

BUILDING FOUNDATIONS, STRENGTH AND FOCUS FOR THE FUTURE

I've just returned from the whirlwind that is the SEMA and AAPEX shows in Las Vegas, where AAAA Director of Government Relations Lesley Yates and I had an incredibly impactful week

These events draw representatives from aftermarket associations worldwide, making our time in Vegas invaluable for connecting, exchanging insights on key issues, and sharing our experience in creating a world-first mandatory data sharing law.

I also had the privilege of speaking at the National Automotive Service Task Force (NASTF) General Meeting and thoroughly enjoyed the "Aussies in Vegas" event hosted by the AAAA, an informal networking evening that brought together Australian companies and industry representatives.

Vital groundwork at these events enhances our connections, improves our service offering and further focuses our advocacy efforts into the future.

This US trip wraps up my international travel and major events for the year, which feels like it has flown by. Reflecting on 2024, I am reminded of our amazing AAAA Annual General Meeting a few weeks ago at the Pullman Hotel Sydney Airport.

The evening was filled with optimism, as we celebrated our collective achievements and looked ahead to new opportunities. A special thanks to our guest Richard Hopkins, whose stories from Formula 1, Supercars, and the Sunswift Racing EV Project reminded us of the innovation and resilience at the core of our industry.

The AGM was a powerful barometer for the industry, showcasing both our strength and momentum. As we look forward, this unity and strength will be vital as we tackle critical issues including ADAS, Vehicle Standards, Fair and Open Competition, the skills shortage, the EV transition, and more recently, a pressing issue currently affecting our skilled workshop technicians in Queensland.

The AAAA has forcefully and publically raised concerns about the Queensland Department of

Transport and Main Roads' (TMR) recent decision to implement mandatory training for Approved Inspection Station (AIS) scheme members.

The mandatory training directive is inappropriate and ineffective, introduced without industry consultation, and rolled out during Queensland's caretaker period without a clear cost/benefit analysis. This is unacceptable. While subsidised training is generally welcomed, the rushed timeline and mandatory nature are ill-suited to most workshops.

These hastily introduced requirements have the potential to drive some of our most professional and competent businesses out of the program, while operators who exploit the system can still complete a training session and continue as before. This approach risks eroding trust in a system designed to enhance road safety.

There is, however, a path forward. We are in discussions with the Department and new Minister and will continue to advocate for genuine consultation and an evidence-based approach. Our goal remains clear: to ensure road safety for all Queenslanders while championing policies that support and strengthen our industry – not hinder it.

Speaking of strengthening our industry, I am excited to announce Autocare 2025, Australia's premier training-led event for technicians and business owners.

This event will feature top local and international experts and offer invaluable training across a wide range of workshop management and technical topics. In addition, Autocare 2025 will host a bustling trade show, providing unmatched networking opportunities for all attendees.

Nowhere else will you have the chance to experience such a comprehensive training event, learning from the best in the business while covering all the key topics that matter most to your success.



Mark your calendars for June 20–21, 2025, in Brisbane. This is one industry event you won't want to miss – you can learn more on page 6 and book tickets at www.autocare.org.au

Finally, I want to extend my sincere thanks to all of our members for your unwavering support throughout the year. Your commitment is what keeps us moving forward.

As we approach the holiday season, I hope you all enjoy a well-deserved, safe, and relaxing Christmas and New Year break. Here's to a successful 2025 – I look forward to what we will accomplish together in the year ahead.



Stuart Charity
Chief Executive Officer