

WE DON'T HAVE TO WAIT FOR ZLEVS TO BE KIND TO THE ENVIRONMENT

It is clear that the Australian car-parc is transitioning to include more vehicles that are zero and low emission

Electric and hybrid vehicles are central to this transition, and hydrogen and sustainable fuel powered ICE vehicles are also prominent in discussions about our evolving car-parc.

There are many consumer, manufacturer and regulatory dynamics impacting the rate of growth of the ZLEV population in Australia, but the fundamental driver of this transition is an environmental one. We want and need to reduce automotive industry carbon emissions across the country.

The ZLEV transition will undoubtedly play a leading role in efforts to reduce carbon emissions. However, this transition is not the only way to reduce emissions and we can all play our part to positively impact what the future looks like. The automotive aftermarket industry consists of 50,000+ businesses, employs over 300,000 people and is worth \$25B annually to the economy. An industry as large as ours has a responsibility, and a great opportunity to make an important impact on carbon emissions alongside the ZLEV transition.

Why should we be investing in measures to reduce our carbon emissions? The environmental benefits for our future are obviously the primary motivation. Further to this, doing the right thing by the environment shows that our industry is proactive and committed to a sustainable future, which makes it more attractive for present and future staff and business partners. Direct business benefits of investing in sustainability measures can include reduced running costs, a better working environment for staff and customer retention and growth. Consumers are increasingly concerned about the environment and want to reduce their own impact. They are making purchase decisions based on environmental considerations.

Whether you are a small family-owned workshop or multi-national corporation, analysing and improving your environmental footprint should and can be an ongoing process. For many of our members' businesses this is not a new practice. They have actively pursued ways to reduce their carbon footprint for years. In fact, AAAA members are winning awards for their innovative environmentally friendly solutions. For further inspiration look no further than the regular stories in this magazine about these fantastic initiatives.

Even if you haven't had the time, money or know-how to make changes, it is important to acknowledge that there are 'low hanging fruit' steps that can be taken. Some of the following ideas could help drive your sustainability efforts.

Energy usage and associated costs should be an area of focus for all businesses, small and large. Given that electricity prices are set to increase significantly over the coming years according to government predictions, if you have not already, now may be a good time to invest in electricity saving measures. Changing existing lighting to LED technology and examining how you can minimise your electricity use are great first steps. Other steps such as having heating/cooling equipment that has thermostat control and upgrading old work equipment and machinery can also reduce power usage. Last but certainly not least, installing solar power can be a transformational improvement to your business' energy usage, depending on your circumstances.

Packaging is a huge and for the most part unavoidable aspect of parts production, distribution and retailing businesses. The good news is packaging processes and materials continue to improve and there are cost efficient, eco-friendly alternatives to traditional packaging solutions.

Recycling should be another avenue that businesses utilise. Recycling materials, packaging, workshop lubricants, used parts and office equipment are just some of the recycling opportunities for businesses to consider. Waste audits and management plans are a good way to tackle recycling and resources online can help you through these processes.

Workshops can continue to maximise the efficiency of the current ICE powered car-parc through great servicing practices and using high quality parts which will help move the carbon emission needle in the right direction. Encouraging customers to bring in their car for a service to ensure it is operating efficiently to reduce carbon emissions and increase fuel economy can be an effective marketing message. In addition, offering free advice to customers about driving efficiently and keeping the correct tyre pressures is another technique to stay in touch and benefit customers and the environment.

Even if the changes your business makes on the environmental side are modest, the power of us all collectively making changes will yield a significant positive outcome for our future. I look forward to seeing further inroads being made by our industry on this important issue. The AAAA will continue to support, offer advice and advocate at government level to ensure the aftermarket can maximise its ability to reduce its carbon footprint, alongside the ZLEV transition.



Autocare

The topic of running an environmentally friendly business will feature in the education program at Autocare 2023. Autocare Convention is Australia's largest dedicated automotive skills and training event, taking place across the 9th and 10th of June 2023 and you are invited. Autocare was designed to train workshop technicians and workshop managers and owners on the latest technical information and business management practices for the future. We will have further announcements to make on the exciting education program shortly. Our sponsorship and exhibitor places are already filling fast, so please contact us if you wish to see your brand 'up in lights' with our exhibitor packages via cameron@aaaa.com.au or 03 9545 3333.

Finally, with the Christmas season approaching, I hope you have enjoyed reading our magazine this year. I feel it has stepped up even further in the quality and variety of content it provides our readers, month in, month out, so thank you to our magazine team for their efforts.

I hope everyone has a smooth and productive lead into Christmas and you enjoy a break to recharge with friends and family. I look forward to a prosperous and successful 2023 for all.



Stuart Charity
Chief Executive Officer