

Mandatory recall to solve airbag issues

Associations across the motor-vehicle sector are teaming up to ensure government safety campaign succeeds

The automotive industry has reacted positively to the government ordering the mandatory recall of 50,000 vehicles fitted with certain types of faulty airbags.

Distributors of units sold new in this country and importers of used vehicles fitted with alpha-type Takata inflators have 18 months to complete remedial work, while future imports without recall certifications will be banned.

The compulsory call-back is unprecedented in scale with such inflators fitted to some vehicles between 2001 and 2006.

The alpha-type airbags have a significantly higher rate of failure than others made by Takata due to a manufacturing fault. They can deploy incorrectly during an accident and send fragments towards occupants.



Vehicles with alpha-type Takata airbag inflators are now subject to a compulsory recall

The recall may be followed by another 257,000 vehicles at a later date that have been fitted with non-alpha systems.

Problems with Takata airbags stem back to 2008 when incidents involving the incorrect deployment of inflators were reported in the US. Since then, they have been associated with 23 deaths worldwide and 230 serious injuries. Globally, about 100 million vehicles are affected.

The recall announcement was

made by Kris Faafoi, Minister of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, on April 4 and comes hot on the heels of similar action in Australia where more than two million units have been called back.

His decision has been welcomed by the Motor Industry Association (MIA), which has been

campaigning for action on Takata airbags for the past five years, VIA (the Imported Motor Vehicle Industry Association) and the Motor Trade Association (MTA).

There are about 11,280 NZ-new vehicles with alpha-type inflators of which 6,485 have been fitted with replacements while 4,795 remain to be completed, according to the MIA.

There are also 68,116 used vehicles with these inflators. While 22,494 have been replaced, another 45,622 are yet to be rectified.

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GUEST EDITORIAL

Measures taken to ensure stock flow

Nigel Grindall expects extra bug treatments for loading of vehicles to be brought in

The crisis caused by the identification of brown marmorated stink bugs (BMSBs) and yellow spotted stink bugs had the potential to be one of those events that could easily have ended as catastrophic for our industry.

While many companies struggled with finding stock in New Zealand, the Japan end of the industry had the opposite problem with too much stock arriving at terminal receiving station (TRS) yards that were already backed up with seasonally high volumes.

The re-routing of vessels bound for other markets to the New Zealand trade has further exacerbated this problem and may well continue to be an issue as vehicles bound for elsewhere continue to congest these TRS yards.

While in Japan over the past three weeks, I have seen many TRS yards with more cargo than they can handle and – in some cases – even spilling out onto surrounding side roads.

I would expect that this situation will continue for the next few months causing processing times in Japan to be extended.

The support of the shipping companies, their commitment to our market and proactive measures taken during this challenging time must also be commended.

Going forward, the approved vehicle system (AVS) operators, wider vehicle industry and Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) will continue to work together to ensure we are all prepared for upcoming BMSB seasons, which will most



NIGEL GRINDALL, CEO of ATL and Moana Blue

likely run from September through to the end of April each year.

As of March 5, the MPI has instructed each of the AVS border inspection operators that they will be required to have their systems improved to ensure they mitigate the risk of any live pests from entering New Zealand.

While this will increase costs of providing the AVS for each operator, it will also mostly likely increase the decontamination processing and inspection timeframes in Japan on an ongoing basis.

Keeping our borders free from any biosecurity risk is paramount, as well as ensuring that the AVS operators continue to service customer orders.

Just as importantly, we need to provide the shipping lines with confidence to schedule car carriers to New Zealand.

Having spoken with many importers and exporters, very few have complained about the situation, and have simply got on with ensuring their businesses remain fluid and operating.

Many have been buying up available stock in New Zealand and getting creative with their businesses.

Compliance centres have probably been hit the hardest and I feel for some of these businesses, which are heavily reliant on volume while working on tight margins.

I'm very confident that effective systems and processes will be in place right through the entire supply channel from Japan to New Zealand come September 1 this year. ☺

autofile

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"We are working on what's a reasonable timescale to bring all affected vehicles in by, and the NZTA will be preventing new and used vehicles from coming into the country if they have open recalls," says David Crawford, chief executive officer of the MIA.

"Importers will need to have the correct documentation to show the vehicle doesn't have an outstanding recall and, if it has been subjected to one, that the call-back has been completed."

Distributors will send three or four letters to owners to take vehicles in for remedial work before they receive notification from the NZTA that they may not get warrants of fitness at the next inspection unless they do.

Crawford told Autofile the agency has not said yes to actual flagging. That will depend if a sufficient number of owners comply, which he believes will be known one year through the 18-month period for call-backs to be completed.

"The NZTA's recalls website

Vehicles in New Zealand with alpha-type Takata airbags

| | STOCK IN NZ WITH ALPHA AIRBAGS | NUMBER OF ALPHA RECALLS CLOSED OUT | ALPHA AIRBAG RECALLS OUTSTANDING |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| NZ-new vehicles | 11,280 | 6,485 | 4,795 |
| Used imports | 68,116 | 22,494 | 45,622 |
| Total | 79,396 | 28,979 | 50,417 |

Vehicles in New Zealand with non-alpha Takata airbags

| | STOCK IN NZ WITH NON-ALPHA AIRBAGS | NUMBER OF NON-ALPHA RECALLS CLOSED OUT | NON-ALPHA RECALLS OUTSTANDING |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| NZ-new vehicles | 160,150 | 59,340 | 100,810 |
| Used imports | 212,648 | 56,472 | 156,176 |
| Total | 372,798 | 115,812 | 256,986 |

Source: MIA – March 2018

has been moderated so when a distributor enters a recall, there are extra boxes to tick based on whether it's for an alpha or non-alpha airbag so we get accurate reporting rates," he explains. "Also, a co-ordination group has been set up to monitor the completion rate, which will report to government officials."

The MIA has been campaigning for procedures around safety recalls to be tightened up for eight years.

"It's a step in the right direction," says Crawford. "This government seems much more interested in the

risk posed by these recalls.

"Why it's taken so long is because we have struggled with senior officials, but that has changed with a new senior manager coming into the NZTA in January. This is an example of good governance between government and industry.

"Some work needs to be done around safety, but the Takata issue is one of the significant risks that couldn't be left undone. The NZTA is updating its systems to make this work, while VIA is behind this as well."

The sheer scale of the Takata recalls to be completed by trained technicians means work will be staggered. The remedy takes between 30 minutes and two hours depending on make and model. There's about 80 per cent availability of parts available for alpha-type inflators, while the figure is slightly lower for non-alpha.

"Even if we had all the parts, the work would tie up franchised dealerships for the next 18 months – about 450,000 vehicles are affected, but only around 130,000 have been done."

Crawford adds that with used imports, the responsibility of replacing airbags rests with the importer and not the marque, while there would be no inconvenience to would-be owners for importers to ensure stock is fit and proper for use on Kiwi roads.

"The issue is exacerbated by used importers, who have continued to import vehicles that haven't had recalls closed out in the country they are sourcing from," stresses Crawford. ▶

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The screenshot shows a Trade Me listing for a 2004 Mazda MPV 2.3 auto. The listing includes a photo of the vehicle, key details (Mazda MPV, 2004, 17,100km, 2000cc, Automatic, 5-speed, Silver), and a background check section. The background check results are: Stolen vehicle check (Pass), Money owing check (Pass), Damaged import check (Pass), and Re-registered check (Pass). The listing also shows a rating of 4.5 stars and a description of the vehicle.

Advice for industry

Car dealers run the risk of being fined \$600,000 under the Fair Trading Act if they fail to comply with requirements of the compulsory airbag recall, says the government.



And if a trader or supplier tries to import a non-compliant unit, this will in effect be a restricted item and subject to action by Customs.

A supplier includes any person or business that has supplied an affected vehicle in trade. That includes importers, wholesalers, distributors and retailers.

A grace period of 40 working days from April 4 allows for vehicles en-route to New Zealand without close-outs on alpha-type Takata inflators to be legally landed here for compliance.

However, any stock that arrives outside of this timeframe will be seized by Customs and treated as a prohibited import, says Malcolm Yorston, VIA's technical manager.

He told Autofile: "The NZTA is working with border-inspection companies to get processes in place. If any vehicles are identified without remedial work done, they cannot be landed."

Yorston urges importers of used vehicles to work with their agents in Japan to ensure call-backs are closed off before stock is bought at auction there and sent dockside.

You can check for active recalls by visiting www.vehiclecallsafety.nzta.govt.nz or subscribe for updates at www.recalls.govt.nz/airbags. For more details on used Japanese imports potentially affected, log onto www.rightcar.govt.nz/takataalpha.

Paul Smith, of Consumer NZ, says there are no particular issues surrounding the Consumer Guarantees Act and recall. That's because faulty airbag parts will be replaced at no expense to buyers, which gives them no reason to go down the line of rejection.

The NZTA may prevent a warrant of fitness being issued in the future if repairs aren't completed. ☺

"These vehicles have mostly been proceeding through compliance without checking and on-sold to unsuspecting consumers. It's then left up to distributors to try to identify these vehicles and manage a recall.

"Under legislation, New Zealand distributors of new vehicles are not obliged to undertake recalls of used imports. Consumer legislation places obligations, including recalls, on the supplier of the goods, which in this case is the importer of the used vehicle."

An MIA code of practice encourages distributors to recall used imports when they have crossed the border before a call-back is announced.

"However, the continued importation of used vehicles with a known recall places an unacceptable burden on consumers. The MIA welcomes the government's decision to prevent any vehicle with an open recall from passing compliance and entering our fleet."

VIA was due to meet with the MIA and new-vehicle distributors on April 11 to agree the process and terms to manage replacing recalled airbags in used imports.

The following day, both associations were to convene with a working group set up by Ministry for Business and Innovation (MBIE), which is overseeing the recall, so proposed measures can be approved.

In this country – as in other markets – recall progress has been hampered by a lack of replacement airbags.

"Completion of the recall will require the co-operation of government and industry over some months," says David Vinsen, chief executive of VIA.

"VIA will collaborate with our membership, the wider industry and government agencies to effect a resolution. We will support our membership in adhering to compliance obligations.

"We thank the MIA and new-vehicle distributors for their assistance in dealing with the recall so far, and will work with them to ensure all vehicles meet the appropriate safety criteria."

Greig Epps, the MTA's industry relationship manager, believes developments on this issue will have widespread implications for the sector.

The MTA is part of the government's oversight group, which includes the MIA and VIA, that will discuss operational details for implementing the call-backs.

"This includes how to inform members, the industry and public about steps that need to be taken," Epps told Autofile. "MTA members will be keen to help customers find the right assistance if their vehicles are affected.

"Used car dealers will need to know what to do with current affected stock, and what to tell consumers who bring in affected vehicles for trade-ins and find a sale cannot be completed. We expect more information and detail to be available in a week or so."

Kris Faafoi, Minister of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, says: "From April 4, we have an agreed timeframe for replacements

of alpha-type airbags and – after a 40-working day grace period for vehicles in transit – no affected new or used vehicles will be able to enter into New Zealand.

"Because I'm not satisfied enough progress has been made on non-alpha airbag recalls, I've set up a monitoring group that will report monthly. If enough progress isn't made, I will enact a compulsory recall across the board."

A voluntary recall of vehicles with affected airbags started in New Zealand in 2013 and about 29,000 of the alpha-type systems have been replaced, says Faafoi.

He adds: "The industry has recalled vehicles with Takata airbags with varying degrees of success, but more must be done to ensure alpha-type airbags are removed from our fleet.

The recall requires alpha-type airbags to be replaced by December 2019. It also provides guidance, reporting and monitoring to ensure necessary call-back and remediation work is undertaken. ☺

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Innovating for the future

An autonomous flying car powered by electricity and being developed in New Zealand can reduce the planet's reliance on motor vehicles.

Fred Reid, chief executive of Zephyr Airworks, is also hoping his airborne taxi service will take off in this country within six years.

The two-seater Cora has been secretly tested in Canterbury since October. It has 90 per cent less moving parts than a helicopter and is driven by electric motors.

About 520kW is needed for lift and 220kW when off the ground, and it will be silent when cruising. The Cora's top speed will be around 170kph, it could fly from 150-900 metres with a one-way range of 80km, which may improve.

Reid revealed more about the "vertical take-off and landing" aircraft at the T-Tech Transport Innovation Conference hosted by



Zephyr Airworks' Cora

ITS NZ in Auckland last month.

He said New Zealand was chosen as the best place to develop the Cora, which has been granted an experimental airworthiness certificate by the Civil Aviation Authority.

"The country is open-minded, has a vision for sustainability and high levels of intellectual-property protection.

"This is the birth of an industry that will be ubiquitous across the globe in 25 years. New Zealand will be a centre of excellence

for this programme. This isn't a billionaire's toy."

Reid said a team of about 125 was working on the project here and in California, with one aircraft in the South Island and three in the US. He hoped between nine and 20 built would be by March 2019.

He added global reliance on motor vehicles caused one million deaths a year, massive air pollution and millions of dollars in lost productivity, so everyday high-speed direct flights offered by the Cora could be one of the solutions.

"We aren't a disruptor in that we will not eliminate the need for cars, spaceships and bicycles. It's complimentary to ride-sharing."

Kitty Hawk, which owns Zephyr Airworks, has been in talks with the government for about 18 months with multiple agencies coming together to help trial the Cora.

The project fits with Canterbury authorities' goal for the region to focus on future technologies.

Rod Schebesch, senior vice-president of Santec North America, a professional services company, didn't mince his words when describing vehicles as "a waste of space, energy, money, time and lives".

However, he did add: "In regards to congestion, we have a solution for the first time in our history – and close to a 90 per cent reduction in collisions – with autonomous vehicles [AVs].

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◀ vehicle-to-infrastructure systems can be powerful when they work together."

Schebesch said China could lead the way with ITS because of the speed and support of its government, and "gigantic capital investment".

"Test-beds need to be set up and moves made to bring governments together. There needs to be tangible progress or partners will drop off."

Schebesch said self-driving transit was more affordable with one shared AV taking the equivalent of 11 car spaces.

"Ownership is changing. Many people will not own a car, but will pay to use it. Car manufacturers have got this.

"Electric-power infrastructure needs to be supported to transfer away from fossil fuels. There will be big changes over the next five years. Petrol tax will disappear to be replaced with tax time-based and or on distance travelled."

Minister of Transport, Phil Twyford, told the conference a future technology leadership group would help New Zealand harness some of the \$1.5 billion annual value to the economy from ITS and develop a 10-year land-transport roadmap.

"This group will bring together the best domestic knowledge and international expertise."

Twyford pointed to a report released by Business NZ last month, which focussed on drones, smart logistics and self-driving vehicles. It found this country has a good regulatory and business environment to benefit from ITS.

"ITS have the potential to not only make transport more efficient, better for the environment and safer, they can make a valuable contribution to the economy."

A future with city dwellers using a mix of transport – from ride-share and autonomous shuttles to cycling – was outlined by a senior fellow of the New Cities Foundation based in Canada.

Greg Lindsay said homes were already being constructed with no car parks and businesses were

developing mobile services to bring their products to people's doors.

He suggested steering committees should be set up to ensure citizens got the transport they wanted rather than waiting for companies, such as Uber, to provide them, while autonomous vehicles could drop people off and park themselves.

A two-year cross-Tasman trial to improve positioning services,

such as satellite-based augmentation systems (SBAS), is due to conclude next June.

Satellite positioning is a major component of many applications, especially in AVs, but the accuracy of GPS or GNSS systems across Australasia

is below par.

Graeme Blick, of Land Information New Zealand, said the study would see if a business case could be established to invest further in a fully operational system.

One reason for the trials is increased technical componentry in new vehicles, which would utilise such information, including mapping and improving safety.

Blick said: "If someone is in the wrong lane on the motorway, they can be warned." GPS is accurate to about 10 metres, whereas SBAS bolsters this to a metre or less.

Peter Mersi, chief executive of the MoT, said: "Transformation is likely to come from rapidly developing vehicle technologies and the application of transport-related data... providing for a smarter, safer and more efficient system, while encouraging mobility solutions, such as ride-sharing.

"Many things are happening in the technology space. We need to understand what this means for all of us.

"For government, it is aspects such as where we should be investing money or determining whether our regulatory frameworks are still fit for purpose and designed with future technologies in mind.

"We're thinking about what we can do to enable the benefits of these technologies, and mitigate against potential risks." ☺



Phil Twyford

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Crisis affecting all sectors

Business is slowly improving for some operators in the automotive industry in the wake of the stink-bug crisis, but many issues remain – now and heading forward.

Limited amounts of stock got through to compliance shops and dealers last month, and there were high volumes of arrivals at Ports of Auckland (POAL) over the Easter period.

However, uncertainty remains in regards to long-term Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) action over brown marmorated stink bugs (BMSBs) while traders are scrambling for stock.

The insects' high-risk season closes at the end of April before re-starting in September when extra treatments may be demanded on vehicles and or vessels.

This year has been particularly bad for infestations with some putting this down to extended periods of cold and snow in Japan increasing their period of hibernation.

There's a general feeling that while trade appears to be picking up, this month may see some businesses finding it harder to pay bills after the two-week period when much of the industry ground to a halt.

Mark Greenfield, general



The Tokyo Car, above, and Sepang Express have been discharged



manager of Motorcentral, believes dealers have been affected by varying degrees – some slightly hit, others severely and some not at all.

"Some traders are down on their stock and have been impacted significantly," he told Autofile. "Cars have been starting to come through and supply will come up to speed, but for some traders it has been the worst February and March in history.

"A layer of dealers have got enough capital to sustain themselves, but others are struggling in this respect. Those that are lean and need volume may not be making money.

"It also depends on how many vehicles they've got on what boats, and what stock they have and normally sell on yards. All of these factors are relevant. Some dealers have been so low on stock they've turned their front rows sideways to make them look full.

"Then there's the cost to the

economy. That has to be a big chunk of money."

Nick Owens, director of Auto Inspection Services in Christchurch, which specialises in entry certification, adds: "There have been big delays for a long time and dealers were expecting to have their cars by now.

"It's affecting everyone from truck drivers to paint shops. There was a reasonable amount of stock in Christchurch in February, but dealers then had empty yards.

"Many clients who have cancelled orders are holding onto their money, have bought elsewhere or have decided they don't need a new car."

Here's how industry events in March unfolded.

MARCH 1: DECK BY DECK

Vehicles were being discharged from the Tokyo Car – hit by stink bugs – at POAL. The MPI was

allowing deck-by-deck unloading for heat treatment. The Sepang Express returned for repeat fogging and the Glovis Caravel left Kiwi waters after more bugs were found. Armacup's Carrera, fogged off Brisbane, was cleared to offload about 1,200 units in around a day.

MARCH 2: PORT CONGESTION

POAL was expecting 28 car carriers in the next 33 days with about 40,000 units on-board. It warned: "There's potential for congestion." Mitsui OSK Line (MOL) reported the Courageous Ace was outside NZ waters. If any bugs were found, it would become one of the "20 per cent" inspection vessels and go to the back of the queue.

MARCH 5: BACK TO ASIA

The Glovis Caravel and Courageous Ace went to Singapore for treatment due to possible delays at POAL, while the Morning Christina berthed for fogging. A working

[continued on page 10]

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The Glovis Caravel and Courageous Ace sailed to Singapore last month for stink-bug treatment



[continued from page 8]

group of industry and government officials was seeking ways of combatting BMSBs and other insects in vehicles from Japan.

MARCH 9: VESSEL CLEARED

The Trans Future 6 had been cleared and discharged, according to Autohub, but its arrival in Lyttelton was unclear due to proposed strike action.

MARCH 13: BUG MYSTERY

The MPI couldn't say if BMSBs stowed away on used, new or heavy vehicles, or on ships in Japan. "Vessels are probably least likely, although contamination from previous cargo can't be excluded," a spokesman said.

MARCH 14: IN HIBERNATION

The Courageous Ace arrived in Singapore for controlled discharge

to make any remaining bugs come out of hibernation. The Dream Orchid had berthed in Auckland and was being fogged. The BMSB-affected Sepang Express was about to land at POAL to undergo deck-by-deck discharge. Its arrival followed the departure of the Tokyo Car the previous week. The Dream Diva was due to dock on the 17th.

MARCH 16: SHIP CLEARED

The MPI cleared the Dream Orchid for discharge following inspections. The Trans Future 6 had completed discharging at NZ ports after re-inspection and was expected back in Osaka on March 26. The Australian government had inspected the Trans Future 7 in Brisbane after fogging, and it was sailing to NZ for

possible discharge on the 21st.

MARCH 19: SLOW PROGRESS

Up to 30 vehicles per day were being taken off the Sepang Express with the MPI checking samples from two decks. A spokesman said: "We're constrained by the time taken for units to go through the heat-treatment chamber, so cannot give an estimate of when the controlled discharge will be finished." No live bugs had been discovered. Jacanna's Ken Quigley, and a team from NZ and ATJ Japan, had been in Singapore since the Courageous Ace and Glovis Caravel arrived for treatment and inspections. It was reported good progress was being made.

MARCH 20: LONG PROCESS

It was taking up to three times longer to unload vehicle carriers that visited or originated in Japan. Recent arrivals, such as the Triton Ace, had to be MPI-inspected and fogged. POAL spokesman Matt Ball said these vessels were in port for up to 72 hours per visit, compared to the normal 12-24 hours. "We are facing challenges with berth allocation. We are accommodating vessels on a first-in, first-served basis."

MARCH 21: SINGAPORE UPDATE

Two ships' re-loading process in Singapore had changed. New cars, trucks and machinery from the Glovis Caravel were to be transhipped onto the Courageous Ace, which would only take new cargo to NZ, while only used units would be loaded onto the Glovis Caravel. NZ Customs said declarations would not have to be resubmitted.

MARCH 22: EASTER HOLD-UPS

Autohub said while BMSB vessel infestations had affected shipping schedules, it had also resulted in "large – and growing – stockpiles of used vehicles in ports and storage facilities around Japan awaiting shipment". As a result,

shipping lines were advising a stream of vessels would arrive at POAL beyond Easter. "This [and] the Easter break will cause serious congestion on the wharf." Customers were asked to contact compliance centres to advise there would be high volumes of vehicles arriving over the next two to three weeks. Matt Ball, of POAL, said: "Statutory days provide for increased cargo dwell time. Come Good Friday, we will be full with vessels waiting." Shipping lines' expectations were reasonable given circumstances with transporters. "The Trans Future 5, with her 4,800-unit discharge, will be the main cause of congestion."

MARCH 26: SHIPS DELAYED


Autohub reported the Trans Future 7, Sepang Express and Dream Orchid were all delayed. The Sepang Express was due to complete its Auckland discharge on March 27 before departing, along with cargo from the Dream Orchid and Trans Future 7, for Lyttelton and Wellington. Trans Future 5's due date was unconfirmed.

MARCH 27: TREATMENT DONE

Treatment of cargo on the Courageous Ace and Glovis Caravel had been completed in Singapore with inspections and tests showing this was successful. The Courageous Ace had completed re-loading process and was due at POAL on April 5 with the Glovis Caravel set to depart on March 29. Final discharge programmes were yet to be finalised with the MPI. The Sepang Express had almost finished unloading in Auckland.

MARCH 29: CARGO ENTRIES

Customs said it would approve amendments to import entries affected by BMSBs if the originals had already been cleared for cargo clearance. Brokers were told to lodge the amendments as soon as possible to avoid processing delays. ☺



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Marque modernises business

The top-selling brand in New Zealand has turned its business model on its head by moving away from traditional dealerships.

Toyota launched Drive Happy – an agency model with national fixed prices – on April 2 along with other changes to its operations, such as a new website and overnight test drives.

The company says its new “drive-away pricing” system sees retail rates similar to average past transactions and some reductions, and includes pre-delivery costs, floor mats, tank of fuel and registration or road-user charges.

There are no longer any dealerships – they are now known as “stores”. Sales people have been retrained as vehicle consultants, product experts or store concierges.

Toyota stores have more demonstration models, which can be on-sold after being in the fleet for a fixed period with the aim of offering consumers more choice.

About 1,000 new vehicles are kept in three centres with dispatch normally 24 hours after sale for forecourt arrival the next day, although the bottom of the South Island may take an extra day.

The marque is using large pieces of land in Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington with car distribution groups being part of the project from early on.

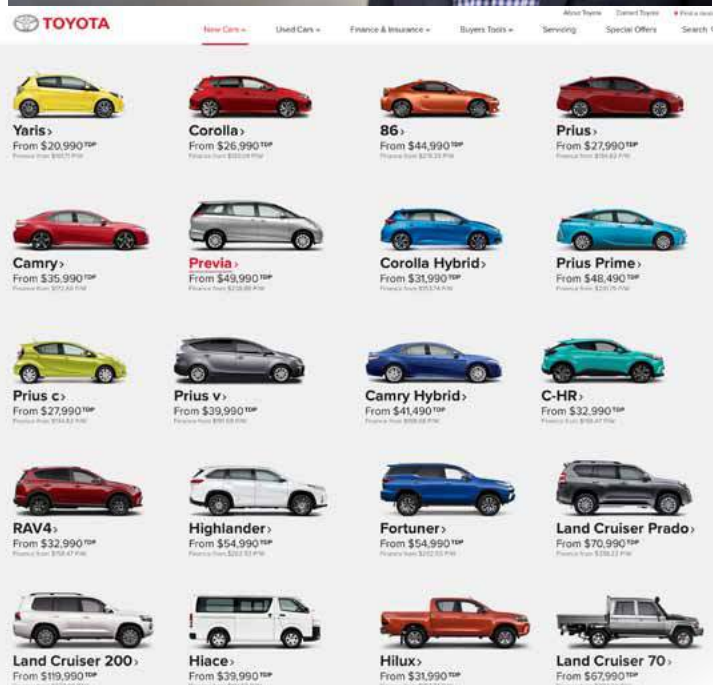
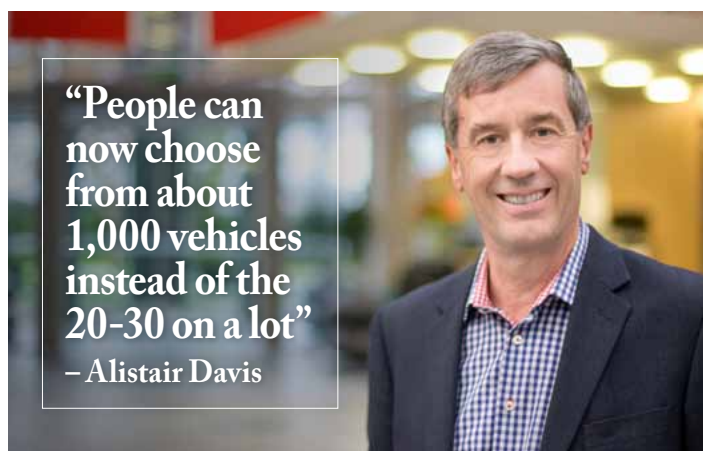
“Our business needs to align with customers’ expectations,” says Alistair Davis, chief executive officer of Toyota NZ. “The changes will save time and money.”

No business wants to be known for its “hard-selling tactics”, but “sadly that’s the reputation that comes with a traditional car dealership”.

But Davis stresses there’s no intention to cut out local dealers. “Our research told us people want product specialists and not just commission-focussed sales people. We have put considerable focus on training our people to offer a great customer experience.”

Price negotiation was the most common concern that came out

“People can now choose from about 1,000 vehicles instead of the 20-30 on a lot”
– Alistair Davis



The range on Toyota NZ's revamped website

of the research with buyers unsure if they had secured the best deals, while finding the right vehicle for their needs was more important than the best price.

“Our pricing had been recommended retail price [RRP] with customers going on-site for negotiation, Davis told Autofile. “The new drive-away price means there will be no haggling. It will be the same everywhere in the country. It comes with no surprises. What customers see is what they get.”

The new system has resulted in some cut on previous RRP, while customers “will buy when they’re ready – we have to make the process easy and transparent”.

In the past, dealers might have reduced prices if keen to get a

car sitting in stock sold. “This was uneven. Now all customers will be treated fairly. In the past, they might have looked to get a good deal and then become disappointed after finding a better one elsewhere.

“Dealers no longer get a dealer’s margin. In that sense, they have become our agents. The cars are being sold for Toyota NZ for a dealer’s fee for the service provided. They do not hold new cars in stock, while the number of demonstration models has been doubled.”

Dealers will continue to sell finance and other add-ons, which are being offered through a new online tool “with customers getting fair interest rates based on their risks”.

“Our dealers have been part of the conversation, and part of our

customer research and strategy for more than five years.”

Savings, which are passed onto buyers, are made by not holding stock, eliminating freight costs and making business efficiencies.

“Dealerships now offer a better choice. People can choose from about 1,000 vehicles instead of the 20-30 on a lot.”

Toyota NZ’s updated website features a vehicle builder for buyers to choose their configurations, although online sales are not currently planned.

Other changes include allowing customers to have overnight test drives instead of “10 minutes around the block”.

Then there’s a seven-day, money-back option – if certain conditions are met – for unsatisfied buyers. They include vehicles returned “as new” with less than 500km travelled.

“Our used car business continues as it is,” says Davis. “There are about 1.2 million vehicle transactions a year in New Zealand. Of those, around 160,000 are new cars of which we have 21 per cent. Our Signature Class is going well with about 9,000 units a year and we’re happy with that.”

Tony Bowater, chief executive officer of Bowater Toyota in Nelson, says: “Toyota NZ and dealers have been in consultation for a number of years on how to make the sales experience better for the client. This standardises processes, makes things clearer for buyers and removes buyer anxiety.”

Bowater has seen some sales processed through the agency model with fixed prices and has had positive feedback from clients.

“Buyers can see the true value of cars. The RRP never ended up the transaction price. Drive Happy could firm up used Toyota car prices. It will have a stabilising effect and opens us up to a wider range of buyers.”

Grant Herrick, manager of new-vehicle sales at Rotorua Toyota, describes Drive Happy as a “great idea – there’s no more confusing pricing across the country”, and he cannot see it having any flow-on effects on used-car prices. ☺



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Lagonda's Vision Concept

Top-end brands go green

Switzerland is well-known as one of the world's playgrounds for the rich and famous, so it never comes as any surprise to see stiff competition between the supercar and luxury marques at Geneva Motor Show.

Last month's event, however, was more than price-tags and top speeds – green technology and artificial intelligence were on the agenda.

Claimed to be the first luxury brand driven solely by zero-emission powertrains, Lagonda has been revamped by owner Aston Martin and will launch two new models by 2023.

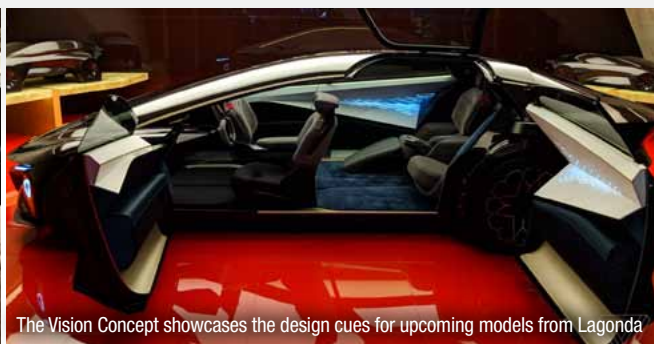
The badge's standalone return was celebrated by an electrified and self-driving Vision Concept being unveiled.

Andy Palmer, president of Aston Martin, said Lagonda would disrupt the status quo by combining two design approaches.

"People associate luxury in their cars with a traditional and even old-fashioned approach because that is all that's been available," he said.

"Lagonda exists to challenge that thinking, and prove being modern and luxurious aren't mutually exclusive. It will produce cars that exploit technology without being obsessed with it."

The Vision Concept previews the design language of two new models, with the first set to enter production in 2021 and the second likely to follow two years later.



The Vision Concept showcases the design cues for upcoming models from Lagonda

Body styles have yet to be confirmed, but Lagonda displayed scaled-down coupe and SUV concepts alongside the Vision Concept fastback sedan. Any two of the three could make production in the next half-decade.

The company says "the electrification revolution" means there's no longer any need for horse and carriage design, and the concept shows design opportunities created when there's no need to provide space for a power source in front of the passenger compartment.

Batteries occupy the Vision Concept's floor. Its solid-state pack can be installed for a real-world driving range of up to 644km with wireless charging supported.

Outputs are sent to an intelligent all-wheel-drive (AWD) system that distributes up to 100 per cent of available torque to any corner depending on demand.

It has seating for four and caters for people more than two metres tall

thanks to efficient interior packaging. The seats are similar to armchairs and the front pews can rotate 180 degree. Roof sections open upwards so people can stand up inside and walk out of the vehicle.

The Vision Concept boasts level-four autonomy meaning it can drive itself in normal conditions on all recognisable roads. Its steering wheel can move from left to right-hand drive, or retract if a human driver isn't required.

Porsche has provided an insight into its second all-electric car to follow its initial Mission E sports sedan due to be revealed in its production form next year.

The Mission E Cross Turismo – a "cross utility vehicle" – is expected to arrive in 2021 with a 440kW twin-motor with the marque describing it as an expression of how it sees the all-electric future.

The vehicle is based on the Mission E's battery-friendly architecture and will utilise the same electric AWD powertrain.

"The level of continuous power is unmatched by any other electric vehicle – multiple accelerations are possible in direct succession without loss of performance," says Oliver Blume, chief executive officer of Porsche.

The marque says it is "already fit for the road", and will come with an 800-volt system prepared for fast-charging and can also be charged over an induction pad on garage floors.

The E Cross Turismo is expected to have an 80 per cent charge time of 15 minutes on a high-power fast-charger with a minimum range of 500km on full charge.

Bentley has tapped fellow Volkswagen Group brand Porsche for a new powertrain option for its hybrid SUV.

The Bentayga Hybrid has an electric motor and turbo-charged petrol V6. This plug-in set-up will probably be adopted from the Panamera 4 E-Hybrid.

It produces 243kW of power



Porsche's Mission E Cross Turismo

Bentley's Bentayga Hybrid is the marque's first electric offering



Bugatti's Chiron Sport is 18kg lighter than the original Chiron



◀ and 450Nm of torque from its V6, and 100kW and 400Nm from its electric motor, for combined outputs of 340kW and 700Nm.

Bentley is yet to unveil the Bentayga Hybrid's relevant figures, but more than 50km of emissions-free driving is promised, while combined carbon-dioxide emissions have been tested at 75g/km.

The battery pack can be fully charged in two-and-a-half hours when plugged into an industrial connection, while using a domestic household socket takes five hours longer.

Three e-modes – EV drive, hybrid and hold – have been added along with four carry-over on-road modes, which are sport, Bentley, comfort and custom.

Information from the sat-nav system helps determine which e-mode will be the most efficient along stretches of a pre-selected route for automatic employment.

MyBentley3 connected services have been updated to include remote battery charging, remote heating and cooling, charging-station finder and vehicle-status report. These functions can be operated via a smartphone.

A collaboration between the marque and designer Philippe Starck has resulted in the Power Dock, a recharging unit that can be installed at owners' homes.

"The Bentayga Hybrid is our first step on the road to electrification," said Adrian Hallmark, chairman of Bentley Motors. "It gives customers the best of both worlds – effortless performance on the open road and emission-free driving in the city."

The hybrid will be available to order from the second half of 2018.

When it comes of pure power, Lamborghini often leads from the front and its Huracan Performante Spyder is no exception.

It can hurtle from 0-100kph in 3.1 seconds and onto 200kph in 9.3 seconds with a maximum of 325kph.

The Spyder is powered by the Performante's 470kW and 600Nm mid-mounted normally aspirated 5.2-litre V10, and wears its bodykit with an added forged carbon-fibre front spoiler and rear wing.

The car boasts Lamborghini's active aerodynamics package that adjusts downforce, such as cornering at high speed.

The Spyder gets a sportier suspension tune, along with recalibrated electronic stability control, more responsive steering, four-wheel drive and a three-mode driving system.

Bugatti ushered in the Chiron Sport in Geneva. It's a lighter and more dynamically capable version of the "regular" record-breaking Chiron.

About 18kg has been trimmed from the Chiron's kerb weight thanks to the addition of several new parts, including lightweight alloys, a carbon-fibre stabiliser and intercooler, and a lighter exhaust deflector and rear window glass.

The inclusion of carbon-fibre windscreen wiper arms – a world-first for a production car – and 3D-printed aluminium windscreen wiper arm tips contribute towards 1.4kg of the weight loss.

The rear-axle differential has been optimised, while a dynamic vectoring function helps distribute torque individually to the wheels on each side to improve steering, especially in tight curves.

The Chiron's eight-litre quad-turbocharged W16 petrol engine carries over to the Sport with 1103kW of power at 6,700rpm and 1,600Nm of torque from 2,000-6,000rpm. It takes 2.4 seconds to get to 100kph from standstill and its top speed is electronically limited to 420kph. ☺

Lamborghini has lifted the lid on the Huracan Performante to produce a Spyder sibling

HURACAN
Performante
Spyder



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Paradox of the fleet's age

I often argue against the standard practice of using a vehicle's age as a marker of its safety and efficiency.

I don't mean this argument to be self-serving as someone who works in the used-vehicle industry. Instead, for me, it's logical.

Before joining the team at VIA, I had never worked in the automotive industry. My background is academic, centred on processing and manipulating data. When VIA hired me, I was working on a PhD in artificial intelligence.

From this standpoint, when I look at problems such as the age of the fleet, I'm doing so informed solely by the data. This doesn't necessarily mean I'm right because relying only on data can have its own pitfalls.

However, coming from outside the industry means I haven't formed any biases, biases that might trap me into only finding – or looking for – certain answers in the data that confirm what I already think, which is a common error made by analysts.

FALSE DICHOTOMY

I consider it my role to identify optimal solutions and plans that are beneficial to both the industry and New Zealand.

I see no reason why the two must be mutually exclusive. If a question exclusively results in zero-sum answers, then the solution starts with fixing the question.

I'm often asked how we can reduce the fleet's age. Most people who ask this question already have a solution in mind – and that's cut

used imports. The false dichotomy is that we can have an old fleet or a "good" fleet.

My response is usually to ask for clarification on what's meant by a "good" fleet. The more obvious answers I get are "safe" and "clean". I have yet to meet anyone who would disagree with those goals.

Being in this industry, I also get the less obvious answer – an affordable fleet. The fleet has a purpose, and if New Zealanders can't afford a vehicle that purpose is denied. What's available must be



want to raise safety and efficiency, and decrease affordability. This is much more likely to limit access to the benefits of owning a vehicle for some socio-economic groups.

As I mentioned, I don't like restricting myself to questions with zero-sum solutions. If what we

really want to do is increase the efficiency, safety and affordability of the fleet, why not focus on those things? Why are we looking at the age at all? Let's identify specific goals in these three areas and find ways to achieve them.

"What's available must be attainable by all types of consumers who we want to participate in our market and economy"

attainable by all types of consumers who we want to participate in our market and economy.

One day, hopefully, other forms of travel will exist in a convenient enough form that the purpose of the fleet can be fulfilled by alternative means. As a frequent user of Auckland's public transport, I would have to argue this day has not yet arrived.

While age is often used as a standard measure for safety and efficiency, there's another useful correlation – age and affordability.

When we say we want to reduce the fleet's age, we're saying we

BUILT TO LAST

There's more to my reluctance to use age as a measure of "goodness" of a fleet. Globally, all fleets are ageing. Cars built today, if properly maintained, are designed with a 450,000km lifespan.

New, emerging technologies – such as electric vehicles with a reduced number of moving parts and smart cars that cannot crash – will further "exacerbate" this problem by assuring these cars last their projected lives and beyond.

If our goal were simply a younger fleet, these great features would be a detriment as they

would see more ageing vehicles on our roads. In fact, seeing as how the average vehicle in New Zealand travels about 14,000km annually, cars today are built with a 30-plus year expected life.

For this reason especially, the focus on a newer fleet isn't logical to me.

WHAT WE'VE GOT

The scariest part of this discussion is that no-one is looking at addressing the real problem – the junk, the gross offenders already in the fleet.

The problem with these vehicles is degradation. Due to the lack of proper maintenance, they often become much less efficient and safe than they were initially built to be. These vehicles are our fleet's worst emitters of pollutants, including carcinogenic particulates and carbon.

Perhaps one solution would be for all vehicles sold in New Zealand, new or used, by any seller, to be subject to an enhanced warrant of fitness.

This could require all vehicle characteristics, including emissions, to be within a tolerable range – for instance, a defined percentage of the manufacturer's original specification. Owners of sub-par vehicles wouldn't be able to sell them, but would still be permitted to use them for the rest of their lifespan.

If the real goal is to find ways to make the fleet as safe, efficient and affordable as possible, I would be happy to add "properly maintained" to the list of desired characteristics. ☺



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Cars boost profits at port

Motor-vehicle imports have helped to increase trading performance at Ports of Auckland (POAL).

The company experienced volume growth across all cargo types in the six months to December 31, while unaudited net profit after tax was down slightly to \$29.2 million from \$29.3m.

POAL's overall car volume of 148,879 units represented an increase of 2.1 per cent from 145,883 in the previous corresponding period.

General cargo rose by 4.7 per cent due to continued strong demand for vehicles and materials to support infrastructure demand in the Auckland region, while container volumes rose by three per cent.

Non-car break-bulk volumes grew strongly – up by 7.27 per cent in six months – as more heavy vehicles were imported. Cruise-



ship visits rose by 50 per cent.

As for financials, unaudited revenue of \$120.6m was up by up 9.1 per cent. Unaudited profit before income tax came in at \$34.m, down by six per cent, while the port's interim dividend fell from \$25.3m to \$23.8m.

Significant capital expenditure increased capacity at the Waitematā sea port and developed POAL's freight hubs in South

Auckland and the Waikato.

Tony Gibson, chief executive, says: "The increase in volumes handled and work around the port unavoidably put pressure on operations. We minimised the impact and delivered excellent service.

"Profits are down slightly as the company embarked on investment. We are focussed on smart growth with a heavy focus on technology, innovation and sustainability in addition to more traditional infrastructure investments, such as wharves and cranes.

"Our results build on work done since 2011 to modernise and make operations more efficient. We are transforming our operation to keep up with Auckland's growth, but doing it in a way that's sustainable and in line with community expectations."

The country's biggest city is growing by about 50,000 people a year and is expected to have a population of two million by 2028.

While the government and council are looking at possibly relocating the port over the next few decades, extra investment is needed in the meantime so it can handle increased demand stemming from population growth.

Gibson says: "To meet this need, we developed a 30-year masterplan, which outlines how we can modify the port to handle growth until such time as a new port is developed.

"The plan, released in November for public comment, ends reclamation in the Waitematā Harbour, and instead focusses on adding capacity through

technology, more intensive land use and selective infrastructure development."

The company has progressed work to become the first automated container terminal in New Zealand. It has also started converting its truck-handling lanes to automated operation and installed ducting for a new fibre-optic network that's due to go live next year, while a new deep-water container berth has been completed.

"In many ways, shipping is still a traditional industry," adds Gibson. "Processes behind most transactions could be described as archaic, but that's set to change with the advent of technologies such as blockchain.

"POAL is setting up an innovation hub with a strong focus on foresight and the future of work to make the most of the coming changes and keep ahead of the disruption our industry certainly faces."

Drawing some parallels with the automotive industry, it aims to become a zero-emissions port by 2040.

"We completed the first step by accurately measuring our emissions and developing a plan to reduce them," explains Gibson.

"We are using the Certified Emissions Measurement and Reduction Scheme [CEMARS] to measure and manage our greenhouse gas emissions, and are the first port in New Zealand to become CEMARS-certified.

"We've started a procurement programme that replaces our vehicles with electric models as we upgrade our fleet. The first two are in use and four more have been purchased."

POAL is looking into shifting to LED lighting, developing a business case for the installation of shore power, initially at one cruise berth, and using solar power.

Its rail office has been converted to run on solar panels as a pilot to evaluate their performance. If successful, they may be rolled out to other areas of the port's business. ☺

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Does your business value time?

We are all given the same amount of time each day to set out and achieve what we desire. The difference is what each of us do with our time, that's a separator between people.

Once an opportunity has been missed or a moment wasted, we cannot get it back. However, each day we're given the opportunity of more time to make the most of.

Various factors can happen in people's lives that leave them appreciating time at a different level to the next person. The measurement of time is the same for everyone. It comes down to what you're capable of doing, what you decide to do, and how much you value its importance.

Understanding the value of time in your dealership is something many businesses don't know how to tackle, or don't see there's a need to.

That said, not appreciating the value of time and what's done in the amount you have during the day, is an area that can really make a difference to your dealership.

Being traders, it's easier to focus on something as tangible as a vehicle you buy and then sell so you can easily measure profit or loss along the way.

When you start to think about efficiencies within dealerships, your return on investment of time – and how staff apply themselves during the day to make best use of the time that's available – can be daunting when you aren't quite sure where to begin.

I like to look at time at a dealership in two ways. One is what

cost does each hour of time during the day have to your business.

The other is what the opportunity value of time is – being what can we generate or need to generate in gross profit as each hour goes by.

Where this one plays a huge roll is when nothing has been done to proactively drive or compliment the business in the minutes and hours that have just passed.

When nothing is done, you still have a cost, but you make no progress towards generating value that helps cover costs, especially with sales people. They shouldn't sit still, you can't afford for them to, and they can't afford to either.

There are many ways to do this and various aspects to factor in. However, to keep it simple and easy to apply are the following two calculations any business can run if you're interested in understanding what your time cost-value is.

COST OF TIME

What does it cost to run my dealership, what are my operating expenses? For this example, we will use \$1 million per annum, 52 weeks in the year, seven days per week, nine working hours per day.

\$1m total operating expenses
divided by 52 weeks
= \$19,230 per week
\$19,230 per week divided
by 7 days = \$2,747 per day
\$2,747 per day divided by 9
hours = \$305 per hour



MARK GREENFIELD
Motorcentral

Therefore, for every person with every hour they are unproductive, inefficient and not contributing positively towards the dealership, is costing the business significantly.

Do the maths with your own dealership and identify your "cost of time".

This is applicable in various ways across every role, but two areas of the most unproductive time tends to be with sales people and administration.

"The measurement of time is the same for everyone"

GROSS TIME PROFIT

This one can be significantly variable. You can drive this up or down, base it on historic or future forecasts. But keeping things simple, we will look at in a sense of going forward. This is what we need to make to ensure the business is at least profitable.

\$1.5m total gross profit needed
divided by 52 weeks
= \$28,846 per week
\$28,846 per week divided
by 7 days = \$4,120 per day
\$4,120 per day divided
by 9 hours = \$457 per hour

What's scary is when you combine the two together – ongoing cost to the business, and gross profit needed to operate and be profitable – it forms a significant hourly number.

Whichever way you cut it and whatever the figures are, it will be relevant to your business and provide you with a real cost of time.

This should be enough to drive you to make changes and identify how each employee can ensure they're making the best use of their time.

As part of doing this evaluation, you start to place more value on inefficiencies and the way you do things.

- ▶ Will you really allow sales people to sit around, and only be productive when a customer walks in? Unlikely, as for every hour they are unproductive it's costing the business significantly.



- ▶ Will you continue to allow admin staff to waste time replicating multiple areas of data entry with the same information that could've been handled once?
- ▶ Will you allow cars to come back from customers because what was promised to be ready for delivery wasn't?
- ▶ Will you allow ongoing poor processes to keep affecting other staff and be employing them to tidy up work that should've been done right in the first place?

Use time wisely to identify how you and your staff can maximise every minute, hour and day to its fullest potential. Because once that day has gone, you cannot get it back.



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NEWS in brief



From left: Linda Surtees of Fostering Kids NZ, Malcolm and Brenda Yorston, Children's Minister Tracey Martin and Grainne Moss, chief executive of the Ministry for Children

Top honour for carers' work over three decades

A couple well-known in the automotive industry have been recognised for fostering children for more than 35 years.

Malcolm Yorston, technical manager of VIA, and his wife Brenda received an Excellence in Foster Care Award at the Beehive last month.

"You don't get into fostering to get awards," Malcolm told Autofile. "The reward we get is helping to make a change in the lives of kids put into situations where there are care and protection issues."

Tracey Martin, Minister for Children, says: "Carers who win these awards are the best of a fantastic group of people who provide the love and sense of belonging all children deserve."

Visit www.autofile.co.nz for more on this story.

Dealerships moving to different area due to re-build

Cockram Motor Group is relocating several of its dealerships in Christchurch. It has sold some land to the Crown, which is wanted for the city re-build's east-west laneway.

At the moment, the half-a-city block bordered by Durham, Tuam and St Asaph Streets houses Hyundai, Isuzu, Maserati, Alfa Romeo and Fiat franchises, plus some two-wheeler brands.

The rest of the Cockram's existing 6,560 square metre site will be sold when the Crown deal is completed.

Family spokesman Matthew Cockram says the area's redevelopment, known as the "south frame", means the land is no longer suitable for the company's needs.

The Cockrams will remain on the old site for up to two years before moving its dealerships to an adjoining block in the city. Its European vehicle business Euromarque has already shifted.

Japanese brand pauses driverless venture after death

Toyota has suspended its autonomous vehicle operation in the US after an Uber self-driving car struck and killed a pedestrian.

The marque's venture, dubbed Chauffeur, was in the midst of testing in Michigan and California.

A spokesman says: "We cannot speculate on the cause of the incident or what it may mean to the automated driving industry going forward. Because we feel the incident may have an effect on our test drivers, we've decided to pause Chauffeur testing on public roads."

No other major car manufacturer or tech company has indicated it will take similar steps.

Kiwi-assembled electric bus transporting students

New Zealand's first battery-powered electric bus is operating in Auckland. The 35-seater is carrying students between AUT's campuses, and provides data on its economics and performance.

"This bus, which was assembled in New Zealand, shows how electric-vehicle technology is moving into the heavy-vehicle space," says Liz Yeaman, of the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority. ☺

New facility for testing

A purpose-built testing station in Hamilton has been officially opened by Vehicle Inspection New Zealand (VINZ).

The facility in Tasman Road, Te Rapa, is close to the company's previous, outdated site – a retrofitted truck repairer's.

It's the first standalone station VINZ has built for six years and is in a great area for business.

A jump in the number of traders setting up in Te Rapa has resulted in more cars being inspected, while the commercial location means there are operations with heavy vehicles.

The testing station, which took 18 months to construct, was up and running by early February.

It was officially opened on March 13 with special guests, suppliers and



The new testing facility in Hamilton

customers invited. They included Fergus Gammie, chief executive of the NZTA, and his colleague Robert Brodnax, director of transport access delivery.

Gammie stressed VINZ – as a key service delivery partner – had an important role to play in the vehicle certification arena.

He added it was essential this process worked correctly in regards



Fergus Gammie, left, of the NZTA, with VINZ's Gordon Shaw



VINZ guests, customers and staff at the opening

to the safety of vehicles and those travelling in them.

"VINZ is dedicated to high levels of skills and this facility is part of this," he said. "Thank you for your partnership."

Gordon Shaw, chief executive officer of VINZ, described the facility – headed up by site services manager Murray Coombes – as "fantastic".

"We have ended up with a great site here, which offers our customers

a state-of-the-art inspection facility," he told guests.

"We are now in a different part of town, and our old and new sites are like chalk and cheese.

"Our single-lane facility in Gore in the South Island has opened and a new station is being built in Palmerston North as we speak. We will then be turning our attention to other locations." ☺

Appeal considered

Trade Me's acquisition of Limelight Software Ltd, trading as Motorcentral, has been declined by the Commerce Commission.

In July 2017, Trade Me advised it had conditionally agreed to purchase Limelight, which operates a cloud-based dealer management system (DMS).

In making its decision, the commission considered the effects of the merger on competition in the provision of DMS products to car traders and supplying online classified advertising to them.

Chairman Dr Mark Berry says it could not be satisfied the buy-out wouldn't be likely to substantially lessen competition in relevant markets.

Alan Clark, head of Trade Me Motors, says the company is considering its next steps following March 9's decision.

"The commission has given a high-level view of its reasons, but we're keen to see the full rationale

in its written decision before we decide what to do.

"We'll consider all options, including appealing. We'll also explore how we can work with Motorcentral to deliver some of the benefits we planned to our mutual customers."

Mena Eskander, director of Motorcentral, told Autofile: "Trade Me is the largest online market base and Motorcentral is the largest supplier of DMS software, so there's going to be synergies and benefits we can achieve and deliver to our common customers if we are together. The acquisition was very much based on that.

"We are disappointed, but have no reason to shed too many tears. It's onwards and upwards.

"Trade Me is a significant part of this industry. We will work with it and others to ensure our position is solid and we are able to deliver benefits to the industry." Visit www.autofile.co.nz for more on this story. ☺

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From the bay to big city lights

Navigating the adversity of the automotive industry has shaped Mike Critchley's career – the past two decades of which he has spent with Automotive Holdings Group (AHG) for which he's now New Zealand country manager.

In his formative years, Critchley worked as a commission-only used car salesman before being a new car consultant, then managing fleets, finance and sales, being a dealer principal and now general manager of AHG NZ.

"All brought their own challenges. You learn quickly how to solve problems and turn a tough situation into a lucrative solution."

And he used those skills during the global financial crisis (GFC) to ensure his dealerships came through it stronger than before.

Critchley started his career in the industry around 1991 when he joined John Dyke Ford in Tauranga as a used car salesman.

"I started as green as grass. It wasn't something I had ever thought of back then. My parents owned a couple of large workshops in Tauranga, so I grew up around cars and always loved motor racing especially the V8s.

"Back in those days there were no computers or cellphones, so there were two ways you talked to people – on the landline or yard. We used to have a half-day on the yard and a half-day off it.

"The half-day off was knocking on doors. It taught you how to talk to people and made you thick-skinned. The receptionist



Mike Critchley

"My parents owned a couple of large workshops in Tauranga, so I grew up around cars"

typed letters and I put them in letterboxes after hours.

"There was no choice but to work leads hard. The guys who were good at follow-up and the sales process did really well. It was, however, the era of the 'hard close' because once customers left the yard, it was difficult to get hold of them."

Critchley left Dyke's to work in hospitality and owned a bar in Tauranga for about three-and-a-half years.

"Hospitality and selling cars have a lot in common – it's about people and

the experience. You think it's glamorous, but the hours aren't conducive to a healthy lifestyle especially when working until two or three in the morning and dealing with drunks. But I had a great time and made a lot of good friends."

By then it was the late 1990s and Critchley was in his late 20s. He had got to that point in life where he thought, "what am I going to do now". A friend he worked with at Dyke's, Mike Ranstead, asked him if he had thought about moving to Auckland – there was a lot of money to be made there.

"As a born-and-bred Bay of Plenty boy, the prospect of moving to the big smoke was exciting, so I got a job with South Auckland Motors in used cars."

He started working for 100 per cent commission, which was the norm back then. Critchley explains: "If you didn't sell anything, you didn't eat. I must have gone about three or four weeks with no income.

"There were about 10 used-car sales consultants and all incoming calls went to one phone in the so-called 'shark tank'.

"Guys were tripping over each other to get to the phone. If a customer walked in, look out. Standing on the yard to cut people off at the pass was normal, along with other antics. I thought, 'what the heck am I doing here'.

"Then I had four sales in a week, which gave 25 per cent of the gross, and I took home a

On the road

When he first got his driver's licence at 15, Mike Critchley drove his parents' workshop 1972 Holden HQ ute. It was manual three on the tree with no power steering, so it was like "turning an ocean liner, but awesome".

He adds: "Four mates would squash across the bench seat in the front and there'd be another four on the tray."

The first vehicle he bought was a yellow



Critchley's first car was a Toyota Corolla SR Coupe

1978 Toyota Corolla SR Coupe. "My dream car back then was a Mitsubishi Colt Galant GTO or a Mazda RX4, but they were hard to come by and held their values well.

"The SR was cool and had a 1,300cc engine. But like most young blokes I wanted

more power, so I sold it to buy a Nissan Bluebird SSS Turbo. It was one of the first of the imports into the country. It had 22-inch wheels and came with features New Zealand cars didn't have back then.

"When I was 19, my partner at the time and I wanted to build our first house, so I needed to sell the car to help with the deposit. I haven't owned a vehicle since. Today, I live in Auckland's best-kept secret, Northcote Point, with my wife Christy."



An artist's impression of the North Harbour Ford premises due to open in September

big commission. At that point, I changed tack. I started going through obsolete customers on the database and phoning them.

"I ended up being quite good on the phone. I would make appointments to meet customers on the yard and got them to ask for me by name. I tell young employees today that persistence and a strong disposition pay off in the long run."

Critchley stayed with South Auckland Motors for a couple of years and also sold new stock.

During that time, Auckland Auto Collection was formed between the Colonial Motor Company (South Auckland Motors), Ford Motor Company and Mazda NZ.

"As the business was formed, roles became available with the central office based at John Andrew Ford," Critchley told Autofile. "I was part of the newly created group leasing team. It was an exciting opportunity."

"Each account manager was assigned four leasing companies to look after. We were responsible for all interaction between dealerships and companies. The lease consultants had a consistent message and there was structure to it."

"That went on for about two-and-a-half years until they disestablished the lease roles and the process went back to dealerships. It was a good experiment and the concept was right. Maybe it was just ahead of its time."

At that point, Critchley

became a business manager at John Andrews. After restructuring, he became the Ford finance manager and retail sales manager for new cars.

"Within 12 months, we were doing about 200 to 230 units a month – half fleet-managed by Andrew Collett and half retail-managed by myself. Ross Moore was dealer principal during this period and it was a strong sales force. From memory, our best performance was 300 new Fords in a month."

In 2005, Critchley became general sales manager for Ford, Mazda and used cars for about 12 months as AHG bought the business in October 2006.

Early in 2007, the dealer principal at North Harbour Ford & Mazda resigned and Critchley thought he'd "have a crack" and remained in that position until earlier this year when he became AHG's general manager of operations in New Zealand.

Looking back, he says guiding the dealership through the GFC in 2007/08 was a defining period in his career.

"I learnt a lot during that time. We had to make some tough decisions early on. We were honest and transparent with staff."

"We had to close two branches – Albany and Warkworth. That was tough. I had to let go of good people. It was brutal as that was the first time I'd ever had to do that, but we were able to relocate some staff back to Glenfield, Silverdale and across the rest of group."

AHG
AUTOMOTIVE HOLDINGS GROUP

Busy building

AHG NZ has six of the country's leading brands, nine dealerships, 13 workshops and 550 employees across Auckland.

The company is building a new Mazda store in Silverdale Shopping Centre near Orewa, which will open this month.

It's also investing in a new Ford showroom on North Shore's Link Drive. This will be a first for the company by having a dealership with all vehicles displayed inside. It's due to open in September.

Closing two branches consolidated the business during the downturn. Service became even more of a priority as people held onto cars rather than buying new models.

"We turned things around pretty quickly and six months later came out of it stronger than we had been. The experience refocused the management team, and our staff and productivity improved."

"When things are rosy and the money's coming in, people don't notice the fat in the business. When your back is up against the wall, the industry can lose money fast because of massive overheads."

"People in Auckland did start to panic. They tend to judge wealth by house prices. Some were made redundant and found themselves with big mortgages."

We re-worked finance deals and some downsized their cars."

Critchley believes one benefit of the GFC was the interest-rate drop from about 10.9 per cent to five or six per cent. "When you have \$12 million plus in stock, that's pretty significant."

He notes the internet has made massive changes to the industry. "When I first started in Tauranga, everything was written on paper. You'd be lucky to speak to about 10 people on the yard a week and three or four would phone in off an advert in the paper."

"Business is now online and we've opened our store to thousands of people who can look at stock on our website. It's a big challenge to the industry, but also the greatest asset at our disposal. I sometimes wonder how well we have responded. There's more that can be done."

Critchley says it's easy to notice the dealerships that focus on their online business due to good-quality photos and the spiel about vehicles.

"There was a mystery shopper survey a few years ago, which showed 60 per cent of visitors to yards weren't followed up. That's a poor reflection on our industry. It would be interesting to see if that has changed if the survey was done again today."

He believes no one in the industry is certain of what the future will hold for the traditional dealership model. "People are holding back and waiting to see what will happen." ☺

The month that was.... April

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April 29, 2005

Emissions screening not worth it

The government scrapped its plans to introduce a compulsory vehicle-emissions screening programme, saying it was unlikely to deliver benefits relative to its cost.

Judith Tizard, Associate Minister for Transport, had recently met with the industry to announce the decision, addressing many people who worked on submissions for the proposed scheme towards the end of 2004.

Tizard said the submissions, in combination with the results of the ministry's pilot testing, indicated the programme would be more expensive than originally envisaged.

"I have concluded implementing the simple test as proposed across the entire fleet places too great a burden on motorists and the vehicle industry without requisite returns," she said. "Therefore, I've decided the proposed introduction of emissions screening in late 2006 will not now proceed."

Perry Kerr, chief executive officer the Motor Industry Association, said the decision was a cop-out. "This is an admission our fleet is so decrepit that a meaningful measurement of emission levels would be too difficult to administer.

David Vinsen, of the Independent Motor Vehicle Dealers' Association, disagreed, saying it was good the government accepted such a programme wouldn't work.



April 4, 2008

Court order obtained on microdots

The Motor Industry Association (MIA) obtained an interim court order in relation to the proposed imposition of whole of vehicle marking (WOVM) on all cars entering the fleet.

The order prevented the government from progressing with its implementation before the outcome of a high-court hearing scheduled for August.

WOVM involved spraying each car with 7,000 tiny microdots, with each dot containing the unique 17-digit vehicle identification number.

"There's no solid evidence microdots will have nothing other than a minimal effect on the rate at which vehicles are stolen," said Perry Kerr, of the MIA. He added it was unfair for the new-vehicle industry to absorb the costs of a scheme that rarely affected it.

DataDot Technology described the legal action as a last-ditch effort to derail a crime-reduction measure that was in the public's interest.



April 27, 1998

Tariffs decision likely with budget

It seemed likely the government would abolish tariffs on vehicles during its May budget. That would have effectively put an end to ongoing uncertainty in the industry, which was largely responsible for plummeting sales.

It would also follow Nissan's expected official announcement in April on its plant closure, which had been under media scrutiny for weeks.

The industry said the speculation was causing problems because of continued public confusion about what it would mean for vehicle prices.

The Minister of Commerce, John Luxton, went on the record to say car prices would drop when tariffs came off, although many in the industry disputed that.

Most in the industry agreed exchange-rate movement and factory price increases would keep new vehicle prices at current levels.



April 13, 2007

Review of vehicle legislation published

Consumer Affairs Minister Judith Tizard released two discussion papers recommending changes to improve legislation on car purchases.

They resulted from work done by her ministry following its review of the Motor Vehicle Sales Act.

"The proposals will result in an improved registration system for motor-vehicle traders, and reduce business compliance costs and unnecessary red tape," said Tizard.

David Vinsen, chief executive of the Independent Motor Vehicle Dealers' Association (IMVDA), was pleased with the review and "generally happy with the logical step forward the review suggests".

But he added the IMVDA was concerned there had been no change to the "imported as damaged" category. "It's not particularly helpful to the public because they don't know what it means."

The Motor Trade Association said the proposed improvements to the law continued to disappoint. Communications manager Andy Cuming said it would develop a submission on the proposals reflecting members' views.



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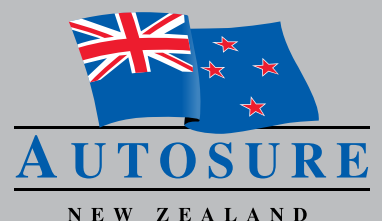
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Industry movers

PAUL CLOKE recently joined Finance Now as area manager for motor-vehicle finance for the Waikato and Bay of Plenty, a region he has built strong relationships in previously.

His role will be to manage existing customers while further growing the motor-vehicle dealer portfolio in these areas.

Cloke has joined Finance Now after five years as an account manager for Autosure and, prior to that, spent 11 years with the Waikato Times as a motoring account executive.



NORMAN SAMUELS has joined the AutoPlay team in the newly created role of dealer solutions specialist.

Samuels brings with him in-depth digital industry knowledge and strong customer empathy, says David Boshier, AutoPlay's general manager. "He will be a great addition as we keep growing our New Zealand-based customer-facing team."



ALASTAIR WINTER has been appointed account manager for Autotrader's business in the Christchurch region after working for parent company Bauer Media for the past four years.

After attending university in Canterbury, Winter moved to London for two years where he worked for shipping company Anglo Pacific. Prior to joining Bauer Media, he worked for Freightways for two years.



MARK RUDDLESDEN has been appointed regional director of Fleetwise. He has joined the fleet management company with 20 years' experience in the automotive industry after being LeasePlan's business development manager for nine years.

Prior to this, Ruddlesden was sales manager for Turners Auctions in Wellington and business development manager at Esanda, now FleetPartners.



JAMI-LEE ROSS, MP for Botany, pictured, has been promoted to National's senior whip, and opposition spokesman for transport and infrastructure.

The transport associate is Brett Hudson. Ross replaces Judith Collins, who moves to housing and urban development.

The reshuffle is part of National leader Simon Bridges' fresh look for the party. The front bench includes Amy Adams with finance, while her associates are Andrew Bayly and Alistair Scott.

Nathan Guy takes on biosecurity, Michael Woodhouse health and immigration, Tim Macindoe ACC, Jonathan Young energy and resources, Simon O'Connor customs and Scott Simpson environment.



COLIN SMITH, of Tauranga, has been voted in as president of the NZ Motoring Writers' Guild. Manawatu's Richard Bosselman is vice-president.

Smith is NZME's regional motoring editor. He has been a guild member for 31 years and was its most recent vice-president. Bosselman has been a journalist since 1979.

NZ labour market report

THE NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT market has started 2018 positively with sentiment looking up across New Zealand.

Consumer confidence grew in January after three months of decline, while the government posted an unexpected operating surplus.

The good news extended to the job market with Seek recording an 8.1 per cent increase in advertisements compared to the same time last year.

"The mood is generally positive in the market right now," says Lee Tyrell, director of recruitment firm Franklin Smith.

Almost all regions saw strong annual growth. Southland and Northland were out in front, with opportunities growing by 24.4 and 23.7 per cent respectively.

The Bay of Plenty and West Coast recorded high levels of job ads relative to the past five years, and the trend has been looking up for the past four months.

While Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch have also recorded high levels of vacancies, the trend has been quite flat over recent months.

In the current competitive market, employees may need to reconsider recruitment strategies to attract top candidates.

"They need to be able to articulate why they are employers of choice," says Tyrell. "If you are struggling to answer this question, you need to go back to the drawing board. In the current market, you want candidates to walk out of an interview thinking 'wow, I want to work here'."

"Every candidate Googles a company before applying, so ensure you're using your website to advertise yourself as an employer of choice."

Tyrell suggests reviewing job descriptions to ensure they clearly explain requirements. "Some companies have generic descriptions, but it's worth taking time to include more detail. Candidates may want to take a description home and review it to ensure it's the right role for them."

In addition, Stats NZ reports more Kiwis are working – and working smarter – with labour productivity going up by 0.9 per cent in the year ending March 2017. Growth in the workforce saw labour inputs for the measured sector increase by 2.9 per cent, while the economy expanded by 3.8 per cent.

"The latest figures show workers could produce 133 goods or services each hour in 2017, compared with 100 an hour 20 years ago," says Gary Dunnet, senior manager of national accounts.

In the long run, productivity is regarded as key to increasing the country's standard of living as workers share the fruits of their labour. By producing more for each hour worked, incomes may rise and the country becomes wealthier.

Growth in labour productivity in goods-producing industries was up by 1.6 per cent boosted largely by 3.9 per cent growth in construction.

Service industries saw such growth of 0.8 per cent in aggregate over the year, while primary industries saw a 0.6 per cent decline.

Meanwhile, in the year ending January 2018, 70,100 more migrants arrived than left – 132,000 compared to 61,900. The largest net gains were from China with 9,300, India on 6,700, the UK with 6,100, South Africa on 4,900 and the Philippines with 4,800.

Annual net migration in the 12-month period was down by 1,200 from the January 2017 year. It reached a record high of 72,400 in the July 2017 year, but has since slowed slightly.

In the January 2018 year, there were 24,900 arrivals from Australia with a similar number departing.

More than half of migrants arriving from Australia are returning Kiwis living across the Tasman for more than a year.

The number of migrants going back and forth to Australia in the past year almost balanced each other out – the net gain was just 40 people in the past 12 months. ☺

TO FEATURE IN INDUSTRY MOVERS
EMAIL EDITOR@AUTOFILE.CO.NZ

Keeping abreast of market changes

As the old saying goes, "you never stop learning". That's so true in the automotive industry with new makes and models coming out all the time, upgrades to existing marques and their products, electric and hybrid cars becoming more common, and the way technology is advancing with all the electronic gadgets and safety enhancements to vehicles.

Your customers will know all these details when they decide to purchase, so how do you keep abreast of the market?

There's another old saying you, "learn by your mistakes", which is not always true. Learning by your mistakes is usually a costly exercise, and sometimes involves an emotional cost or monetary cost.

Generally when your mistake at work is a monetary cost – it may not be for you, but it almost certainly will be to the dealership.

It could be the loss of a sale, customer, or the loss of an opportunity to sell finance and insurance (F&I).

How do you learn? There have been a number of studies done on this subject. One of the best ways we at Protecta Insurance have found is to learn from your peers.

That is one of the reasons why we hold regular business manager breakfast meetings across the country.

The breakfast meetings do have a teaching components to them, but most of the learning is around the table with open and frank discussions, listening and sharing ideas – both successful and unsuccessful.

The theme of the breakfast changes each time. This enables



TONY HEADLAND
General manager
Protecta Insurance

the dealership to maximise its F&I profits.

With internet and phone-selling, the basic rules are the same – offer 100 per cent of your customers 100 per cent of your products 100 per cent of the time. If you do this, the results will amaze you.

All you need is the proven process for success and this is what these monthly breakfast meetings are arming their attendees with.

As well as the teaching and learning component, our quarterly breakfast meetings give business managers time to chat and get to know each other.

Although franchise and non-franchise business managers attend, their goals, challenges and frustrations are the same, and this gives them the platform to

network and share solutions.

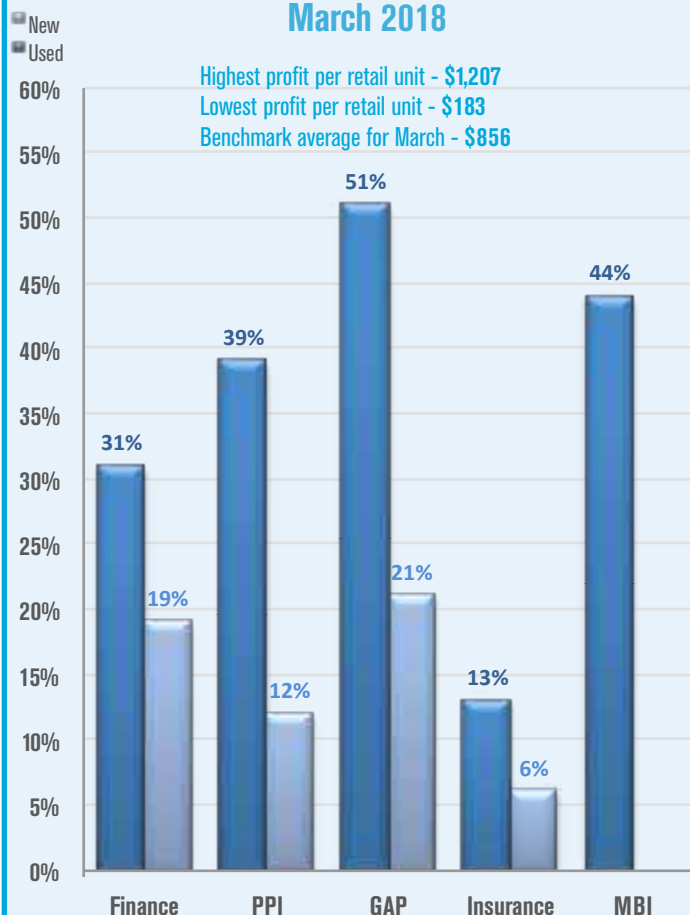
Our anti-money laundering breakfast meetings in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch were very successfully held in February. Upcoming meetings dates will be available soon.

The dates for our two-day business managers' training courses are April 17-18, June 19-20, August 21-22, October 9-10 and November 21-22.

These are hosted by Erin Mills in Auckland, although due to high demand we do put on additional courses in other locations around the country.

We are experiencing high demand for all our training sessions and breakfast meetings, so please act quickly. Contact us now and register to attend the next one in your area. We look forward to seeing and hearing from you there. ☺

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SPEED DIARY

13 APR

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14 APR

Formula E Championship - Rome, Italy

14 - 15 APR

Superbikes - MotorLand Aragon, Spain
World Rallycross Championship -
Circuit de Catalunya, Barcelona, Spain

15 APR

F1 - Sakir, Bahrain
NASCAR Cup Series - Bristol Motor
Speedway, USA

20 - 22 APR

Australian Supercars - Phillip Island 500

21 APR

NASCAR Cup Series - Richmond
International Raceway, USA

21 - 22 APR

Superbikes - Assen, Netherlands

22 APR

MotoGP - Austin, Texas, USA

26 - 29 APR

WRC - Rally Argentina, Cordoba

27 - 28 APR

Formula E Championship - Paris, France

28 - 29 APR

World Touring Car Cup - Hungaroring
Budapest, Hungary
Formula 2 Championship - Baku City,
Azerbaijan
World Rallycross Championship -
Montalegre, Portugal

29 APR

F1 - Baku City, Azerbaijan
NASCAR Cup Series - Talladega
Speedway, USA

4 - 5 MAY

World Endurance Championship - Spa-
Francorchamps, Belgium

4 - 6 MAY

Australian Supercars - Perth SuperSprint

5 MAY

DTM - Hockenheimring, Germany

5 - 7 MAY

European Rally Championship - Rally
de Catalunya, Spain

6 MAY

MotoGP - Jerez de la Frontera, Spain
NASCAR Cup Series - Dover Speedway,
Delaware, USA
DTM - Hockenheimring, Germany

Gearing up for F3 changes

As New Zealander Marcus Armstrong prepares for his first season in the FIA European Formula 3 Championship, the sport's governing body has confirmed it will be upgraded next year to run as a 10-round championship alongside Formula 1.

A new FIA Formula 3 series is expected to supersede the existing European F3 series and GP3.

The move was approved by the World Motor Sport Council in Geneva last month with a limited number of other details revealed.

The weekend will feature two races, and the grid will be between 24 and 30 cars. A new vehicle will be designed for the series with a single chassis – expected to be from Dallara,

the engine and tyre supplier.

It will boast increased chassis strength, increased cockpit rim height and strength, the Halo frontal-impact protection device, and

will be the first car to feature a frontal anti-intrusion panel.

Junior categories, such as the Toyota Racing Series (TRS), will only switch to Halo if required to by the FIA.

This year, Armstrong is racing for respected Italian team Prema and remains with the elite Ferrari Driver Academy.

He and team-mate Richard Schwartzman – third and first respectively in the TRS held in this

country over the summer – will be part of a star-studded Euro F3 entry of 24 drivers, almost half of them graduates of New Zealand's TRS in what may be the hardest-fought in Formula 3's history.

With such intense rivalry, Armstrong has an opportunity to regain his form and turn the tables on his team-mate and, in doing so, come to the attention of talent-spotters among the major premier categories. ☺



Marcus Armstrong and his car for the 2018 European F3 season

Evans victorious on beast's debut

Is this the most powerful Commodore in the world? Is it the most evolved?

A definitive answer is hard to find, but the Wet And Forget sponsored Supertourer-based car took Simon Evans to the northern endurance series title at Pukekohe last month and finished looking as though it could do the whole series again if it needed to.

Evans and co-driver Calum Quin battled dreadful weather at Pukekohe while fending off the Audi R8 LMS GT3 of Andrew Fawcett and Gene Rollinson, who were knocked out early in the final race.

It's the second time Evans has



Simon Evans' Commodore battles Andrew Fawcett's Audi R8 LMS GT3 on a rain-lashed Pukekohe circuit

won the three-hour title and the first for Toyota 86 Championship graduate Callum Quin. The car ran a seven-litre engine and new aero package, along with anti-lock

brakes and traction control.

Dates for the next New Zealand Endurance Championship are still to be confirmed, but is expected to take place later this year. ☺



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Sloan ranges into Europe

Reaching a crossroads in 2017, rallyman Sloan Cox started to look at the next step in his career – a ninth season in rallying or a fresh adventure?

The result is that on April 28 the 26-year-old flies to Scandinavia, turning his back on the New Zealand Rally Championship (NZRC) for what may be a career-defining switch to the growing European rallycross (RallyX or RX) scene.

Cox, twice New Zealand Junior Rally Driver of the Year, is an early adopter.

When Hayden Paddon first built a left-hand-drive (LHD) Mitsubishi Evo IX rally car in preparation to launch his international career, Cox too saw the benefit of LHD. He was also the first in this country to campaign an Evo X.

The arrival of AP4+ and approval for R5-spec cars to join the NZRC raises the price of admission for serious competitors to \$300,000 or more – and that's just the vehicle.

Add in the price of "consumables" – fuel, travel to and from events, accommodation,



food and so on – and the inevitable mechanical breakages and potential panel-beating, and it's a serious investment.

Cox says: "We'd done the full season in 2017 and had competitive speed, but not with the consistency to challenge for the title, so we were trying to decide what to do for 2018."

He contested and won the Teng Tools Rallycross at Bay Park in 2016. This year, he capped that by winning the two National Rally X Series events run by New Zealand Xtreme Motorsport Series/D1NZ.

"It was rallying in front of a crowd – that appealed to me," enthuses Cox, of Rotorua. "It's

"I'm one of those drivers who goes faster when he sees an intersection with a crowd of spectators"

spectacular and entertaining.

"Even on stages, I'm one of those drivers who goes faster when he sees an intersection with a crowd of spectators at it, so we started looking more closely at the sport of rallycross."

Cox quickly found the RX Academy, a single-make rallycross series, which uses rallycross-prepared versions of Renault's Clio RS RX.

"I sent off an email to find out more and they started researching me," he recalls.

The upshot was an invitation to join the exclusive RX Academy, which admits only 12 drivers per season.

It's the starting point for many rallycross competitors in Europe and around the world, and offers competitors professional coaching with driving, mental and physical fitness, media and public relations.

For Cox, that means quickly acclimatising to a front-wheel-drive 1.6-litre turbo car, which is a big change in driving style from the turbo all-wheel-drive Mitsubishi Evo X he has been rallying here.

He must also come up with a budget for series costs – about \$115,000 – along with a travel budget.

There's also the matter of a contingency fund to cover panel or mechanical damage, meaning the cost is similar to another season in the Evo X, but still well short of the cost of an AP4+ season.

Following a three-day training camp, the academy season starts on May 6 in Sweden and has a big prize up for grabs for the winner – a fully funded drive in five European rounds of the RX2 International Series or a full season in the FIA European Rallycross Championship for Super1600.

Cox is hoping his age and experience will be an advantage in the academy series where his rivals are as young as 14 and most have less gravel miles under their belts.

The aim is to build contacts and networks, and to put his skills on display in front of the fiercely competitive European rallycross scene. ☺



Sloan Cox in his Mitsubishi Evo X during the 2010 Rally New Zealand



Spraying gravel on the 2012 Rally Wairarapa

Tribunal rules dealership was not party to sale and swap of faulty vehicles

Background

Brent Cooper, a director of Cooper Motors, purchased a 2007 Holden VE Commodore for \$7,320 from Turners Auctions on August 2, 2016.

Two days later, the car was sold to Tracey Rameka for the same price. Four months later, the vehicle developed a transmission fault.

The parties agreed to swap the faulty VE Commodore for a 1997 VT Commodore. However, two months later, the VT failed a WOF because of a leaking steering rack and chassis corrosion.

Rameka wanted to reject the VT Commodore and recover all amounts she had paid in respect of both vehicles.

The buyer said she purchased the VE Commodore from Cooper Motors, a registered motor-vehicle trader, and was entitled to a remedy under the CGA.

The trader said Rameka wasn't entitled to any remedy because it didn't sell or supply the vehicles to her. Brent Cooper and his wife Lisa, also a director, said Rameka was an acquaintance and they supplied the vehicles in their personal capacity as a favour.

The case

Rameka brought a claim against Cooper Motors alleging faults with the cars breached the CGA. The tribunal stated the problems with both vehicles meant they wouldn't comply with the act's acceptable quality guarantee.

However, it added the legislation's protections only applied if one of the parties to

the transaction was a supplier as defined in section two of the act – someone who transferred ownership or possession of goods under a contract of sale to which the supplier was a party.

Therefore, under the CGA's terms, Rameka had to prove Cooper Motors was a party to those transactions if she was to succeed in her claim.

Rameka contacted Brent Cooper because he operated as a car dealer. The buyer said throughout her dealings with the Coopers that they were acting in their capacity as agents of their business.

The Coopers denied their company supplied the VE Commodore to Rameka. The couple said they were acting in their personal capacity when they purchased it from Turners Auctions for her.

Brent Cooper said Rameka called him asking for assistance in buying a car and the couple had known her for about three years. He said, because of that connection, he was prepared to assist her purchase and pass it on to her at cost.

There was no written agreement documenting the arrangement between the parties. As a result, the tribunal looked at other available evidence to determine whether Cooper Motors sold the VE Commodore to Rameka.

However, it was unable to find any evidence the purchaser told the Coopers she had approached them because they operated a motor-vehicle trader business,

nor was there any evidence the Coopers' were acting as a registered trader when they bought the car for her.

The invoice from Turners was issued to Lisa Cooper and her husband paid for the vehicle using his personal credit card. The couple made no profit on the transaction and on-sold it for the price they paid.

Finally, there was no signed agreement for sale and purchase or consumer information notice (CIN), which were required by law for a transaction involving a registered trader.

When the VE Commodore developed the transmission fault in December 2016, Rameka returned the vehicle to the Coopers, who agreed to let her borrow the VT Commodore until the VE was repaired.

Unfortunately, Rameka could not afford the cost of the repairs so the parties agreed she could have the VT Commodore as a "straight swap" for the VE.

Again, both parties were unable to produce any written agreement documenting the arrangement between them.

The finding

After considering the evidence, the tribunal was satisfied the VE Commodore was not supplied by Cooper Motors. It ruled the transaction was a private agreement between Rameka and the Coopers.

The tribunal was also satisfied that Cooper Motors didn't supply the VT Commodore to the buyer.

The case: The buyer wanted to reject her Holden after it failed a warrant of fitness (WOF) inspection due to corrosion and a leaking steering rack. The sellers, a married couple and owners of a motor-vehicle dealership, said the car was sold privately and the purchaser was an acquaintance.

The decision: The application was dismissed because the buyer failed to prove the dealer was a party to the sale and purchase transaction under the terms of the Consumer Guarantees Act (CGA).

At: The Motor Vehicle Disputes Tribunal, Auckland.

Again, there was no evidence to show that Rameka told the Coopers that she was dealing with them because they operated a motor-vehicle trader business, and there was no evidence the couple ever represented themselves as car dealers.

Also, there was no signed agreement for sale and purchase or CIN, which were required by law when a motor-vehicle trader supplied a car to a consumer.

Instead, the evidence suggested that the Coopers agreed to give Rameka the VT Commodore as a swap for the VE Commodore because she couldn't afford to pay for the transmission repairs.

The tribunal was satisfied that the Coopers swapped the cars as a favour to the buyer rather than as a business transaction on behalf of Cooper Motors.

It was, therefore, satisfied the dealership did not sell or supply either vehicle to Rameka.

Order

The purchaser's claim was dismissed because Cooper Motors held no liability under the CGA for faults with both of the vehicles. ☺



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Purchaser cancels contract after issues arise with supply of three electric cars

Background

Charlotte Walters agreed to purchase a 2012 Nissan Leaf from Wood de Rtib Ltd, trading as AMC Motors, on August 9, 2017.

Under the vehicle offer and sale agreement, the dealer agreed to supply the electric vehicle (EV) within two months, plus an unspecified period for shipping and compliance.

Walters agreed to pay between \$11,895 and \$12,895 for the car. The agreement was the third contract signed by her and AMC Motors to purchase a Leaf.

The first agreement was cancelled because the condition of the EV was unsatisfactory to the buyer.

The second one was cancelled because AMC Motors misrepresented its battery capacity claiming the indicator showed 11 bars of capacity out of a maximum of 12. Its true reading was 10 bars.

As a result, Walters returned it. After further negotiations with AMC Motors, she agreed to sign a third agreement to purchase another Leaf.

Walters had paid \$11,895 for the second Leaf, so the parties agreed the funds would be put towards the purchase of the third car and she would pay any outstanding balance.

However, Walters wanted to cancel the third agreement claiming AMC Motors breached the Consumer Guarantees Act (CGA) and Fair Trading Act (FTA) by misrepresenting the battery capacity of the second EV and

that she entered into the third agreement under duress. She wanted a refund of all amounts paid in respect of the second car.

AMC Motors said Walters wasn't entitled to a refund of all amounts paid in respect of the second Leaf.

It said it initially offered Walters \$800 and a free battery charger as compensation for the second EV not having the expected capacity. Walters refused the offer, but chose to enter into the third agreement.

The case

The tribunal said Walters was unhappy that AMC Motors refused to refund the purchase price of the second Leaf, but there was nothing untoward in the trader's refusal to provide a full refund.

The remedies it offered – compensation or a replacement – were available options under the CGA and FTA for the misdescription of a vehicle.

The tribunal said Walters entered into the third agreement with a full understanding of what she had agreed to and it rejected her submission she entered into the deal under duress.

It also ruled she had no ongoing claim in relation to the second EV because she had resolved any claim she might have had by agreeing to allow AMC Motors to supply a replacement.

The tribunal said the main issue was whether the trader failed to supply the third Leaf within a reasonable time.

The third agreement provided

that AMC Motors would source and import a vehicle for Walters.

The parties didn't agree on a precise timeframe for delivery. Walters was told the Leaf would be ready for collection between one and two months, plus an unspecified time for shipping and compliance. Under the CGA, AMC Motors was required to deliver the EV within a reasonable time.

The tribunal's assessor said it would ordinarily take two months to source the car plus six weeks to ship it from Japan and complete the compliance process in New Zealand.

AMC Motors hadn't delivered the Leaf more than four-and-a-half months after the agreement was signed.

It claimed Walters wasn't entitled to cancel the contract meaning, from its perspective, she had repudiated the deal.

Under the Contractual Remedies Act when a party has repudiated a contract, the other party has two choices – cancel the deal or affirm it.

AMC Motors didn't cancel the contract. It said that it remained willing and able to provide the Leaf to the buyer.

It had, therefore, affirmed the deal and in that circumstance the trader had an obligation to carry out the contract, but it had failed to supply the EV within a reasonable time.

Walters wanted a full refund of all money she had paid to AMC Motors. She could obtain a full refund if the failure to deliver the

The case: The buyer wanted to reject the third Nissan Leaf she had ordered and be financially compensated for loss suffered as a result of the trader's failure to deliver the vehicle within a reasonable time as specified by consumer legislation. The trader claimed the purchaser wasn't entitled to cancel the contract, and it remained willing and able to supply the car.

The decision: The trader was ordered to pay the buyer \$11,895.

At: The Motor Vehicle Disputes Tribunal, Auckland.

vehicle amounted to a failure of a substantial character under section 21 of the CGA.

The finding

The tribunal ruled the Leaf hadn't been delivered to the buyer within the timeframe required and that AMC Motors had breached section 5a of the CGA.

It was also satisfied the dealer's failure to deliver the EV was a failure of a substantial character.

Walters had already paid \$11,895 towards buying the vehicle. No reasonable consumer would have agreed to purchase the EV if knowing the trader would retain \$11,895 and then fail to deliver the goods within the required timeframe.

Under section 18 of the CGA, Walters was entitled to reject the goods in accordance with section 22 and was entitled to a refund of any money paid or other consideration provided in respect of the rejected goods.

The order

The trader was ordered to pay the buyer \$11,895 because the car wasn't delivered within a reasonable time. ⊕

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| Port Calls | | Carrera v1806 | Lake Taupo v1807 | Dream Jasmine v1853 | Tokyo Car v1808 |
|------------|------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| JAPAN | Moji | 20 Mar | - | - | 14 Apr |
| | Osaka | 21 Mar | 2 Apr | 5 Apr | 15 Apr |
| | Nagoya | 22 Mar | 3 Apr | 6 Apr | 16 Apr |
| | Toyohashi | - | - | - | 17 Apr |
| | Yokohama | 23 Mar | 4 Apr | 7 Apr | 18 Apr |
| NZ | Auckland | 9 Apr | 21 Apr | 24 Apr | 6 May |
| | Wellington | 16 Apr | 28 Apr | 2 May | 10 May |
| | Lyttelton | 13 Apr | 1 May | 1 May | 9 May |
| | Nelson | 14 Apr | 3 May | 3 May | 15 May |

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| |
|-----------------------|
| Total new cars |
| 9,050 |
| 2017: 9,230 ▼ 2.0% |



| |
|---------------------------------|
| Total imported used cars |
| 11,841 |
| 2017: 14,474 ▼ 18.2% |

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|----------------------------|
| Whangarei |
| NEW: 242 2017: 217 ▲ 11.5% |
| USED: 270 2017: 295 ▼ 8.5% |

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|---------------------------------|
| Auckland |
| NEW: 3,936 2017: 4,045 ▼ 2.7% |
| USED: 5,775 2017: 7,080 ▼ 18.4% |

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|-------------------------------|
| Hamilton |
| NEW: 637 2017: 668 ▼ 4.6% |
| USED: 780 2017: 1,000 ▼ 22.0% |

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|-----------------------------|
| New Plymouth |
| NEW: 176 2017: 160 ▲ 10.0% |
| USED: 167 2017: 232 ▼ 28.0% |

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|--------------------------|
| Wanganui |
| NEW: 94 2017: 98 ▼ 4.1% |
| USED: 84 2017: 93 ▼ 9.7% |

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|-----------------------------|
| Palmerston North |
| NEW: 283 2017: 329 ▼ 14.0% |
| USED: 295 2017: 415 ▼ 28.9% |

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|-----------------------------|
| Nelson |
| NEW: 156 2017: 144 ▲ 8.3% |
| USED: 198 2017: 266 ▼ 25.6% |

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|--------------------------|
| Westport |
| NEW: 0 2017: 6 ▼ 600.0% |
| USED: 2 2017: 11 ▼ 81.8% |

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|---------------------------|
| Greymouth |
| NEW: 19 2017: 21 ▼ 9.5% |
| USED: 29 2017: 42 ▼ 31.0% |

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|-----------------------------|
| Thames |
| NEW: 126 2017: 70 ▲ 80.0% |
| USED: 119 2017: 106 ▲ 12.3% |

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| Tauranga |
| NEW: 413 2017: 403 ▲ 2.5% |
| USED: 537 2017: 652 ▼ 17.6% |

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| Rotorua |
| NEW: 164 2017: 125 ▲ 31.2% |
| USED: 168 2017: 168 ■ 0.0% |

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|---------------------------|
| Gisborne |
| NEW: 37 2017: 56 ▼ 33.9% |
| USED: 49 2017: 64 ▼ 23.4% |

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|-----------------------------|
| Napier |
| NEW: 278 2017: 276 ▲ 0.7% |
| USED: 262 2017: 293 ▼ 10.6% |

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| Masterton |
| NEW: 102 2017: 93 ▲ 9.7% |
| USED: 70 2017: 77 ▼ 9.1% |

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| Wellington |
| NEW: 932 2017: 933 ▼ 0.1% |
| USED: 834 2017: 1,103 ▼ 24.4% |

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|---------------------------|
| Blenheim |
| NEW: 72 2017: 71 ▲ 1.4% |
| USED: 62 2017: 71 ▼ 12.7% |

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|---------------------------------|
| Christchurch |
| NEW: 833 2017: 926 ▼ 10.0% |
| USED: 1,462 2017: 1,746 ▼ 16.3% |

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|----------------------------|
| Timaru |
| NEW: 65 2017: 92 ▼ 29.3% |
| USED: 89 2017: 138 ▼ 35.5% |

| |
|---------------------------|
| Oamaru |
| NEW: 9 2017: 24 ▼ 62.5% |
| USED: 16 2017: 27 ▼ 40.7% |

| |
|----------------------------|
| Dunedin |
| NEW: 286 2017: 327 ▼ 12.5% |
| USED: 398 2017: 430 ▼ 7.4% |

| |
|----------------------------|
| Invercargill |
| NEW: 190 2017: 146 ▲ 30.1% |
| USED: 175 2017: 165 ▲ 6.1% |

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Imported Passenger Vehicle Sales by Make - March 2018

| MAKE | MAR'18 | MAR'17 | +/- % | MAR'18 MKT SHARE | 2018 YEAR TO DATE | 2018 MKT SHARE |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Toyota | 2,878 | 3,722 | -22.7 | 24.3% | 8,982 | 23.9% |
| Nissan | 2,132 | 2,543 | -16.2 | 18.0% | 6,981 | 18.6% |
| Mazda | 1,978 | 2,058 | -3.9 | 16.7% | 6,284 | 16.7% |
| Honda | 1,188 | 1,449 | -18.0 | 10.0% | 3,776 | 10.0% |
| Subaru | 704 | 605 | 16.4 | 5.9% | 2,209 | 5.9% |
| Suzuki | 606 | 711 | -14.8 | 5.1% | 2,010 | 5.3% |
| BMW | 514 | 713 | -27.9 | 4.3% | 1,504 | 4.0% |
| Volkswagen | 357 | 548 | -34.9 | 3.0% | 1,168 | 3.1% |
| Mitsubishi | 307 | 548 | -44.0 | 2.6% | 1,072 | 2.9% |
| Audi | 235 | 297 | -20.9 | 2.0% | 677 | 1.8% |
| Mercedes-Benz | 227 | 356 | -36.2 | 1.9% | 687 | 1.8% |
| Ford | 104 | 130 | -20.0 | 0.9% | 341 | 0.9% |
| Lexus | 80 | 93 | -14.0 | 0.7% | 256 | 0.7% |
| Volvo | 58 | 94 | -38.3 | 0.5% | 175 | 0.5% |
| Chevrolet | 48 | 80 | -40.0 | 0.4% | 176 | 0.5% |
| Jaguar | 45 | 51 | -11.8 | 0.4% | 151 | 0.4% |
| Holden | 40 | 61 | -34.4 | 0.3% | 125 | 0.3% |
| Dodge | 35 | 24 | 45.8 | 0.3% | 101 | 0.3% |
| Hyundai | 35 | 39 | -10.3 | 0.3% | 90 | 0.2% |
| Land Rover | 34 | 64 | -46.9 | 0.3% | 130 | 0.3% |
| Mini | 34 | 54 | -37.0 | 0.3% | 101 | 0.3% |
| Jeep | 32 | 37 | -13.5 | 0.3% | 79 | 0.2% |
| Peugeot | 22 | 17 | 29.4 | 0.2% | 64 | 0.2% |
| Porsche | 21 | 39 | -46.2 | 0.2% | 66 | 0.2% |
| Chrysler | 18 | 25 | -28.0 | 0.2% | 56 | 0.1% |
| Renault | 9 | 5 | 80.0 | 0.1% | 32 | 0.1% |
| Cadillac | 8 | 4 | 100.0 | 0.1% | 18 | 0.0% |
| Daihatsu | 8 | 13 | -38.5 | 0.1% | 24 | 0.1% |
| Kia | 8 | 8 | 0.0 | 0.1% | 32 | 0.1% |
| Citroen | 6 | 3 | 100.0 | 0.1% | 23 | 0.1% |
| Plymouth | 5 | 3 | 66.7 | 0.0% | 13 | 0.0% |
| Pontiac | 5 | 2 | 150.0 | 0.0% | 14 | 0.0% |
| Alfa Romeo | 4 | 1 | 300.0 | 0.0% | 10 | 0.0% |
| Buick | 4 | 4 | 0.0 | 0.0% | 8 | 0.0% |
| Austin | 3 | 0 | 300.0 | 0.0% | 4 | 0.0% |
| Others | 49 | 73 | -32.9 | 0.4% | 169 | 0.4% |
| Total | 11,841 | 14,474 | -18.2 | 100.0% | 37,608 | 100.0% |

Imported Passenger Vehicle Sales by Model - March 2018

| MAKE | MODEL | MAR'18 | MAR'17 | +/- % | MAR'18 MKT SHARE | 2018 YEAR TO DATE | 2018 MKT SHARE |
|--------------|-----------|---------------|---------------|--------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Mazda | Axela | 575 | 593 | -3.0 | 4.9% | 1,800 | 4.8% |
| Suzuki | Swift | 520 | 617 | -15.7 | 4.4% | 1,720 | 4.6% |
| Nissan | Tiida | 473 | 576 | -17.9 | 4.0% | 1,562 | 4.2% |
| Honda | Fit | 446 | 477 | -6.5 | 3.8% | 1,440 | 3.8% |
| Mazda | Demio | 441 | 470 | -6.2 | 3.7% | 1,528 | 4.1% |
| Subaru | Legacy | 365 | 307 | 18.9 | 3.1% | 1,091 | 2.9% |
| Toyota | Wish | 285 | 379 | -24.8 | 2.4% | 848 | 2.3% |
| Toyota | Vitz | 271 | 281 | -3.6 | 2.3% | 817 | 2.2% |
| Toyota | Prius | 270 | 389 | -30.6 | 2.3% | 759 | 2.0% |
| Mazda | Atenza | 261 | 298 | -12.4 | 2.2% | 805 | 2.1% |
| Toyota | MarkX | 242 | 286 | -15.4 | 2.0% | 708 | 1.9% |
| Mazda | Premacy | 239 | 212 | 12.7 | 2.0% | 668 | 1.8% |
| Volkswagen | Golf | 221 | 335 | -34.0 | 1.9% | 754 | 2.0% |
| Mitsubishi | Outlander | 181 | 304 | -40.5 | 1.5% | 597 | 1.6% |
| Mazda | MPV | 180 | 211 | -14.7 | 1.5% | 595 | 1.6% |
| Toyota | Corolla | 168 | 237 | -29.1 | 1.4% | 521 | 1.4% |
| Nissan | Skyline | 166 | 153 | 8.5 | 1.4% | 412 | 1.1% |
| Nissan | Dualis | 162 | 213 | -23.9 | 1.4% | 520 | 1.4% |
| Subaru | Impreza | 158 | 145 | 9.0 | 1.3% | 511 | 1.4% |
| Toyota | Auris | 153 | 175 | -12.6 | 1.3% | 515 | 1.4% |
| Nissan | Murano | 151 | 159 | -5.0 | 1.3% | 464 | 1.2% |
| Toyota | Estima | 150 | 222 | -32.4 | 1.3% | 461 | 1.2% |
| Nissan | Note | 149 | 199 | -25.1 | 1.3% | 521 | 1.4% |
| Toyota | Blade | 147 | 140 | 5.0 | 1.2% | 469 | 1.2% |
| Honda | Stream | 146 | 148 | -1.4 | 1.2% | 417 | 1.1% |
| Nissan | Leaf | 134 | 105 | 27.6 | 1.1% | 522 | 1.4% |
| Honda | Odyssey | 124 | 195 | -36.4 | 1.0% | 432 | 1.1% |
| BMW | 320i | 116 | 125 | -7.2 | 1.0% | 302 | 0.8% |
| Honda | CRV | 112 | 133 | -15.8 | 0.9% | 367 | 1.0% |
| Nissan | X-Trail | 111 | 130 | -14.6 | 0.9% | 377 | 1.0% |
| Toyota | Ractis | 109 | 129 | -15.5 | 0.9% | 313 | 0.8% |
| Mazda | Verisa | 109 | 117 | -6.8 | 0.9% | 339 | 0.9% |
| Nissan | Bluebird | 103 | 191 | -46.1 | 0.9% | 337 | 0.9% |
| Nissan | Teana | 97 | 128 | -24.2 | 0.8% | 315 | 0.8% |
| Nissan | March | 95 | 101 | -5.9 | 0.8% | 308 | 0.8% |
| Others | | 4,211 | 5,594 | -24.7 | 35.6% | 13,493 | 35.9% |
| Total | | 11,841 | 14,474 | -18.2 | 100.0% | 37,608 | 100.0% |

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Deliveries causing headaches

A trader was facing the prospect of having very few – or even no – electric vehicles (EVs) to sell when his doors officially opened this month.

Dave Boot, director of EV City in Christchurch, was due to open his used car dealership on April 6, but was waiting for stock to be delivered, which was in short supply because of the stink-bug crisis when contacted by Autofile.

"We're waiting to see if the cargo is going to come off quickly or not, while the Courageous Ace is on its way back to New Zealand," he says.

All of this meant that 11 days before opening, EV City was waiting for 34 cars to be delivered. The new dealership will initially stock about 60 per cent EVs and 40 per cent hybrids.

"If the Euro Spirit doesn't embark on time, we will have an opening without vehicles, or one car in the showroom, but at least people are coming in to learn about EVs.

"We have had 25 years of imports without an issue like this. A few dealers close to me are thin on the ground with stock, but they have been selling. This month, yards will look really thin."

Boot says some dealers are panicking and will buy more stock so there may be a glut of cars and that will push the prices down. "We have never experienced an interruption to the supply of stock like this before."

He adds: "We are trying to have everything with a cable.

There's no-one specialising in EVs in Christchurch. We are here to educate people about EVs first and then look at how people can use them in their everyday life.

"There is a hole for an EV specialist in the market in this city and it's quite a different technology."

Henry Schmidt, of Autolink Cars in Grey Lynn, Auckland, believes it will take a few months before the supply chain between Japan and New Zealand gets back to normal.

"New and used dealers have been hit by this. If it goes on for a long time, it will hit the big compliance shops because they have a lot of staff. I hope it doesn't go on for too long.

"Some of the yards in Auckland are looking empty. We are 30 to 40 per cent down in stock as we have some trade-ins on the yard. Our cars have been floating around in the harbour."

Michael Redmond, director

of the Car HQ in Nelson and Christchurch, which sells used European cars, says the discovery of stink bugs on vehicle carriers from Japan in February came at the worst time possible for his business.

"We had just opened a new yard in Christchurch and moved all of our excess stock from Nelson to Christchurch when the ships were delayed, so we were light on stock in Nelson expecting cars to arrive to fill the yard. We are still light on stock on both yards.

"Buyers think there will be stink bugs in their cars and we have had to refund deposits. It has had a huge impact financially for us, you still have overheads. But it's just starting to come right."

Neil Howard, owner of Value Vehicles in Nelson and Westport, says the business has experienced a good month despite having to wait for stock to be delivered due to the bedlam caused by the

discovery of stink bugs on ships out of Japan. "We are light on stock for both yards."

As for last month's sales statistics, registrations of used imported passenger vehicles were down compared to March last year.

Sales dropped by 18.2 per cent, or 2,633 units, to bring last month's total to 11,841. This meant March was lowest month recorded since February 2016.

Year to date, the used imported car market has fallen back by 5.2 per cent – or 2,059 units – when compared to the first quarter 2017.

All regions across New Zealand – except Thames and Invercargill – experienced losses in registrations of used imported passenger vehicles during March.

Out of the main centres, Wellington went from 1,103 sales in March last year to 834 last month, which was a decrease of 24.4 per cent.

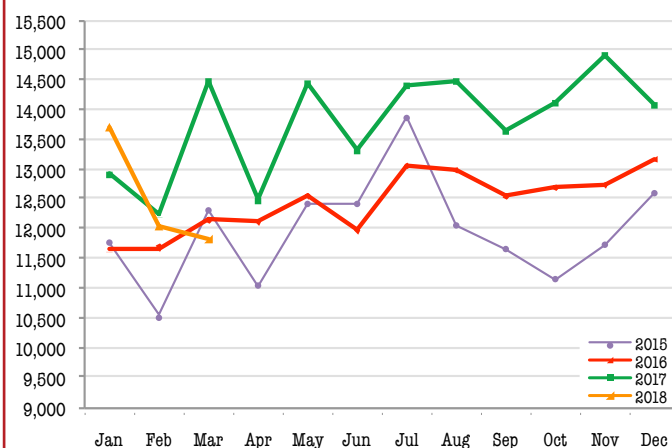
Auckland and Hamilton also didn't compare well to a year earlier with decreases of 18.4 and 22 per cent respectively.

While some car dealers are getting low on vehicles to sell, figures published by Stats NZ show a fall in the value of vehicle imports is having a knock-on effect across the wider economy.

The value of car importations decreased by \$126 million in February from \$257m in the same month of 2017, or by 33 per cent, for the lowest monthly value since March 2013.

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Used Imported Passenger Registrations - 2015-2018



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Large drop in used imports

The number of vehicles imported into New Zealand dropped for the second month in a row due to the brown marmorated stink bug (BMSB) crisis.

Some 10,933 used passenger vehicles crossed the border last month. This was down by a massive 44.1 per cent on March 2017 when 19,546 units were imported and also down by 14.7 per cent compared to February's 9,525 units.

A total of 9,999 new cars, 2,953 new light commercials and 467 used light commercials also arrived during March. These figures were down by 6.5, 10.5 and 18.1 per cent respectively.

The number of used cars imported from Japan last month was 10,154 – a huge 44.9 per cent decrease compared to March last year, but up by 1,302 units on February this year.

There were also decreases from the UK and Australia of 37.9 and 60.6 per cent respectively, with 383 fewer units imported from across the ditch last month compared to 630 in March 2017. The UK's monthly total came in at 95 – down from 241.

The number of arrivals from Singapore totalled 101 – up by four units – while the US' total was 102 arrivals.

So far this year, 30,881 used cars have entered the country. That's

down by 29.75 per cent compared to the first three months of last year.

The disruption to the supply chain by BMSBs should improve over the next two months as vessels are cleared by the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) as the end of the stink-bug season approaches.

Toyofuji's Trans Future 3 was expected to start discharging on April 7 after fogging and MPI inspections.

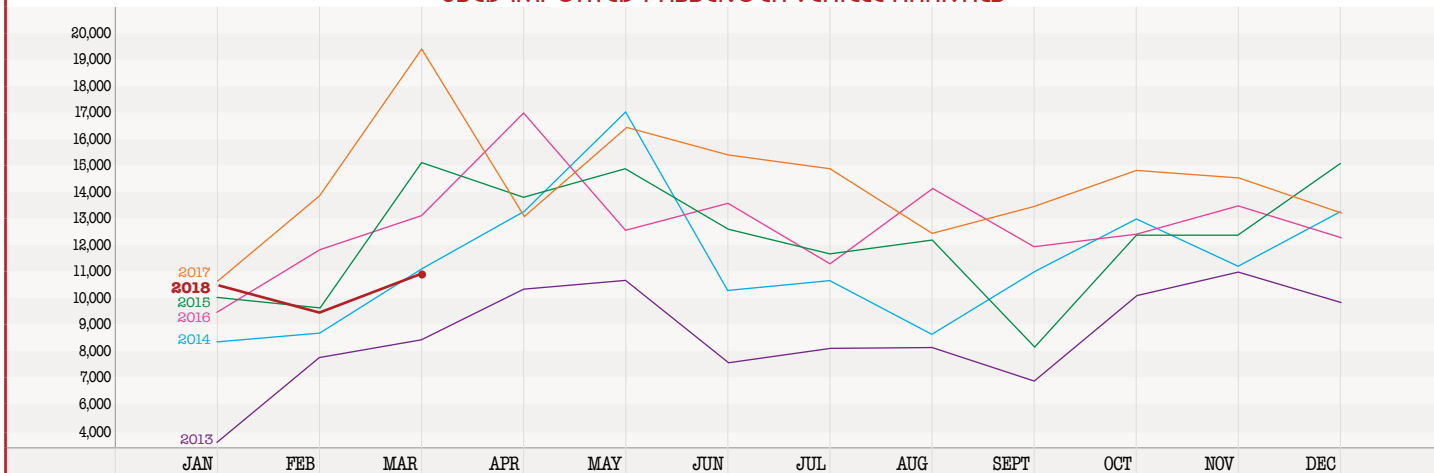
The Trans Future 5 and 6 were diverted to Fiji for fogging. The former should set sail to Auckland around April 9, while the latter's earliest estimated arrival date is April 13 with discharge due to take at least two days.

The Trans Future 5, which was due to dock in Auckland on April 4, underwent fogging in Honiara before sailing to New Zealand, but the decision was made to divert and re-fog it in Suva as a precaution.

"There are 4,800 used vehicles on-board and any additional treatment is beneficial to allow a total discharge when the vessel arrives in Auckland," Blain Paterson, of Toyofuji NZ, told Autofile.

Meanwhile, the MPI may end enhanced stink-bug inspections for all vessels from Japan on April 30. As a result, the average discharge of car carriers should return to 12-24 hours compared to 48 hours. ☺

USED IMPORTED PASSENGER VEHICLE ARRIVALS



Used Imported Passenger Vehicles By Country Of Export

| COUNTRY OF EXPORT | 2018 | | | | | 2017 | | | | | | 2016 | |
|-------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| | JAN '18 | FEB '18 | MAR '18 | MAR MRKT SHARE % | 2018 TOTAL | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | 2017 TOTAL | MRKT SHARE | 2016 TOTAL | MRKT SHARE |
| Australia | 416 | 359 | 383 | 3.8% | 1,158 | 1,529 | 1,414 | 1,339 | 1,258 | 5,540 | 3.2% | 5,151 | 3.4% |
| Great Britain | 121 | 66 | 95 | 0.7% | 282 | 687 | 485 | 478 | 523 | 2,173 | 1.3% | 1,537 | 1.0% |
| Japan | 9,660 | 8,852 | 10,154 | 92.9% | 28,666 | 41,047 | 42,489 | 37,311 | 39,975 | 160,822 | 93.8% | 143,080 | 93.7% |
| Singapore | 119 | 111 | 101 | 1.2% | 331 | 225 | 324 | 296 | 357 | 1,202 | 0.7% | 1,231 | 0.8% |
| USA | 79 | 101 | 102 | 1.1% | 282 | 391 | 309 | 337 | 382 | 1,419 | 0.8% | 1,275 | 0.8% |
| Other countries | 28 | 36 | 98 | 0.4% | 162 | 79 | 110 | 88 | 110 | 387 | 0.2% | 438 | 0.3% |
| Total | 10,423 | 9,525 | 10,933 | 100.0% | 30,881 | 43,958 | 45,131 | 39,849 | 42,605 | 171,543 | 100.0% | 152,712 | 100.0% |



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Trade-ins fill dealer yard gaps

Due to a shortage of imported cars crossing the border last month, one dealer is using trade-ins to stock his premises.

Michael Redmond, director of the Car HQ in Nelson and Christchurch, which sells used European vehicles, says: "We have been keeping all our trade-ins to stock the yards.

"We don't normally keep Japanese cars. The yards are still not full, but things are coming right."

Neil Howard, owner of Value Vehicles in Nelson and Westport, says: "We have been light on trade-ins since December.

"I think people believe they can

get more money selling their cars privately," he told Autofile. "The lack of trade-ins has been a problem for us as well, so there are a few gaps in the yards."

Trader-to-public sales during March were down on the same month of last year. They came in at 17,779 last month compared to 18,131 in March 2017 for a decrease of 1.9 per cent.

Public-to-dealer transactions dropped back by 6.6 per cent. There were 14,158 trade-ins during March compared to 15,152 in the same month of last year.

The biggest proportional rise in dealer-to-public transactions during

March was recorded in Masterton where they rose from 153 to 222 for a jump of 45.1 per cent.

Second spot was taken out by Wanganui, which notched up an increase of 43.1 per cent – from 188 units to 269.

However, business wasn't so rosy in Westport, albeit it on the back of relatively low numbers. Dealer sales there dropped by 70 per cent to nine from 30.

Oamaru saw trader-to-public transactions fall from 68 to 45, or by 33.8 per cent.

When it came to trade-ins, Oamaru recorded the biggest drop – from 31 to three, or by 90.3 per cent.

Thames recorded the biggest rise in this category – of 40.8 per cent from 125 units to 176. Wanganui came second for trade-ins, which rose from 133 to 165 or by 24.1 per cent.

Auckland, which holds New Zealand's largest market share of sales of used cars, saw dealer transactions drop and trade-ins jump.

The city recorded 6,089 trader-to-public transactions in March. This was down by 3.1 per cent compared to 6,281 in the same month of last year for a 34.25 per cent share of the market. Trade-ins, however, jumped by 4.3 per cent from 5,335 to 5,566. ☺

SECONDHAND CAR SALES - March 2018

| | DEALER TO PUBLIC | | | | | PUBLIC TO PUBLIC | | | | PUBLIC TO DEALER | | |
|------------------|------------------|--------|-------|--------------|--|------------------|--------|-------|--|------------------|--------|-------|
| | MAR'18 | MAR'17 | +/- % | MARKET SHARE | | MAR'18 | MAR'17 | +/- % | | MAR'18 | MAR'17 | +/- % |
| Whangarei | 554 | 585 | -5.3 | 3.12 | | 2,132 | 2,105 | 1.3 | | 237 | 280 | -15.4 |
| Auckland | 6,089 | 6,281 | -3.1 | 34.25 | | 15,401 | 15,826 | -2.7 | | 5,566 | 5,335 | 4.3 |
| Hamilton | 1,464 | 1,515 | -3.4 | 8.23 | | 3,441 | 3,715 | -7.4 | | 1,163 | 1,485 | -21.7 |
| Thames | 266 | 242 | 9.9 | 1.50 | | 701 | 585 | 19.8 | | 176 | 125 | 40.8 |
| Tauranga | 849 | 1,001 | -15.2 | 4.78 | | 2,118 | 2,371 | -10.7 | | 576 | 678 | -15.0 |
| Rotorua | 395 | 318 | 24.2 | 2.22 | | 1,077 | 935 | 15.2 | | 134 | 119 | 12.6 |
| Gisborne | 174 | 145 | 20.0 | 0.98 | | 408 | 451 | -9.5 | | 91 | 87 | 4.6 |
| Napier | 647 | 617 | 4.9 | 3.64 | | 1,614 | 1,732 | -6.8 | | 410 | 425 | -3.5 |
| New Plymouth | 392 | 394 | -0.5 | 2.20 | | 981 | 1,074 | -8.7 | | 223 | 274 | -18.6 |
| Wanganui | 269 | 188 | 43.1 | 1.51 | | 650 | 544 | 19.5 | | 165 | 133 | 24.1 |
| Palmerston North | 720 | 850 | -15.3 | 4.05 | | 1,660 | 1,772 | -6.3 | | 1,061 | 1,218 | -12.9 |
| Masterton | 222 | 153 | 45.1 | 1.25 | | 532 | 427 | 24.6 | | 114 | 104 | 9.6 |
| Wellington | 1,599 | 1,655 | -3.4 | 8.99 | | 3,311 | 3,169 | 4.5 | | 1,200 | 1,390 | -13.7 |
| Nelson | 321 | 329 | -2.4 | 1.81 | | 1,117 | 1,073 | 4.1 | | 229 | 219 | 4.6 |
| Blenheim | 153 | 182 | -15.9 | 0.86 | | 474 | 478 | -0.8 | | 96 | 115 | -16.5 |
| Greymouth | 74 | 81 | -8.6 | 0.42 | | 163 | 219 | -25.6 | | 24 | 33 | -27.3 |
| Westport | 9 | 30 | -70.0 | 0.05 | | 28 | 96 | -70.8 | | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Christchurch | 2,157 | 2,185 | -1.3 | 12.13 | | 5,614 | 5,499 | 2.1 | | 1,813 | 2,157 | -15.9 |
| Timaru | 232 | 226 | 2.7 | 1.30 | | 595 | 634 | -6.2 | | 150 | 152 | -1.3 |
| Oamaru | 45 | 68 | -33.8 | 0.25 | | 128 | 206 | -37.9 | | 3 | 31 | -90.3 |
| Dunedin | 712 | 716 | -0.6 | 4.00 | | 2,246 | 2,127 | 5.6 | | 432 | 515 | -16.1 |
| Invercargill | 436 | 370 | 17.8 | 2.45 | | 1,154 | 1,016 | 13.6 | | 295 | 277 | 6.5 |
| NZ total | 17,779 | 18,131 | -1.9 | 100.00 | | 45,545 | 46,054 | -1.1 | | 14,158 | 15,152 | -6.6 |

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New Passenger Vehicle Sales by Make - March 2018

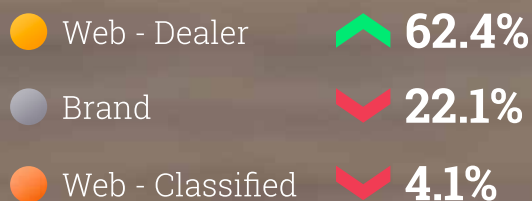
| MAKE | MAR'18 | MAR'17 | +/- % | MAR'18 MKT SHARE | 2018 YEAR TO DATE | 2018 MKT SHARE |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Toyota | 1,196 | 1,213 | -1.4 | 13.2% | 4,699 | 17.2% |
| Mazda | 858 | 905 | -5.2 | 9.5% | 2,656 | 9.7% |
| Mitsubishi | 722 | 691 | 4.5 | 8.0% | 1,837 | 6.7% |
| Holden | 673 | 711 | -5.3 | 7.4% | 2,052 | 7.5% |
| Honda | 636 | 519 | 22.5 | 7.0% | 1,572 | 5.8% |
| Kia | 617 | 626 | -1.4 | 6.8% | 1,891 | 6.9% |
| Suzuki | 605 | 734 | -17.6 | 6.7% | 1,773 | 6.5% |
| Hyundai | 551 | 686 | -19.7 | 6.1% | 1,593 | 5.8% |
| Ford | 504 | 625 | -19.4 | 5.6% | 1,745 | 6.4% |
| Nissan | 371 | 341 | 8.8 | 4.1% | 1,063 | 3.9% |
| Volkswagen | 341 | 386 | -11.7 | 3.8% | 983 | 3.6% |
| Subaru | 291 | 242 | 20.2 | 3.2% | 790 | 2.9% |
| BMW | 232 | 196 | 18.4 | 2.6% | 563 | 2.1% |
| Mercedes-Benz | 200 | 253 | -20.9 | 2.2% | 554 | 2.0% |
| Audi | 193 | 203 | -4.9 | 2.1% | 540 | 2.0% |
| Skoda | 164 | 72 | 127.8 | 1.8% | 408 | 1.5% |
| Jeep | 143 | 94 | 52.1 | 1.6% | 367 | 1.3% |
| Peugeot | 99 | 56 | 76.8 | 1.1% | 274 | 1.0% |
| Land Rover | 83 | 107 | -22.4 | 0.9% | 232 | 0.9% |
| Lexus | 71 | 66 | 7.6 | 0.8% | 202 | 0.7% |
| Mini | 66 | 59 | 11.9 | 0.7% | 213 | 0.8% |
| SsangYong | 59 | 81 | -27.2 | 0.7% | 205 | 0.8% |
| Volvo | 53 | 63 | -15.9 | 0.6% | 157 | 0.6% |
| Tesla | 46 | 18 | 155.6 | 0.5% | 81 | 0.3% |
| Haval | 41 | 0 | 4100.0 | 0.5% | 108 | 0.4% |
| Jaguar | 37 | 38 | -2.6 | 0.4% | 81 | 0.3% |
| Porsche | 37 | 34 | 8.8 | 0.4% | 126 | 0.5% |
| Isuzu | 29 | 9 | 222.2 | 0.3% | 81 | 0.3% |
| Renault | 20 | 25 | -20.0 | 0.2% | 57 | 0.2% |
| Citroen | 17 | 15 | 13.3 | 0.2% | 61 | 0.2% |
| Maserati | 12 | 17 | -29.4 | 0.1% | 33 | 0.1% |
| Mahindra | 11 | 2 | 450.0 | 0.1% | 28 | 0.1% |
| LDV | 10 | 3 | 233.3 | 0.1% | 15 | 0.1% |
| Yamaha | 9 | 14 | -35.7 | 0.1% | 32 | 0.1% |
| Fiat | 7 | 20 | -65.0 | 0.1% | 31 | 0.1% |
| Others | 46 | 106 | -56.6 | 0.5% | 160 | 0.6% |
| Total | 9,050 | 9,230 | -2.0 | 100.0% | 27,263 | 100.0% |

New Passenger Vehicle Sales by Model - March 2018

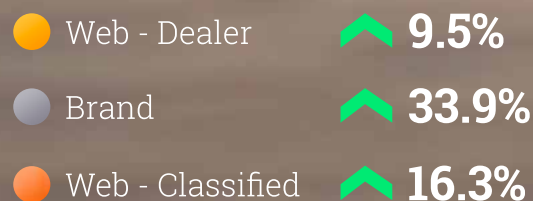
| MAKE | MODEL | MAR'18 | MAR'17 | +/- % | MAR'18 MKT SHARE | 2018 YEAR TO DATE | 2018 MKT SHARE |
|--------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Holden | Commodore | 310 | 168 | 84.5 | 3.4% | 612 | 2.2% |
| Mazda | CX-5 | 303 | 248 | 22.2 | 3.3% | 884 | 3.2% |
| Toyota | Corolla | 287 | 396 | -27.5 | 3.2% | 1,503 | 5.5% |
| Suzuki | Swift | 276 | 201 | 37.3 | 3.0% | 825 | 3.0% |
| Toyota | RAV4 | 267 | 261 | 2.3 | 3.0% | 893 | 3.3% |
| Mitsubishi | Outlander | 264 | 287 | -8.0 | 2.9% | 631 | 2.3% |
| Kia | Sportage | 258 | 349 | -26.1 | 2.9% | 796 | 2.9% |
| Honda | CRV | 214 | 38 | 463.2 | 2.4% | 551 | 2.0% |
| Honda | HR-V | 184 | 193 | -4.7 | 2.0% | 329 | 1.2% |
| Nissan | Qashqai | 178 | 161 | 10.6 | 2.0% | 535 | 2.0% |
| Toyota | Highlander | 177 | 148 | 19.6 | 2.0% | 732 | 2.7% |
| Hyundai | Tucson | 162 | 239 | -32.2 | 1.8% | 430 | 1.6% |
| Mitsubishi | Eclipse Cross | 161 | 0 | 16100.0 | 1.8% | 413 | 1.5% |
| Volkswagen | Tiguan | 159 | 199 | -20.1 | 1.8% | 413 | 1.5% |
| Subaru | Outback | 153 | 131 | 16.8 | 1.7% | 349 | 1.3% |
| Mazda | CX-3 | 151 | 172 | -12.2 | 1.7% | 419 | 1.5% |
| Mazda | Mazda3 | 150 | 223 | -32.7 | 1.7% | 547 | 2.0% |
| Mitsubishi | ASX | 139 | 185 | -24.9 | 1.5% | 410 | 1.5% |
| Nissan | X-Trail | 139 | 97 | 43.3 | 1.5% | 380 | 1.4% |
| Hyundai | Kona | 138 | 0 | 13800.0 | 1.5% | 468 | 1.7% |
| Honda | Jazz | 130 | 168 | -22.6 | 1.4% | 434 | 1.6% |
| Toyota | Yaris | 123 | 185 | -33.5 | 1.4% | 417 | 1.5% |
| Ford | Focus | 120 | 150 | -20.0 | 1.3% | 541 | 2.0% |
| Mazda | Mazda2 | 116 | 96 | 20.8 | 1.3% | 357 | 1.3% |
| Ford | Escape | 111 | 88 | 26.1 | 1.2% | 432 | 1.6% |
| Hyundai | Santa Fe | 110 | 165 | -33.3 | 1.2% | 318 | 1.2% |
| Mazda | CX-9 | 105 | 104 | 1.0 | 1.2% | 312 | 1.1% |
| Toyota | C-HR | 100 | 0 | 10000.0 | 1.1% | 261 | 1.0% |
| Ford | Fiesta | 96 | 44 | 118.2 | 1.1% | 178 | 0.7% |
| Volkswagen | Golf | 94 | 67 | 40.3 | 1.0% | 316 | 1.2% |
| Honda | Civic | 93 | 96 | -3.1 | 1.0% | 212 | 0.8% |
| Holden | Captiva | 90 | 217 | -58.5 | 1.0% | 413 | 1.5% |
| Kia | Rio | 88 | 94 | -6.4 | 1.0% | 281 | 1.0% |
| Suzuki | SX4 S-Cross | 82 | 98 | -16.3 | 0.9% | 188 | 0.7% |
| Kia | Sorento | 81 | 64 | 26.6 | 0.9% | 252 | 0.9% |
| Others | | 3,441 | 3,898 | -11.7 | 38.0% | 10,231 | 37.5% |
| Total | | 9,050 | 9,230 | -2.0 | 100.0% | 27,263 | 100.0% |

Top 3 Sources for Leads, Test Drives and Sales - New Zealand Dealerships

LEADS



TEST DRIVES



Car market 'mature'

Registrations of new passenger vehicles and SUVs dropped back slightly last month when compared to March 2017.

Last month's total came in at 9,050 units, which was a decrease of two per cent – or 180 units – on the same month of last year.

Toyota topped the ladder with 1,196 sales of new cars in March for a market share of 13.2 per cent. It was followed by Mazda on 9.5 per cent and 858 units, and Mitsubishi with eight per cent and 722 units.

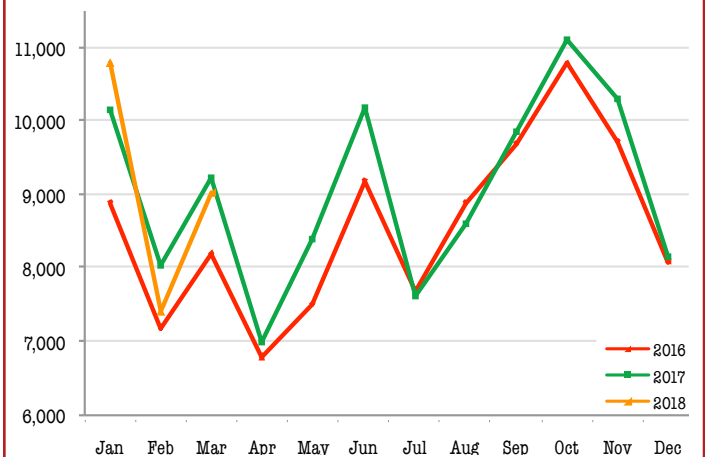
Year to date, the market is down slightly by 0.6 per cent. So far in 2018, 27,263 new passenger

vehicles have been registered compared to 27,430 for the first three months of last year – a variance of just 167 units.

In terms of segments, SUVs took out top spot with 5,674 registrations for March, followed by light commercials with 4,387 and passenger cars on 3,342.

"The market for new vehicles is mature and remains strong," says David Crawford, chief executive officer of the Motor Industry Association. "Economic factors of the past two years are still largely present with strong net immigration, affordable prices and a strong economy."

New Passenger Registrations - 2015-2017



Toyota remained the overall market leader for March with 1,196 new passenger vehicles registrations and a monthly market share of 13.2 per cent.

It was followed by Mazda with 858 sales and a share of 9.5 per cent. Third place went to Mitsubishi with 722 sales and eight per cent. ☺

NEW VEHICLE SALES BY BUYER TYPE - March 2018

| | MAR '18 | MAR '17 | MTH % | 2018 YTD | 2017 YTD | % YTD |
|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| Passenger | 3,342 | 3,845 | -13.1 | 10,776 | 11,643 | -7.4 |
| Private | 1,497 | 1,650 | -9.3 | 4,231 | 4,864 | -13.0 |
| Business | 1,690 | 1,838 | -8.1 | 4,658 | 4,860 | -4.2 |
| Gov't | 136 | 273 | -50.2 | 465 | 551 | -15.6 |
| Rental | 19 | 84 | -77.4 | 1,422 | 1,368 | 3.9 |
| SUV | 5,674 | 5,297 | 7.1 | 16,358 | 15,613 | 4.8 |
| Private | 2,872 | 2,750 | 4.4 | 7,547 | 7,316 | 3.2 |
| Business | 2,658 | 2,332 | 14.0 | 7,436 | 6,580 | 13.0 |
| Gov't | 84 | 76 | 10.5 | 213 | 227 | -6.2 |
| Rental | 60 | 139 | -56.8 | 1,162 | 1,490 | -22.0 |
| Light Commercial | 4,387 | 3,989 | 10.0 | 11,504 | 10,384 | 10.8 |
| Private | 1,070 | 959 | 11.6 | 2,949 | 2,551 | 15.6 |
| Business | 3,081 | 2,794 | 10.3 | 7,892 | 7,226 | 9.2 |
| Gov't | 171 | 141 | 21.3 | 481 | 366 | 31.4 |
| Rental | 65 | 95 | -31.6 | 182 | 241 | -24.5 |
| Sub Total | 13,403 | 13,131 | 2.1 | 38,638 | 37,640 | 2.7 |
| Private | 5,439 | 5,359 | 1.5 | 14,727 | 14,731 | -0.0 |
| Business | 7,429 | 6,964 | 6.7 | 19,986 | 18,666 | 7.1 |
| Gov't | 391 | 490 | -20.2 | 1,159 | 1,144 | 1.3 |
| Rental | 144 | 318 | -54.7 | 2,766 | 3,099 | -10.7 |
| Heavy Commercial | 468 | 554 | -15.5 | 1,299 | 1,319 | -1.5 |
| Other | 157 | 162 | -3.1 | 419 | 459 | -8.7 |
| Total | 14,028 | 13,847 | 1.3 | 40,356 | 39,418 | 2.4 |

NEW VEHICLE MARKET SEGMENTATION - March 2018

| | MAR '18 | MAR '17 | MTH % DIFF | 2018 YTD | 2017 YTD | % YTD |
|--------------------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| Passenger | 3,342 | 3,845 | -13.1 | 10,776 | 11,643 | -7.4 |
| SUV | 5,674 | 5,297 | 7.1 | 16,358 | 15,613 | 4.8 |
| Light Commercial | 4,387 | 3,989 | 10.0 | 11,504 | 10,384 | 10.8 |
| Heavy Commercial | 468 | 554 | -15.5 | 1,299 | 1,319 | -1.5 |
| Other | 157 | 162 | -3.1 | 419 | 459 | -8.7 |
| TOTAL MARKET | 14,028 | 13,847 | 1.3 | 40,356 | 39,418 | 2.4 |
| Micro | 86 | 204 | -57.8 | 296 | 696 | -57.5 |
| Light | 1,099 | 1,103 | -0.4 | 3,373 | 3,175 | 6.2 |
| Small | 1,190 | 1,539 | -22.7 | 4,347 | 4,631 | -6.1 |
| Medium | 323 | 509 | -36.5 | 1,100 | 1,522 | -27.7 |
| Large | 442 | 257 | 72.0 | 1,021 | 876 | 16.6 |
| Upper Large | 5 | 7 | -28.6 | 29 | 30 | -3.3 |
| People Movers | 45 | 59 | -23.7 | 175 | 137 | 27.7 |
| Sports | 152 | 167 | -9.0 | 435 | 576 | -24.5 |
| SUV Small | 1,841 | 1,575 | 16.9 | 5,101 | 4,419 | 15.4 |
| SUV Medium | 2,266 | 2,038 | 11.2 | 6,459 | 6,219 | 3.9 |
| SUV Large | 1,432 | 1,618 | -11.5 | 4,495 | 4,752 | -5.4 |
| SUV Upper Large | 135 | 66 | 104.5 | 303 | 223 | 35.9 |
| Light Buses | 69 | 90 | -23.3 | 179 | 255 | -29.8 |
| Vans | 595 | 692 | -14.0 | 1,394 | 1,586 | -12.1 |
| Pick Up/Chassis Cab 4x2 | 1,506 | 1,421 | 6.0 | 3,966 | 3,666 | 8.2 |
| Pick Up/Chassis Cab 4x4 | 2,217 | 1,786 | 24.1 | 5,965 | 4,877 | 22.3 |
| Heavy Commercial | 468 | 554 | -15.5 | 1,299 | 1,319 | -1.5 |
| Other | 157 | 162 | -3.1 | 419 | 459 | -8.7 |
| TOTAL MARKET | 14,028 | 13,847 | 1.3 | 40,356 | 39,418 | 2.4 |

March 2018 (vs February 2018)

SALES

Web - Dealer

1.6%

Repeat

12.2%

Web - Classified

9.5%

autoPLAY

Smart Digital Tools

Battle of utes hotting up

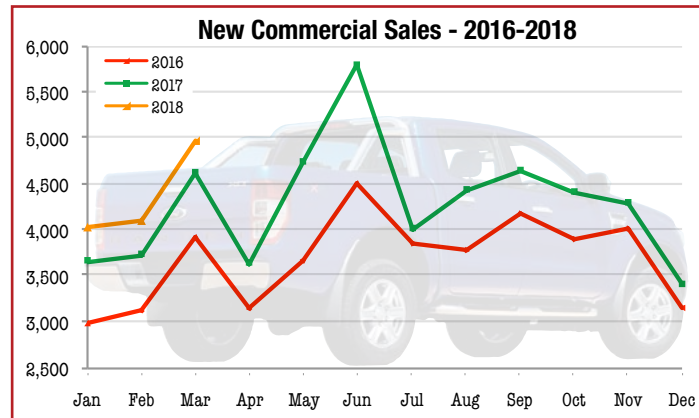
Excitement across the country created by a boom in sales of new commercial vehicles is being matched by the competition in the utilities market.

There were 4,978 new commercials registered across New Zealand in March, which was a 7.3 per cent jump from 4,639 units – or by 339 units – on the same month of last year. This brought the year-to-date total to 13,131 units.

The best-selling model of last month was Toyota's Hilux on 915 registrations, which was just three more than Ford's Ranger.

However, the Ranger still tops the sales ladder for 2018 with 2,360 units compared to the Hilux's 2,254.

Toyota was the market leader



in March with 24.6 per cent of all sales thanks to 1,225 registrations. It was followed by Ford on 21 per cent and 1,047 units, while Holden secured a market share of 8.7 per cent with 427 registrations.

March's third top-selling model was the Holden Colorado with 427 units, while the Mitsubishi Triton was fourth with 382 sales.

Nathan Abernethy, dealer principal of Regional Ford in

Gore, says the business has been feeding off the back of the Southern Field Days, which were held on February 14-16 at Waimumu, just south of Gore.

"The past two months have been good," he says. "Field Days generates a lot of business.

"We are running into stock issues with Rangers because when you're doing these sorts of large numbers, everything we sell was allocated to us. We haven't been able to get as much stock as we would like."

Abernethy adds Regional Ford already has about six confirmed orders for Ford's Raptor ute, which will be released in New Zealand later this year. ☺

New Commercial Sales by Make - March 2018

| MAKE | MAR'18 | MAR'17 | +/- % | MAR'18 MKT SHARE | 2018 YEAR TO DATE | 2018 MKT SHARE |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Toyota | 1,225 | 1,103 | 11.1 | 24.6% | 2,951 | 22.5% |
| Ford | 1,047 | 897 | 16.7 | 21.0% | 2,643 | 20.1% |
| Holden | 427 | 393 | 8.7 | 8.6% | 1,178 | 9.0% |
| Mitsubishi | 382 | 365 | 4.7 | 7.7% | 1,068 | 8.1% |
| Isuzu | 322 | 350 | -8.0 | 6.5% | 884 | 6.7% |
| Nissan | 315 | 290 | 8.6 | 6.3% | 983 | 7.5% |
| LDV | 191 | 114 | 67.5 | 3.8% | 446 | 3.4% |
| Volkswagen | 160 | 115 | 39.1 | 3.2% | 435 | 3.3% |
| Mazda | 159 | 190 | -16.3 | 3.2% | 500 | 3.8% |
| Fuso | 99 | 62 | 59.7 | 2.0% | 214 | 1.6% |
| Hyundai | 80 | 122 | -34.4 | 1.6% | 208 | 1.6% |
| Mercedes-Benz | 73 | 83 | -12.0 | 1.5% | 178 | 1.4% |
| Fiat | 69 | 92 | -25.0 | 1.4% | 229 | 1.7% |
| SsangYong | 64 | 68 | -5.9 | 1.3% | 221 | 1.7% |
| Hino | 55 | 53 | 3.8 | 1.1% | 169 | 1.3% |
| Foton | 49 | 47 | 4.3 | 1.0% | 162 | 1.2% |
| Volvo | 41 | 65 | -36.9 | 0.8% | 78 | 0.6% |
| DAF | 40 | 17 | 135.3 | 0.8% | 88 | 0.7% |
| Iveco | 23 | 19 | 21.1 | 0.5% | 67 | 0.5% |
| Great Wall | 17 | 13 | 30.8 | 0.3% | 41 | 0.3% |
| Others | 140 | 181 | -22.7 | 2.8% | 388 | 3.0% |
| Total | 4,978 | 4,639 | 7.3 | 100.0% | 13,131 | 100.0% |

New Commercial Sales by Model - March 2018

| MAKE | MODEL | MAR'18 | MAR'17 | +/- % | MAR'18 MKT SHARE | 2018 YEAR TO DATE | 2018 MKT SHARE |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Toyota | Hilux | 915 | 740 | 23.6 | 18.4% | 2,254 | 17.2% |
| Ford | Ranger | 912 | 810 | 12.6 | 18.3% | 2,360 | 18.0% |
| Holden | Colorado | 427 | 380 | 12.4 | 8.6% | 1,165 | 8.9% |
| Mitsubishi | Triton | 382 | 365 | 4.7 | 7.7% | 1,068 | 8.1% |
| Nissan | Navara | 315 | 290 | 8.6 | 6.3% | 983 | 7.5% |
| Toyota | Hiace | 261 | 336 | -22.3 | 5.2% | 596 | 4.5% |
| Isuzu | D-Max | 215 | 222 | -3.2 | 4.3% | 602 | 4.6% |
| Mazda | BT-50 | 159 | 190 | -16.3 | 3.2% | 500 | 3.8% |
| Ford | Transit | 135 | 86 | 57.0 | 2.7% | 283 | 2.2% |
| LDV | T60 | 107 | 0 | 10700.0 | 2.1% | 202 | 1.5% |
| Volkswagen | Amarok | 85 | 41 | 107.3 | 1.7% | 259 | 2.0% |
| Hyundai | iLoad | 76 | 122 | -37.7 | 1.5% | 200 | 1.5% |
| Fiat | Ducato | 69 | 89 | -22.5 | 1.4% | 229 | 1.7% |
| SsangYong | Actyon Sport | 64 | 68 | -5.9 | 1.3% | 221 | 1.7% |
| LDV | V80 | 53 | 62 | -14.5 | 1.1% | 138 | 1.1% |
| Toyota | Landcruiser | 48 | 27 | 77.8 | 1.0% | 100 | 0.8% |
| Foton | Tunland | 40 | 41 | -2.4 | 0.8% | 146 | 1.1% |
| DAF | CF | 38 | 15 | 153.3 | 0.8% | 85 | 0.6% |
| Volkswagen | Crafter | 38 | 20 | 90.0 | 0.8% | 53 | 0.4% |
| Isuzu | F Series | 38 | 66 | -42.4 | 0.8% | 104 | 0.8% |
| Others | | 601 | 669 | -10.2 | 12.1% | 1,583 | 12.1% |
| Total | | 4,978 | 4,639 | 7.3 | 100.0% | 13,131 | 100.0% |



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are turning a little **green!**

Sales take tumble by one-fifth

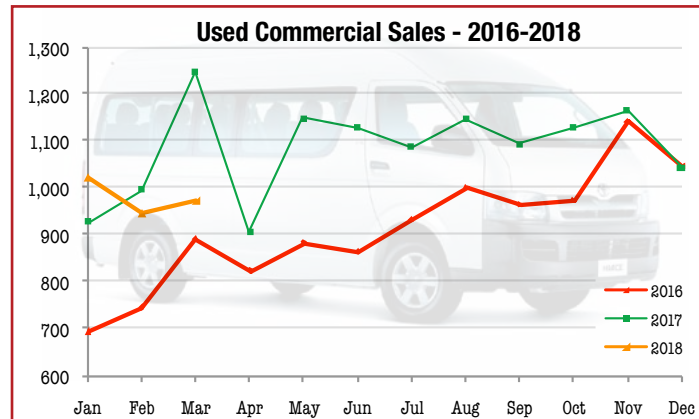
A massive drop in the number of used imported commercial vehicles registered in New Zealand was recorded last month.

There were 975 units sold in March, which represented a 21.9 per cent decrease compared to the same month of last year when 1,249 were registered.

The year-to-date total for used imported commercials has fallen back by 228 units – or by 7.2 per cent – against the first quarter of 2017.

Once again, Toyota's Hiace topped the ladder with 313 units last month compared to 455 during March 2017 for a decrease of 31.2 per cent.

The Nissan Caravan came second on 75, down from 106 or by 29.2 per



cent. Mazda's Bongo secured third spot on the back of a 21.3 per cent slide from 75 to 59 units.

Dunedin bucked the national trend when it came to major centres by reporting a sales jump from 32

units in March 2017 to 43 last month for an increase of 34.4 per cent.

Auckland recorded a 26 per cent fall or by 162 units, while Christchurch and Wellington showed decreases of 29.5 and 23.4

per cent when compared to the same month last year.

It's not all doom and gloom, though. Nathan Abernethy, of Regional Ford in Gore, says sales have been "terrific" during the past two months. "The used ute market is great," he told Autofile. "But the sheer volume in new sales has taken our focus off used."

"There's a certain element of luck when you do a big volume and get a large share of the trade-ins, so we do have a big selection of second-hand utes."

Abernethy says the trade-in rate is about 50 per cent. "The internet opens the door to selling vehicles around the country, but most of our buyers are local." ☺

Used Commercial Sales by Make - March 2018

| MAKE | MAR'18 | MAR'17 | +/- % | MAR'18 MKT SHARE | 2018 YEAR TO DATE | 2018 MKT SHARE |
|-----------------|------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Toyota | 399 | 602 | -33.7 | 40.9% | 1,247 | 42.3% |
| Nissan | 229 | 263 | -12.9 | 23.5% | 642 | 21.8% |
| Mazda | 75 | 90 | -16.7 | 7.7% | 194 | 6.6% |
| Isuzu | 48 | 64 | -25.0 | 4.9% | 152 | 5.2% |
| Ford | 39 | 30 | 30.0 | 4.0% | 132 | 4.5% |
| Mitsubishi | 39 | 45 | -13.3 | 4.0% | 116 | 3.9% |
| Hino | 30 | 41 | -26.8 | 3.1% | 105 | 3.6% |
| Chevrolet | 21 | 19 | 10.5 | 2.2% | 53 | 1.8% |
| Holden | 20 | 23 | -13.0 | 2.1% | 58 | 2.0% |
| Iveco | 8 | 3 | 166.7 | 0.8% | 15 | 0.5% |
| Fiat | 7 | 9 | -22.2 | 0.7% | 57 | 1.9% |
| Mercedes-Benz | 7 | 10 | -30.0 | 0.7% | 19 | 0.6% |
| Dodge | 6 | 7 | -14.3 | 0.6% | 17 | 0.6% |
| GMC | 6 | 8 | -25.0 | 0.6% | 20 | 0.7% |
| Daihatsu | 4 | 4 | 0.0 | 0.4% | 8 | 0.3% |
| Mitsubishi Fuso | 4 | 2 | 100.0 | 0.4% | 6 | 0.2% |
| Suzuki | 4 | 1 | 300.0 | 0.4% | 13 | 0.4% |
| Renault | 3 | 2 | 50.0 | 0.3% | 9 | 0.3% |
| Volkswagen | 3 | 8 | -62.5 | 0.3% | 14 | 0.5% |
| Volvo | 3 | 3 | 0.0 | 0.3% | 8 | 0.3% |
| Others | 20 | 15 | 33.3 | 2.1% | 62 | 2.1% |
| Total | 975 | 1,249 | -21.9 | 100.0% | 2,947 | 100.0% |

Used Commercial Sales by Model - March 2018

| MAKE | MODEL | MAR'18 | MAR'17 | +/- % | MAR'18 MKT SHARE | 2018 YEAR TO DATE | 2018 MKT SHARE |
|--------------|-----------|------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Toyota | Hiace | 313 | 455 | -31.2 | 32.1% | 955 | 32.4% |
| Nissan | Caravan | 75 | 106 | -29.2 | 7.7% | 214 | 7.3% |
| Mazda | Bongo | 59 | 75 | -21.3 | 6.1% | 162 | 5.5% |
| Nissan | NV200 | 51 | 42 | 21.4 | 5.2% | 138 | 4.7% |
| Isuzu | Elf | 32 | 39 | -17.9 | 3.3% | 89 | 3.0% |
| Nissan | NV350 | 32 | 18 | 77.8 | 3.3% | 87 | 3.0% |
| Nissan | Vanette | 30 | 45 | -33.3 | 3.1% | 68 | 2.3% |
| Toyota | Regius | 28 | 50 | -44.0 | 2.9% | 88 | 3.0% |
| Toyota | Dyna | 24 | 39 | -38.5 | 2.5% | 91 | 3.1% |
| Mitsubishi | Canter | 18 | 24 | -25.0 | 1.8% | 52 | 1.8% |
| Nissan | Atlas | 17 | 27 | -37.0 | 1.7% | 62 | 2.1% |
| Hino | Ranger | 15 | 17 | -11.8 | 1.5% | 48 | 1.6% |
| Toyota | Toyoace | 13 | 25 | -48.0 | 1.3% | 43 | 1.5% |
| Mazda | Titan | 12 | 11 | 9.1 | 1.2% | 23 | 0.8% |
| Hino | Dutro | 11 | 22 | -50.0 | 1.1% | 42 | 1.4% |
| Nissan | Hilux | 11 | 19 | -42.1 | 1.1% | 44 | 1.5% |
| Ford | Ranger | 11 | 13 | -15.4 | 1.1% | 48 | 1.6% |
| Isuzu | Forward | 10 | 14 | -28.6 | 1.0% | 39 | 1.3% |
| Chevrolet | Silverado | 10 | 10 | 0.0 | 1.0% | 25 | 0.8% |
| Nissan | E-NV200 | 9 | 1 | 800.0 | 0.9% | 29 | 1.0% |
| Others | | 194 | 197 | -1.5 | 19.9% | 600 | 20.4% |
| Total | | 975 | 1,249 | -21.9 | 100.0% | 2,947 | 100.0% |

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Stock finally being processed

The number of new passenger vehicles to officially cross the border into New Zealand in March was 9,999.

Last month's total was up by 24 per cent on the 8,043 units that entered in February. It was also an increase on March 2017's figure of 9,200 by 8.7 per cent.

Registrations also decreased when compared to the same month of last year. There were 9,050 new cars sold last month, which was down by two per cent when compared to 9,230 in March 2017.

As a result, 949 more cars arrived at dealerships than were sold leading to an increase in stock on-hand to 69,913 units.

So far this year, 25,975 new vehicles have arrived in the country with 27,263 being sold, adding to a reduction in stock of 1,288 units in the first three months of 2018.

However, when compared to March 2017, stock numbers have increased by 8.8 per cent over the year.

Franchised dealers across New Zealand now have 235 days' worth of stock on hand, which is three days more than February and 13 days more than March 2017.

While stock has remained steady, retail activity continues to be strong with daily sales averaging out at 297 last month – up by 2.4 per cent on the same month of last year.

Wallis Dumper, managing director of Subaru NZ, says vehicle carriers loaded with new Subarus have finally arrived at Ports of Auckland and are being processed.

"We are now in good shape," he told Autofile. "We will have caught up by the end of May."

However, Dumper notes ships

have been caught up in delays caused by industrial action at Lyttelton Port last month.

He says. "The strike has affected the delivery of cars in the South Island by at least a week. We were down in sales in March – there weren't enough cars arriving."

On the flipside, Dumper says April and May will be interesting months because dealers will be working hard getting pre-sold vehicles to buyers and selling stock at the same time.

"The cars processed in May should take us ahead of the game. The industry is never boring."

Nathan Abernethy, dealer principal of Regional Ford in Gore, says: "From what I understand, they have a handle on the stink-bug situation."

"Everything is going very well in both new and used. Most of the

farmers and tradies have had a good year."

Abernethy says there is a three to four-week turnaround to get cars from Auckland and onto the yard. Two to three years ago, it was more like a 10 to 12-day turnaround.

He says: "Central Otago is booming. Gore is really busy. We sold about 40 new vehicles in February and almost 40 in March."

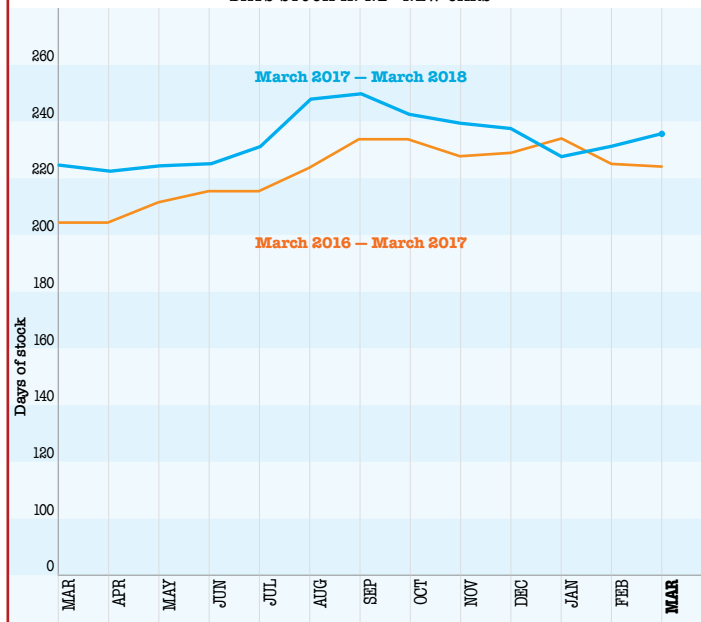
"We sell a lot in white, grey and silver. A lot of the time, the colour buyers choose can be what we have in stock. Ford dealers work together and swap stock so customers can get what they want."

Alan Muir, of Dunedin City Motors, says sales were brisk in March. But, due to industrial action at Lyttelton, some vehicles were shipped to Nelson. That said, they arrived within usual delivery timeframes. ☺

Dealer stock of new cars in New Zealand

| | CAR SALES | | | | DAILY SALES | DAYS |
|----------------------|---------------|------------|----------|------------|--------------------|---------------|
| | IMPORTED | REGISTERED | VARIANCE | STOCK | - 12-MONTH AVERAGE | STOCK AT HAND |
| Mar '17 | 9,200 | 9,230 | -30 | 64,279 | 290 | 222 |
| Apr '17 | 8,234 | 6,996 | 1,238 | 65,517 | 290 | 226 |
| May '17 | 9,539 | 8,386 | 1,153 | 66,670 | 293 | 228 |
| Jun '17 | 10,483 | 10,181 | 302 | 66,972 | 296 | 227 |
| Jul '17 | 12,591 | 7,605 | 4,986 | 71,958 | 295 | 244 |
| Aug '17 | 10,599 | 8,606 | 1,993 | 73,951 | 295 | 251 |
| Sep '17 | 7,620 | 9,855 | -2,235 | 71,716 | 295 | 243 |
| Oct '17 | 10,473 | 11,109 | -636 | 71,080 | 296 | 240 |
| Nov '17 | 9,825 | 10,289 | -464 | 70,616 | 297 | 237 |
| Dec '17 | 8,736 | 8,151 | 585 | 71,201 | 298 | 239 |
| Jan '18 | 7,933 | 10,798 | -2,865 | 68,336 | 299 | 228 |
| Feb '18 | 8,043 | 7,415 | 628 | 68,964 | 298 | 232 |
| Mar '18 | 9,999 | 9,050 | 949 | 69,913 | 297 | 235 |
| Year to date | 25,975 | 27,263 | (1,288) | | | |
| Change on last month | 24.3% | 22.0% | | 1.4% | | |
| Change on Mar 2017 | 8.7% | -2.0% | | 8.8% | | |
| | MORE IMPORTED | LESS SOLD | | MORE STOCK | | |

DAYS STOCK IN NZ - NEW CARS



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Port strike adds to delays

Industrial action taken by staff at Lyttelton Port last month exacerbated supply problems for the automotive industry in the South Island after brown marmorated stink bugs (BMSBs) were found on roll-on, roll-off vessels originating from Japan.

Auto Inspection Services in Christchurch received a few cars off the Dream Orchid on the weekend of March 17-18 for compliance processing, but is feeling the effects caused by the discovery of stink bugs and the strike.

Nick Owens is director of the business that specialises in the entry certification of used imports.

"We should be running at half-capacity, but if all of this continues we're throwing money out the door," he told Autofile. "You can't have staff sitting around when there's no money coming in."

For example, Trans Future 7 was due in at Lyttelton on March 23. Owens says it was supposed to leave Auckland on March 21, but with the port strike cars were likely to be offloaded at Auckland to await another vessel to tranship them.

"This compounds the problem, so there are inefficiencies everywhere," he adds. "There will be a bunch of cars in Auckland waiting to get to Lyttelton and Nelson. The strike will affect a huge number of industries, not just us."

"There should be stock soon. The whole system will be under the pump, but will dealers be able to pay for their cars? There's nothing we can do about it. Staff are taking time off. Any business owner will have to look at laying off staff."

Owens has heard lot of marginal players in Auckland have been hit, but says Christchurch's

automotive industry is more established and cautious.

He adds some small businesses operating with low profit margins may find themselves in financial difficulty.

Henry Schmidt, of Autolink Cars in Grey Lynn, Auckland, says: "We have about 40 cars on bug-affected ships and more are coming in on other vessels from Japan."

"We now have a storage problem – where to put the cars off the wharf. We normally have about 12 to 15 units, but we will have 50 and nowhere to put them. Storage space is expensive and it's a problem for everyone."

There were 10,933 used cars imported last month – down by 44.1 per cent on March 2017's total of 19,546 units.

On the other side, 11,841 used imports were registered compared

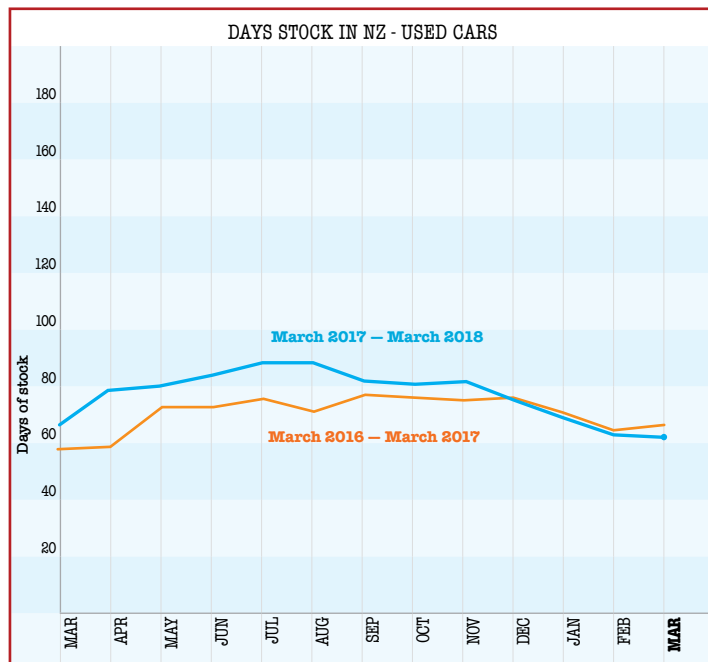
to the same month a last year when 14,474 were sold, which was a decrease of 18.2 per cent.

With 10,933 coming in and 11,841 being sold, the net effect was 917 fewer used cars imported than sold to decrease the number of unregistered cars sitting on dealers' yards to 27,866 units – down from 28,783 in February.

This stock count is the lowest since January 2017 when there were 26,363 units still to be registered. Current stock is 20.7 per cent lower than the same month of last year when unregistered stock stood at 33,004.

Daily sales, averaged over the past 12 months, have decreased to 448 units a day, down from 455 in February.

At the current rate of sales, there's enough stock at-hand to last two months, or 62 days. ☺



Dealer stock of used cars in New Zealand

| | CAR SALES | | VARIANCE | STOCK | DAILY SALES - 12-MONTH AVERAGE | DAYS STOCK AT HAND |
|----------------------|---------------|------------|----------|------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | IMPORTED | REGISTERED | | | | |
| Mar '17 | 19,546 | 14,474 | 5,072 | 33,004 | 421 | 78 |
| Apr '17 | 13,017 | 12,507 | 510 | 33,514 | 422 | 79 |
| May '17 | 16,584 | 14,439 | 2,145 | 35,659 | 427 | 84 |
| Jun '17 | 15,530 | 13,339 | 2,191 | 37,850 | 431 | 88 |
| Jul '17 | 14,055 | 14,430 | -375 | 37,475 | 434 | 86 |
| Aug '17 | 12,416 | 14,483 | -2,067 | 35,408 | 439 | 81 |
| Sep '17 | 13,378 | 13,645 | -267 | 35,141 | 442 | 80 |
| Oct '17 | 14,866 | 14,118 | 748 | 35,889 | 445 | 81 |
| Nov '17 | 14,642 | 14,924 | -282 | 35,607 | 451 | 79 |
| Dec '17 | 13,097 | 14,102 | -1,005 | 34,602 | 454 | 76 |
| Jan '18 | 10,423 | 13,719 | -3,296 | 31,306 | 456 | 69 |
| Feb '18 | 9,525 | 12,048 | -2,523 | 28,783 | 455 | 63 |
| Mar '18 | 10,933 | 11,841 | -917 | 27,866 | 448 | 62 |
| Year to date | 30,881 | 37,608 | (6,736) | | | |
| Change on last month | 14.8% | -1.7% | | -3.2% | | |
| Change on Mar 2017 | -44.1% | -18.2% | | -15.6% | | |
| | LESS IMPORTED | LESS SOLD | | MORE STOCK | | |

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