting the adoption of EVs	5

The AAAA is a contributing signatory to a larger submission to the National Electric Vehicle Strategy as part of a collaboration between representatives of all sectors of the automotive industry.

This document is supplementary to the other submission, and focuses on the idiosyncrasies of the AAAA and the aftermarket sector of the automotive industry.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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WHO WE ARE

The Australian Automotive Aftermarket Association (AAAA) is the national industry association representing automotive parts manufacturers, replacement and service auto parts distributors, wholesalers, importers and retailers of automotive parts and accessories, tools and equipment, and providers of vehicle service, repair and modification services in Australia. Our industry supports car owners after the purchase of the car - keeping their vehicles safe, and providing products for modification to make vehicles fit for purpose, including trade and emergency vehicles. Everything that happens to the car after the initial purchase is part of the Australian automotive aftermarket sector. We also advise consumers on when their vehicle has reached the end of useful life and we provide advisory services on which car would be suitable for their next purchase. We often support consumers and fleets for lengthy periods of time - when you find a trusted service provider, you normally keep them.

4,000+



Representing over 4,000 businesses across all sectors of the Australian automotive aftermarket

Businesses of all sizes - from small family workshops and sole traders to national banner groups and multi-national corporations

40k



Our members employ over 40,000 Australians



Members located in rural, regional and metropolitan areas all across Australia

The independent aftermarket is a significant segment of the automotive industry and in most cases, parts supplied to the consumer through distribution channels alternative to the motor vehicle dealer networks are of an equivalent (or in many cases superior) quality, and are fit for the purpose intended. A significant number of AAAA members also produce automotive parts that are used in the original build of the vehicle, and products that are sold by new car dealerships as OEM parts.

The AAAA is a nominating organisation on Standards Australia committees covering a wide range of parts and accessories, tools and equipment and our member representatives are actively involved in the development of product quality standards. The AAAA and our member companies passionately defend the reputation and integrity of

the independent aftermarket and stand by our products and professionalism.

We have strong relationships with state and federal regulators and regularly disseminate information to members on relevant legislation and standards to assist them with their compliance obligations.



AUTOMOTIVE REPAIRERS COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

In November 2016, in response to demand from the independent automotive repair and service sector, the AAAA launched the Automotive Repairers Council of Australia (ARCA) as a specialist sub-council of the AAAA joining the Automotive Product Manufacturers and Exporters Council, 4WD Industry Council and

Performance Racing and Tuning Council.

ARCA has been established to open doors to increased automotive knowledge and business expertise, protect competition and choice in the market and ensure a strong and unified national voice to government on behalf of Australia's independent service and repair workshops. The Council operates across state borders to provide structure and much needed formal links to the rest of the automotive parts and accessories supply chain. The ARCA committee includes industry leaders drawn from independent workshops and major service and repair chains from all across Australia. ARCA has an active role in supporting members to be 'EV Ready', providing updated trend data on EV take up and the likely take up rates in Australia and providing a link to major providers of EV training in safety and proficiency.

INDEPENDENT REPAIR AND EVs

There are over 35,000 independent automotive service and repair workshops across Australia. Varying from small family businesses to national banner groups, these workshops are where Australians go for their regular servicing or when they experience an issue with their car.



Who Australians trust for car advice

Our research has shown that the first place Australians go for car advice is their local workshop. This puts the repair industry at the centre of the decision making process for buying their next car.

This makes independent technicians integral to Australia's EV journey. When customers ask "should I buy an EV?", the industry is building the skills and knowledge to provide quality advice with the objective of building confidence to advise customers on their next car choice.

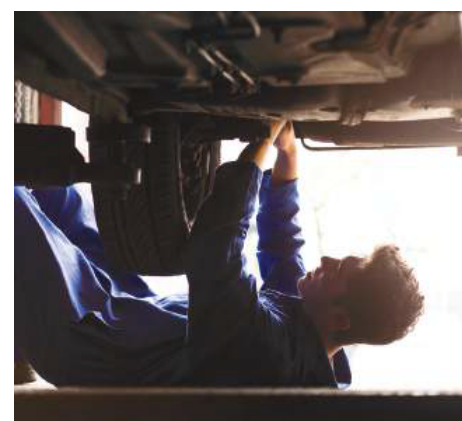
The myth of the invincible EV

It is common to hear that EVs will require significantly less servicing and repair than the current fleet, without the need to replace engine oils, filters and other common components.

Early indications show this is far from the truth. The increased weight of EVs compared to equivalent combustion vehicles will mean more checks and work on tyres and suspension systems. Battery systems are core components of EVs, and will require constant monitoring and optimisation to ensure that range and power are not compromised. Bingles will still happen, and components and systems will still need to be repaired and replaced.

The transition to EVs does not signal the end to service and repair as we know it, but rather a change in practices and priorities, and we view this as an opportunity for the industry to upskill and evolve.

AAA is at the forefront of the industry's evolution. We are developing and implementing a program to track and record the real world requirements of owning an EV across its life cycle. These reports will be shared with the industry to help them better prepare for working on EVs and providing quality advice to their customers.



SUPPORTING THE ADOPTION OF EVs

Supporting the independent service and repair sector is crucial to promoting EV uptake. AAAA welcomes the positive measures proposed in the National Electric Vehicle Strategy consultation paper to assist Australians in purchasing EVs, but it is our mission to ensure that the discussion about how these vehicles can be appropriately and effectively maintained and repaired is also part of the national dialogue. Supporting the incoming EV fleet across the full cycle of ownership is crucial to maintaining public confidence in purchasing EVs and promoting their uptake.

TRAINING

The independent repair and service industry is keen to upskill its workforce to prepare for working on EVs.

However, there is a lack of training opportunities available to technicians who wish to complete courses which certify them to safely and proficiently conduct this work. Waitlists are in the hundreds at most training institutions, and while private providers are entering the market to provide training, we are acutely aware that we need more places for technicians in these courses. Automotive technicians are ready to be trained in EV safety and proficiency, and are already taking the time to find and sign up to training courses. However, the training sector is unable to meet demand.

We expect to see exponential growth in the demand for training as EVs increase their share of the Australian fleet. It is crucial that we work together to act now to expand training opportunities and incentivise industry participation as early as possible, ensuring the industry is prepared before the need for repair outstrips availability. A lack of suitable trainers is part of the issue that is restricting providers' ability to generate places, so investment in TAFE providers to find and employ suitable trainers may be the key to expanding supply.

RECOMMENDATION

Invest in TAFE and private providers to increase capacity for delivering EV courses and hire suitable trainers.

EV training courses can also be optimised to decrease the time

component required in person at the facility, while maintaining proficiency standards. These courses are generally conducted in person, but theory elements can be delivered online before the in person components at the facility. This will free up training resources which are a factor in restricting supply.

RECOMMENDATION

Investigate the possibility of amending and adapting EV courses to embrace a mix of online learning and practical training in order to decrease the training time required in the workshop, and with the ultimate goal of increasing capacity at training facilities.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND EQUIPMENT

Preparing workshops for working on EVs requires more than training technicians. Safely working on EVs requires specialised equipment, such as charging infrastructure, insulated tools and workshop signage. Many workshops will choose to dedicate one vehicle bay to EVs when demand increases, to ensure that the appropriate tools and safety equipment are appropriately set up, and signage can be displayed which alerts colleagues and customers when a technician is working on high voltage components. It is our view that workshops should be examining the option to do that right now. The demand is not there yet, but if workshops start to invest in this capacity it sends a clear message to the motoring public that their trusted mechanic is gearing up for EV and is confident that they will see EVs in

sufficient numbers to justify today's investment.

RECOMMENDATION

Expand industry grants to include the purchase of specialised EV equipment by workshops as eligible activities, and develop new programs targeted to promoting workshops upgrades and preparedness for EVs. We recommend limiting the time period in these grants to 2-3 years to ensure they promote and reward early uptake and preparation.

The network of independent workshops also provides a significant opportunity to support the expansion of charging infrastructure across Australia. By supporting the purchase and installation of this equipment at workshops, we can ensure that charging stations are available for public use, especially in metropolitan areas where space is limited, while also supporting these workshops in keeping their customers' vehicles charged. Generally auto service and repair workshops have a significant forecourt for customers to drop off and pick up vehicles. This forecourt may be underutilised outside working hours, and may provide a good opportunity to expand charging options, particularly in inner-city areas where apartments are not ready to install charging equipment.

RECOMMENDATION

Examine options to support automotive service and repair businesses in installing charging stations in publicly accessible forecourts to increase the availability of charging infrastructure.

