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Call for policy action after feebates chop

Used-imports industry quick to outline key areas of concern to government and make suggestions for better transport future

The Imported Motor Vehicle Industry Association (VIA) is calling on the government to create demand incentives for consumers to switch to lower-emissions vehicles following the axeing of the clean car discount (CCD).

It has outlined a number of concerns around the clean-car programme to the National-led coalition and is hoping to meet with Simeon Brown, Minister of Transport, for talks early this year.

Besides looking at light vehicles coming into the country, VIA is keen to see the government put a greater focus on policies to encourage a refresh of the existing light fleet.

The association's message is backed up by a briefing paper sent to Brown last month that details a range of ideas for politicians and the industry to explore to help address issues such as reducing carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions from transport.

VIA notes it wasn't opposed to removing the CCD, which ended on December 31, but says other measures different from the feebates scheme need considering to stimulate purchases of low and zero-emissions vehicles.

Greig Epps, chief executive, told Autofile: "We have to ask how we can encourage people to move older vehicles out of the fleet and get them into something more fuel efficient, potentially a hybrid, and help move us towards that goal of lower carbon."

VIA's report also suggests putting more emphasis on influencing consumer behaviour at the point of purchasing fossil fuels, and allowing clean car standard (CCS) credits to be traded between "new" and "used" credit account holders at a ratio of one-to-two.

Another topic the association wants to raise with Brown is the looming changes to exhaust-emissions standards that will see used imports being harmonised with the new-vehicle sector.

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VIA wants to talk with the government about its plans for EV infrastructure

GUEST EDITORIAL

'Oh, the places you will go' – Dr Seuss

Brian McCutcheon reflects on Autofile's rich heritage as he retires as publisher

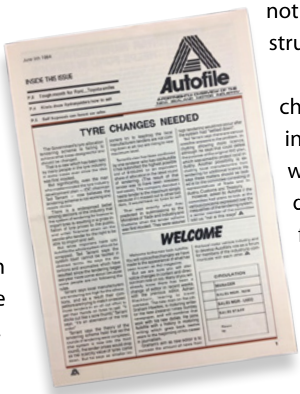
BRIAN McCUTCHEON
Publisher, Autofile

If you had asked the 15-year-old me, as I started my plumbing apprenticeship in 1971, what I'd finish up doing immediately before retiring, I'm not sure I would have replied "being involved in a car industry magazine".

But as Dr Seuss said: "You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose."

Well, I ended up here and I'm pleased I did.

As I finish "active duties" as publisher of Autofile, conversations with industry folk have reminded me of its earlier days so I thought of penning this brief history of the magazine, which I'm proud of.



Autofile's first issue – June 5, 1984

The first issue of Autofile came out in June 1984. It was a photocopied subscriber publication with a checklist on the front for the manager, sales manager – new, sales manager – used and sales staff to tick after reading it. (For the five years before this, it was called AID magazine, which stood for Auto Industry Data.)

When I was introduced to Autofile in February 2010, it was weekly and cost $310 including GST per year to subscribe to and the publication was for sale.

Dave McKewen, a Dunedin businessman, approached me to see if I'd be interested in looking at this "opportunity". A few weeks later, we formed 4 Media Ltd and bought Autofile from Trade Media Ltd, effective on April 1, 2010.

It was just after the global financial crisis. Astute timing has never been a strong suit of mine. Dave was a director until I bought his shares in early 2013.

During the sale process, I trawled though countless back issues. Autofile had, at times, been well-respected and an industry asset.

In 2010, however, it was struggling so its appeal to us was its history and future opportunities, not its format and structure.

Our job was to change it to reflect the industry it served and we started with its design. The "glossy" front page became more news-like with lead stories starting there. The masthead and logos were refreshed, and editorial boundaries set.

Essentially, we wanted to remove any "ego" it might have and get back to basics with in-depth articles and statistics to help dealers understand the market.

In our view, Autofile belonged to the industry and needed to reflect that. It shouldn't be about the writers or owners, so there would be no bylines or photos except on editorials. There were

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From 2010 – the March 5 and May 13 front pages

experts happy to share their views, so we used them.

All this was only possible with the support of advertisers and people who recognised trade publications had important roles to play. In short, we needed good copy and money to run the business.

We hired new staff. Stian Overdahl was Autofile's first editor under 4 Media. His experience was editing the University of Auckland's student magazine Craccum, not exactly the automotive industry. But he was intelligent, a good learner and quickly won people's trust.

Adrian Payne joined us as designer and remains with Autofile today. His skills and experience in the sector are second to none. Having that great eye and consistency has been a real strength.

I believe our look and feel is the best around, and reflects the industry we're in.

Stian left in March 2012 and Darren Risby joined us two months later. Still with Autofile, he's the steady hand on the tiller, an experienced editor and consummate professional.

He's ably supported by Matthew Lowe and Sue Fox, who have been with Autofile for four and eight years-plus, respectively.

CHANGES DOWN THE LINE

On May 9, 2010, the first issue of Autofile was published under our new management. It was free to subscribe to. The lead stories that week were on the emissions trading scheme and uncertainty over new finance legislation, familiar topics today.

We only produced a couple of weekly magazines before going twice monthly with a single issue in December and January.

In April 2016, we changed to monthly as the magazine is today.

Aside from keeping Autofile true to its core role, we've had some changes and took on or started some interesting projects.

We launched a modern website in October 2013 after what seemed like an eternity in development. This was followed by Insight to inform subscribers of breaking news and provide a regular update of stories online. This e-newsletter now has more than 2,400 subscribers and a huge open rate.

From the Rising Sun to the Long White Cloud was published in October 2014 by 4 Media Ltd, owner of Autofile, for the IMVIA's 25th anniversary

Dealer Directory came up for sale in 2013. After buying it, it was put on ice until we had resources to clean up the data and get it ready for market. Its first edition under 4 Media ownership was in February 2015. It continued as twice yearly before becoming annual from 2019.

In early 2014, we were approached by some founding members of the used-imports industry about writing a book on the sector's history.

Penned by Jackie Russell, the design, editing and publishing were managed by 4 Media. "From the Rising Sun to the Long White Cloud" was released in October 2014 to coincide with a function to celebrate 25 years of the IMVIA.

At the start of the 2017/18 financial year, Darren (Dazzz) Wiltshire purchased half the shares in 4 Media. He had been a client of Autofile for some time as head of motors at Trade Me.

When he was looking for a change in late-2016, conversations ended with us being equal partners from April 2017. Dazzz being an astute businessman and great with technology also allowed for an exit strategy for me over time. That time is now.

THE BIGGER PICTURE

The great thing about producing a trade magazine is witnessing everything important to that industry, such as changes to legislation that influence how dealers manage their businesses and what's happening in supply countries and en route here.

Things can come from left field – the likes of biosecurity incursions, airbag recalls, vehicle tampering and major events at home and overseas, such as earthquakes and cyclones.

The market generally sorts itself out. There are always adjustments along the way that some survive and some don't. Others thrive in them.

Our industry is filled with innovative people who will find a way to maximise an opportunity, so business will go on.

Thanks to all those whose support I am eternally grateful for. I will remain interested in New Zealand's automotive industry and will keep in touch through the great relationships I've made and as a subscriber of Autofile.

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Its briefing, which provides a vision for the future of transport in New Zealand looking out to 2030 and beyond, says the used-imports industry may be ready for Euro 7, or its equivalent standards, before new cars.

Also on the agenda is a call to introduce road-user charges (RUC) for all light vehicles with weight-based levy adjustments so more is paid for heavier vehicles to reflect road usage.

VIA describes charges for electric vehicles (EVs) in 2024 as a "good first step towards a broader RUC regime".

Making the fleet lighter, known as "lightweighting", is highlighted to enhance environmental sustainability through fuel efficiency, reduced emissions and a reduction in harm when accidents happen.

The association points out that internationally up to an eight per cent reduction in emissions is achievable on the back of a 20 per cent drop in average vehicle mass.

Epps explains the used-imports industry can help in all areas highlighted in its briefing document by "providing vehicles with smaller, more efficient engines, more hybrids becoming available and supplying lighter cars that aren't doing as much damage either to the road to other users or in collisions".

> We're showing how the future will still have cars and our sector will be playing its part
> – Greig Epps

If the government wants to reduce vehicle kilometres travelled (VKT), then it will also need to make investments in providing more public transport and supporting other active modes.

"We don't see those things as a threat to the industry because they're about giving people choice," says Epps.

"We're showing how the future will still have cars and our sector will be in there playing its part, especially in that affordable segment, by helping everyday Kiwis have a vehicle that contributes to reducing emissions but also allows them to get the things done every day that they need to."

The through line of the report is there will always be a need for private vehicles, even if people don't use them as much, because public transport won't cater to every need and not everything can be done with an e-cycle or on foot.

The vision for the future of transport does, however, rely on consumer behaviour change and government policy action.

VIA proposes continued efforts to replace models powered by internal combustion engines (ICEs) with EVs, but warns there are risks if other areas aren't properly addressed.

"While some have been able to access EVs – despite the likely ongoing cost and supply issues – the lack of policies and focus on infrastructure for electrification may lead to rolling brown-outs in some areas, which in turn has made EVs potentially undependable," states its briefing.

That message comes despite National committing to create a nationwide network of 10,000 public EV chargers by 2030.

Epps says the document, entitled VIA: New Zealand's Transport Future, aims to paint a picture of what the future could look like and put forward policies it thinks are needed to achieve that picture.

It tackles the goals of reducing the harm caused by the transport system while maximising sustainability, fair-market competition and diversity of transport modes.

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"The government has got a big work programme ahead of it but we've got a lot of areas we think need to be worked on as well, so this briefing is a way of getting those topics and suggestions in front of ministers," Epps explains.

VIA was eager for Brown and his colleagues to have the document as soon as possible for when the three coalition parties – National, Act and NZ First – make policy plans for the longer term.

"They have made their 100-day plan and will now be looking at what they do next. That's where we want to be – starting to have conversations and getting in there saying here are some ideas and this is what we want to talk about.

"There are also things in the 100-day plan we want to talk about such as rolling out EV infrastructure.

"I'm certain other associations will be looking to have a similar conversation and we'd welcome a conversation with the minister either as a group or individually."

VIA's report provides a vision for the future of transport to 2030 and beyond

When it comes to choosing types of transport, VIA's policy ideas are aimed at influencing demand and supply. They may also impact what types of new and used models are imported or provide incentives that affect sticker prices.

It is lobbying for new safety standards in a phased approach that considers supply, affordability and efficacy, such as looking at mandating lane-keep functions or similar systems.

VIA also recommends a whole-of-fleet management approach that takes a harm-based view of safety and progresses decarbonisation, noting any decisions must consider the types of transport New Zealand chooses, the environment in which Kiwis travel and the market.

It urges the government to look at shifting from the conventional occupant protection safety-rating system for vehicles to one that's harm-based, and considers emissions and potential harm from crashes.

On top of this, VIA says the government must deal with the existing fleet through retrofitting low-carbon technologies or scrapping older ICEs and should support shared-mobility options to cut VKT.

The association wants ministers to put some focus on parallel imports and says they need to be redefined under NZTA regulations, as well as the criteria for defining if a vehicle is new, like new or used. A shift would promote fair competition, eliminate monopolistic advantages and safeguard consumer rights, it says.

Consumers have a right to repair or modify their car, states the briefing. This requires fair access for independent repairers to technical documents available in New Zealand and no entity should be able to use its market position to prevent competition in this space.

INDUSTRY DISRUPTION

Epps acknowledges some of the policies in the association's briefing may result in disrupting parts of the industry, forcing dealers and other business owners to look at how they operate.

They will have to decide whether they can continue to function with the types of vehicles that need to be brought in, be it through government regulations or consumers' changing demands.

"For those who want to stay in the automotive space, they may have to think about what else can they look at, such as different models, maybe bringing in more micro-mobility vehicles or shifting to other areas like battery reconditioning or car conversions.

"Change also presents an opportunity for our members, who are natural businesspeople and entrepreneurs. We're fighting to ensure the industry is sustainable but sustainable in a way that adapts to vehicle needs of the future."

A potential concern around future government policies affecting the industry is the coalition's desire to slash staff numbers across the public service.

Epps says: "We've had a few years of lots of rapid change. The biggest complaint from industry has been not being talked to early enough and not being given enough time to provide feedback.

"I feel there's a growing desire among many officials to ensure conversations are had more often and are more productive.

"However, one area of uncertainty for us is the coalition government wanting to reduce the costs of government and looking at downsizing various departments.

"That may impact the Ministry of Transport and the NZTA, which may create issues of not having the people there to talk to as much or policies not being driven forward because there aren't enough resources.

"However, I'm optimistic we will be able to maintain good connections with those departments once the government has run its rule over the public sector."

Warning over clean-car shift

Drive Electric warns any weakening of the clean car standard (CCS) in addition to abolishing the clean car discount (CCD) could mean between 100,000 and 350,000 fewer electric vehicles on our roads by 2030.

It says such action would also risk increasing carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions by 900-3,000 kilotonnes, and may push up economic costs by between $900 million and $3.5 billion.

Kirsten Corson, who chairs the lobby group's board, says research it has published shows it's clear New Zealand needs an alternative form of incentive for consumers to buy electric cars.

"A new ICE [internal combustion engine] vehicle bought today will stay on our roads for 20 years consuming costly oil and releasing emissions," she explains.

"Without EV incentives, the carbon price will need to be higher to hit New Zealand's emissions targets. This increases costs to households in terms of energy bills, and could result in more farms being converted to forestry to offset emissions."

Drive Electric believes incentives work, are a comparatively cost-effective way to cut transport emissions and can be removed when EVs reach price parity with ICEs.

This view is backed up by the Climate Change Commission in its consultation draft advice on New Zealand's second emissions reduction plan (ERP) for 2026-30.

It states: "Continued policy support is essential to encourage the purchase of new EVs at the pace needed to achieve the second and third emissions budgets."

Drive Electric stresses the new government could have considered different options, such as adjustments to the CCD to create a fiscally neutral scheme. These included the staged withdrawal of discounts, cutting rebates, tightening eligibility and exempting certain fee-attracting vehicles, such as utes.

It says future options include removing fringe-benefit tax on EVs and accelerating depreciation rates for fleets. Businesses buy 50-60 per cent of new vehicles – and 60 per cent of new EVs – and usually only keep them in their fleets for two to five years.

We're going to need to accelerate demand for EVs to take full advantage of electrification

– Kirsten Corson, Drive Electric

"The government wants to electrify New Zealand and intends to invest in public charging," says Corson. "We're also going to need to accelerate demand for EVs to take full economic advantage of electrification.

"We are working with industry on solutions to EV incentives and look forward to discussing these with the government."

Drive Electric says if the CCS remains in its current form following the CCD being scrapped on December 31, depending on the responses from car importers there could be at least 100,000 fewer EVs on the road by 2030.

Scrapping the standard in addition to the feebate scheme could result in as many as 350,000 fewer EVs being on our roads by 2030, it contends.

SCRAPPED IN ONE DAY

The government passed legislation repealing the CCD from January 1 after an amendment bill raced through parliament. It was introduced on December 12 before passing its three readings the next day.

Simeon Brown, Minister of Transport, told the house: "Many drivers who need utes for work can't avoid charges under the scheme as there are few viable alternatives that meet their needs.

"The scheme was supposed to be fiscally neutral with charges covering rebates and administration costs. However, more has been paid out in rebates than received. This is only set to get worse.

"We will deliver a comprehensive, nationwide network of 10,000 public EV chargers by 2030, while considering robust cost-benefit analysis."

Cameron Luxton, Act's transport spokesperson, claimed the scheme wouldn't have cut New Zealand's overall emissions because those from transport are covered by the emissions trading scheme (ETS).

"Incentives to switch from petrol ▶

or diesel to electric are already in place at the pump through ETS levies, currently around 16 cents on a litre of petrol," he said.

The Greens labelled the scheme's scrapping as "an act of climate vandalism". Julie Anne Genter, transport spokesperson, added: "The CCD is the most effective climate policy implemented by any government in New Zealand.

"It prevented two megatonnes of climate pollution entering the atmosphere, led to cleaner air for people to breathe and saved people thousands of dollars on fuel."

Genter highlighted that 60 per cent of all new cars sold in August were electric or hybrid.

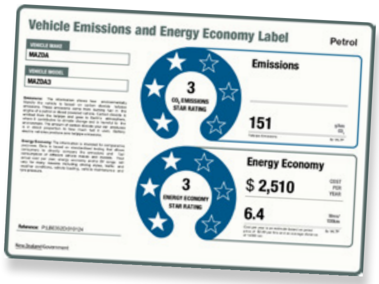
Tangi Utikere, Labour's transport spokesman, said the government "ramming" the repeal of the feebate scheme through parliament under urgency denied Kiwis the chance to have their say about how it might affect them.

A regulatory impact statement on the CCD was prepared by the Ministry of Transport (MoT) in case it was required by the incoming government, which had committed to ending the scheme. It sought to "inform that decision", say officials.

That said, the document wasn't lodged with a paper considered by cabinet on December 4 because the latter decided to suspend requiring such statements on decisions relating to the coalition's "100-day plan" solely involving the repeal of legislation.

The ministry's statement was finalised on November 30 and the CCD's abolition gained royal assent on December 13. A redacted version was then "proactively released" on the MoT's website on December 22.

The report states the scheme's objective was to speed up the shift to a low-emissions light fleet at a faster rate than just through market forces and this was being achieved with "EV and hybrid uptake now several years ahead of expectation". Challenges would "likely intensify" the longer it



Car dealers must now be using the new blue VEEELs on stock for sale

was in place with one being its cost. However, the scheme was "intended to be fiscally neutral to the crown over 10 years", with charges covering rebates and the policy's implementation and admin costs.

"If EV uptake subsequently reduces, there will be a strong case for future initiatives to be developed," says the MoT report.

Now the CCD has been binned, it adds the government "will need to ensure alternative policies to reduce transport CO2 emissions are created to meet New Zealand's emissions reduction commitments".

LABELS ON STOCK

Vehicle emissions and energy economy labels (VEEELs) and information on stock offered for sale – on yards and online – had to be updated from January 1.

It continues with a familiar design with CCD information deleted. The label's neutral blue colour previously indicated when no fee nor rebate applied. It can still be printed in greyscale.

Given the new rules' short timeframe, the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority "will take a fair and balanced approach in ensuring labelling requirements are met", advises the Imported Motor Vehicle Industry Association.

The NZTA says no exceptions will be made for rebates claimed after December 31. If a consumer bought a car but didn't register it until January, no fee will be collected.

Corrections to CCD applications lodged after the deadline are allowed until February 1, but aren't automatic. Incorrect registrations completed in December needing to be corrected this year are being assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Changing times for industry

The clean-car policies and an overhaul of exhaust-emissions legislation were among the main items on the automotive industry's agenda in 2023.

The introduction of the clean car standard (CCS) and a revamp of the clean car discount (CCD) created disruption for businesses, while wild weather early in the year led to thousands of cars being scrapped.

And there were also changes at the top for key industry associations with new chief executives appointed at the Imported Motor Vehicle Industry Association (VIA), Motor Industry Association (MIA) and Motor Trade Association (MTA).

JANUARY

CLEAN-CAR RULES

The CCS came into force at the start of the year, but challenges for officials to get everything in place for its roll-out meant penalty payments for high emitters didn't need to be made until June 2023. The CCS became liable when imports were processed – unlike the CCD, imposed at first registration.

New-vehicle distributors and franchised networks were counting the cost of systems to oversee the CCS not being completed on time. Delays by Waka Kotahi's development team meant the transport agency's online portal wasn't completely ready by January 1. As a result, rather than being an automatic process, manual checks were still required to ensure vehicle identification numbers were picked up by the system once the "pre-delivery in" section for an import was completed.

Less supply and more demand for vehicles at auctions in Japan were driving up prices of most used cars, but a logistics boss warned the economic situation at home was of greater concern. Ken Quigley, managing director of Jacanna Customs & Freight, said rising interest rates in New Zealand and the threat of recession looked set to dampen the automotive market and impact supply-chain businesses.

A dealer called for disability vehicles to be exempted from the CCS amid fears people would otherwise have to resort to buying older and higher-emitting models. Rod Milner, managing director of Milner Mobility in Auckland, said new and used mobility vehicles for wheelchair users had previously been spared from most charges incurred through legislation, including the feebate scheme.

FEBRUARY

FLOOD DAMAGE

Massive clear-up operations were needed at some dealerships after record deluges in Auckland damaged cars and showrooms. Archibald & Shorter North Shore said second-hand vehicles at its Wairau Valley site were affected by the extreme weather on January 27, but no new cars were damaged. Other affected businesses included Tristram MG, where vehicles got caught up in the floods, while water entered Continental Cars BMW's premises and the showroom was "done for".

The Tyrewise team was looking forward to seeing the roll-out of a nationwide product stewardship scheme for end-of-life tyres (ELTs). A four-month trial of the project in Hawke's Bay was completed at the end of 2022. The programme, run by Auto Stewardship NZ, had been designed to tackle the estimated 6.5 million ELTs produced each year by ensuring their collection and recycling. Plans for the project

to go live would begin once the government enacted regulations under the Waste Minimisation Act.

The Ministry of Transport (MoT) started a review of the CCD with a focus on balancing rebates and fees. The scheme was designed to be self-funding in the long term, but figures showed the government collected $105.1 million from 50,191 penalty payments between April 1 and December 31, 2022, while $203.3m was refunded via 62,514 rebates over the same period. In addition, $85.2m was paid out through 13,149 rebates on light vehicles purchased in the six months before the full feebate scheme was launched.

The government's decision to add skilled motor mechanics to the immigration green list was hailed by the MTA as the industry battled a crippling labour shortage. Ian Pike, chief executive, said: "We're grateful to the minister for hearing the call of our industry and taking this step to support businesses across the country."

New chief executives: Greig Epps at VIA, Aimee Wiley for the MIA and Lee Marshall at the MTA

MARCH

NEW CHIEF FOUND

Aimee Wiley was appointed to take over as chief executive of the MIA and would start at the association on April 1. Her experience in the automotive industry included working for Ford NZ and Ford Asia-Pacific on product development. Before joining the MIA, she was programme director for low-emissions vehicles at Waka Kotahi where she worked on the clean-car programme.

VIA warned dealers and consumers might lose out when replacing vehicles written off after extreme weather unless action was taken by insurance companies around how they defined their values. It said the clean-car programme meant sticker prices were no longer the values that vehicles should be insured for because penalties or rebates affected their overall cost. The problem arose after about 10,000 cars were set to be scrapped following floods across the Auckland region in late January and Cyclone Gabrielle lashing the North Island in February.

The MIA expected Waka Kotahi's fully developed systems to oversee the CCS would be in place by the middle of 2023. Outgoing chief executive David Crawford said there had been teething issues, which were predicted with the implementation of the policy at the start of the year. "The CCS is creating a lot more regulatory and compliance work for our members."

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APRIL

SCRAPPAGE PLEA

The government was urged to keep plans for a scrappage scheme on its agenda to help cut emissions from the light fleet and make it safer. The MTA said it was disappointed the $568m clean car upgrade had been canned by Prime Minister Chris Hipkins as he sought to free up funding to relieve cost-of-living pressures and fix damage caused by Cyclone Gabrielle.

The MIA was lobbying for 24 months' notice before the introduction of tougher emissions targets for new light vehicles. It said the two-year period was needed so marques could plan production timeframes for exports to New Zealand. It also warned the range of models would drop if the MoT pressed ahead with its proposed timetable for new exhaust-emissions standards, which would mean stricter regulations in New Zealand than in Australia. The MoT wanted to shift all new light vehicles from Euro 5 on the New European Driving Cycle, or US or Japanese equivalents, to Euro 6d – or US Tier 3 or Japan 2018 – from February 1, 2025, and existing new models from February 2026.

Plans for a $568 million scrappage scheme, called the clean car upgrade, were canned by the government

The MTA announced Lee Marshall would be taking over as chief executive from interim boss Ian Pike. Marshall had spent the previous 12 years in management roles in the car-rental industry. "I'm looking forward to getting started," he said. "It's a long-standing, proud organisation that's of a scale no other trade association for the automotive industry can really compare to."

VIA feared proposed changes to the CCD might result in fewer hybrids qualifying for rebates after a review of the feebate scheme was undertaken by the MoT. Light vehicles that produced between 147g and 191g of carbon dioxide (CO_2) per kilometre fell into a "zero band" and attracted neither a fee or a discount, but officials were considering dropping that range by about 50gCO_2/km. Kit Wilkerson, VIA's head of policy and strategy, made a submission to the government expressing a preference for the zero band to be between about 150gCO_2/km and 175gCO_2/km.

MAY

DISMAY OVER DISCOUNT

A relaunch of the CCD was criticised because of the short timeframe for the industry to adjust before changes kicked in. There were also concerns segments of the market would become more expensive for consumers with many fuel-efficient hybrids set to attract lower rebates or miss out altogether, and utes getting hit with bigger penalties. The MIA, VIA and MTA all condemned the roll-out date of July 1 for the overhauled feebate scheme as too soon because it risked creating disruption across the car industry and its supply chain.

The new chief operating officer at Mitsubishi Motors NZ said despite best efforts of carmakers and governments, it would still be some time before the country's transport emissions tumbled. Tony Johnston said the current number of annual sales in New Zealand and prices for new, cleaner models were likely to limit how quickly the fleet's emissions fell. "There are four million cars running around our roads and we're selling 130,000 to 140,000 new vehicles a year, so it's going to take a significant time to decrease the age of the fleet and emissions by just selling electric vehicles [EVs]."

The Financial Services Federation (FSF) boosted its team to the equivalent of 4.6 full-time staff. Katharine McGhie took on the new role of business development manager with responsibility for building on its membership growth. She joined the FSF after seven years at BusinessNZ where she was business development and events manager.

JUNE

CALL TO ACTION

The MTA called for emissions testing to be rolled out and for big changes to the clean-car policies to be made. It said comprehensive testing on tailpipe pollution could reduce New Zealand's carbon footprint by the equivalent of taking four per cent of vehicles off our roads or putting 160,000 EVs on them. The association was also lobbying for the plug to be pulled on the CCD and for goals and targets in the CCS to be deferred by two years. The policy suggestions were unveiled in a document called Driving New Zealand Forward – Future Proofing the Automotive Industry, which was a "call to action" to the next government.

Businesses and individuals showed their support for a new collective set up to advocate for more females to pursue careers in the industry. Women in Automotive NZ was created to address the under-representation in the sector with females accounting for just 17 per cent of the workforce. The group was launched in Auckland with a panel discussion including Natasha Callister, chief commercial officer at MTF Finance, Simon Rutherford, managing director of Ford NZ and MIA president, and Gina Sim, national fleet sales specialist at Auto Drive Holdings.

Sir Colin Giltrap decreased his stake in the Giltrap Group and became an equal owner of the company along with his two sons, Richard and Michael. The move halved Sir Colin's previous 67 per cent controlling stake in the business, which has been family-owned since 1966, and came after he stepped down as group chairman at the start of 2023.

Frank Willett, chief executive of Autohub NZ, became interim chairman of VIA following the resignation of Chris Stephenson, chief executive of Enterprise Motor Group. The latter said he had a full workload with professional and personal commitments.

Panellists at the Women in Automotive NZ launch were, from left, Toni Harris, Simon Rutherford, Louise Sixton, Gina Sim, David Storey and Natasha Callister

JULY

EMISSIONS CONCERNS

The MIA urged the government to delay introducing more stringent emissions standards until after Australia had adopted such rules so a "balanced transition" could be delivered to the local market. Its submission to the MoT was in response to proposed amendments to the Land Transport Rule: Vehicle Exhaust Emissions 2007. The association called for a "pragmatic, feasible and balanced approach" to the timing of changes.

Meanwhile, VIA objected to the "arbitrary" way the government had assigned standard equivalencies to its exhaust-emissions proposals. It backed the proposed timeline for transitioning used and new light vehicles to Euro 5 and Euro 6 respectively. However, that support was contingent on the MoT adjusting its methods on correlating European standards with those in Japan before going ahead.

The MTA was campaigning for consumer legislation to be revamped, describing it as a "blunt instrument" when applied to car sales. It wanted the Consumer Guarantees Act to be amended to give courts and tribunals discretion to allow for depreciation and use in some cases. The association added "the time is right" to redefine the Motor Vehicle Disputes Tribunal's jurisdiction because nearly 20 years had passed since it was developed and it needed a wider remit to hear repair cases.

ANCAP and its European counterpart released their vision to 2030 by establishing the future focus for safety in their new-vehicle markets. Key aspects being incorporated

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into existing star ratings over the next seven years would include passive safety tests with greater focus on gender equality, as well as the ageing population of motorists and occupants.

David Sena, left, bought Eugene Williams' stake in 2 Cheap Cars Group Ltd to hold about 76 per cent of its shares

AUGUST
ASSOCIATION CHANGES

David Vinsen took his last bow as VIA's chief executive at its annual meeting. The event also saw the appointment of two new board members – Greg Hedgepeth, chief executive officer of Turners' automotive retail division, and Hayden Johnston, director and general manager of the Genuine Vehicle Group. They replaced Matt Battle, of Moana Blue, and Ken Quigley, of Jacanna, who rotated off the board. Frank Willett was nominated unopposed as chairman when the new board met on July 28.

Government policies had affected the supply of used vehicles over the past year, reported Turners Automotive Group. Grant Baker, chairman, and chief executive Todd Hunter described the company's financials for 2022/23 as "pleasing" considering the state of the economy and regulation in the finance and vehicle markets. "The clean-car programme has had the most material impact on supply during the past 12 months, resulting in fewer used imports coming into New Zealand," they said. "With economic conditions becoming more challenging, we are continuing to see demand shift into lower price-points."

David Sena hoped to purchase Eugene Williams' shares in 2 Cheap Cars in a deal valued at about $4.3m. The agreement between the two company founders was conditional on approval by shareholders other than Sena, Williams and their associates. Sena wanted to buy Williams' 30 per cent holding to take his own stake to about 76 per cent.

Great Lake Motor Distributors Group's distribution, retail and vehicle-leasing operations were acquired by Inchcape. The purchase meant the UK-based company had secured LDV and SsangYong as brand partners in New Zealand, and it entered retail operations here with five owned dealerships.

SEPTEMBER
INDUSTRY LEFT WAITING

The industry faced having to wait until after October's general election before learning when new standards for exhaust emissions would be introduced and whether the changes would take heed of their concerns. The MoT received and analysed 77 submissions about the proposals. Advice on how to proceed with the legislation was provided to David Parker, Minister of Transport, in late August. However, parliament dissolved on September 8 and a decision looked set to rest with the next government. As a result, any new standards for imported vehicles were unlikely to come into effect until mid-2024 at the earliest.

About 170 fees and charges for services provided by Waka Kotahi were changing from October 1 after the government approved regulations for a fresh approach to be taken. The shake-up meant dealers paying extra to register cars and incurring a new charge to access the motor-vehicle register. The adjustments were designed to bring in an extra $66m in revenue for the transport agency.

Greig Epps was hailed as a "very good fit" after being named as the new chief executive of VIA. He was to take up the role from September 20 after a year as manager of regulatory affairs at the Insurance Council of NZ. Before that, Epps worked for the MTA for eight years. His strength in transport and industry advocacy was "just what we were looking for", said VIA chairman Frank Willett.

OCTOBER
TRADERS PUSH BACK

Car dealers voiced discontent at the rate Trade Me Motors was increasing its listings prices. Some registered motor-vehicle traders said the site had delivered double-digit percentage increases for the cost of package deals in the past two years and a similar jump was expected in 2024. Trade Me said it had invested heavily in new features and its pricing "fairly reflects the value of our packages".

A former investigator with NZ Police impressed finance-industry judges and walked away with a top award, thanks in part to his "passion for improving complaints processes". Michael Bushell, an employee of Avanti Finance, scooped the rising-star gong at the annual Crediting Excellence Awards run by the FSF.

Mark Gilbert announced he would be stepping down as chairman of Drive Electric after

The year in numbers

The Ranger was the country's number-one new vehicle of 2023 despite the market being impacted by the now-defunct clean car discount.

Ford's ute notched up 9,908 units to claim 25.7 per cent of last year's new commercials market. Toyota's Hilux and Mitsubishi's Triton totalled 8,049 and 3,103 respectively.

Overall, 38,545 new commercials were sold last year versus 48,416 in 2022 – down by 20.4 per cent.

As for new cars, 110,406 were registered in the past 12 months for a decrease of five per cent from 116,278.

The best-seller was Toyota RAV4's with 8,753 units for a market share of 7.9 per cent. Next up were Mitsubishi's Outlander on 4,055 and Tesla's Model Y with 3,932.

Toyota, predictably, was 2023's most popular new-car marque with its 21,909 units coming in at 19.8 per cent. Mitsubishi was second with 10,282 and Kia was third on 10,062.

Ford was last year's top brand for new commercials. Its 10,732 registrations amounted to a market share of 27.8 per cent compared to Toyota's 10,440. Mitsubishi was third with 3,115.

As for used-imported cars, there were 114,922 registered in 2023 – up by 3.8 per cent from 110,758 in 2022.

Toyota's Aqua topped the ladder on 19,167 for 16.7 per cent of the market. The Toyota Prius was second with 12,620 followed by Mazda's Axela on 5,080.

Toyota was 2023's most popular marque for used passenger vehicles with 51,121 units and 44.5 per cent. Nissan came second with 16,817 and Mazda was third on 13,138.

There were 6,022 used imported commercials sold last year compared to 7,597 in 2022 for a drop of 20.7 per cent. Toyota was the top marque on 2,740 for a 45.5 per cent market share, and its Hiace was the top model with 1,987 and 33 per cent.

"The clean-car programme has had the most material impact on supply," said Todd Hunter, of Turners Automotive Group

leading the organisation for more than 11 years. He said it was time to "pass the baton" to someone else after seeing the number of EVs on our roads increase from just a few when he took up the post in June 2013 to more than 86,000 now. His retirement would be effective from December 31.

David Sena was given the green light by shareholders of 2 Cheap Cars to complete the purchase of Eugene Williams' stake in the business. The agreement between the co-founders was put to a vote at the company's annual shareholders' meeting in Auckland. A resolution to approve the deal was passed on September 28. Chairman Michael Stiassny said it was a "significant milestone and draws a clear line underneath the tensions of the past few years".

NOVEMBER
RULES REVISION

Industry associations secured some major gains after last-minute revisions to future import regulations by the outgoing Minister of Transport. David Parker's changes to exhaust-emissions rules included dates for stricter standards on new light vehicles being pushed back by more than two years from the government's original plans. There was also good news for used importers as the border-inspection process would be adopted as the point of compliance instead of certification for entry into service, which would reduce the impact of shipping delays.

Importers learnt they would have to start paying fees for tyres – whether loose or attached to a vehicle – from March 1, 2024, after the Waste Minimisation (Tyres) Regulations were published. These are the rules to enable product stewardship for ELTs to be launched.

The MIA and VIA were looking forward to starting talks with the next government on making changes to the CCS targets. The National Party was set to form a coalition with Act and NZ First after the official result of the general election was announced. Pre-election, National pledged to ditch the CCD by December 31 and to revise the CCS. Act wanted both schemes axed and NZ First said it would develop infrastructure to expand the use of electric and hydrogen fuel-cell vehicles.

Nine dealers had been banned from the motor-vehicle traders' register year-to-date with a further 11 instances of non-compliance being recorded. Two registrations had also been cancelled in 2023 due to people being disqualified while two unregistered dealers had been banned.

Toyota NZ said it would defend a class action that claimed it sold 35,000 diesel vehicles with faults since 2015. The lawsuit affected Hilux, Fortuner and Prado models manufactured from October 2015, which had been fitted with a 1GD-FTV or 2GD-FTV engine. Shine Lawyers filed an application at Palmerston North High Court to bring the action on behalf of Toyota vehicle owners who, it claimed, "suffered financial loss due to a defective diesel particulate filter system".

DECEMBER
INDUSTRY WISH LIST

The MTA called on the government to put new policies around immigration and education among its main priorities to help maintain a "well-functioning automotive industry". Lee Marshall, chief executive, said these areas were at the top of the MTA's wish list and included a request to immediately pause the development of Te Pukenga, the NZ Institute of Skills and Technology.

The MG4 won the AA Driven Car Guide New Zealand Car of the Year award for 2023. The EV was also voted best passenger car after the judges picked winners across 11 classes. "This recognition continues the award-winning pedigree of the new MG4," said Arek Zywot, MG NZ's country manager. "This title takes it to nine overall car-of-the-year accolades."

The Optimus Group acquired a controlling stake of 51 per cent in Auto Trader Media Group, which owns Autotrader.co.nz. The global automotive business said the investment would extend the services it provides to this country's car industry and give it a stake in a "trusted digital platform".

A new automotive marketplace was set to come to New Zealand after operating across the Tasman for almost three years. AutoFlip connects private sellers and car businesses through an online platform with the franchise to start the operation here purchased by Patrick Davey and Ken Quigley, of Davey NZ.

'Sufficient' lithium for switch

With purchases of electric vehicles (EVs) rising globally, consumer concerns about the availability of lithium – the naturally occurring element used in their rechargeable batteries – are emerging.

The valuable resource from Earth's crust is usually found in mineral deposits, brine pools and salt flats, but people are asking if the world is at risk of running out of lithium.

Experts from Drive Electric have delved into the subject and note a single EV's lithium-ion battery pack contains about 8kg of lithium, according to data from the US Department of Energy's Argonne National Laboratory.

The lobby group adds that reports from the US Geological Survey show the world's identified lithium resources are estimated to be around 79 million metric tonnes and the projected amount of lithium needed to meet current requirements is between 500,000 and 1.3m tonnes.

However, the latter figure is expected to increase significantly in coming years as demand for lithium grows.

"Given these predictions, it's understandable some may be concerned about the future availability of lithium," says Drive Electric.

"However, according to a recent publication in the scientific journal Joule, there's conclusive evidence that the world possesses sufficient raw materials, such as lithium and other battery metals, to continue transitioning from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources.

"Most analysts suggest lithium will never see shortages, cartels or sale restrictions that oil does."

It adds some of the reasons the world is considered unlikely to run out is that more lithium sources are still being discovered and advances in exploration technology could help to identify deposits in the future.

Researchers are also looking into alternative sources of lithium that could supplement or replace traditional lithium reserves.

The 2010 Deepwater Horizon disaster spilled about 800 million litres of crude oil into the Gulf of Mexico. Experts say concerns about mining lithium are minimal compared to the extraction of fossil fuels

Developing new types of batteries and cell chemistries, such as solid-state batteries, is another area likely to help reduce the demand for lithium.

"As more research into new battery cell chemistries and refining current technology takes place, it's likely EV manufacturers will have more alternatives with less human or financial cost, thus making the end product more accessible, ethical and affordable for consumers," says Drive Electric.

Research into newer battery chemistries in redesigned electronic components, such as denser nickel, that reduce the usage of scarce and expensive materials is also constant.

The experts note significant makers of lithium batteries for cars and other transport have set targets to eliminate cobalt, which is a much more scarce and problematic battery metal, from their chemistry.

Some companies have already seen success in using cobalt-free batteries. For example, Tesla reports nearly half of all its vehicles produced in the first quarter of 2022 run on nickel and cobalt-free iron phosphate batteries.

"As demand for lithium increases, prices are likely also to rise, which could incentivise the development of new reserves or alternative technologies," says Drive Electric.

"This could also lead to increased recycling of lithium from used batteries, further extending the lifespan of existing resources."

Drive Electric adds EVs remain a relatively new market, meaning developments with batteries or manufacturing methods may still be ahead that could alleviate potential lithium shortages.

As for recycling, the number of used EV batteries reaching the end of their initial lifespan is expected to surge after 2030 and the World Economic Forum forecasts 54m end-of-life batteries will be recycled by that year. This has the potential to cut lithium supply requirements by about 10 per cent in 2040.

"The concern for lithium mining is minimal when you consider the effects oil mining have on the environment and socially," says Drive Electric.

"The mining of EV battery metals has emerged as a source of political instability, and the mining of these resources is often subject to poor environmental and employment practices.

"However, the magnitude of EV influence on conflict is still considerably smaller than that of oil production, which has a fraught history in this respect."

It adds the transition to more sustainable energy means the availability of lithium will play an essential role in developing technologies and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

"While the question of the supply of lithium for EV batteries is a valid one to raise, the abundant supply of lithium means it's unlikely the world will ever run out of this vital resource.

"With ongoing efforts to research alternative sources and technologies, rising prices are all factors that will ensure a steady supply of lithium in the future."

Sticker prices to drop

Fuelled by falling battery costs, EVs may hit price parity with petrol and diesel models in Europe this year and the US in 2026 before accounting for two-thirds of global car sales by 2030.

A report by the Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI), which is based in Colorado, predicts battery prices should halve this decade.

This could make EVs "for the first time as cheap to buy as petrol cars in every market by 2030".

It adds batteries are expensive and it's a cost that still makes EVs unaffordable for many buyers. However, their prices are steadily dropping as marques invest in new chemistries, materials and software to make electric cars more efficient.

According to RMI's analysis, the growth of battery EVs in Europe and China implies such sales "will increase at least six-fold by 2030 to enjoy a market share of 62-86 per cent".

Research released by Exeter University in the UK suggests EVs will reach a tipping point in price parity with fossil-fuelled models as early as 2024 in Europe, 2025 in China and 2026 in the US.

Checking your digital health

At the start of a new year, many businesspeople tend to reflect on the previous 12 months' strategies, evaluating and fine-tuning processes as they plan for the year ahead. This practice can help enhance companies' efficiency and performance across all areas, marketing included.

Dealerships, like other businesses, tend to start a new marketing partnership filled with enthusiasm. They build a website, strategise around target audiences and initiate campaigns across different channels.

As the months go by, however, priorities change and many find themselves leaving their digital media to hum along in the background as they tend to other priorities.

Yet, to stay competitive, car dealers must continually assess their online activity. Regular, comprehensive digital health checks are essential for ensuring the business' online presence is making the right impression with audiences, adapting to shifting trends and maximising return on investment (RoI).

And what better time to do this than at the beginning of a new year. So, what should dealers be evaluating when it comes to their digital footprint?

YOUR WEBSITE

The website is the first point of contact between potential customers and a dealership. It is the virtual showroom and, like the physical one, it needs to be appealing, user-friendly and up to date.

Does your website put your best foot forward? When did you last give it an overhaul? Is it maximising conversion opportunities?

In the ever-evolving digital landscape, an outdated website that is difficult to navigate can turn away potential customers. Regularly updating a site ensures it remains visually appealing, functional and aligned with the latest design trends.

MARKETING PARTNER

Digital marketing is witnessing significant changes including the shift towards a cookie-less world.

Businesses must regularly evaluate whether their digital partners are staying ahead of these trends. Are they adapting to changes in data-privacy regulations and finding innovative ways to engage customers without relying on traditional tracking methods?

JAMES HENDRY
National account director
AdTorque Edge NZ

Being confident in the ability of your digital partners to navigate changes and remain a step ahead is crucial for maintaining a competitive edge. It's not just about today's trends, but about anticipating and preparing for tomorrow's challenges.

FIRST-PARTY AUDIENCES

Building and marketing to first-party audiences is key to a dealer's digital success. All opportunities to capture potential customers' data and engage them should be leveraged.

A digital health check needs to consider whether every opportunity is being utilised to build and effectively advertise to first-party audiences.

This includes tracking and recording interactions with clients, ideally through automated processes that push data directly into a customer relationship or lead-management system. It then involves utilising that data to run targeted marketing, including email and SMS campaigns, that resonate with the client base.

TOOLS FOR DATA

It is important for markets to have access to comprehensive reporting tools and insights that enable them to accurately analyse the performance of their digital activity.

A digital health check should include an assessment of the reporting mechanisms in place. Are they providing meaningful insights into customer behaviour, website performance and campaign RoI?

Without this data, it's challenging to make informed decisions and optimise strategies for maximum effectiveness.

The importance of running an annual digital health check in a market as competitive as automotive cannot be overstated.

By regularly evaluating and optimising digital strategies, dealerships can ensure they stay ahead of the curve, connect with their audience effectively and drive success in the ever-evolving digital landscape.

Going electric about saving industry

The thunderous growl of engines, the heady fragrance of petrol and the allure of speed have all defined the essence of the automotive industry for a long time.

However, as our world recognises the need for a more sustainable future, the once-celebrated imagines of mobility and freedom have transformed into portents of a looming crisis.

Electric vehicles (EVs) have emerged as the industry's possible saviour with the potential to rescue it from self-destruction.

Yet, as we see this solution rolled out, it has become increasingly clear that the journey to redemption is riddled with obstacles, many of which the industry itself has inadvertently thrown in its own way.

Even those like me, who claim to be "technologically ambivalent" and "solution neutral", still need to understand we face real challenges in the near future and that, so far, there only appears to be a very small subset of viable solutions.

Sustainability is more than simply reducing emissions and pollution. It requires a comprehensive approach that includes not just exhaustive recycling and reuse, environmental considerations and public safety, but also economic viability.

Our goal is clear and that's to accomplish more with less without an ecological footprint.

For the car industry to be sustainable, we must provide goods while progressively reducing overall consumption and environmental impacts.

Regrettably, our efforts so far have failed to demonstrate that EVs can do this. In fact, one might question if manufacturers even recognise sustainability as a goal.

KIT WILKERSON
Head of policy and strategy
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Take, for instance, the recycling of conventional car designs into electric variants.

While this might be a convenient strategy to capitalise on familiarity, it fails to embrace the potential of EVs and perpetuates many problems with modern cars.

This choice results in unwieldy electric models being burdened with both the negative characteristics of EVs and legacies of their internal combustion engine (ICE) predecessors.

The weight of this choice cannot be underemphasised because it not only negates sustainability, it also impacts infrastructure and jeopardises the safety of other cars on the road.

Heavier vehicles, regardless of being electric or traditional, pose a significant threat to road users in smaller models, pedestrians and cyclists.

Furthermore, production processes for larger EVs demand higher material consumption resulting in increased embedded carbon-dioxide emissions and lifecycle costs.

With higher energy consumption, escalated maintenance expenses and inefficiencies, larger EVs exacerbate the problems they were meant to resolve.

The positioning of electric vehicles as premium goods by manufacturers also ends up being a roadblock to future sustainability.

While it's undeniable that early adopters were willing to splurge on these "luxury" cars, this strategy doesn't align with the broader goal of integrating EVs.

True sustainability, by its very essence, should be comprehensive, inclusive and accessible to all. Normalising the concept of EVs and making them affordable, practical options for the masses should be the primary objective.

In fact, this is the biggest challenge to EV adoption. There's an unfulfilled need for a fleet of affordable and lightweight electric models tailored for the general populace.

We need vehicles that are budget-friendly and practical for the everyday commuter, but the silence on this critical requirement is deafening.

The resurgence of more conservative governments globally has added another layer of complexity.

Their tendency to be more sceptical towards EVs – or, more precisely, the necessity for them – is no secret, and it has emboldened naysayers to propagate misinformation and disinformation.

In this climate of political polarisation, the lines between genuine concerns and manufactured falsehoods have become increasingly blurred.

The biggest risk of this political change is that, without government pressure, the industry forgets or delays its goal to become sustainable in the hope of getting a few more years of business as usual.

While this may feel like a benefit to the industry, it will only be a temporary reprieve, and will make the inevitable transition that much more difficult and jarring when it does occur.

To address this challenge, the industry must recalibrate its approach. The emphasis should be on developing lightweight, purpose-built EVs from the ground up, unshackled from the constraints of the ICE era.

Like the transition from horse-drawn carriages to early automobiles, innovation must be rooted in understanding the demands of the future and not the past.

Lighter electric vehicles would then not only be more economical and resource-efficient, but would also require smaller batteries, reduced energy consumption and fewer adverse consequences in the event of accidents.

The automotive industry must stay on the path. It must combat misinformation and remain resolute in its commitment to a sustainable future.

We must not lose sight of the fact that its long-term future is intricately linked to our ability to adapt and embrace change.

EVs were never about saving the world. EVs are about saving the car industry. We forget that at our own peril.

Calling time on career

Steve Prangnell has retired as Toyota New Zealand's vice-president of sales and operations.

He has, however, agreed to stay on in an interim advisory capacity for a while.

After that, Prangnell is looking forward to an active retirement and will pursue several personal projects, including possibly setting up a business to create jobs for people with disabilities.

His 40-year career with the company started on the floor of its factory in Christchurch in 1983 before he shifted to its headquarters.

He has taken on several business lines, such as parts and assembly, new and used-vehicle sales, franchise development, distribution and logistics, and has held leadership positions.

Steve Prangnell

Prangnell was involved in major projects for Toyota NZ. These included it becoming a full-service car distributor and shifting from a dealership to agency model.

"The thing that has kept me with Toyota is I love the brand," he enthuses. "I couldn't envisage working for any other car company, but the time is right.

"I've given the best 40 years of my life to Toyota and it's given me the best 40 back. Forty years ago, my manager at the Hornby factory identified a glimmer of talent and I'm thankful to have had the opportunity."

Neeraj Lala, chief executive officer, says: "The thing for me that best defines Steve's 40 years is his focus on developing personal relationships.

"Much of Toyota's success comes from the fact we're embedded in communities we serve. Steve has been integral to that."

Prangnell has agreed to stay on in an interim advisory role to support Toyota through the transition of his role and to support the development of the company's franchises.

He says the favourite vehicle he's owned was a 1993 MkIV RZ-R Supra, which he bought in the 1990s as a Signature Class import.

Group gets into top 50

Turners Automotive Group is now ranked alongside the country's largest stocks after being added to the NZX 50 Portfolio Index and MidCap Index last month.

The NZX 50 is designed to measure the performance of the 50 largest, eligible stocks listed on the main board by float-adjusted market capitalisation.

"This is a major milestone," says chairman Grant Baker. "It reflects the quality of the business and growth the team has generated over the past 10 years."

Todd Hunter, chief executive, adds: "Half of our auto group team members own shares in Turners, so it's great to see them enjoying some of the success through their ownership as well as in their day-to-day results."

The month that was... January

January 31, 2000

Inquiry to probe unsafe cars and roads

Unsafe vehicles and dangerous roads were two of the major causes of New Zealand's unacceptably high road toll, said Harry Duynhoven, chairman of a newly set up select committee responsible for transport and industrial relations.

He was keen to see action taken in those areas and had strong backing from the new government to make something happen.

As part of its pre-election transport manifesto, Labour said it would review the reasons for the country's high road toll, covering all aspects of transport in New Zealand.

The idea was to try to find out why our fatality rate was 50 per cent higher than in Victoria, Australia – on which it was supposed to be modelled – and 100 per cent higher than in Sweden, which was a country of similar size, population and topography.

"We have yet to see any terms of reference, but they are likely to come under the broad headings of vehicle standards, driver training and licensing, roads, speeding and enforcement," said Duynhoven.

He was keen to establish stricter standards for vehicle safety and to ensure the public was aware of which cars were proven to be safer than others. "It has been estimated that if everyone bought the safest cars, the road death toll would be halved."

January 18, 2008

Fuel-economy labelling soon

The Energy Efficiency (Vehicle Fuel Economy Labelling) Regulations 2007 had been introduced, requiring information to be displayed at point of sale and on internet listings.

The rules meant all traders selling needed to have a label on vehicles being sold or those promoting others of the same type from April 2008.

The regulations included cars offered for lease for four months or longer, but excluded vehicles weighing more than 3.5 tonnes and motorcycles. For vehicles being sold online by dealers or privately, information had to be provided in listings.

Although the rules applied to new and used vehicles for sale, generally information only existed for cars post-2000 although there might be some exceptions to that general rule.

"Vehicles in New Zealand are tested to either European or Japanese methods to derive a fuel-consumption figure expressed in litres per 100km," said EECA.

January 21, 2004

Roadside sale crackdown

Transit New Zealand was taking action on vehicles parked alongside state highways in New Plymouth in a campaign targeting sellers displaying cars on roadsides.

Its contractors would monitor problem areas, such as SH45 at Spotswood and SH3 at Bell Block, seven days a week, leaving warning notes on windscreens of offending vehicles and towing those that weren't removed.

Errol Christiansen, Transit NZ's regional manager, said many sellers might not realise the practice was illegal. "Transit exercises some flexibility in its approach to the issue of roadside car sales, but not when the safety of road users is at risk," he added.

"Some motorists are distracted by cars for sale and slow down or stop suddenly to take a closer look, which is a safety hazard. The other concern is people getting out of their cars and dashing across busy roads to inspect vehicles."

The announcement came after promises from various local councils to get tough on the illegal practice. Wellington City Council had passed a bylaw requiring sellers to obtain written permission from it before displaying vehicles in public places.

January 23, 2009

Jaguar reveals fastest and cleanest car

Jaguar revealed its new XKR and XFR at Detroit Auto Show 2009. Tipped to be one of the marque's fastest cars yet, the XFR had already proven its credentials with a modified version of the vehicle with 600hp clocking 363kph on the salt flats at Bonneville, Utah.

It had become the fastest Jaguar of all time by surpassing the 349kph registered by the XJ 220 coupe in 1992.

Featuring all-new AJ-V8 Gen III petrol engines and new AJ-V6D Gen III diesel engines, Jaguar claimed the XF delivered more power and performance with comparable or better fuel economy and emissions than those they replaced.

The XFR was powered by the all-new supercharged 510hp five-litre V8, which could accelerate from 0-96kph in just 4.7 seconds. The engine also pumped out a staggering 625Nm of torque, making it Jaguar's ultimate sport sedan.

A naturally aspirated five-litre V8 producing 385bhp powered the other new V8 XF model. Both engines had improved fuel economy and carbon-dioxide emissions that met forthcoming Euro 5 emissions legislation. The 2010 XF range was due to arrive in New Zealand later that year.

Attracting and retaining talent

Happy 2024 everyone and, as previously outlined, I am leveraging off the greater MTA team to discuss business topics that cause issues or concerns within everyday trading.

Attracting younger talent into the automotive space has been a subject raised by some dealers I have spoken too, so I reached out to Loretta Thompson, the MTA's learning and development manager, who penned this month's article.

LARRY FALLOWFIELD
Sector manager – dealers, Motor Trade Association

ONGOING PROGRESSION

In an era characterised by rapid technological advancements and evolving workplace dynamics, the car industry is no exception.

The significance of professional development has become more important than ever, especially when it comes to attracting and retaining young talent.

The subscription mindset is prevalent among today's youth, particularly Generation Z, and underscores the importance of continuous growth and learning in the workplace.

Often used to describe their inclination towards services that offer constant updates and improvements, the term "subscription mindset" reflects the desire for ongoing progression.

This mindset extends beyond consumer choices to career preferences with young professionals seeking employers who understand and cater to their growth.

Youth can often view themselves as customers at work, rather than employees, and their overall experiences are considerations to stay or leave.

If the experience isn't what they expected, they unsubscribe from it to look for an organisation that can meet their needs. Professional development programmes, therefore, play a pivotal role in attracting and keeping this demographic engaged.

Members of Generation Z, born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s, are known for their tech-savvy nature and entrepreneurial spirit. Unlike others, they value experiences over possessions and prioritise a sense of purpose in their careers.

Loretta Thompson

For employers looking to tap into this dynamic talent pool, providing opportunities for professional growth is often a necessity and a key aspect youth appreciate is a commitment to continuous learning.

They view their careers as dynamic journeys rather than static destinations, and employers who actively support this mindset stand out as attractive.

Dealerships that have professional development programmes, learning workshops, training sessions and mentorship opportunities will resonate with young people, and their desire for skills enhancement and career advancement.

Moreover, the value youth place on such development goes beyond the individual by being drawn to workplaces that foster a culture of learning and collaboration.

Dealers who prioritise employee growth create an environment that not only retains young talent, but also fuels innovation and adaptability.

In a world where change is constant, organisations that invest in their employees' professional development are better equipped to navigate evolving landscapes.

Another factor contributing to the importance of professional development for youth is the fluidity of their career paths.

Unlike those in previous generations who often followed linear career trajectories, they embrace the gig economy and value diverse skill sets.

Programmes that offer versatility and cater to a range of skills are particularly appealing to this demographic. They appreciate employers who recognise the multifaceted nature of their talents, and provide avenues for exploration and diversification.

Development serves as a magnet for youth talent by drawing them towards organisations that align with their values and aspirations.

It goes beyond the traditional notion of benefits and salary, signalling to young professionals that their growth is a priority company priority.

The subscription mindset of today's youth, particularly Generation Z, underscores the imperative for employers to embrace professional development as a cornerstone of their talent acquisition and retention strategies.

By fostering a culture of continuous learning and offering diverse growth opportunities, dealers can position themselves as not just workplaces but as platforms for the ongoing development of tomorrow's leaders.

Only some will make it out of the factory. We look back at a selection of 2023's concepts

Grand designs for future cars

The Concept CLA-Class

The Concept CLA-Class prompted plenty of industry interest when it was unveiled in Germany.

The compact sedan is one of four new models, including two SUVs, which are likely to be offered this year by Mercedes-Benz with two distinct battery electric vehicle (BEV) powertrains.

Board chairman Ola Källenius says: "The Concept CLA Class is the forerunner for an entirely new all-electric segment of entry-level vehicles at Mercedes-Benz."

Manufactured on the company's MMA modular platform, it boasts aerodynamic styling, a coupe-like sedan profile, numerous sustainable materials and an estimated electric range of up to 750km.

The dual-motor electric Concept CLA-Class draws much of its technology from 2022's Vision EQXX Concept, which it claimed would use as little as 10kWh of energy per 100km while also boasting a lighter, smaller battery pack.

Inside a broad super-screen display with the Mercedes-Benz operating system is complemented by silver and white leather upholstery, which are tanned with coffee husks. Fabrics made from recycled plastic bottles, and other elements constructed from lab-grown silk, bamboo and even paper, add those environmental brownie points.

"The Concept CLA-Class marks the start of a new era," says Gordon Wagener, chief design officer. "It reinterprets the iconic elements of the brand's rich design heritage to craft a whole new face of Mercedes-Benz."

The company says the production version of the concept, which was unveiled at the International Motor Show in Munich, will be offered with lithium ferrous-phosphate battery packs in base form and silicone-oxide-based units in higher trim grades. Estimates place the capacity of the latter at approximately 90kWh.

The car's 800-volt system is set to offer 250kW DC fast-charging capabilities with vehicle to home and vehicle-to-grid capabilities.

Each of the models' dual-synchronous motors is likely to output 175kW of power via two-speed transmissions. It is expected both rear and all-wheel-drive variants will come to market.

OPEL'S JEWEL

The Experimental EV's most striking feature is the complete absence of chrome, which has been substituted by lighting elements and bold graphics.

Unveiled in Munich in September, the offering from Opel – the Stellantis-owned German marque – is a "clear vision" of where it will be heading in coming years.

It boasts flowing aerodynamics, a spacious and airy cabin and what Opel defines as "next generation" head-up display technology.

Conventional screens are gone. They have been replaced by an augmented reality projection system that displays information or entertainment above the dashboard.

There are also no unsightly wing mirrors to test the designers because they've been replaced by fully integrated 180-degree cameras inside the C-pillars.

At the front, the new-look Opel Blitz sits atop the brand's signature compass. At the Experimental's rear, the compass forms its brake light. In place of the Blitz logo, the tailgate features simple O-P-E-L lettering.

The rear diffuser deploys and retracts depending on the prevailing driving situation, the steering wheel folds away when not required and, instead of using conventional screens, information is projected using AI technology and voice control.

Opel's Experimental



Cupra's DarkRebel


Could the Nissan Hyper Force concept hint at styling for the next-generation GT-R?

CUP RUNNETH OVER

Like something out of the Batman franchise's Dark Knight, the DarkRebel pushes design boundaries.

The striking two-seater concept from Cupra showcases the Spanish brand's vision of a future sports car. It was revealed for the first time in physical form in September having previously existed in just digital form.

The marque allowed users to influence the design of the car online before the wraps came off it.

Creating what it says will become the "ultimate interpretation" of its brand vision, the EV aims to promote the process of designing a car "without boundaries", although it's not yet understood just how far from the brief user input was allowed to stray.

"The DarkRebel is the ultimate interpretation of our vision," says Wayne Griffiths, chief executive officer of Cupra.

He adds it has been created to "prove that electric cars in the future can be sporty, sexy and emotional" – for example, by offering sharp lines with a shooting brake-style body, while it's long bonnet is arrow-shaped.

Jorge Díez, Cupra's design boss, says: "With no heritage or need to keep to DNA, we can make it from scratch, which gives thousands of possibilities."

Capturing some of the brand's existing motifs, the concept features a triangular light signature, while the central "spine" connects the front and rear of the all-electric model.

The DarkRebel's cabin features progressive bucket seats and a "gamified steering wheel and shifter". The driver-orientated model is said to connect motorist and machine "as one".

MUCH DARING DO

Nissan unveiled the Hyper Force, which was the finale to its series of "hyper" concepts on display at the Japan Mobility Show a few months ago.

President Makoto Uchida says: "All five cars are symbols of the future and embody our founding spirit of 'daring to do what others don't'. We have advanced our EV innovations, moving beyond mobility to create a more sustainable world."

The four other Hypers include the Tourer, an "advanced" minivan featuring autonomous driving, and the Adventure – a digital SUV designed to support outdoor activities.

Then there's the Punk, which is wrapped in a "functional and stylish body style". The Urban's styling "complements the sophisticated tastes of its target users" who are, unsurprising, urban and suburban-based professionals.

But back to the Hyper Force. The all-electric high-performance supercar has been designed for racing enthusiasts and gamers who "crave the adrenaline rush of the track, but are also eco-conscious".

At its core is a high-output powertrain with a solid-state battery that can produce output up to 1,000kW with precise and rapid acceleration.

Powerful downforce, an advanced form of Nissan's e-4ORCE all-wheel-control technology and a lightweight body with high-strength carbon promise enhanced cornering, and exceptional handling on circuits and winding roads.

High aerodynamics have been developed with the Nismo racing team to generate powerful downforce while a dual-level rear diffuser controls airflow.

The front canards, front-fender flip and both ends of the rear wing feature active aero functionality, while a newly developed plasma actuator suppresses air detachment to maximise grip and minimise inner-wheel lift during cornering.

The user interface changes colour and display according to racing or grand touring mode, and is designed to instantly display the most-needed information for the driving circumstances.

Thanks to autonomous drive with hyper lidar and sensors tuned for sports use, the vehicle is designed to ensure a high level of safety on public roads and circuits.

All said and done, the Hyper Force is Nissan's vision for a next generation, all electric and high-performance supercar.

Record grid contests 86 series

The Toyota 86 Championship has attracted massive entry numbers as it celebrates a full decade of top-level racing.

And the grid of 24 promises some of the best race action since the inaugural season in 2013.

The 2023/24 season kicked off at Taupo International Motorsport Park in mid-November with a starting line-up that included multiple genuine championship prospects, outstanding rookies, four exceptional female drivers, three drivers from Australia and a bigger master class.

Category manager Amanda Tollemache says there are champions from karting, Formula Ford, the Australian Toyota 86 series, domestic New Zealand club racing and even SIM racing.

"It's one of the highest quality fields that has been assembled for the championship as well as the biggest."

This means picking a championship winner is almost impossible. That said, in any single-make series, consistency is always king.

Being at the sharp end of the field in every session at every round is critical and missing a race result sets contenders back significantly.

Clay Osborne trailed champion Brock Gilchrist on wins in the 2022/23 season, but maintained a high-enough finishing record to be in with a shout of the title until the last lap of the final race.

Dual champion and racing-standards observer, Rowan Shepherd, says being the outright fastest and winning races is certainly important in this championship, "but being consistent is absolutely essential".

He adds: "To be that consistent means you need speed, race craft and a great team around you. You need to deliver in every session, in all conditions and you can't afford any drama on-track that might put you out of the points or, even worse, out of the weekend.

"The prize at the end of it is genuine recognition of a major achievement in motorsport."

From the New Zealand contingent on the entry list, there are obvious title candidates. Multiple race-winner Justin Allen is one as is Hunter Robb, who was hugely impressive in his two outings in last year's championship.

Tayler Bryant is another ready for a big campaign, while Formula Ford champion Hayden Bakkerus and Improved Production champion Ryan Denize are also determined to do well.

Talent from across the Tasman this season includes Toyota 86 scholarship champion Lockie Bloxsom, Summer Rintoule and Alice Buckley. John Penny and Christina Orr-West are front-runners in the master class.

Others with race-winning pace include Tom Bewley, Hampton Downs Academy winner Jackson Rooney, Bree Morris, Thomas Mallard and Cormac Murphy.

DOMINANT IN ROUND ONE

Tom Bewley saved his best for last with a dominant drive in the third and final race of the first weekend of the 2023/24 Toyota 86 Championship in Taupo.

Although he made a poor start, he tucked in behind early leader Jackson Rooney and stayed alongside Rooney going into the first turn before taking the lead two corners later.

Up until that point, the weekend had been a pitched battle between Bewley and Hunter.

Rooney then hit Robb, spinning him off the track and copping a drive-through penalty. Bewley was well-clear and took a huge 20 second win at the flag.

With two race wins, a round win and becoming early leader in the points table, it was a dream result for Bewley in his second season of the championship.

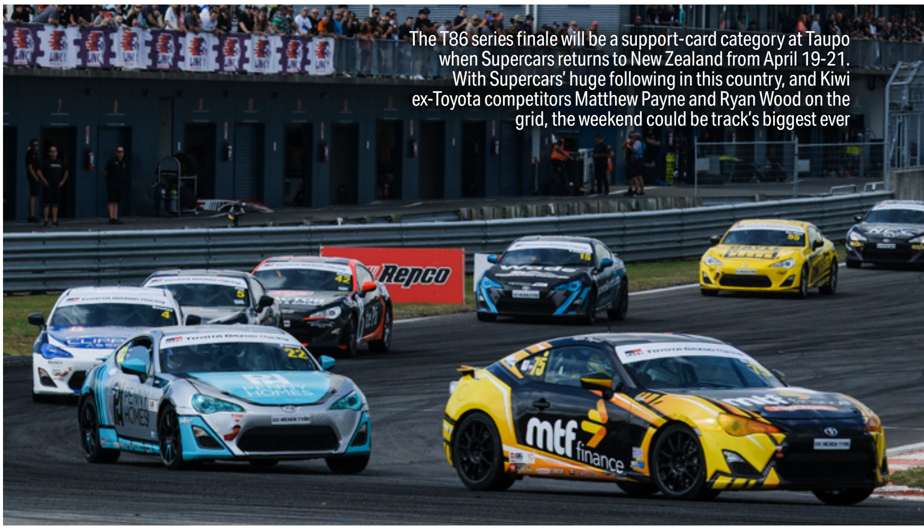
"I saw Jackson go right on turn one, so I took the outside option and made it work," he says. "I got a little tap from him in the action and thought I might have a bit of damage, but it was fine.

"I kept concentrating and saving the car. I was absolutely stoked to get the race wins and the round."

The championship resumes at the end of January for the second round at Manfeild Circuit Chris Amon. Bewley, Exton, Robb and Rooney look like the early runners this season.

Hunter Robb was this season's first winner.
Photo: Bruce Jenkins

The new GR86 racer broke cover at Hampton Downs. Photo: Andy Kruy



The T86 series finale will be a support-card category at Taupo when Supercars returns to New Zealand from April 19-21. With Supercars' huge following in this country, and Kiwi ex-Toyota competitors Matthew Payne and Ryan Wood on the grid, the weekend could be track's biggest ever

Drivers lining up on the grid this season include, from left to right, Hayden Bakkerus, Christina Orr-West, Hunter Robb, Bree Morris, Tom Bewley and Alice Buckley

SLEAK, FASTER RACER

Looking ahead and the new GR86 will replace the TR86 for the 2024/25 Toyota 86 series and beyond with the existing model being replaced as the mainstream championship car after 11 seasons.

The vehicle features a bigger engine at 2.4 litres rather than the two litres of the current TR86, and it packs more power and torque.

Toyota Gazoo Racing NZ (TGRNZ) expects it to be at least between one-and-a half to two seconds per lap quicker.

The specification will closely follow the Australian series car when it's introduced next season six months ahead of the first New Zealand GR86 Championship. To date, there were small but significant differences between the two versions of the TR86.

The new vehicle was revealed at Hampton Downs in the presence of the Gazoo Racing GR Yaris' chief engineer, Naohiko Saito, who flew in from Japan for the occasion.

"For a small country, motorsport is huge in New Zealand," he says. "We see the passion, and we wanted to come and have a look for ourselves. We haven't been disappointed."

A lot of early development work has already been done, but track work will be ongoing to determine the final overall specification.

"Testing is under way and we know the car will be a step up in terms of performance," says Nicolas Caillol, motorsport manager at TGRNZ.

"We're looking at ways to make the change from one model to another as easy as possible for existing and new competitors, and the future of the existing fleet is also being discussed.

"The launch of the new GR86 reaffirms our own long-term commitment to domestic New Zealand motorsport and finding the country's next international drivers and, of course, the next world champion."

Initial testing is being undertaken by two-time champion Rowan Shepherd and 2019/20 champ Peter Vodanovich.

"Even at this early stage of development, it's obvious it is going to be a big step up in performance while retaining all that was good with the TR86," says Vodanovich.

"Better acceleration out of the slow and medium corners is very noticeable with the extra torque from the bigger engine.

"It's noticeably faster in a straight line and has plenty of grunt going up Hampton Downs' hill to the start-and-finish line.

"We're only beginning to develop the car, but there's no question it's going to be very good."

TOYOTA 86 SERIES CALENDAR

Rnd 2:	Jan 26-28	Manfeild Circuit Chris Amon.
Rnd 3:	Feb 9-11	Euromarque Motorsport Park, Christchurch.
Rnd 4:	Feb 16-18	Highlands Motorsport Park, Cromwell (NZ Grand Prix).
Rnd 5:	Mar 15-17	Hampton Downs Motorsport Park.
Rnd 6:	Apr 19-21	Taupo Motorsport Park (Supercars).

Tribunal rules vehicle's intercooler was probably damaged post-supply to buyer

A 2018 Mitsubishi Outlander XLS

The case: The consumer wanted to reject his 2018 Mitsubishi Outlander after it developed an engine fault four weeks after purchase. Although the trader had initially failed to address the problems with the car, it later compensated him for costs he had incurred. Therefore, the dealer said the consumer wasn't entitled to reject the vehicle.

The decision: The tribunal ruled the car had been of acceptable quality when it was supplied.

At: The Motor Vehicle Disputes Tribunal via video link.

Background

The 2018 Mitsubishi Outlander XLS that Paulo Vargas Portales purchased from Zodiac Motor Company on October 8, 2022, for $28,995 developed an engine fault about a month after purchase. He paid $2,500 to have it fixed.

The buyer said the trader initially refused to repair the vehicle, so he wanted to reject it under the Consumer Guarantees Act (CGA) and sought a refund of all amounts paid.

These included guaranteed asset protection and mechanical breakdown insurance, compensation for other costs and losses, and to have his ongoing obligations under his consumer credit contract assigned to the trader.

The dealer said the Outlander wasn't faulty at the time of sale. However, it had compensated the buyer for all diagnostic and repair costs he had incurred, so he wasn't entitled to any further remedies.

The case

At the time of purchase, the Outlander's odometer reading was 138,248km. Vargas Portales checked the car's oil levels when it arrived from Auckland at his home in Temuka near Timaru and the fluid looked clean.

He didn't drive the Outlander until November 7 and for the two weeks after that he drove only on roads with a speed limit of 60kph or lower. He didn't notice any performance issues with the vehicle during this time.

Vargas Portales said he drove it on the "open road" for the first time on November 21. However, the car was low on power and took about 30 seconds to reach 100kph.

A few days later, it lost power and the engine-warning light illuminated when his wife drove it.

Vargas Portales had the Outlander assessed by Bairds Motordrome Temuka. It replaced a split intercooler hose and a diagnostic scan found that it had a diesel particulate filter (DPF) fault.

The repairer suggested he take the vehicle to an automotive electrician or a Mitsubishi franchise for DPF regeneration.

The buyer emailed an employee of the trader on November 27. Before remedial work was performed, he explained the engine-warning light had come on and asked for assistance. However, he didn't receive a reply.

Vargas Portales stopped using the Outlander and transported it to Caroline Mitsubishi in Timaru for assessment, which discovered the DPF light was on and that the oil level was "way too high" with one-and-a-half litres of diesel in the fluid.

Staff at the franchised dealership changed the oil and its filter, but they were unable to perform a DPF regeneration because of a hole in the intercooler. Its report suggested this damage was likely caused by a stone.

At that time, the Outlander had been driven for around 3,000km following purchase.

Vargas Portales contacted the dealer and advised it of Caroline Mitsubishi's diagnosis. An employee of the trader told him to make a claim using his mechanical breakdown insurance.

However, the buyer said the policy provider told him not to make a claim because the issue appeared to be pre-existing.

Instead, Vargas Portales had Caroline Mitsubishi carry out the repairs. Although the vehicle was no longer faulty, the buyer decided he wanted to reject it because of its issues and the trader's failure to respond to his concerns.

The dealer said Vargas Portales wasn't entitled to reject the car. It agreed that it had initially failed to respond to his concerns and had since dismissed the member of staff who had dealt with him.

However, once the trader's management became aware of the issues, it compensated the customer for all repair and diagnostic costs he had incurred.

The finding

The issue requiring the tribunal's consideration was if the Outlander was of acceptable quality for the purposes of the CGA.

Section six of the act defines goods are of acceptable quality if they are fit for all the purposes they are commonly supplied, they are acceptable in appearance and finish, and are free from minor defects, safe and durable.

The evidence showed the Outlander's intercooler was most likely punctured by a stone, which then caused a lack of boost inside the engine. The intercooler hose then split because the engine-control unit (ECU), through the boost sensor, detected the lack of boost entering the intake manifold.

The ECU then demanded more boost from the turbocharger, which caused a temporary "over boost" that could split any vulnerable intake hoses.

To also compensate for the lack of boost, the ECU would have injected more fuel into the combustion chamber to increase engine power and initiate the DPF's regeneration.

Too much fuel was then injected into the chamber, which interfered with the DPF regeneration process.

The tribunal had to determine whether the intercooler was damaged before or after the car was sold to Vargas Portales.

After considering all the evidence, it ruled the intercooler was most likely damaged after the vehicle was supplied because that damaged part would have caused the engine to over-fuel, resulting in high oil levels due to diesel contamination.

However, Vargas Portales inspected the car's oil level on delivery and noted that it was normal. Also, there were no other signs of a damaged intercooler within the first few weeks of the buyer using the Outlander.

The adjudicator said symptoms of such damage would have become apparent quickly, but Vargas Portales reported no such issues until he had driven the vehicle almost 3,000km before the DPF warning light came on.

As a result, the tribunal found the car had been of acceptable quality because it was as free of minor defects as a reasonable person would consider acceptable at the time of sale.

Order

The claim was dismissed.

Fair trading laws apply to unauthorised repairs on car offered for sale by dealer

The case: The trader agreed to sell Richard Forbes' Nissan Leaf and completed repairs on it without his permission. When the car failed to sell, the dealer asked Forbes to pay for the work before uplifting the Leaf. He reluctantly did so, but then wanted a refund of the repair costs.

The decision: The tribunal found there was a breach of the Fair Trading Act (FTA) because the remedial work was an unsolicited service.

At: The Motor Vehicle Disputes Tribunal, via video link.

Background

In February 2023, Richard Forbes asked Hamilton Electric Vehicles Ltd to sell his 2013 Nissan Leaf. The dealer agreed and displayed it for sale.

By the end of March, the trader hadn't sold the car so Forbes decided to sell it privately.

However, the dealer refused to release it until Forbes paid $736, which was what the trader had spent repairing damage to it.

Forbes said that work was performed without his authorisation. But because he had found a purchaser for the Leaf, he reluctantly paid that amount to Hamilton Electric Vehicles.

He wanted to recover that cost from the trader, but the dealer claimed the tribunal had no jurisdiction to consider this claim.

The tribunal didn't know the precise reasons for that submission because Hamilton Electric Vehicles offered no submissions in support of its position.

The trader declined to participate in the hearing when the tribunal advised that it couldn't make its own recording of the proceedings.

The case

Nicholas Down, director of Hamilton Electric Vehicles, appeared by video link at the hearing and advised the tribunal he was recording the hearing.

He wanted to record what was going on because he believed an applicant had lied during a previous and unrelated tribunal matter involving the dealership and he had been unable to obtain a copy of the transcript to prove that.

The tribunal advised Down he couldn't record the hearing, and that he could choose to turn the recording off and participate or the matter would proceed without him.

Down then disconnected himself from the hearing. Before doing so, he mentioned this matter should be transferred to the Disputes Tribunal because he considered the Motor Vehicle Disputes Tribunal didn't have jurisdiction.

The adjudicator then adjourned the proceedings and asked a manager from the Ministry of Justice to call Down and invite him to return to the hearing. He declined to do so.

Following the hearing, the tribunal issued a direction asking both parties to provide any submissions they would like to make on whether the tribunal had jurisdiction. Hamilton Electric Vehicles didn't provide any.

The finding

Firstly, the tribunal considered if it had jurisdiction to consider this claim.

Under section 89 of the Motor Vehicle Sale Act (MVSA), it has jurisdiction to determine claims under the FTA with respect to selling a car, but only if one of the parties in the matter is a registered motor-vehicle trader, which was the case in this application.

The term "sale" with respect to a vehicle is defined in section six of the MVSA as meaning "the sale or lease or exchange or any other disposition of that vehicle or of any interest in that vehicle" – for example, under a hire-purchase agreement.

It includes the display for sale, or offer for sale, lease or exchange of the car. However, it excludes a lease or offer for lease of a vehicle for a term not exceeding four months.

Under the MVSA, selling a car encompasses a broad range of conduct. It not only includes retailing a vehicle in a narrow, legal sense, but also includes the broader concepts of "display for sale" or "offer for sale".

This claim didn't relate to selling a car. However, the evidence was clear that Hamilton Electric Vehicles had displayed Forbes' Leaf for sale.

This claim, which was about costs incurred while the car was being offered for sale, therefore related to the sale of the Nissan.

Secondly, the tribunal considered if the trader provided an unsolicited service for the purposes of section 21b of the FTA.

It was clear the dealer did provide a service to Forbes by repairing his vehicle. An invoice dated April 13, 2023, stated the company arranged to have the car's rear bumper and left-hand rear guard repaired and for the affected areas to be repainted at a cost of $736.

Under section 21b of the FTA, Hamilton Electric Vehicles wouldn't be entitled to recover the cost of any repairs if such remedial work was an unsolicited service.

The tribunal understood the dealer said it was entitled to be paid for repairs it performed on the vehicle, including work that wasn't authorised by Forbes.

However, Forbes claimed he shouldn't be liable for the cost of those repairs as he never gave his approval for them to go ahead.

The tribunal was satisfied there was no agreement between the parties for Hamilton Electric Vehicles to perform any other remedial work on the Leaf at Forbes' expense.

Consequently, the work performed by the dealer was an unsolicited service and, as a result, Forbes wasn't liable to pay for this.

Thirdly, the tribunal considered if Hamilton Electric Vehicles breached section 21c of the FTA by asserting a right to payment for an unsolicited service, which isn't permitted by the legislation.

The adjudicator ruled the dealer had breached this prohibition by demanding that Forbes pay the cost of repairing the vehicle before it would release it to him.

Finally, the tribunal considered what remedies were available to Forbes for a breach of section 21c of the FTA.

Remedies under the legislation are discretionary and are to be exercised to give effect to the policy of the act, which includes to protect consumers' interests.

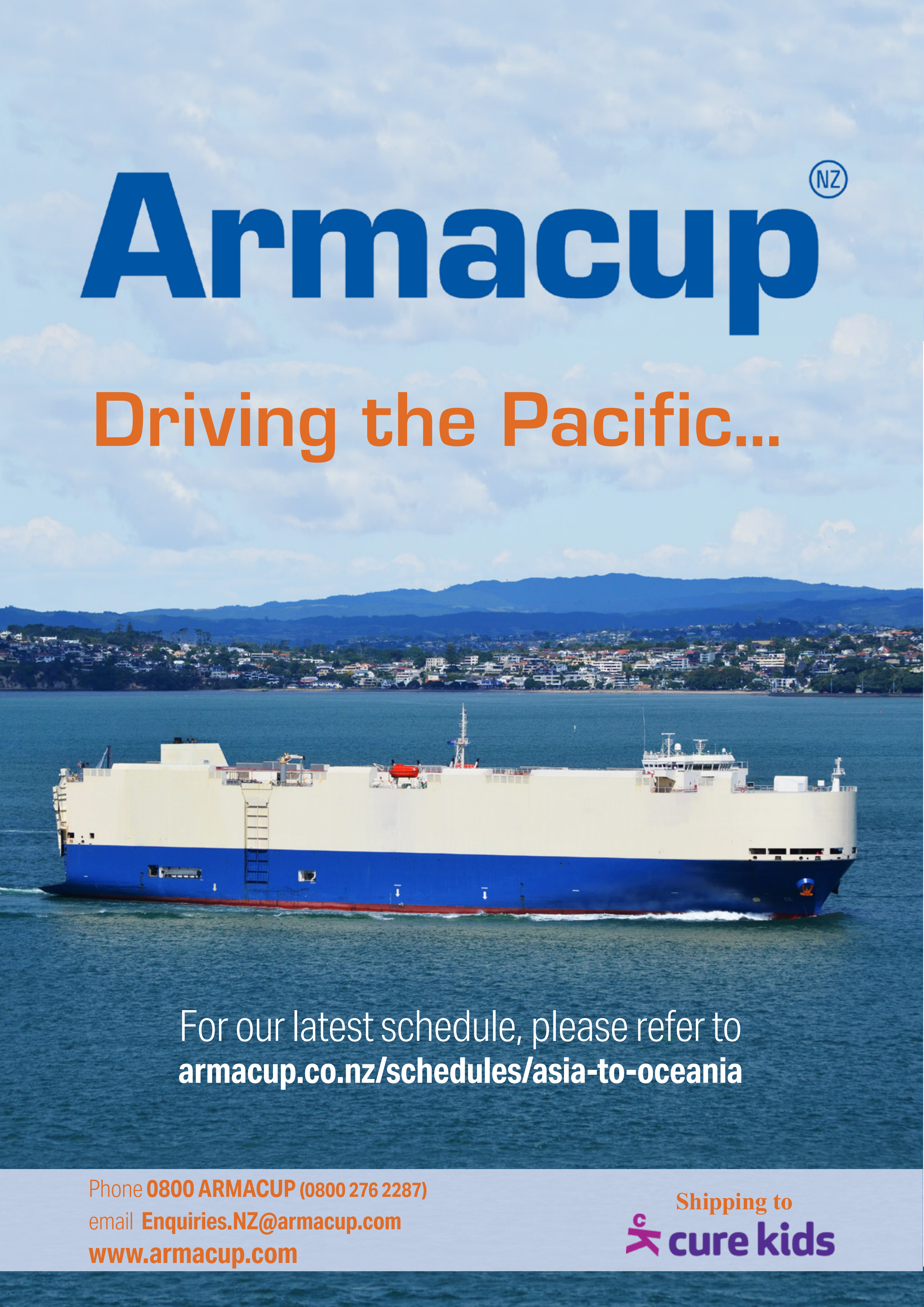
The objective of the FTA's remedies is to do justice to the parties in the particular circumstances of each case.

In this matter, the tribunal considered the appropriate remedy was an order requiring Hamilton Electric Vehicles to refund the amount paid by the applicant for the repairs.

Order

The dealer was ordered to pay $736 to Forbes.

A 2013 Nissan Leaf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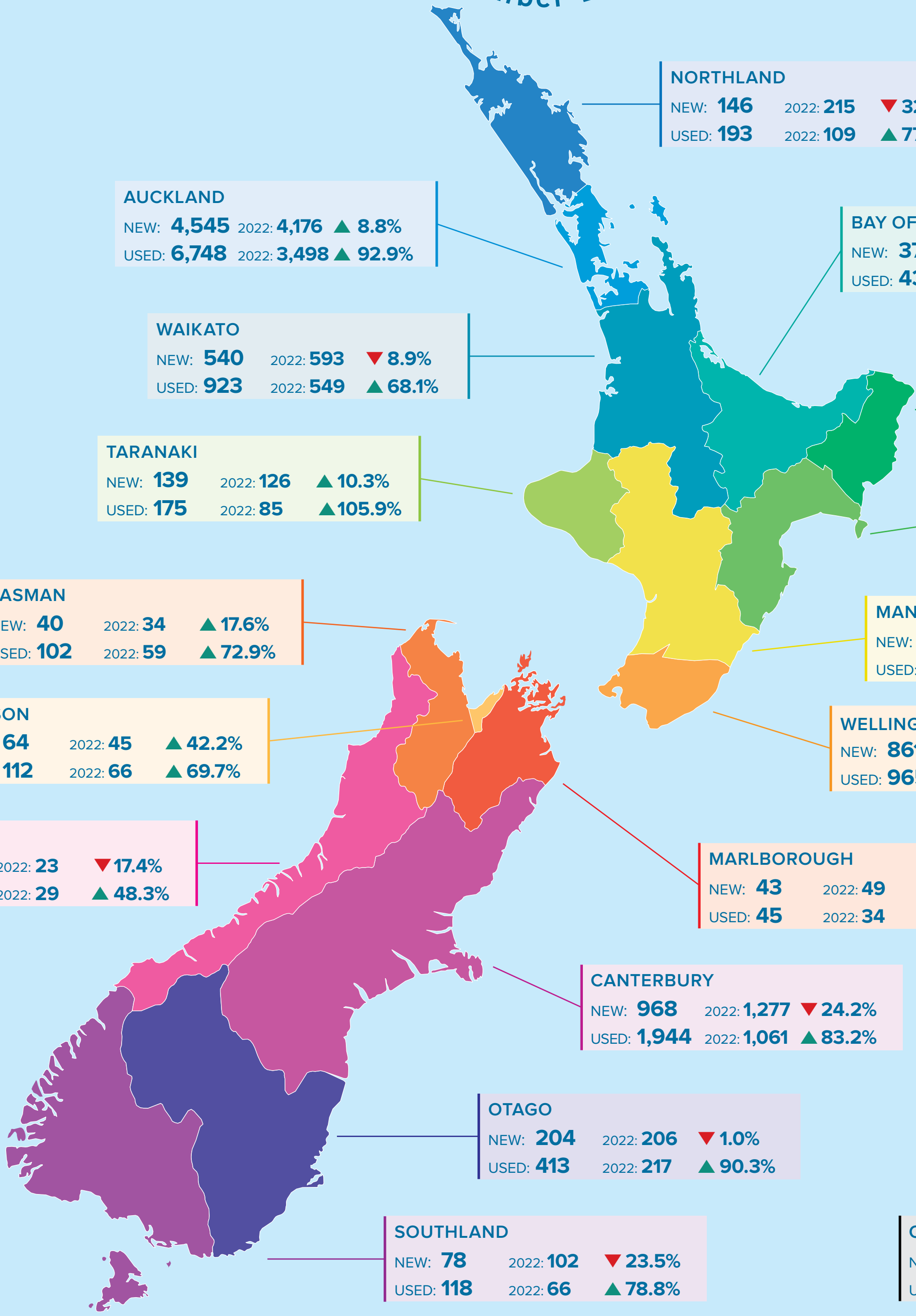
Around the Country
December 2023

Total new cars
8,559
2022: 8,487 ▲ 0.8%

Total imported used cars
12,806
2022: 6,974 ▲ 83.6%



NORTHLAND	NEW:	146	2022: 215	▼ 32.1%
	USED:	193	2022: 109	▲ 77.1%
AUCKLAND	NEW:	4,545	2022: 4,176	▲ 8.8%
	USED:	6,748	2022: 3,498	▲ 92.9%
BAY OF PLENTY	NEW:	374	2022: 400	▼ 6.5%
	USED:	438	2022: 330	▲ 32.7%
WAIKATO	NEW:	540	2022: 593	▼ 8.9%
	USED:	923	2022: 549	▲ 68.1%
GISBORNE	NEW:	18	2022: 53	▼ 66.0%
	USED:	42	2022: 40	▲ 5.0%
TARANAKI	NEW:	139	2022: 126	▲ 10.3%
	USED:	175	2022: 85	▲ 105.9%
HAWKE'S BAY	NEW:	229	2022: 197	▲ 16.2%
	USED:	225	2022: 134	▲ 67.9%
TASMAN	NEW:	40	2022: 34	▲ 17.6%
	USED:	102	2022: 59	▲ 72.9%
MANAWATU-WHANGANUI	NEW:	269	2022: 235	▲ 14.5%
	USED:	274	2022: 173	▲ 58.4%
NELSON	NEW:	64	2022: 45	▲ 42.2%
	USED:	112	2022: 66	▲ 69.7%
WELLINGTON	NEW:	861	2022: 746	▲ 15.4%
	USED:	965	2022: 498	▲ 93.8%
WEST COAST	NEW:	19	2022: 23	▼ 17.4%
	USED:	43	2022: 29	▲ 48.3%
MARLBOROUGH	NEW:	43	2022: 49	▼ 12.2%
	USED:	45	2022: 34	▲ 32.4%
CANTERBURY	NEW:	968	2022: 1,277	▼ 24.2%
	USED:	1,944	2022: 1,061	▲ 83.2%
OTAGO	NEW:	204	2022: 206	▼ 1.0%
	USED:	413	2022: 217	▲ 90.3%
SOUTHLAND	NEW:	78	2022: 102	▼ 23.5%
	USED:	118	2022: 66	▲ 78.8%
OTHERS (Chatham Islands, overseas, unknown)	NEW:	22	2022: 10	▲ 120.0%
	USED:	46	2022: 26	▲ 76.9%

Imported Passenger Vehicle Sales by Make - December 2023

MAKE	DEC'23	DEC'22	+/-%	DEC'23 MKT SHARE	2023 YEAR TO DATE	2023 MKT SHARE
Toyota	7,067	2,633	168.4	55.2%	51,121	44.5%
Nissan	2,089	887	135.5	16.3%	16,817	14.6%
Mazda	914	1,025	-10.8	7.1%	13,138	11.4%
Honda	693	417	66.2	5.4%	7,903	6.9%
Mitsubishi	507	229	121.4	4.0%	3,359	2.9%
Subaru	410	446	-8.1	3.2%	6,027	5.2%
Suzuki	193	141	36.9	1.5%	2,869	2.5%
BMW	187	230	-18.7	1.5%	2,837	2.5%
Lexus	172	76	126.3	1.3%	1,582	1.4%
Volkswagen	151	276	-45.3	1.2%	3,256	2.8%
Mercedes-Benz	99	103	-3.9	0.8%	1,615	1.4%
Audi	96	165	-41.8	0.7%	1,839	1.6%
Tesla	28	1	2,700.0	0.2%	88	0.1%
Ford	27	60	-55.0	0.2%	422	0.4%
Land Rover	19	33	-42.4	0.1%	190	0.2%
Chevrolet	18	34	-47.1	0.1%	171	0.1%
Peugeot	18	5	260.0	0.1%	118	0.1%
Jaguar	14	11	27.3	0.1%	129	0.1%
Mini	14	13	7.7	0.1%	167	0.1%
Volvo	12	34	-64.7	0.1%	196	0.2%
BYD	8	0	800.0	0.1%	38	0.0%
Hyundai	8	11	-27.3	0.1%	73	0.1%
Porsche	7	19	-63.2	0.1%	120	0.1%
Jeep	5	13	-61.5	0.0%	92	0.1%
Bentley	4	4	0.0	0.0%	32	0.0%
Daihatsu	4	1	300.0	0.0%	58	0.1%
Dodge	4	14	-71.4	0.0%	81	0.1%
Renault	4	2	100.0	0.0%	32	0.0%
Smart	4	3	33.3	0.0%	48	0.0%
Holden	3	10	-70.0	0.0%	64	0.1%
Pontiac	3	6	-50.0	0.0%	19	0.0%
Alfa Romeo	2	3	-33.3	0.0%	14	0.0%
Aston Martin	2	0	200.0	0.0%	13	0.0%
Rolls-Royce	2	1	100.0	0.0%	12	0.0%
Vauxhall	2	0	200.0	0.0%	5	0.0%
Others	16	68	-76.5	0.1%	377	0.3%
Total	**12,806**	**6,974**	**83.6**	**100.0%**	**114,922**	**100.0%**

Imported Passenger Vehicle Sales by Model - December 2023

MAKE	MODEL	DEC'23	DEC'22	+/-%	DEC'23 MKT SHARE	2023 YEAR TO DATE	2023 MKT SHARE
Toyota	Aqua	3,096	1,067	190.2	24.2%	19,167	16.7%
Toyota	Prius	1,841	571	222.4	14.4%	12,620	11.0%
Nissan	Leaf	876	167	424.6	6.8%	4,437	3.9%
Toyota	Corolla	695	238	192.0	5.4%	4,674	4.1%
Nissan	Note	644	185	248.1	5.0%	4,308	3.7%
Mitsubishi	Outlander	440	163	169.9	3.4%	2,498	2.2%
Toyota	C-HR	381	117	225.6	3.0%	2,655	2.3%
Mazda	Axela	361	368	-1.9	2.8%	5,080	4.4%
Honda	Fit	267	197	35.5	2.1%	3,558	3.1%
Nissan	X-Trail	204	145	40.7	1.6%	2,317	2.0%
Mazda	Demio	197	231	-14.7	1.5%	2,907	2.5%
Subaru	Impreza	195	167	16.8	1.5%	2,759	2.4%
Nissan	Serena	191	137	39.4	1.5%	2,691	2.3%
Toyota	Vitz	159	99	60.6	1.2%	1,755	1.5%
Mazda	CX-5	133	169	-21.3	1.0%	1,980	1.7%
Suzuki	Swift	130	109	19.3	1.0%	1,950	1.7%
Subaru	XV	124	98	26.5	1.0%	1,537	1.3%
Honda	Vezel	107	57	87.7	0.8%	1,107	1.0%
Toyota	Camry	101	47	114.9	0.8%	1,170	1.0%
Volkswagen	Golf	99	190	-47.9	0.8%	2,166	1.9%
Honda	Shuttle	87	20	335.0	0.7%	333	0.3%
Toyota	Yaris	86	11	681.8	0.7%	399	0.3%
Toyota	Sai	82	73	12.3	0.6%	1,223	1.1%
Honda	Grace	77	26	196.2	0.6%	535	0.5%
Mazda	Premacy	75	82	-8.5	0.6%	1,153	1.0%
Toyota	Auris	73	53	37.7	0.6%	600	0.5%
Lexus	CT 200h	69	14	392.9	0.5%	485	0.4%
Toyota	Spade	68	10	580.0	0.5%	696	0.6%
Mazda	Atenza	57	102	-44.1	0.4%	971	0.8%
Toyota	RAV4	47	11	327.3	0.4%	395	0.3%
Toyota	Sienta	45	19	136.8	0.4%	472	0.4%
Toyota	Harrier	42	14	200.0	0.3%	242	0.2%
Toyota	Wish	41	46	-10.9	0.3%	846	0.7%
Honda	Accord	40	15	166.7	0.3%	280	0.2%
Lexus	IS 300h	36	6	500.0	0.3%	200	0.2%
Others		1,640	1,950	-15.9	12.8%	24,756	21.5%
Total		**12,806**	**6,974**	**83.6**	**100.0%**	**114,922**	**100.0%**

Company sets expansion plan

A strategic property plan "will drive profitable growth through new and better branches in the right locations", says a major player in the used-imports sector.

Paul Millward, chief executive officer of 2 Cheap Cars (2CC), says the company needs to be strong "where it matters most, and that's largely in big urban centres and specifically Auckland".

It has seven branches in the country's biggest city where it holds a nine per cent market share, but its scale means further opportunities exist.

"We're also doubling the size of our Christchurch yard where we see potential for an expanded dealership in a market that's significant and where our share is low," adds Millward.

"Over the next three years, 2CC will focus on a two-tiered site strategy with mega and satellite sites depending on the scale of the geographic opportunity.

"The rationale for this is that additional sites require low overheads to run and, given our business model, new yards require minimal capital investment."

As for the market, stock availability is "generally improving" post-pandemic, while the company now has multiple shipping partners to support consistent delivery and strong inventory.

"New Zealand is in a cost-of-living crisis, climate change is creating weather events causing vehicle damage and the fleet is ageing," notes Millward.

"The upshot is car repairs are increasingly uneconomic, new-vehicle sales are under pressure and we're seeing demand for used cars in the $8,000 to $12,000 bracket, which is where we are positioned.

"In terms of competitors, we continue to see the numbers of registered dealers decline and there remain significant barriers to import at scale.

"Simply put, 2CC's strategy – coupled with our scale, brand and market dynamics – paints a positive picture for the future."

Gross margin expansion is the company's key metric for success. It aims to achieve this by continuing to increase finance-and-insurance penetration, accelerating digital capabilities and ensuring it has "the right cars, in the right places, at the right prices".

Its intention is to prioritise margin over market share because "scale is still important to a low-cost retailer, but delivering profits is what will create value for shareholders".

Electric and hybrid-electric vehicles (HEVs) continue to be a sweet spot for 2 Cheap Cars and accounted for 41 per cent of total sales in 2022/23 – up by 65 per cent on the previous year.

"Our ability to source quality hybrids is a strength," Millward says. "Pain at the pump will continue to make EVs and HEVs attractive."

Looking to the future, the company aims to make $6.5 million net profit after tax in the 2025 financial year.

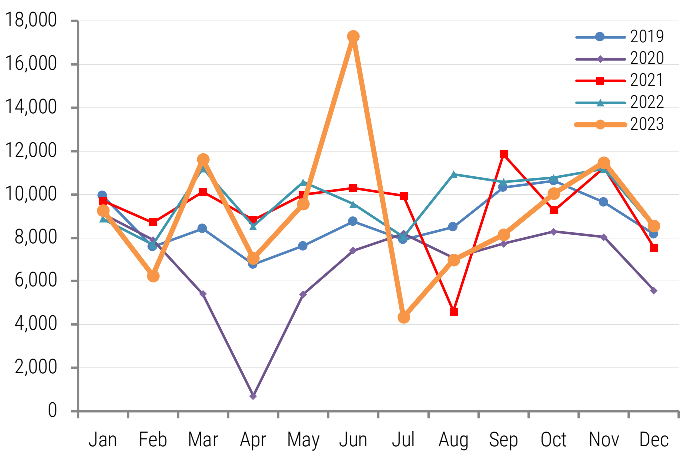
"Provided we execute on the strategy – and assuming foreign exchange, supply and regulatory stability – we're confident this is a realistic figure."

Massive jump

There were 12,806 used-imported cars registered in December – the last month of the clean car discount. The total was up by 83.6 per cent compared to 6,974 in the same month of 2022.

The Toyota Aqua topped the models' ladder with 3,096 units. The Prius was second with 1,841 with Nissan's Leaf third on 876. December's most popular marque was Toyota thanks to 7,067 first-time registrations with Nissan second on 2,089.

Used Imported Passenger Registrations - 2019-2023



Used Imported Passenger Vehicle Sales by Motive Power - December 2023

MAKE	DEC'23	DEC'22	+/-%	DEC'23 MKT SHARE	2023 YEAR TO DATE	2023 MKT SHARE
Full battery electric	989	180	449.4%	7.7%	4,813	4.2%
Plug-in hybrid electric	623	160	289.4%	4.9%	2,926	2.5%
Non plug-in petrol hybrid	8,182	2,900	182.1%	63.9%	59,357	51.6%
Petrol	2,951	3,563	-17.2%	23.0%	46,335	40.3%
Diesel	60	171	-64.9%	0.5%	1,486	1.3%
Others (includes non plug-in diesel hybrid, fuel cell)	1	0	0.0%	0.0%	5	0.0%
Total	**12,806**	**6,974**	**83.6%**		**114,922**	

Ratings for safety changed

Safety ratings for light vehicles in New Zealand have been updated on the Rightcar website.

The system, which indicates how much protection models provide in accidents, applies to the vast majority of in-service used cars, SUVs, utes and vans.

Based on the latest independent analysis of Australasian real-world crash data, the ratings of about 900,000 light vehicles in the fleet have changed compared to how they were rated in 2022.

"No one expects to crash, but everyone makes mistakes," says Fabian Marsh, the NZTA's senior manager of road safety. "When this happens, safe vehicles play a major role in preventing deaths and serious injuries.

"Many people are unaware the safety of different vehicles – both used and new – can vary greatly, or that in a crash they are twice as safe in a five-star rated car than in one-star car."

The transport agency says vehicles with one or two safety stars make up about 40 per cent of New Zealand's light fleet, but are over-represented in accidents involving deaths and serious injuries.

Previous analysis has shown high safety-rated vehicles are available in most categories and price brackets.

The Rightcar website also includes information about models' crash-avoidance features, such as automatic emergency braking and lane-keeping systems.

The transport agency recommends people check the safety features vehicles have along with their ratings before deciding what to buy, while car dealers must ensure safety-ratings data on their stock is current.

As for the clean car standard, annual targets for carbon-dioxide emissions changed on January 1.

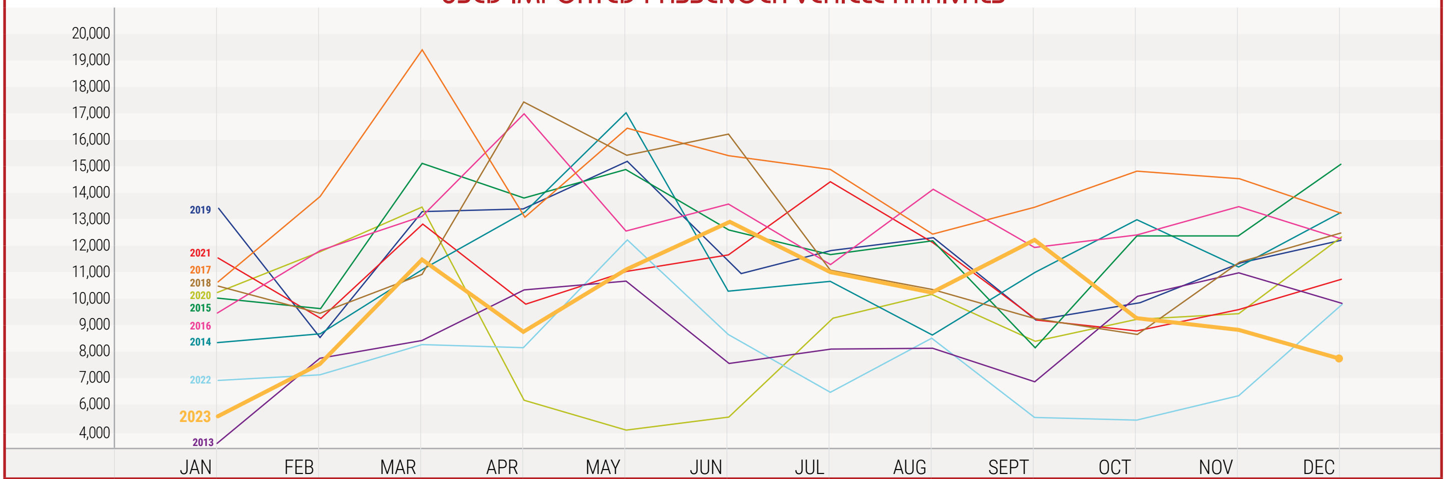
They dropped to 133.9g/km from 145g/km for cars and from 218.3g/km to 201.9g/km for commercials. Annual light-fleet targets are legislated until 2027.

USED IMPORTS UP 26%

There were 7,772 used cars imported during December to take the full-year total to 115,753, which was up by 26.1 per cent when compared to 91,783 in 2022.

Japan accounted for 98 per cent of 2023's total with 113,462 units. In addition, 1,263 used passenger vehicles were brought in from Australia last year, 272 came from the UK, 265 from the US and 250 from Singapore.

USED IMPORTED PASSENGER VEHICLE ARRIVALS



Used Imported Passenger Vehicles By Country Of Export

COUNTRY OF EXPORT	2023														2022		2021	
	JAN '23	FEB '23	MAR '23	APR '23	MAY '23	JUN '23	JUL '23	AUG '23	SEP '23	OCT '23	NOV '23	DEC '23	DEC MKT %	2023 TOTAL	2022 TOTAL	MKT SHARE	2021 TOTAL	MKT SHARE
Australia	126	76	136	85	125	96	89	95	83	165	84	103	1.3%	**1,263**	2,358	2.6%	3,072	2.4%
Great Britain	34	17	24	23	20	17	15	28	15	25	35	19	0.2%	**272**	514	0.6%	1,259	1.0%
Japan	4,846	7,246	11,225	8,607	10,740	12,717	10,841	10,092	11,867	8,950	8,764	7,567	97.4%	**113,462**	87,740	95.6%	123,508	94.8%
Singapore	23	3	24	27	28	20	20	15	13	18	22	37	0.5%	**250**	426	0.5%	1,378	1.1%
USA	29	18	21	10	21	25	21	21	41	29	15	14	0.2%	**265**	491	0.5%	697	0.5%
Other countries	24	12	12	16	20	25	14	14	33	18	21	32	0.4%	**241**	254	0.3%	403	0.3%
Total	**5,082**	**7,372**	**11,442**	**8,768**	**10,954**	**12,900**	**11,000**	**10,265**	**12,052**	**9,205**	**8,941**	**7,772**	**100.0%**	**115,753**	**91,783**	**100.0%**	**130,317**	**100.0%**

Members driving forward course

The Financial Services Federation (FSF) says a "gold standard" is being set for lenders with the launch of an NZQA-approved level-five course in consumer credit.

The micro-credential is designed to elevate the skillset of anyone working in the highly regulated sector.

It aims to equip them with knowledge to contribute to positive outcomes for lenders and navigate the consumer credit landscape.

The qualification's development has been led by the FSF in partnership with Strategi, which is a provider of education solutions.

The course covers the Credit Contracts and Consumer Finance Act (CCCFA), the legislative framework more widely, stakeholders in consumer credit, responsible lending, disclosure requirements, identifying repayment difficulties, credit-related insurance and credit reporting.

It also addresses the importance of treating borrowers fairly and ethically with an emphasis on people in vulnerable circumstances.

Lyn McMorran, the FSF's executive director, says: "This qualification is a significant milestone for the federation and our members have been the driving force behind it. Our members pledge to maintain elevated standards when they join the FSF, but this is a further opportunity to formalise their commitment to responsible lending.

"There's nothing like this out there for lenders at this level. You could do a business degree and won't even hear CCCFA. You learn in-house, on the job and, like in any industry, habits get passed on. This qualification sets a standard.

"It's important we retain and attract good people in the non-bank lending sector, and hope this qualification helps to elevate consumer credit as a fulfilling profession."

The FSF is sponsoring 10 free scholarships for financial mentors looking to bolster their toolkits with the qualification.

TRADING TAKES TUMBLE

Dealers sold 13,743 second-hand cars to the public in December, which was a decrease of 8.3 per cent from 14,985 during the same month of 2022.

There were also 11,769 public-to-trader transactions last month, which was down by 0.2 per cent from 11,798 when compared to the previous December.

SECONDHAND CAR SALES - December 2023

	DEALER TO PUBLIC				PUBLIC TO PUBLIC			PUBLIC TO DEALER		
REGION	DEC '23	DEC '22	+/- %	MARKET SHARE	DEC '23	DEC '22	+/- %	DEC '23	DEC '22	+/- %
Northland	449	483	-7.0	3.27	1,759	1,711	2.8	137	169	-18.9
Auckland	4,539	5,424	-16.3	33.03	12,419	12,033	3.2	5,148	5,352	-3.8
Waikato	1,385	1,579	-12.3	10.08	3,563	3,515	1.4	993	1,063	-6.6
Bay of Plenty	918	908	1.1	6.68	2,614	2,429	7.6	545	565	-3.5
Gisborne	126	151	-16.6	0.92	337	332	1.5	51	48	6.3
Hawke's Bay	531	522	1.7	3.86	1,326	1,236	7.3	346	338	2.4
Taranaki	340	319	6.6	2.47	947	951	-0.4	164	167	-1.8
Manawatu-Whanganui	742	766	-3.1	5.40	1,821	1,874	-2.8	711	613	16.0
Wellington	1,254	1,346	-6.8	9.12	2,849	2,792	2.0	1,092	928	17.7
Tasman	115	141	-18.4	0.84	436	384	13.5	16	21	-23.8
Nelson	120	152	-21.1	0.87	357	369	-3.3	134	116	15.5
Marlborough	121	129	-6.2	0.88	366	322	13.7	51	77	-33.8
West Coast	104	112	-7.1	0.76	248	292	-15.1	39	38	2.6
Canterbury	2,032	1,929	5.3	14.79	4,934	4,648	6.2	1,820	1,753	3.8
Otago	657	681	-3.5	4.78	1,781	1,706	4.4	404	416	-2.9
Southland	262	284	-7.7	1.91	951	795	19.6	118	134	-11.9
Other	48	59	-18.6	0.35	130	169	-23.1	0	0	0.0
NZ Total	**13,743**	**14,985**	**-8.3**	**100.00**	**36,838**	**35,558**	**3.6**	**11,769**	**11,798**	**-0.2**

New Passenger Vehicle Sales by Make - December 2023

MAKE	DEC'23	DEC'22	+/-%	DEC'23 MKT SHARE	2023 YEAR TO DATE	2023 MKT SHARE
Toyota	1,740	1,191	46.1	20.3%	21,909	19.8%
MG	803	458	75.3	9.4%	6,096	5.5%
Mitsubishi	710	980	-27.6	8.3%	10,282	9.3%
Ford	653	448	45.8	7.6%	5,444	4.9%
BYD	651	317	105.4	7.6%	3,714	3.4%
Honda	587	226	159.7	6.9%	3,677	3.3%
Tesla	558	1,279	-56.4	6.5%	4,900	4.4%
Kia	396	167	137.1	4.6%	10,062	9.1%
Hyundai	392	496	-21.0	4.6%	7,104	6.4%
Suzuki	334	695	-51.9	3.9%	6,812	6.2%
GWM	220	0	22,000.0	2.6%	899	0.8%
Mazda	137	243	-43.6	1.6%	3,828	3.5%
Volkswagen	136	235	-42.1	1.6%	2,824	2.6%
BMW	120	100	20.0	1.4%	1,763	1.6%
Skoda	111	173	-35.8	1.3%	1,723	1.6%
Nissan	109	219	-50.2	1.3%	3,201	2.9%
Lexus	101	51	98.0	1.2%	1,309	1.2%
Mini	93	92	1.1	1.1%	1,041	0.9%
Mercedes-Benz	91	127	-28.3	1.1%	1,486	1.3%
Subaru	86	196	-56.1	1.0%	1,959	1.8%
Polestar	72	24	200.0	0.8%	546	0.5%
Jeep	70	22	218.2	0.8%	511	0.5%
Peugeot	55	81	-32.1	0.6%	889	0.8%
Land Rover	54	64	-15.6	0.6%	1,225	1.1%
Cupra	49	31	58.1	0.6%	472	0.4%
Audi	44	105	-58.1	0.5%	1,373	1.2%
Opel	40	18	122.2	0.5%	362	0.3%
Fiat	34	97	-64.9	0.4%	152	0.1%
SsangYong	33	25	32.0	0.4%	365	0.3%
Volvo	20	33	-39.4	0.2%	585	0.5%
Citroen	15	11	36.4	0.2%	185	0.2%
Haval	10	139	-92.8	0.1%	1,888	1.7%
Jaguar	10	18	-44.4	0.1%	179	0.2%
LDV	7	3	133.3	0.1%	40	0.0%
Alfa Romeo	5	18	-72.2	0.1%	61	0.1%
Mahindra	3	8	-62.5	0.0%	278	0.3%
Renault	3	11	-72.7	0.0%	177	0.2%
Yamaha	3	1	200.0	0.0%	27	0.0%
Can-Am	2	2	0.0	0.0%	42	0.0%
Isuzu	1	21	-95.2	0.0%	121	0.1%
Porsche	1	16	-93.8	0.0%	476	0.4%
Others		46			419	0.4%
Total	**8,559**	**8,487**	**0.8**	**100.0%**	**110,406**	**100.0%**

New Passenger Vehicle Sales by Model - December 2023

MAKE	MODEL	DEC'23	DEC'22	+/-%	DEC'23 MKT SHARE	2023 YEAR TO DATE	2023 MKT SHARE
MG	MG4	622	0	62,200.0	7.3%	1,790	1.6%
Toyota	RAV4	439	266	65.0	5.1%	8,753	7.9%
Honda	Jazz	437	136	221.3	5.1%	2,175	2.0%
BYD	Atto 3	428	317	35.0	5.0%	3,170	2.9%
Toyota	Yaris Cross	358	146	145.2	4.2%	2,310	2.1%
Mitsubishi	Outlander	357	336	6.3	4.2%	4,055	3.7%
Tesla	Model Y	356	866	-58.9	4.2%	3,932	3.6%
Ford	Escape	333	182	83.0	3.9%	1,597	1.4%
Mitsubishi	Eclipse Cross	266	254	4.7	3.1%	3,641	3.3%
Toyota	Yaris	261	121	115.7	3.0%	1,418	1.3%
Suzuki	Swift	219	367	-40.3	2.6%	3,919	3.5%
Hyundai	Kona	202	151	33.8	2.4%	1,966	1.8%
Tesla	Model 3	202	413	-51.1	2.4%	968	0.9%
Toyota	Highlander	193	63	206.3	2.3%	1,419	1.3%
BYD	Dolphin	163	0	16,300.0	1.9%	484	0.4%
Toyota	Corolla Cross	161	103	56.3	1.9%	1,873	1.7%
Kia	EV6	151	3	4,933.3	1.8%	955	0.9%
MG	ZS	138	389	-64.5	1.6%	3,117	2.8%
Toyota	Corolla	131	301	-56.5	1.5%	2,285	2.1%
Honda	ZR-V	124	0	12,400.0	1.4%	628	0.6%
GWM	Ora	114	0	11,400.0	1.3%	442	0.4%
Ford	Puma	111	60	85.0	1.3%	775	0.7%
Hyundai	Ioniq	106	40	165.0	1.2%	702	0.6%
Kia	Stonic	98	19	415.8	1.1%	1,706	1.5%
Ford	Mustang Mach-E	90	0	9,000.0	1.1%	487	0.4%
Ford	Focus	84	4	2,000.0	1.0%	518	0.5%
Kia	Niro	78	8	875.0	0.9%	2,052	1.9%
Mini	Hatch	71	55	29.1	0.8%	521	0.5%
Toyota	Land Cruiser Prado	70	48	45.8	0.8%	721	0.7%
Nissan	Leaf	69	0	6,900.0	0.8%	416	0.4%
Polestar	Polestar 2	69	24	187.5	0.8%	541	0.5%
Volkswagen	ID.4	69	0	6,900.0	0.8%	382	0.3%
Skoda	Enyaq	62	18	244.4	0.7%	270	0.2%
BYD	Seal	59	0	5,900.0	0.7%	59	0.1%
GWM	Haval Jolion	54	0	5,400.0	0.6%	151	0.1%
Mitsubishi	ASX	51	331	-84.6	0.6%	1,259	1.1%
GWM	Haval H6	50	0	5,000.0	0.6%	193	0.2%
Toyota	bZ4X	50	0	5,000.0	0.6%	53	0.0%
BMW	i	44	33	33.3	0.5%	251	0.2%
Toyota	C-HR	44	64	-31.3	0.5%	1,264	1.1%
Hyundai	Tucson	42	88	-52.3	0.5%	1,943	1.8%
Kia	Sorento	42	14	200.0	0.5%	1,279	1.2%
Suzuki	S-Cross	42	16	162.5	0.5%	480	0.4%
Suzuki	Vitara	40	150	-73.3	0.5%	942	0.9%
Peugeot	208	37	54	-31.5	0.4%	375	0.3%
Others		1,372	3,047	-55.0	16.0%	42,169	38.2%
Total		**8,559**	**8,487**	**0.8**	**100.0%**	**110,406**	**100.0%**

Hybrids prosper in 'disruptive' year

Toyota NZ reports strong sales of new vehicles in 2023 despite it being affected by government policies.

It registered 33,640 units last year, which was up by 13 per cent from 2022's total, according to the company's statistics.

Chief executive Neeraj Lala notes there were plenty of challenges during the past 12 months, but it was humbling to be overall market leader again.

"To be honest, 2023 was the most disruptive year we have faced in terms of intervention in the market," he says.

"The lack of certainty and policy flip-flops had an enormous impact on our supply chain, people and stores.

"However, we had incredibly understanding customers. With the support of our business partners, we made huge efforts to get our orders delivered even as policies waxed and waned."

Lala notes the transition towards the full electrification of the light fleet is under way and that Toyota NZ is committed to providing the broadest range of models with the right technology to the right people and at the right time.

"We call this 'mobility for all', which needs customers, tech and infrastructure to be moving forward together."

Different consumers need different types of access to mobility. Toyota's aim over the next five years is to offer a range of new and used vehicles with a mix of powertrains.

"We are a volume business," says Lala. "Our strategy has been to serve all customers in just about every segment and that's not about to change.

"What is changing is the mix and availability of models. Over time we will sell more electrified vehicles and a rapidly decreasing number of diesel or petrol.

"We have four core types of technology on our five-year radar – hybrid electric, plug-in hybrid electric, battery electric and fuel-cell EVs.

"By offering a wide range, we will be able to meet our commitment to a 46 per cent reduction in carbon dioxide [CO2] emissions and our target of getting to net zero as a global organisation by 2050."

As more consumers seek fuel-saving and lower CO2-emitting powertrains, Toyota is providing hybrid options in core passenger models, such as the Corolla, RAV4 and Highlander.

Hybrids accounted for 52 per cent of the marque's Kiwi sales in 2023, which helped reduce the average emissions of vehicles it imported by seven per cent to 165g of CO2 per kilometre at the year's end.

The introduction of its first fully electric bZ4X and hybrid Hilux in 2024 will further support its commitment to decarbonising its portfolio.

Toyota NZ also imports used vehicles and sold 7,336 such units last year, an increase of 25 per cent from 2022.

With the marque represented by almost one-in-four light vehicles in this country, its service and parts business is also experiencing growth and distributed 2.7 million parts last year.

Lexus NZ, meanwhile, has set an annual record after selling 1,309 cars and SUVs last year, up from its previous best of 1,023 in 2022. Its portfolio includes hybrid, plug-in hybrid and battery-electric options with 90 per cent of its 2023 registrations being electrified.

Average CO2 emissions across its range were down to 119g/km compared with 121g/km in 2022.

Lala says Lexus' record year reflects growing demand for low-emitting, electrified powertrains coupled with the marque's "premium technology, body and interiors".

ACROSS THE TASMAN

Australia's new-vehicle market notched up a record 1,216,780 sales in 2023, climbing by 2.3 per cent from the previous best of 1,189,116 in 2017. Last year's total was also 12.5 per cent higher than 1,081,429 in 2022.

Ford's Ranger was the best-performing model on 63,356 units and it was the first time since 1995 that a blue-oval nameplate has topped the ladder across the ditch.

Next up were Toyota's Hilux on 61,111, Isuzu's D-Max with 31,202, Toyota's RAV4 on 29,627 and the MG ZS with 29,258.

Toyota was number-one on the marques' ladder with 215,240 units for a 17.7 per cent share of the market.

Mazda was second with 100,008 and 8.2 per cent, while Ford took third spot on 87,800 units and 7.2 per cent. Kia and Hyundai completed the top five with 76,120 and 75,183 registrations respectively.

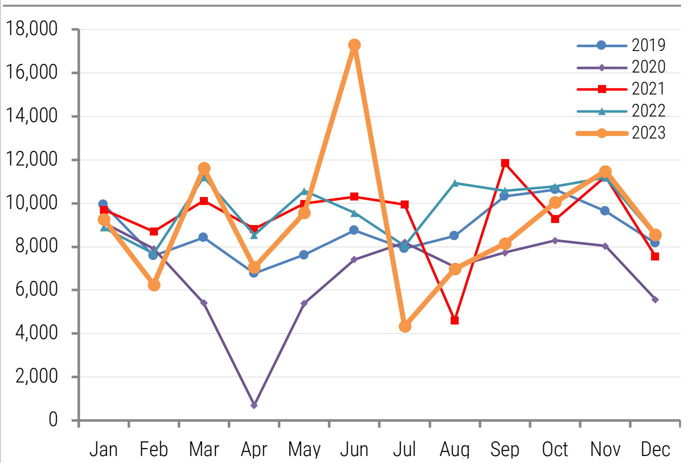
SUVs and light commercials made up 78.4 per cent of sales and comprised all the top 10 vehicles sold in Australia during 2023.

Electric charge

Registrations of new cars totalled 8,559 last month, which was up by 0.8 per cent on 8,487 during December 2022. The MG4 was the best-selling model on 622. Second place went to Toyota's RAV4 with 439 and the Honda Jazz came third on 437.

December's top marque for new-vehicle registrations was Toyota with 1,740. It was followed by MG on 803. Mitsubishi came third with 710.

New Passenger Registrations - 2019-2023



New Passenger Vehicle Sales by Motive Power - December 2023

MAKE	DEC'23	DEC'22	+/-%	DEC'23 MKT SHARE	2023 YEAR TO DATE	2023 MKT SHARE
Full battery electric	3,357	2,210	51.9%	39.2%	21,016	19.0%
Plug-in hybrid electric	987	385	156.4%	11.5%	8,989	8.1%
Non plug-in petrol hybrid	2,644	1,304	102.8%	30.9%	29,479	26.7%
Petrol	1,338	3,828	-65.0%	15.6%	42,410	38.4%
Diesel	233	760	-69.3%	2.7%	8,510	7.7%
Others (includes non plug-in diesel hybrid, fuel cell)	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	2	0.0%
Total	**8,559**	**8,487**	**0.8%**		**110,406**	

Market to become 'less volatile'

Ford New Zealand is expecting to "get out of the blocks fairly quickly" with the Ranger and other products.

Simon Rutherford, managing director, says many customers held off buying in 2023 and were waiting for the clean car discount (CCD) to disappear.

"There's going to be a settling period for the industry following the end of the CCD, and I expect the first quarter and into the second quarter will be a period of normalisation," he predicts.

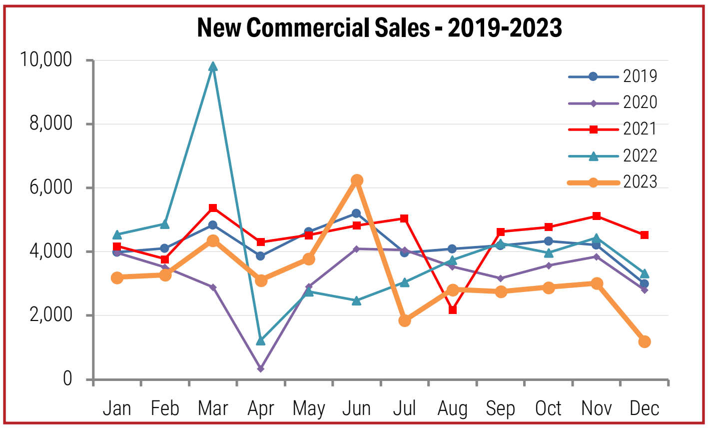
"Last year was very unstable and difficult for the industry as a whole to navigate, with fluctuations of cash flow and inventories in a high cost-of-capital business and high interest rates. It's hard for dealers to navigate that.

"We're pleased to get into what we hope is a less volatile environment. At the same time, we still want to lower our emissions after achieving our target last year."

Rutherford told Autofile that he wants the clean car standard "to be more realistic in terms of its forward slope of the curve".

He adds: "We also want to work towards alternative sustainable transport, lower emissions, and having fair and reasonable targets to do that.

"There needs to be an all-sectors approach to achieve that and we need to understand the dynamics of what's happening globally with the transition to electric vehicles. The pace might be changing a bit, but it's not stopping."



DOUBLE CLAIMED

Rutherford is "really pleased" the Ranger was New Zealand's best-selling new vehicle last year, "particularly given the clean car

New Commercial Sales by Make - December 2023

MAKE	DEC'23	DEC'22	+/-%	DEC'23 MKT SHARE	2023 YEAR TO DATE	2023 MKT SHARE
Ford	229	1,157	-80.2	19.0%	10,732	27.8%
Toyota	151	750	-79.9	12.5%	10,440	27.1%
Fiat	125	25	400.0	10.4%	534	1.4%
Isuzu	120	226	-46.9	10.0%	2,278	5.9%
LDV	115	157	-26.8	9.6%	1,176	3.1%
Mercedes-Benz	91	115	-20.9	7.6%	1,057	2.7%
Fuso	70	78	-10.3	5.8%	1,256	3.3%
Iveco	48	62	-22.6	4.0%	597	1.5%
Scania	31	31	0.0	2.6%	661	1.7%
Hino	28	62	-54.8	2.3%	756	2.0%
Mitsubishi	28	289	-90.3	2.3%	3,115	8.1%
DAF	24	6	300.0	2.0%	256	0.7%
Volkswagen	19	45	-57.8	1.6%	1,022	2.7%
Factory Built	15	2	650.0	1.2%	53	0.1%
UD Trucks	15	20	-25.0	1.2%	315	0.8%
SsangYong	14	9	55.6	1.2%	152	0.4%
Mazda	11	21	-47.6	0.9%	347	0.9%
Foton	9	9	0.0	0.7%	177	0.5%
Volvo	9	12	-25.0	0.7%	314	0.8%
Hyundai	8	33	-75.8	0.7%	483	1.3%
Others	44	217	-79.7	3.7%	2,824	7.3%
Total	**1,204**	**3,326**	**-63.8**	**100.0%**	**38,545**	**100.0%**

New Commercial Sales by Model - December 2023

MAKE	MODEL	DEC'23	DEC'22	+/-%	DEC'23 MKT SHARE	2023 YEAR TO DATE	2023 MKT SHARE
Ford	Ranger	198	1,113	-82.2	16.4%	9,908	25.7%
Fiat	Ducato	125	25	400.0	10.4%	522	1.4%
Toyota	Hilux	106	614	-82.7	8.8%	8,049	20.9%
Mercedes-Benz	Sprinter	77	91	-15.4	6.4%	815	2.1%
Isuzu	N Series	44	37	18.9	3.7%	517	1.3%
Isuzu	F Series	38	36	5.6	3.2%	539	1.4%
LDV	eT60	35	26	34.6	2.9%	144	0.4%
Iveco	Daily	34	56	-39.3	2.8%	431	1.1%
Ford	Transit	31	41	-24.4	2.6%	814	2.1%
Toyota	Hiace	31	122	-74.6	2.6%	1,809	4.7%
LDV	Deliver 9	29	32	-9.4	2.4%	228	0.6%
Mitsubishi	Triton	28	279	-90.0	2.3%	3,103	8.1%
Isuzu	D-Max	24	135	-82.2	2.0%	1,038	2.7%
LDV	eDeliver 3	24	5	380.0	2.0%	97	0.3%
DAF	CF	23	5	360.0	1.9%	236	0.6%
LDV	eDeliver 9	21	24	-12.5	1.7%	83	0.2%
Fuso	Canter 616	20	22	-9.1	1.7%	346	0.9%
Hino	500	14	30	-53.3	1.2%	352	0.9%
SsangYong	Rhino	14	9	55.6	1.2%	152	0.4%
Toyota	Land Cruiser	14	14	0.0	1.2%	574	1.5%
Others		274	610	-55.1	22.8%	8,788	22.8%
Total		**1,204**	**3,326**	**-63.8**	**100.0%**	**38,545**	**100.0%**

discount was operating during 2023".

The feebate scheme was scrapped at midnight on December 31 – and with it went incentives on zero and some low-emitting models, and charges on the likes of utes, when registered for the first time in this country.

"It showed how customers value the Ranger as a product," he says.

"To be the best-selling nameplate despite the segment coming under the pressure it did was a testament to what customers value with the Ranger. It has got unmatched capability and provides a great driving experience.

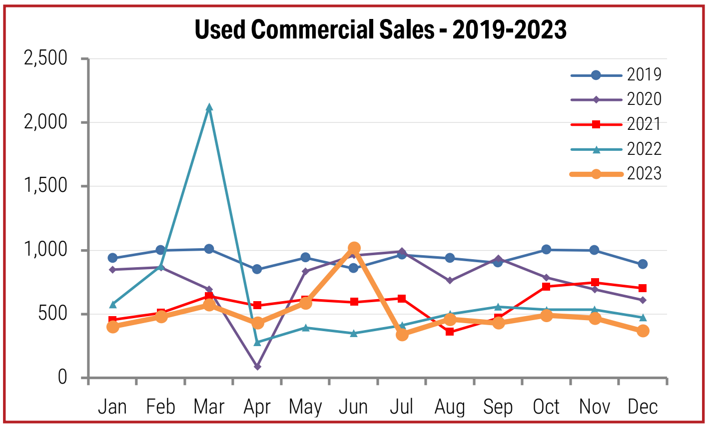
"We offer the Raptor at top of the range, V6 diesels and we're winning with the bi-turbo engine as well.

"The combination of those things has driven the Ranger's success by being able to give customers what they want in different categories.

"We're excited about 2024 because we have continued to iterate the product and have the all-new PHEV with Pro Power Onboard coming.

"With regard to commercials overall, we also achieved the commercials' leadership with constrained supply and have got ourselves in a far better position going into this year.

"We're also launching the all-new Transit Custom as a diesel and BEV. We're excited about extending our market offer with the Transit from where we have been. With our growing range, I'm confident we can hold onto the commercials' leadership overall."



FEES IMPACT ON SALES

December, the last month of the clean car discount, saw registrations of new commercials drop by 63.8 per cent year on year from 3,326 to 1,204.

Ford's Ranger was the best-selling model on 198 with the Fiat Ducato second on 125. Toyota's Hilux was third with 106.

The blue oval was December's most popular marque with 229 units and a market share of 19 per cent. It was followed by Toyota on 151.

There were 367 used-imported commercials registered last month for a year-on-year drop of 21.9 per cent from 470. The top model was Toyota's Hiace with 100 units.

Used Commercial Sales by Make - December 2023

MAKE	DEC'23	DEC'22	+/-%	DEC'23 MKT SHARE	2023 YEAR TO DATE	2023 MKT SHARE
Toyota	140	159	-11.9	38.1%	2,740	45.5%
Nissan	71	107	-33.6	19.3%	1,303	21.6%
Hino	40	36	11.1	10.9%	405	6.7%
Isuzu	31	34	-8.8	8.4%	375	6.2%
Mitsubishi	23	18	27.8	6.3%	313	5.2%
Daihatsu	8	11	-27.3	2.2%	101	1.7%
UD Trucks	8	1	700.0	2.2%	63	1.0%
Ford	7	39	-82.1	1.9%	173	2.9%
Chevrolet	6	11	-45.5	1.6%	59	1.0%
Fiat	5	4	25.0	1.4%	30	0.5%
Volkswagen	5	2	150.0	1.4%	36	0.6%
Suzuki	4	4	0.0	1.1%	62	1.0%
Mazda	3	3	0.0	0.8%	58	1.0%
Mercedes-Benz	3	4	-25.0	0.8%	26	0.4%
Ram	3	1	200.0	0.8%	8	0.1%
DAF	2	1	100.0	0.5%	14	0.2%
Dodge	1	5	-80.0	0.3%	11	0.2%
Fuso	1	0	100.0	0.3%	19	0.3%
Holden	1	13	-92.3	0.3%	61	1.0%
Hyundai	1	1	0.0	0.3%	7	0.1%
Others	4	16	-75.0	1.1%	158	2.6%
Total	**367**	**470**	**-21.9**	**100.0%**	**6,022**	**100.0%**

Used Commercial Sales by Model - December 2023

MAKE	MODEL	DEC'23	DEC'22	+/-%	DEC'23 MKT SHARE	2023 YEAR TO DATE	2023 MKT SHARE
Toyota	Hiace	100	114	-12.3	27.2%	1,987	33.0%
Nissan	NV350	38	58	-34.5	10.4%	799	13.3%
Hino	Dutro	29	22	31.8	7.9%	303	5.0%
Isuzu	Elf	25	21	19.0	6.8%	254	4.2%
Fuso	Canter	18	8	125.0	4.9%	220	3.7%
Toyota	Dyna	14	22	-36.4	3.8%	210	3.5%
Nissan	Caravan	13	22	-40.9	3.5%	236	3.9%
Toyota	Regius	13	11	18.2	3.5%	347	5.8%
Daihatsu	Hijet	8	11	-27.3	2.2%	101	1.7%
Nissan	Atlas	7	4	75.0	1.9%	88	1.5%
Hino	Ranger	6	12	-50.0	1.6%	76	1.3%
Nissan	Civilian	6	2	200.0	1.6%	44	0.7%
Toyota	Hilux	6	4	50.0	1.6%	53	0.9%
Fiat	Ducato	5	4	25.0	1.4%	29	0.5%
Isuzu	Forward	5	8	-37.5	1.4%	90	1.5%
Volkswagen	Transporter	5	0	500.0	1.4%	13	0.2%
Nissan	e-NV200	4	1	300.0	1.1%	14	0.2%
Suzuki	Carry	4	4	0.0	1.1%	61	1.0%
Toyota	Coaster	4	2	100.0	1.1%	16	0.3%
Nissan	Condor	4	1	300.0	1.1%	30	0.5%
Others		53	139	-61.9	14.4%	1,051	17.5%
Total		**367**	**470**	**-21.9**	**100.0%**	**6,022**	**100.0%**

Port wants to retain vehicles

Mixed results

There were 8,559 new passenger vehicles registered last month, up by 0.8 per cent from 8,487 in December 2022 and down by 25.4 per cent from 11,479 in November.

Imports of new cars during December totalled 7,454. This was down by 25 per cent from the same month 12 months ago and 4.8 per cent lower than November's total of 7,832.

It means the stock of new cars still to be registered has fallen by 1,105 to 72,224. Daily registrations, as averaged over the previous year, stand at 302 units per day – down from 319 a year ago.

Stock at-hand has fallen from 243 days in November to 239, or 7.9 months, if sales continue at their current rate. In December 2022, stock at-hand was 265 days.

The chief executive of Port of Auckland Ltd (POAL) wants to keep vehicle-import operations where they are currently located.

Roger Gray warns any effort to shift them elsewhere will come at a cost to the environment.

He has also told city councillors the financial value of that part of the business means it's "one of the last trades I want to see moved".

The number of vehicles crossing POAL's wharves from the start of July to the end of September was 19.1 per cent higher than in the same period of 2022.

The rise in car volumes, including one week when 1,400 Ford Rangers arrived at the port, has been a key driver for the company to get ahead of budget in the first quarter of its 2024 financial year.

Gray says the best way to progress towards a low-carbon supply chain is for vehicle imports and the whole port to remain where they are.

"It would add 15,000 tonnes of carbon emissions a year if we shifted the roll-on, roll-off operation. We would more than double our carbon footprint if all operations moved."

He wants Auckland to become the country's "number-one premium import port" and no longer has its sights set on being bigger than its main rival.

Tauranga became New Zealand's main container port in 2015. It handled 1.18 million containers last year compared with Auckland's 819,000.

Gray is content to let the Bay of Plenty operation remain ahead of POAL on that front, adding he wouldn't drop prices to get more market share and only wanted "profitable volume".

In the past, Wayne Brown, Mayor of Auckland, has expressed a desire to shift some of POAL's operations out of the city centre, including vehicle imports, and convert more of the wharves to public use.

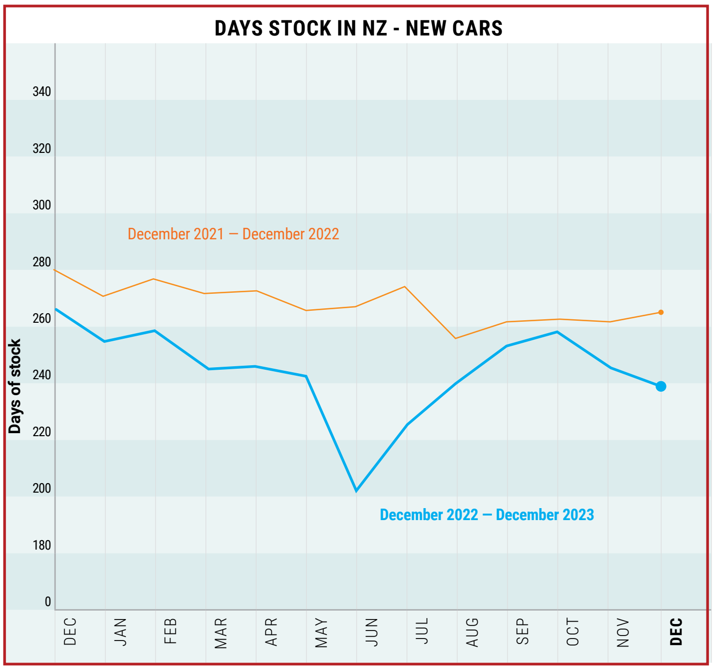
Gray's comments came after the company bounced back with a net profit after tax of $40.5 million for its 2022/23 fiscal year, which signalled a recovery from a $10.3m loss in the previous period.

The results took the port's dividend payable to Auckland Council for the year to $30m. That represented an increase of $15.8m on the prior 12-month period and $13m more than forecast.

Other highlights include underlying net profit after tax climbing by $20.2m to reach ►

Dealer stock of new cars in New Zealand

	CAR SALES IMPORTED	CAR SALES REGISTERED	VARIANCE	STOCK	DAILY SALES - 12-MONTH AVERAGE	DAYS STOCK AT HAND
Dec '22	9,936	8,487	1,449	84,317	319	265
Jan '22	5,985	9,245	- 3,260	81,057	319	254
Feb '23	6,381	6,243	138	81,195	316	257
Mar '23	7,506	11,605	- 4,099	77,096	317	243
Apr '23	6,045	7,030	- 985	76,111	313	243
May '23	7,995	9,542	- 1,547	74,564	310	241
Jun '23	10,725	17,238	- 6,513	68,051	331	206
Jul '23	8,183	4,332	3,851	71,902	321	224
Aug '23	9,399	6,971	2,428	74,330	310	240
Sep '23	10,030	8,126	1,904	76,234	303	251
Oct '23	10,778	10,036	742	76,976	301	255
Nov '23	7,832	11,479	- 3,647	73,329	302	243
Dec '23	**7,454**	**8,559**	**- 1,105**	**72,224**	**302**	**239**
Year to date	**98,313**	**110,406**				
Change on last month	**-4.8%**	**-25.4%**		**-1.5%**		
Change on Dec 2022	**-25.0%** LESS IMPORTED	**0.8%** MORE SOLD		**-14.3%** LESS STOCK		



$45.2m in the 2023 financial year.

Revenue increased to $320.2m and was up from $265.3m year-on-year, while net-debt levels fell from $449.9m to $407.5m over the same timeframe.

IMPORT VOLUMES MIXED

Vehicle and bulk-cargo volumes dropped in 2022/23 compared to the previous year with the number of cars crossing Auckland's wharves totalling 228,588.

That was lower than the previous two years, but higher than the 2020 financial year when Covid-19 first disrupted operations.

More than half of POAL's earnings came from container terminal operations as TEUs – 20-foot equivalents – rose from about 812,000 to 818,810. About 170,000 cruise-ship passengers also arrived in the city as such sailings returned after a two-year absence.

Jan Dawson, who chairs POAL's board, says the results reflect the execution of the first year of the company's three-year "regaining our mana" strategy, as well as the hard work of the executive team and workers.

"The board is pleased to return an improved dividend to the shareholder, Auckland Council," she adds.

"We anticipate continued improvement over the next three years as we work towards providing a dividend equal to $1m a week in financial year 2023."

Gray says the past year has been transformative for the port. "There have been substantial efforts and successes in our three focus areas, which are reflected in strong financial results, the transformation of employee relations, and the safety and wellbeing of our people."

ROBUST SUPPLY CHAIN

The port's resilience was demonstrated by the fact it only closed for three days for the Auckland floods and Cyclone Gabrielle due to high winds.

As soon as they dropped, it was back in action.

"We're pleased with the resilience of the port and see it as an asset serving the whole North Island," says Gray. "Other parts of the supply chain didn't fare so well.

"New Zealand's freight and supply-chain strategy is now firmly the focus of the Ministry of Transport. It's working on creating a low emissions, resilient, productive, innovative, equitable and safe national supply chain, which we look forward to collaborating on."

Gray emphasis that Auckland as a city is positioned to withstand natural disasters. It has undertaken tsunami modelling and is well-protected by the islands in the Hauraki Gulf should there be a significant earthquake in South America, for example.

"New Zealand needs a long-term resilient supply-chain strategy that ties together roading, rail and port infrastructure into a national plan," he adds.

Surge in sales

There were 7,772 used cars imported last month, which was down by 20.5 per cent from 9,781 in December last year.

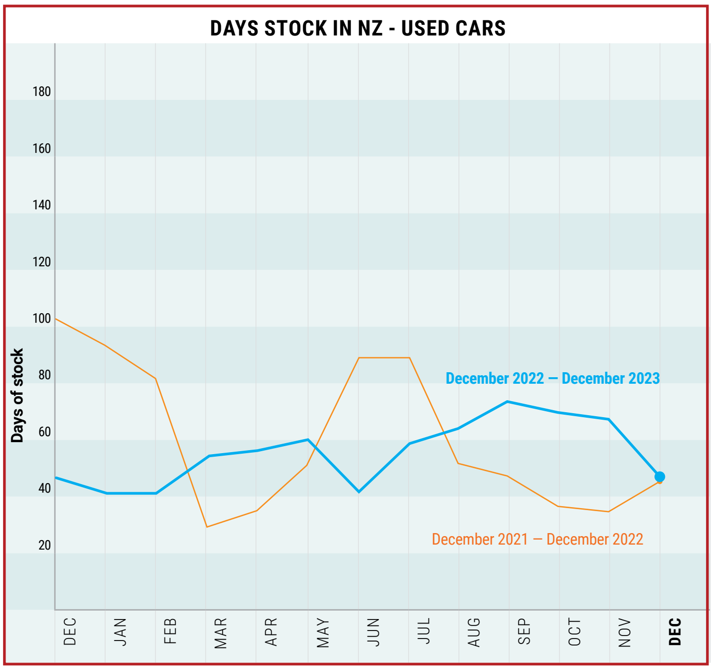
The total also decreased compared to November – by 13.1 per cent when 8,941 crossed our border.

A total of 12,806 units were registered in December.

This was up by 83.6 per cent versus 6,976 in the same month of 2022 and 32.9 per cent more than November's 9,639 as the clean car discount ended.

With 5,034 more used cars registered than imported last month, it dropped unregistered stock on dealers' yards or in compliance shops to 14,871 units. This was 25.3 per cent lower than 19,905 in November.

Average daily registrations last month rose to 315 – up from 304 a year ago – and there's 47 days' stock remaining.



Dealer stock of used cars in New Zealand

	CAR SALES		VARIANCE	STOCK	DAILY SALES - 12-MONTH AVERAGE	DAYS STOCK AT HAND
	IMPORTED	REGISTERED				
Dec '22	9,781	6,976	2,805	14,040	304	46
Jan '22	5,082	7,121	- 2,039	12,001	295	41
Feb '23	7,372	7,751	- 379	11,622	287	40
Mar '23	11,442	9,667	1,775	13,397	247	54
Apr '23	8,768	7,934	834	14,231	251	57
May '23	10,954	9,578	1,376	15,607	258	60
Jun '23	12,900	16,668	- 3,768	11,839	284	42
Jul '23	11,000	6,492	4,508	16,347	279	59
Aug '23	10,265	8,716	1,549	17,896	281	64
Sep '23	12,052	8,905	3,147	21,043	285	74
Oct '23	9,205	9,645	- 440	20,603	292	71
Nov '23	8,941	9,639	- 698	19,905	299	67
Dec '23	**7,772**	**12,806**	**- 5,034**	**14,871**	**315**	**47**
Year to date	**115,753**	**114,922**				
Change on last month	**-13.1%**	**32.9%**		**-25.3%**		
Change on Dec 2022	**-20.5%** LESS IMPORTED	**83.6%** MORE SOLD		**5.9%** MORE STOCK