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Review of audits on compliance needed

Automotive industry responds to agency's investigation to tackle conflicts of interest across used-imports supply chain

The NZTA is being urged to move away from paper chases to random on-site checks to ensure entry-certification processes are properly followed.

The suggestion has been put forward by VIA (the Imported Motor Vehicle Industry Association) during consultation on the agency's operational policy for managing the integrity of used-vehicle certification inspectors and inspection organisations.

The review is being carried out because the NZTA has received feedback it should change its approach to assessing conflicts of interest (COIs).

It believes public confidence may be hit if entry certification is carried out by those with ownership interests in vehicles they are certifying and there are potential safety risks because of the way the system works.

However, VIA's chief executive David Vinsen says: "The real upshot of this process is that it provides the agency with an opportunity to improve its auditing of entry-



Used-imports entry certification is under NZTA scrutiny

compliance systems."

He says integrity can best be ensured by the regulator implementing a "regimen of random unannounced physical output auditing", while it's the NZTA's responsibility to manage actual and perceived COIs.

Vinsen says officials currently turn up at inspection locations at prearranged times to check if processes are being adhered to,

but VIA would like to see them arrive unannounced and, for example, "look at the last 10 cars that have been certified and pull them apart".

"That would involve going through the whole process and having an in-depth look at those 10 vehicles," says Vinsen.

"If the certifier says, 'only four of those cars are still here because six have gone to dealers', the NZTA should visit those traders to check them. If the dealer then says three have been sold, the agency should visit the owners and thoroughly check those as well."

"Then it can be ensured all 10 vehicles have been properly certified with checks done properly."

"That is a strong recommendation VIA has instead of just the predetermined paper chase in place at the moment."

As for the NZTA's focus on COIs, "VIA is straight down the middle on the issue".

"Businesses should have the right to arrange themselves in an efficient way and enter contracts



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GUEST EDITORIAL

Celebrating three decades in sector

Neil Taylor looks back on his career from joining a team of three after starting up on his own

On March 19, 2019, I celebrated 30 years with Autosure. I certainly have a few more grey hairs now than when I started, but what a great journey it has been.

I've seen many changes in the automotive industry over this time, but there are some things that were challenging then and remain so today.

One that particularly comes to mind is the necessity to expediently deal with claims to ensure vehicles are repaired and back on the road as soon as possible. At Autosure, we have fine-tuned our part in that role over the years to achieve maximum efficiencies.

Back in the 1980s, I set up my own loss-adjusting company and, after a couple of years managing claims for numerous underwriters, I was invited to join Autosure. So I hopped into my Fairmont Ghia on March 19, 1989, and began my new career with the other three people in the team.

Since then we've grown to a business of more than 50 staff and developed a great, positive team culture, which is one of the key reasons I'm still here as national claims manager three decades on.

We worked hard during the first 15 years, but also had a great time doing it and enjoying the rewards.

The introduction of Japanese used imports made the biggest impact that I can recall during that era and, of course, we now import a huge variety of vehicles



NEIL TAYLOR

National claims manager
Autosure

from different sources throughout the world. I wouldn't have dreamt all those years ago that I would see what we're now experiencing with electric and self-driving vehicles.

In terms of claims, we've seen a marked increase in repair costs over the past five years, particularly. This is partially due to the impact of the modern vehicle and the effect new technology has had on the industry.

A good example of this is the challenges that correct diagnosis before starting repairs present. Only recently, we were involved in a replacement engine claim only to find that a fuse was at fault. Correct and efficient scanning equipment is essential.

One thing that hasn't changed over the years, for us and everyone in the industry, is the need to be 100 per cent committed to customers and this is at the heart of everything we do at Autosure.

I'm thankful for the special and valued relationships that have evolved over the years with numerous business partners, associates and fellow employees across the country.

These have enabled me to gain in-depth knowledge in entertainment, game fishing, golf and harness racing – long may that learning curve continue and thank you all for your hospitality.

I work with a great team of people who will collectively ensure the future success of Autosure as a leader in our industry. I'm extremely proud to be part of it. ☺

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for their benefit unless there is the over-riding effect of diminishing competition," Vinsen told Autofile.

"We don't want to see a race to the bottom, and it's up to the regulator to identify and deal with actual or perceived conflicts of interest."

The NZTA's approach to assessing COIs is set out in operational policy. When it was created, some integration of the used-vehicle supply chain was accounted for, "but not to the extent of what has occurred".

The proposed changes include clarifying the definition of COI, strengthening controls for appointing entry-certification inspectors to avoid them, and ensuring they tell the agency about conflicts.

It all means the NZTA could no longer permit an organisation to entry certify a vehicle it has an ownership interest in or has conducted border inspections for.

"The agency has reached a preliminary view COIs should be

avoided to maintain the integrity of the system," it says. "The changes would not prohibit an entry certifier from importing used vehicles or carrying out border-inspection services."

MAKING VIEWS KNOWN

VIA – along with the Motor Industry Association (MIA) and Motor Trade Association (MTA) – have made formal submissions on the suggested entry-certification changes.

The background is covered in VIA's submission, which states companies "previously understood to be unrelated have created a commercial grouping". There is also a segment of the industry that isn't part of a grouping that has expressed its "perception a COI exists".

VIA's position is businesses should be entitled to enter arrangements for reasons of efficiency, commercial benefit and or improved regulatory compliance if regulatory requirements are met



David Vinsen, chief executive of VIA

to satisfactory standards.

"Actual and perceived conflicts are assumed to be harmful to the integrity of entry certification," says Kit Wilkerson, VIA's policy analyst and adviser.

"We submit it's the regulator's role to identify and deal with COIs. This may include requiring applicants to provide sufficient information on ownership and commercial relationships.

"We support the effort, but suggest the proposed regulation would likely lead to perverse outcomes and offer suggestions on ways the case for changes can be made stronger."

VIA's primary concerns with the proposals – and policy in general – are based on the review ensuring the integrity of the process and preventing unsafe vehicles from entering the fleet.

Its submission states no evidence has been provided that COIs the proposed changes are designed to prevent harm the process' integrity, or any such conflicts have increased the number of vehicles unfit for purpose being certified.

VIA adds it hasn't been proven that a company cannot be involved in different parts of import and entry-certification processes and have failed to fulfil their roles with integrity.

"The proposed changes would require businesses to prove COIs do not exist," adds Wilkerson. "It is, however, impossible to prove a negative. Most Western legal systems' burden of proof is on the one making a claim. The lack of a COI isn't a claim, it's the lack of a claim."

"We foresee the proposed

changes will drive parts of the industry to be much less transparent in business arrangements.

"The greatest impact will be on companies already trying to do the right thing. These changes will make them less able to compete with parts of the industry that have not, would not and will not report actual conflicts."

WORKING WITH INDUSTRY

The MTA says definitions being used by the NZTA in regards to COIs may "lead to mistrust and the breakdown of working relationships" unless revised, and it raises a warning flag over how changes have been drafted.

"Terms used are open to interpretation," says Graeme Swan, the MTA's sector manager – repair. "What one party may think is a COI, another may believe it's not a conflict at all."

"The NZTA needs to issue guidance on how it will be satisfied functional separation will exist between entry certification and other inspection, repair and maintenance activities to ensure a level playing field."

Swan says an agency document already exists for in-service certification giving examples of potential conflicts.

He adds: "The agency should issue guidelines on how it may be satisfied COIs may be addressed. It's imperative we work together to build a robust system so only safe vehicles are certified."

Given the agency's crackdown on in-service inspections, the MTA believes its entire document on proposed policy should be reviewed and amended to better reflect what's required in its regulatory capacity, and from appointed inspecting organisations and vehicle inspectors.

"Overall, the MTA would like to see a process to manage COIs instead of trying to limit or prevent them."

In regards to key proposals, the MTA adds it's unclear in whose mind any actual, potential or appearance of a conflict needs to occur – the agency's, an inspecting organisation's or the public's.

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► It's also unsure of the intended audience. "Is this an internal document for the NZTA and staff, or for the wider industry including inspectors, inspecting organisations and industry bodies? This needs to be spelt out."

As for its purpose, the MTA believes it is light on emphasising vehicle safety, while in one section there's no mention of the agency's statutory function to suspend or revoke inspecting organisations or inspectors for failing to comply with conditions of appointment.

These as options to encourage compliance with requirements have been flagged up by the MTA.

Also, its submission states: "Some listed certification activities don't line up with what's listed under section 2.2(1) of the Vehicle Standards Compliance Rule and there appears to be a couple of categories not mentioned at all.

"These are low-volume vehicle specialist inspection and certification, and new light-vehicle entry inspection and certification."

Overall, the MTA wants the agency to be more transparent in its organisational structure so stakeholders can easily find the right person or team to contact when issues arise.

It believes the NZTA is working to improve its engagement with industry on important consultations and appreciated the chance to present its views on managing conflicts to a panel of senior officials.

DIFFERENT REQUIREMENTS
A meaningful separation needs to exist between border inspection, entry certification, repair certification and vehicle ownership to maintain system integrity when it comes used imports, says the MIA.

It believes this is necessary to ensure all cars entering the fleet

comply and are safe to operate on roads.

A key point in the MIA's submission on the NZTA's proposals is while they are aimed at used imports, they also have implications for entry compliance for new vehicles.

"Material or actual COIs shouldn't exist," says Crawford. "Perceived conflicts should be able to exist in certain circumstances,

but need to be transparently managed.

"But there comes a point with certain ownership models that while it might be possible to remove or manage actual COIs, a strong perception of a conflict exists in consumers' minds. When this is the case, it should be treated as a material COI."

The MIA highlights the new and used-import sectors work

under different commercial drivers and regulatory constraints for entry compliance.

The new-vehicle industry's franchise model has distributors not owning dealerships or having common directors.

"Pre-delivery inspection [PDI], WOF and COFs are carried out by dealers or third parties," says Crawford. "Going forward, some distributors may bring PDI in-house. If they do, it will be contracted out, but the perception of a COI is too great if the service provider also becomes the inspecting organisation."

PDI ensures new cars meet required standards before entry certification with the NZTA auditing distributors to ensure processes are robust.

"The cost of taking short-cuts is too high as it invariably means a loss of distributing brands," explains Crawford. "Put another way, new-vehicle distributors cannot close and pop up under a different company name to avoid

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"It's imperative we work together to build a robust system"

— Graeme Swan, MTA

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compliance failures."

However, the used-imports sector is different with operators choosing a wide range of vehicle brands, ages and types.

The MIA's observations of the used industry over the past 30 years shows "while there are good operators, it's well-known it contains elements of opportunistic behaviour that isn't always as aligned to the standards it should be".

Crawford says: "Overseas sellers and importers have – over the years – engaged in criminal activities including Customs valuation fraud, odometer winding and fraudulent documentation, including Japanese deregistration certificates."

In its submission, the MIA cites other examples as being bringing in damaged and written-off vehicles for repair before on-sale without their histories being fully disclosed, importing stolen cars and money laundering.

It adds there has been cases of



"It's important testers remain independent"

– David Crawford

importing vehicles re-engineered from half-cuts and bringing in cars with open recalls without disclosing that.

Crawford notes the NZTA wants to define a COI as "a situation where a person applying to carry out inspection or certification activities is or could be influenced – or could be perceived to be at risk of being influenced – by professional, financial or personal interest in key parts of the entry and certification supply chain. A COI includes an actual, potential or perceived conflict".

When it comes to material conflicts, the MIA wants them to be

well-defined and banned.

"The NZTA's guidelines don't robustly define a material COI. This makes it challenging to determine what's a perceived versus a material conflict.

"In our view, a material COI in used imports is when the same company is the importer and compliance organisation. It's less clear if they are different companies or when common directors for each company are in the supply chain."

As for perceived conflicts, the MIA considers the agency's proposed position is confusing because it appears to suggest they should never exist.

It says it's difficult to define what a perceived COI is because it often comes down to what's in the mind of the person claiming one exists, but a key principle is a company testing and certifying a product cannot have a financial interest in it.

The MIA has come up with three hypothetical conflicts of interest in used-imports compliance.

One is when there are common directors between different companies in the supply chain, but no common ownership.

For example, if company A imports a car and company B manages entry compliance and both have one or more common directors but there's no other connection – such as common ownership – this would give rise to a perceived COI. That's because directors are responsible for each company's policy and oversee operational duties.

In the MIA's view, the perceived COI is likely manageable through proper procedures.

"In such a case, the NZTA should require those companies to recognise there are perceived

COIs, require them to have policies to manage them and audit compliance to ensure they don't become actual conflicts."

The MIA's second scenario has common directors between supply-chain companies combined with common ownership. It believes this gives rise to high perceived COI levels.

"This shouldn't be permitted. We expect the agency to ensure all arrangements are treated the same."

The third MIA example is when different companies with common ownership may give rise to high levels of perceived COIs.

"Common ownership occurs in several ways, such as two companies holding shares in each other or different companies having a common parent," says Crawford.

"Horizontal or vertical common ownership between buyers of used imports, finance companies with incentives to ensure they are sold and compliance companies – in any combination – is problematic.

"At the very least, compliance must be undertaken by a neutral third party with no shared ownership or common directors."

Apart from one member, the MIA stresses it's largely unaffected by the NZTA's proposals because they don't impact on importing and complying new vehicles.

However, from an industry perspective, it says it has been a "strong advocate of regulatory intervention to set safety and environmental standards, and create a level playing field".

It's on this basis the MIA supports the agency wanting to clarify operational policy.

Crawford says: "It's important for the compliance system's integrity that testers remain independent and face no pressure to certify vehicles as roadworthy when they may not be."

He adds it's important COIs are managed to maintain public confidence given the used-imports industry's "track record of exploiting loopholes".

"This isn't to say all used importers flaunt the system. This isn't the case. But the MIA's view is it's more likely to occur in the used sector than new." ⊕

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Tributes to group president

Members of the used-imports industry in New Zealand – and their colleagues and friends in Japan – are mourning the passing of Heiwa Auto Group's president.

Masatoshi Abe died last month with members of the executive team of Autohub NZ, a Heiwa-owned company, travelling to his homeland to pay their respects.

Abe san will be remembered in both countries as a pioneer of exporting used Japanese vehicles around the world.

His company started as a motorbike shop in 1966 in Osaka's Tennoji ward. But it was in 1992 that he decided to make in-roads into used exports.

It started selling vehicles to New Zealand in 1993 before finally withdrawing from retailing second-hand cars in Japan in 1999 because the local market had become saturated.

Heiwa Auto has since become one of the largest players in the country's vehicle-export industry. It now sells to more than 20 countries including Malaysia, Australia and Cyprus, as well as Africa.

In addition to Autohub and Heiwa Auto, the group has diverse subsidiaries. These include Enhance Auto, AutoPortal, Unique Auto



Masatoshi Abe, former president of Heiwa Auto Group, with John Davies, ex-managing director of Autohub NZ.
Photo: Brian McCutcheon

and the H3 Joyfit fitness centres. Others cover recycling, elderly care, banking, transport and house auctions.

Abe san was in this country in January for the official opening of Autohub NZ's new offices in Hobsonville, Auckland.

At the event, John Davies, former managing director of Autohub NZ, said: "A special thanks to our Japanese guests here today,

including the president of our whole corporation, Abe san. Your presence means a lot to us, to see you here on this day."

What follows are his words taken from the Japanese company's website.

"Earlier than any other company in the trade, we were convinced the used-car export market would expand in the future," said Abe san.

"Through innovative approaches

in quality improvement and by reforming logistics... we have promoted a strong globalisation in markets.

"We will continue to expand the used-car export market and the potential of our business through new approaches to form the standard of the next generation."

CONSIDERATE, GENEROUS
John Davies' friendship and business relationship with Masatoshi Abe spanned three decades.

He appointed Davies to the position of managing director of Autohub NZ, and then president of Autohub Japan, and the global group, a few years ago – a great honour for a "gaijin" and sign of mutual respect.

What follows is Davies' personal tribute to the ex-president of Heiwa Auto Group.

“I first met Abe san around 1990. I was in Japan every few weeks buying cars for my wholesale and retail business, and began buying from Heiwa Auto Co Ltd.

At this time, the company was situated in Nanko, Osaka, and was previously mainly a domestic supplier.

On weekends, I would go to its storage yard and have a good

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look over my week's arrivals. It was there that I first met Masatoshi Abe. His job, at that time, involved preparing cars on the yard for export. A beer or two in the hot sun soon cemented our relationship.

Over the years, his position became more senior and eventuated in his rise to president after the death of his father in the late 1990s, but he still found time for me when I was in Osaka.

In 2003, I decided to cease trading in cars and flew to Japan to settle our business.

Abe san refused to allow my departure and asked if I could consider retaining a close relationship – and think of ways I could help Heiwa Auto.

I put my car-dealer hat back on and came up with several suggestions to help his customers in New Zealand, and increase margins and volumes for his company.

Abe san and the directors liked and approved all of my ideas, and entrusted me to start "Heiwa D2D" logistics service, open bank accounts in New Zealand, act for them in this country and negotiate reduced freight rates by pooling customers' vehicles together. It was a great success and Heiwa Auto increased market share exponentially.

In 2006, Abe san asked me to form a new company and offer logistics to any exporter. This was

totally opposite to our competitors' thinking in Japan, whereby they closeted their services in their own companies. The rest is history.

Abe san always had foresight and was always supportive of staff trialling new ideas. He led by encouragement.

At this point in time, Heiwa Auto Group has some 22 companies in more countries than I know – not only supplying cars, but a dining arm, elderly care, recycling centres and Les Mills fitness franchises. He wasn't scared of a challenge.

Abe san was considerate, compassionate and extremely generous. Staff always shared in the company's good fortunes by way of bonuses, holiday homes, annual trips, sky-diving, Hawaii marathons, use of a luxury boat in Osaka and some great parties.

He always trusted my ideas and supported so many new ventures that were suggested, such as the acquisition of Penrose Compliance and forming Autobridge, our dealer finance company.

A plan for his succession has already been formed, which will be announced shortly. This looks robust and sensible, and I foresee no disruption to any of the group's services.

His death on his birthday at the age of 56 came as a shock to me as we only caught up for a barbecue at my house in late January. He will be sorely missed. ☺

Call to meetings

VIA (the Imported Motor Vehicle Industry Association) is holding its annual general meetings later this month.

The South Island branch's meeting takes place on May 28. The North Island AGM is being held on May 29 and will be immediately followed by the national meeting.

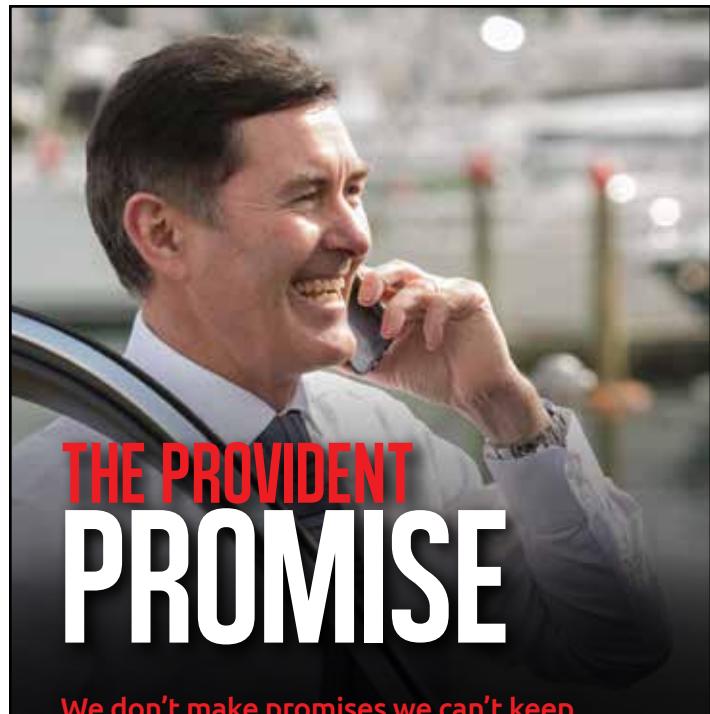
All members are entitled to raise proposals or items of business they wish to have considered at the meetings.

VIA's rules state these must be submitted to the branch secretary

at least 14 days before the AGM takes place.

Members with matters to raise at the South Island AGM should email bev@via.co.nz while those for the North Island meeting need to be sent to alistair@brlaccountants.co.nz by May 14.

Confirmation of venues, times, agendas, minutes and chief executive David Vinsen's annual report will be made available online at www.via.org.nz on May 20. Members are urged to make every effort to attend. ☺



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**Steve Owens,
CEO Provident Insurance, NEW ZEALAND.**

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Dealerships set for rebranding

A well-known name in Auckland's used-vehicle market over the past 30 years will disappear when branches of Buy Right Cars (BRC) are relaunched as Turners Cars.

The decision, which will cost about \$4.5 million to implement, is part of a strategic review being carried out by the board and senior managers at Turners Automotive Group.

All of the group's divisions are under scrutiny with emerging themes being "simplification, de-risking, focus on core capabilities and strengths, and investing in capital-efficient growth opportunities".

The board of directors expects to unveil outcomes by the end of June, but its early decision to rebrand BRC's 10 branches – nine in Auckland, one in Hamilton – aims to create greater shareholder value

over the medium term.

"In a market the size of New Zealand, a single-brand strategy makes a whole lot of sense," says Todd Hunter, the group's chief executive officer.

"It provides opportunity to further leverage high levels of awareness and trust Kiwis place in Turners. It will also enable marketing and other cost synergies."

It was back in July 2016 that Turners announced it would pay \$15.3m plus stock for BRC with 78 per cent of the purchase price settled in cash and 22 per cent in Turners Ltd shares. About \$6m of the consideration would be determined by BRC's performance on earn-out arrangement over two years.

At the time, Hunter said BRC was expected to contribute earnings before interest and tax



It will cost about \$4.5m to rebrand Buy Right Cars as Turners Cars

some older inventory units.

Hunter said Turners had taken over managing BRC from the vendors in September 2017 – a year earlier than expected. "We're starting to see the turnaround. The earn-out payment to the original owners has been reduced accordingly. We remain confident in growth prospects."

A retail-investor roadshow presentation, published in July 2018, reported 34 per cent revenue growth at BRC with operating profits falling by 21 per cent. A "closer association" with Turners' branding was to be implemented with three new branches targeted over the next two years.

At Turners' AGM in September last year, Hunter reported BRC's acquisition had delivered a step-up in results for the automotive division. By then, two new BRC sites had opened in Hamilton and Penrose, Auckland.

On November 27, the NZX was informed BRC had delivered lower-than-expected results. Sales had risen by nine per cent, margins had dropped by 20 per cent to about \$2,000 per unit. Revenue was up by 11 per cent to \$32.2m, but operating profit fell by 63 per cent to \$0.5m, and the Hamilton branch was "performing above expectations".

Turners' interim report to September 2018, published on December 21, stated most market headwinds had been felt by BRC due to its high proportion of used imports and mainly operating in Auckland where demand was weaker.

The company's updated guidance of April 19 informed shareholders of BRC's rebranding – and its one-off, non-cash write-off would be included in the group's results for the 2019 financial year.

Visit www.autofile.co.nz for an in-depth look back at Turners' ownership of BRC. Turn to page 35 for Hunter's views on trading conditions. ☺

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Meet Trade Me's new boss

The executive vice-president of a company running three Scandinavian online marketplaces has been unveiled as the Trade Me Group's new chief executive officer.

Anders Skoe, who is also current CEO of Finn.co in Norway, takes over from Jon Macdonald in late July.

Finn.co is similar to Trade Me in that it operates across automotive, real estate and employment classifieds, as well as general items.

It's owned by Nordic Marketplaces, of which Skoe is executive vice-president, and it has similar companies in Sweden and Finland – Blocket.se and Tori.fi. Nordic's parent company is Oslo-based media conglomerate Schibsted.

"I'm looking forward to moving to New Zealand with my family and joining the Trade Me team," enthuses Skoe.

"It's a fantastic business with great potential to grow. It's particularly exciting to come into this business when it's going through a significant moment in its history with a move back into private ownership."

"It's a fantastic business with great potential to grow"

– Anders Skoe



Skoe's appointment was announced last month after the high court cleared the way in mid-April for Trade Me's purchase by Titan AcquisitionCo NZ Ltd.

Macdonald, who is staying on until Skoe's arrival, had planned to leave Trade Me at the end of 2018.

But at the request of the board, he agreed to stay on while the company went through its scheme of arrangement with Titan and to ensure a smooth handover.

"I had the pleasure of meeting Anders at Finn's headquarters in Oslo some time ago," says Macdonald.

"I'm delighted he's agreed to take on the role here, particularly given his strong experience in leading such a closely comparable

business in a similar market. I wish him all the best and look forward to seeing Trade Me continue to thrive."

Skoe adds: "It has been an incredibly difficult decision for me and my family to leave Finn, Schibsted

and Norway.

"But the opportunity to lead Trade Me in New Zealand is a unique opportunity, both personally and professionally. For us, this is an exciting new chapter."

Skoe became Finn's CEO in 2016 and then executive vice-president of Nordic on January 1, 2019.

He joined Finn as head of business intelligence in 2010. He was in that position for two-and-a-half years.

In April 2013, Skoe was promoted to chief financial officer. He was then interim CEO for two months from before being appointed on a permanent basis.

"Every day, we help millions of people buy, sell, hire and get hired," Nordic states on its website. "Our mission is to create perfect matches through our trusted marketplaces and innovative solutions."

Before joining Finn, Skoe worked for Google for five years. He started in 2005 as a technical account manager, and implemented and managed AdSense on some of the company's largest partner sites.

After two years, he went on to become technology programme manager on Google TV building systems so adverts could go live in hours. In 2008, he became partner technology manager for business intelligence and AdSense. ☉

Court approves deal

The high court made orders last month approving the proposed scheme of arrangement for Titan AcquisitionCo NZ Ltd to buy out Trade Me.

They constituted the final formal step for the takeover to go ahead after Trade Me's shareholders voted in favour of it on April 3.

Titan will acquire 100 per cent of Trade Me shares for \$6.45 per share with investors being paid on the implementation date of May 8.

"We're pleased the final court orders have been made," says David Kirk, Trade Me's chairman. "They give certainty to the deal."

Unless something unexpected was to happen under the protective provisions of the implementation

agreement, the ownership change was due to go ahead in early May.

Kirk adds: "All of the directors have loved being part of Trade Me's story and they are proud of what's been achieved in the time it has been listed.

"We'll all watch Trade Me's progress with interest. We know it will stay a key part of Kiwi lives no matter what the ownership."

Trading in Trade Me shares was suspended at the close of trading on NZX and ASX on May 2 before delisting after the scheme of arrangement being implemented.

Titan is a New Zealand company owned by Apax IX Fund, a fund advised by UK-based private-equity firm Apax Partners. ☉



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Sport scoops top gong

The Suzuki Swift Sport has been crowned supreme winner at the AMI NZ Autocar Car of the Year Awards.

The popular five-door variant saw off other class winners after more than 130 vehicles were tested. The Sport won the category for performance vehicle and was then rated the best finalist.

The Sport derivative of the Swift has long been a popular seller, but the arrival of the new turbocharged version last year resulted in a boost in demand.

In 2017, it accounted for 15.1 per cent of new Swifts sold in New Zealand. The introduction of the 1.4-litre turbo version in 2018 resulted in the Sport capturing 32.9 per cent of Swift sales in 2018.

“Keen and enthusiastic drivers have special enthusiasm for the Swift Sport with almost one-in-three buyers in this country choosing the manual gearbox version over the

past two years,” says Gary Collins, general manager of automobile marketing for Suzuki NZ.

“This is an unusually high level when most new-car buyers now opt for automatic or continuously variable automatic transmissions.”

Kyle Cassidy, chief judge, says the scoring system was weighted towards a vehicle’s particular strengths so a supermini could fairly be compared with a six-figure luxury contender. He describes the Swift Sport as a “mild-mannered commuter” in the city with a turbocharged engine balancing fuel economy with ease of driving.

The AMI NZ Autocar Car of the Year class winners were the Seat Ibiza – less than \$30,000 category, Kia’s Niro PHEV – \$30,000-\$45,000, Subaru Forester Premium – \$45,000-\$60,000, Mazda CX-8 Limited – \$60,000-\$100,000, Suzuki Swift Sport – performance, Porsche Cayenne S – luxury. ☺

IN BRIEF

Association points out ships go where there's cargo

The NZ Shipping Federation has objected to any future plan that would see Port of Auckland's operations being shifted to Northport.

Annabel Young, executive director, says: “Any attempt to force cargo to, from or via a particular port must lead to questions about whether this is to be mandatory or subsidy-driven. Natural flows will be based on population and production.”

“The Auckland Future Port study found 70 per cent of cargo coming into the Waitemata was bound for the city, usually South Auckland. Distance from point of origin to port, or from port to point of sale, is an important factor.”

The federation has made its views known during the consultation process of the government’s Upper North Island Supply Chain Strategy.

This includes a feasibility study on whether a shift in port operations, which would see car imports relocated first, is possible, as reported in the April issue of Autofile.

Electric car ‘world’s best’ as marque land treble

The all-electric Jaguar I-PACE completed an historic hat-trick at the 2019 World Car Awards. It won the coveted overall title, and the awards for green car and vehicle design.



The I-PACE, pictured, is the first model to win three world car titles in the awards’ 15-year history. Its latest, at the New York International Auto Show, came after it was named European car of the year.

It has a 90kWh lithium-ion battery and delivers a range of up to 470km. Range-optimising technologies include a battery preconditioning system. When plugged in, the I-PACE automatically adjusts the battery to maximise range before setting off.

Designed and developed in the UK, more than 11,000 units have been sold in about 60 countries.

McLaren’s 720S took out world performance car, the urban car award went to Suzuki’s Jimny and Audi’s A7 was world luxury car. Visit www.autofile.co.nz for more news and galleries from the Big Apple.

Translation of model’s name raising eyebrows

A German marque has put its dealers across the border on a sticky wicket thanks to the name of its electric car.

Étron, in French, doesn’t quite signify electric power, sex appeal or innovation – it’s more closely associated with excretion.

Thus Audi’s e-tron may come in for some toilet humour from francophones globally, especially as the pronunciation of the car’s name and “turd” are virtually the same.

It describes the e-tron in promotional material as “the only electric SUV built with Audi DNA”, adding “this is electric done the Audi way”.

Focus on mobility into the future at Tokyo show

Technology will be high on the agenda at the 46th edition of the Japanese automotive industry’s biggest event.

An “open future” is the theme for Tokyo Motor Show, which runs from October 24 to November 4. It will explore what future mobility may look like and “applied technologies that could feature”. The event will be staged at Tokyo Big Sight, and venues in the city’s Odaiba area.

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Expanding mobility and horizons

Many people still believe owning an electric vehicle (EV) would severely restrict their travel.

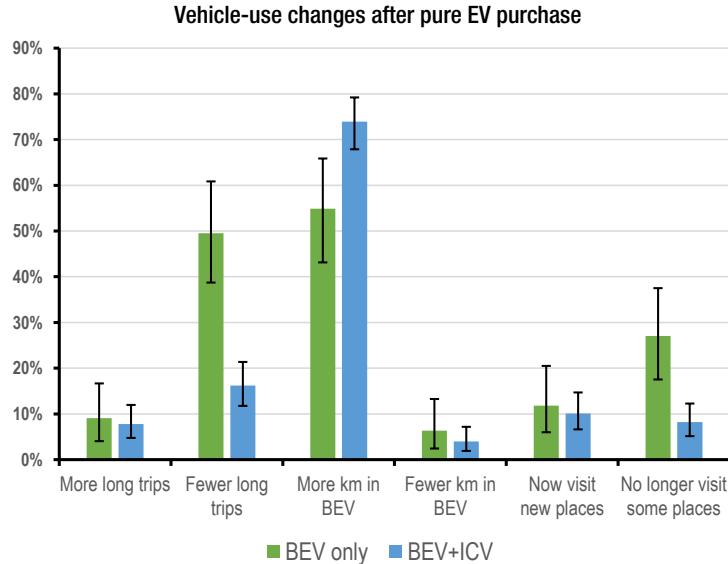
In fact, a Flip The Fleet survey last year found that only around five per cent of owners travel fewer kilometres overall in their EV than in their internal combustion vehicle (ICV). The majority went even further since owning an electric car.

For most adopters, acquiring an EV triggered little difference in their transport patterns. Sixty-two per cent of 474 owners who responded to the survey reported their transport habits either hadn't changed, or had only changed a little, since buying an EV.

Those who made the switch adjusted their overall mobility in subtle ways. About five per cent of the owners with only a battery electric vehicle (BEV) rent a car more often than previously – presumably for occasional long trips needing an internal combustion vehicle (ICV).

Between three and four per cent of EV adopters fly less than previously. Perhaps buying their EV coincided with a change in lifestyle and sticking closer to home? Certainly, I'm one of many retirees who have gone electric to reduce costs, but some report flying less because owning an EV has made them more conscious of the environmental costs of planes.

Eighteen per cent of Flip The Fleet participants own just a BEV, while only three per cent own just a plug-in hybrid (PHEV). Therefore, a whopping 79 per cent can choose between taking an



The sample is divided into families and businesses with only battery electric vehicles (BEVs), shown by the green bars, and those who continued to own both an internal combustion vehicle (ICV) and a BEV (blue bars). Data for plug-in hybrids are excluded because of the small sample size. The bars show the five and 95 per cent uncertainty interval around the mean

EV or ICV for whatever journey is coming up that day.

Those with just a BEV make the greatest adjustment of their movement patterns when they ditch their ICV – more than one-quarter of them stop visiting some places they used to frequent and about 10 per cent find new haunts. People with just a PHEV at home don't need to adjust at all.

The survey shows how easily EVs fit into most families' lives. They are ideal for short trips from home to work, school, sporting venues and shops. For the majority, BEVs have the range they need for everyday use.

But here's the bonus – people are kinder to their family and wider community after going electric.

One respondent put it this way: "EVs bring family and friends closer together. The cheap running costs and enjoyable driving experience mean I'm more likely to volunteer to pick up and drop off other people's kids. EV ownership has made me more likely to help people."

A pensioner reported the one-hour trip to Wellington to visit a new grand-daughter used to cost at least \$20 in an ICV. "Now I visit when I want."

Children of electric-car owners also benefit. "I'm more likely to take my son directly to football – and without grumbling about his inability to arrange a lift or car-pooling," said another parent.

Some BEV owners even want to share beyond their own families.

"I have a very different attitude about this car," said one.

"I want the EV to be a communal car for the family living here," another reported. "Everyone is free to use it when I don't need it. Limiting carbon is the aim, so sharing the EV rather than other family members driving their hybrid or petrol cars makes environmental sense."

Some BEV owners even want to share the love beyond their own families. One owner picks up hitch-hikers and takes them closer to their destinations.

Another encourages friends with just a BEV to borrow their remaining ICV when it's needed for towing or long trips. It's all part of being part being in the "EV glee club".

Among all this good community news, there is one worry – some EV adopters are in danger of becoming front-seat potatoes.

About one-fifth of owners with just a BEV report they now walk or bike less than previously, probably in part because of the pleasure and low cost of driving. There was no evidence EV adopters use public transport.

One respondent summed this all up with "EV ownership sets me free". Electric cars are not only expanding mobility for some people, they're also bringing us closer together. Having more access to affordable EVs is important for making a better living, but also for living better. ☺

Henrik Moller is a retired sustainability scientist. Additional research by Daniel Myall and Dima Ivanov. Visit www.flipthefleet.org.

Live EV listings on Trade Me:

+4.4%

Compared to last month

+53.9%

Compared to prior year

New EV listings on Trade Me:

+10.1%

Compared to last month

+30.2%

Compared to prior year

EV watchlists on Trade Me:

+4.5%

Compared to last month

+18.8%

Compared to prior year

China drives global growth

Worldwide sales of fully electric vehicles (EVs) and plug-in hybrids (PHEVs) topped 2.1 million last year – a jump of 64 per cent compared to 2017.

Their share of the light-vehicle market went as high as 3.8 per cent in December and came in at 2.2 per cent for the whole year with a 69-31 per cent split in favour of EVs.

The figures, published by Sweden-based database EV-volumes.com, include passenger cars, light trucks in the US and Canada, and light commercials in Europe and China.

Pure EVs have gained three per cent market share since 2017 – primarily driven by sales in China increasing by more than 500,000 units to 1.2m.

Other factors to impact on global EV sales have been the arrival of Tesla's Model 3 and PHEV demand in Europe dropping back when new fuel-economy test

procedures were introduced in September.

European growth of 34 per cent in 2018 was held back by tight EV inventories and long waiting lists for popular pure-electric models.

Sales in the US jumped by 79 per cent with the Model 3 contributing 138,000 units. Deliveries were limited to North America for six months, but the Tesla was still 2018's best-selling fully electric model.

Registrations outside China, Europe and the US totalled 150,000 for a 39 per cent increase. Uptake dropped in Japan, but other markets – such as Canada and South Korea – expanded faster than average.

Smaller markets are still leading EV adoption. Norway topped the ladder for market share with 40 per cent of new cars sold being electric. Iceland was second with 17.5 per cent and Sweden third on 7.2 per cent.

Among the larger economies,

China was top with a market share of 4.3 per cent. All other jurisdictions with more than one million total sales came in at around two per cent.

EV-volumes.com connects the loss of electric sales in Japan to Toyota's Prius Plug-in, which it reports as having been in decline since the arrival of the second-generation Nissan Leaf in late 2017.

Excluding the Prius, the country's electric uptake increased by 38 per cent as the Leaf and Mitsubishi's Outlander gained most registrations.

By the end of 2018, the global fleet of EVs was 5.4m light vehicles. Medium and heavy commercials added 600,000 units to the global stock with 120,000 deliveries.

Some 3.2m sales of light EVs and 140,000 heavy EVs are anticipated for this year.

Comparing New Zealand to other countries, demand for EVs continues to be strong.

In February, for example, Kiwi

registrations jumped by 107 per cent.

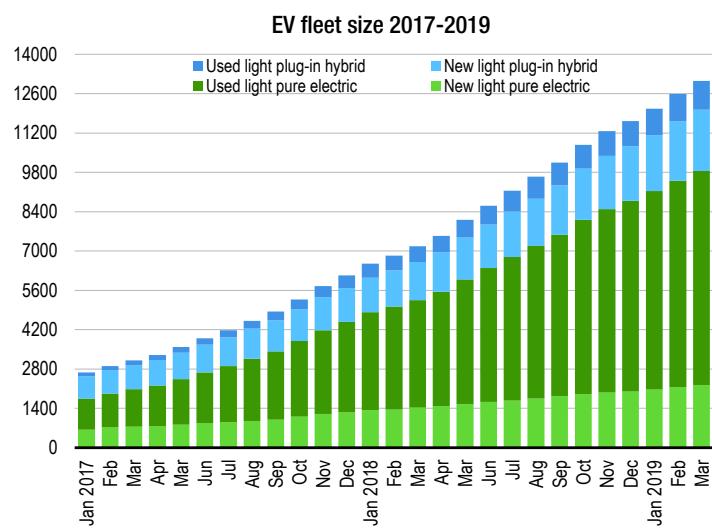
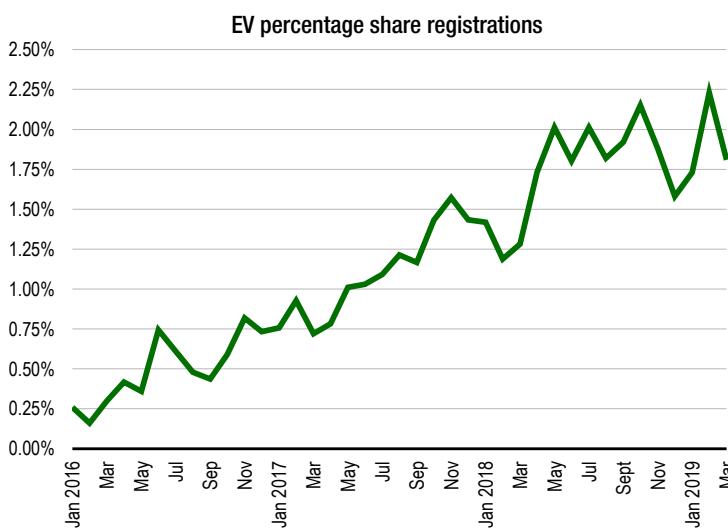
This compared to rises of 58 per cent in China, 35 per cent in Germany, 33 per cent in the UK and 28 per cent in Australia on the same month in 2018.

As for February's global sales result, that came in at 114,250 units, including light commercials and 300 fuel-cell vehicles – 35 per cent above the same month of last year. ☺

Total EVs by region

Northland	409
Auckland	5,716
Waikato	663
Bay of Plenty	433
Hawkes Bay	213
Gisborne	42
Taranaki	171
Manawatu/Wanganui	405
Wellington	1,866
Nelson/Marlborough	452
Canterbury	1,937
West Coast	14
Otago	768
Southland	95

Source: Ministry of Transport, April 8, 2019



Source: MoT, April 8, 2019

Top 5 EV models
listed on Trade Me last month:

- Nissan Leaf
- Nissan e-NV200
- BMW i3
- Hyundai IONIQ
- Mitsubishi Outlander

* Figures as per the end of April 2019

Average listing price
for the month:

\$24k

Eye on EVs



trademe
motors

First for space technology

Aston Martin has unveiled the design concept for the AM-RB 003 – its last mid-engined hypercar following the Valkyrie and Valkyrie AMR Pro.

Previously known as Project 003, it will benefit from Red Bull Advanced Technologies being involved in its design and engineering.

The AM-RB 003 will incorporate concepts and technologies taken directly from Formula One with production limited to 500 coupes worldwide.

It features a pronounced front keel and large rear diffuser with the underfloor generating the bulk of the downforce, and will benefit from next-generation aircraft morphing technology to create a variable airfoil across the rear wing.

The technology – called FlexFoil



The AM-RB 003 concept

and developed by Michigan-based FlexSys – has been validated by NASA through performance and acoustic flight testing, with Aston Martin claiming to be the first company to implement aerospace methods in the automotive industry.

The system allows for downforce to be altered without changing the physical angle of the element for high performance, improved efficiency and reduced wind noise.

Turbulence and the associated drag increase found in current active-wing designs is virtually eliminated too.

The production design will allow for larger leading and trailing edge deflections than shown in the concept, and will incorporate increased actuation rates to allow a real-time response to changes in the dynamic state.

One of the biggest differences between the Valkyrie and AM-RB

003 is the size of the cockpit, with greater concessions to usability and comfort.

The concept boasts LMP1-style doors, which open forwards taking a section of roof with them so getting in and out is easier.

Full details have yet to be announced, but the AM-RB 003 will be the first car to receive the marque's hybrid-turbo V6 engine.

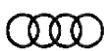
Complementing the power unit will be a Nexcel sealed oil system. This facilitates changes in less than 90 seconds, and refines and reuses the engine oil.

The system was first used in Aston Martin's track-only Vulcan and was subjected to numerous Nürburgring 24-hour campaigns to prove its credentials. Its use on the AM-RB 003 will be the first for a road-going vehicle globally. ☺

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Core crossover model

Mazda has unveiled its new-generation line-up through the CX-30 compact SUV.

As a core model, it will be rolled out globally with sales starting in Europe in the middle of this year.

The crossover combines SUV proportions with styling from the marque's Kodo2 design language. The side-view highlight is "reflections sliding over the undulating body surface".

David Hodge, managing director of Mazda NZ, believes it will be a welcome addition to the CX range and prove popular with Kiwis.

"Having the CX-30 will enable us to be in a position to provide New Zealanders with the option of selecting a CX to meet

lifestyle requirements," he says. "Its styling and features, along with the Skyactiv-X engine, will enhance its appeal."

Performance attributes, such as accelerating, turning and braking, have been improved.

The marque's Skyactiv architecture enables people to make the most of their natural sense of balance and the latest engines, including Skyactiv-X, allow responsive speed control in any driving situation.

User-friendly packaging and a cabin that seats four adults mean customers can enjoy trips anywhere. The CX-30, which has been designed to be easy to drive with increased height for better visibility, will be made at key Mazda plants worldwide. ☺



The 2019 Mazda CX-30

Safety built in mind across range

The all-new RAV4 offers an advanced safety package across its eight-variant range.

The line-up boasts dynamic-radar cruise control, a pre-collision system with autonomous emergency braking including pedestrian and daylight cyclist detection, road-sign and lane-tracing assist, and automatic high beam.

Other safety technologies include blind-spot monitoring, rear cross-traffic alerts, reversing camera, front and rear parking sensors, and seven airbags.

"Advanced safety technology shouldn't only be available on the top grades," says Neeraj Lala, Toyota NZ's general manager of product and new-vehicle sales.

"Customers want to know they can have adventurous fun with the peace of mind they have the best

Toyota's RAV4 Limited



safety technology in their vehicle if they need it."

For the first time in New Zealand, Toyota is offering a self-charging hybrid-electric RAV4 in three grades with its 155kW 2.5-litre petrol-electric powertrain mated to an electronically controlled CVT.

This continues a power switch across the marque's range, which is expected to offer an electrified

option on models by 2025.

The hybrid RAV4 has a linear acceleration feel thanks to distributing more driving force to the rear wheels via a newly developed E-Four system. This assists in suppressing front-wheel slip during off-the-line starts.

The system also helps reduce understeer during cornering for enhanced steering stability. Off-road, increased rear-wheel torque

provides more powerful hill-climbing performance.

The new model, which went on sale in April, can also coach the driver towards better fuel economy, while the four driving modes are EV in the hybrid, normal, eco and sport.

A new 2.5-litre, four-cylinder engine provides 152kW of power and 243Nm of torque in all-wheel-drive (AWD) petrol variants combined with an eight-speed automatic transmission. There's also a new two-litre petrol engine and direct-shift CVT combination.

At entry level are the front-wheel-drive 127kW and 203Nm two-litre petrol variants offered in GX, GXL and Limited grades.

The top-of-the-line Adventure AWD is powered by the 2.5-litre petrol engine and uses a Toyota-first dynamic torque-vectoring AWD system. This powerplant is also available in the non-hybrid GXL. ☺

Focus on interior

Volvo says it's breaking away from the industry assumption that cars need an exterior facelift every three or four years during its model lifecycle.

With the XC90, the marque is instead focusing on refreshing its flagship mainly on the inside while giving its exterior new wheels, colours and a new grille.

In terms of active technology, the seven-seater comes with the city safety and blind-spot information system.

The marque says city safety with autobrake is still the only system on the market to recognise pedestrians, cyclists and large animals.

The oncoming lane-mitigation system, first introduced on the XC60, is now available on the



The Volvo XC90

XC90. Cross-traffic alert technology also offers autobrake and the safety cage forms the core of passive safety technology.

Coby Duggan, general manager of Volvo NZ, says the SUV has consistently been one of the company's most popular models.

"The refreshed XC90 offers Volvo's most advanced suite of safety and user-interface technology, while the versatility it has become renowned for will continue," he adds.

The new model will be available here during the third quarter of 2019 with pricing to be confirmed closer to launch. ☺

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The month that was... May

May 27, 2005

Recalls code on the table

A draft agreement regulating the responses of new-vehicle distributors to overseas recalls had been prepared by the Motor Industry Association (MIA) and was to be put to a council meeting.

Chief executive officer Perry Kerr said if the proposed agreement was adopted, marques would pay for repairs to all vehicles under seven years of age – whether used imports or New Zealand-new.

This was in line with the MIA's campaign for a ban on imports older than seven years.

"The thrust of the code is all recalled vehicles will be repaired," Kerr said. "It's just a question of who pays. Under this agreement, if the vehicle is under seven years of age, the manufacturer will pick up the cost. If it's older, it's back on the importer."

He added the agreement would only apply to safety-related recalls in which the distributor had the manufacturer's support, and only to vehicles imported before the call-back was announced.

In some cases, the manufacturer would supply parts only. In those incidences, owners would still be up for the cost of labour, but could claim that back from the importer, which all along had full legal responsibility, Kerr said.



May 25, 2007

Fuel tax to sting industry

Regional fuel taxes would benefit all road users, said Annette King, Minister of Transport, but the transport industry was unconvinced.

The government outlined plans in May's budget to let regions introduce petrol taxes of up to 10 cents a litre for the road and public-transport projects.

Tony Friedlander, chief executive of the Road Transport Forum, said it was "lunacy" to expect the trucking industry to fund passenger transport through the new tax and a 10c diesel tax would push up freight costs by 1.4 per cent.

But King believed her proposal would benefit all road users, not just owners of private vehicles and commuters using public transport.

"By enabling a regional fuel tax for petrol and diesel users, we can ensure all road users contribute to new roading and public-transport infrastructure to support our transport vision," she said.

"Furthermore, an increasing number of private vehicles are diesel-powered. To not charge diesel users would mean petrol users are subsidising them." King added transport operators using diesel vehicles off-road would have their tax refunded.



May 24, 1999

Car fairs 'illegal' after ruling

The Motor Vehicle Dealers' Institute (MVDI) was about to turn its attention to car fairs in the wake of a high-court decision effectively denouncing park-and-sell operations as illegal.

The judgement declared that when a vehicle-selling operation went beyond a tenant-landlord situation, a breach of the Motor Vehicle Dealers' Act occurred.

Steve Downes, executive director of the MVDI, said this meant offering ancillary services – such as holding keys, assisting in sales, taking prospective buyers for test drives, arranging finance and offering mechanical assessments on-site – were activities that made an unlicensed business a car-sales yard.

Since the decision was made public, the institute had been contacting park-and-sell operators to ensure they were aware of the judgement's ramifications. It also believed tender centres and car fairs were affected by the ruling.

Downes said if fair operators kept to the tenant-landlord provisions there would be no problems.

But as most also offered ancillary services, they would fall under the ambit of the court decision and would feel the full force of the MVDI's wrath.



May 7, 2004

Rally confirmed with some changes

The Motor Industry Association (MIA) officially confirmed the second running of the Energywise Rally with some changes.

The event proposed for November 1-4 had support from the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority, Gull Petroleum and the AA.

Perry Kerr, chief executive officer of the MIA, said fuel was going to become more important to consumers in the near future.

"We're moving into an era in which the price of fuel is going to be a more important factor in our daily lives," he said. "This will not only influence buyers' choice of vehicles, but will also bring fuel-saving driving practices into greater focus."

"The new-car industry, with every new model that's launched, continues to make advances in fuel efficiency and lower emissions at the same time as enhancing performance, safety and driving pleasure."

"This event gives us the opportunity to demonstrate this to the public. We propose to add a new dimension focusing on driver skill in achieving maximum economy irrespective of the vehicle's ultimate capability."

The rally would also reward drivers surpassing official ADR figures.



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Agency chairman 'jumps ship'

Headlines on two press releases – the second issued just six working days after the first – perhaps sum up concerns the automotive industry has of the NZTA.

On April 18, the agency extorted "stabilisation phase completed" with Kane Patena installed as new general manager for compliance function.

On April 26, the regulator revealed "board chairman announces resignation" with Michael Stiassny saying his job was done, and it was time for a new permanent chief executive officer and chairman to change NZTA culture.

Minister of Transport, Phil Twyford, who appointed Stiassny, thanked him for his "exceptional" service. "Michael has worked tirelessly to not only uncover but to resolve issues, particularly in relation to systemic failure in the agency".

If the minister thought he could avoid a political dogfight, he must have been dreaming. He simply opened the door for the opposition's spokesman for transport to claim the regulator was "in a state of internal chaos".

"It's telling Stiassny's jumping ship only one year into a three-year contract and goes to show how deep the rot is within NZTA at the moment," said Paul Goldsmith.

"Twyford's mishandling of transport has been substantial. To lose a chief executive officer and a freshly appointed chairman within a year is incompetent."

Not that National covered itself in glory considering it oversaw the NZTA for the nine years it was in government.

That period saw the agency's seismic and berated shift from regulation to education, the loss of institutional knowledge with experienced staff members walking or being shown the door, and other failings culminating in its former boss, Geoff

Dangerfield, then departing.

Making his "exit left stage", Stiassny said: "The time is right for a new chairman and permanent CEO to guide culture change in the agency to ensure public safety is at the heart of its function."

His resignation came six months after revelations the NZTA hadn't been properly checking up on companies certifying vehicle



safety and giving out licences.

The scandal led to Fergus Gammie quitting as CEO in December.

"The regulatory compliance review is now complete, more than 300 regulatory compliance enforcement actions have been taken and recommendations of the independent inquiry report are almost fully implemented," said Stiassny last month..

"General managers have been appointed for two new key functions – regulatory and safety, and health and environment.

"These are cornerstones of a new approach, the results of which will continue to play out in months and years to come."

Bizarrely, at 1pm on April 30, Stiassny was still listed as chairman of the board on the agency's website.

So job well done, according to Twyford, who said as a result of Stiassny's leadership over the past year, "New Zealanders can have confidence the agency is fully focused on ensuring public safety on our roads".

Not quite, said Goldsmith, who remarked the departure was announced on a Friday afternoon, which is when governments try to bury "bad news".

However, it was only a week earlier the NZTA announced it had completed the first phase of its regulatory compliance review,

clearing 850 open compliance cases and improving its internal processes.

It added Patena was its new general manager leading regulatory function having taken over from law firm Meredith Connell, which was appointed to help lead that department by Stiassny in October 2018.

Brett Gliddon, the NZTA's acting chief executive officer, said

Patena was to continue implementing a "best-practice regulatory model prioritising safety".

"Our new firm, but fair, approach to compliance ensures those responsible for certifying vehicles and running commercial-transport services do the right thing and comply with the rules," said Gliddon.

"The majority do a great job, but when we find evidence of

operators breaking the rules and compromising safety we'll hold them to account."

The review saw around 300 enforcement actions taken against service providers, drivers and transport-service operators for failing to reach required standards. Actions ranged from formal warnings to revoking rights to operate.

The agency's regulatory responsibilities include 390,000 class two to five heavy-vehicle licence holders, 45,000 transport-service licences, course providers, more than 8,300 inspectors working at about 3,500 inspecting organisations and a fleet of more than 4.3 million vehicles.

The automotive industry, stunned by failings at the NZTA, is holding its breath on what could possibly happen next. ☺

Darren Risby, editor

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Take action with ageing stock

Don't just slash prices on aged stock. Take action and see if you can increase interest and hopefully convert it into sales before impacting bottom-line profits.

After asking the question recently of a number of dealers – and observing what seems to be common practice across the industry as the “go to” strategy for dealing with aged stock – the answer was to slash at least \$1,000 off the window price to hopefully stimulate some buyer motivation.

In reality, however, this is an assumptive action that directly impacts the bottom line, and is usually done with little or generally no effort into finding other ways to attract some attention on cars that have gone quiet on the interest front.

Old stock can be defined in different ways – whether it be in days, months or a lack of views online.

What really matters is what you do with it when it gets to that

point. The majority of dealers seem to take action based on time rather than any hard data that paints a picture.

Before eroding profits, it pays to review the vehicle listing to see if there is any apparent reason it hasn't sold yet.

Also, review the car itself to see if there's something wrong with it that will put prospective buyers off once they have test-driven it, and so on.

It's better still if you can also report on vehicle-activity history and views online because this will provide a greater level of insight as to how the car has performed to date.

Then, if all that checks out, look at what your options are to promote the vehicle on alternative cost-effective mediums if you haven't done so already. There are a range of options open to dealers.

► Promote the car on your



MARK GREENFIELD
Motorcentral

Facebook page or set a budget for pay-per-click advertising through industry solutions, such as AdConnect. This covers Facebook and Google Advertising across your most likely customers.

- It may mean investing in raising the visibility of the listing on websites such as Trade Me or Need A Car, or other platforms with options that increase the profile of the listing and potential audience – for example, super featuring or highlighting.
- It could mean actively looking across the past customer opportunities that the car may suit, whereby you send people texts with the vehicle link from your website.
- Another idea is placing an incentive on the car within the sales team.
- The vehicle could be positioned better when it is on

display at your dealership. Whatever it is that you choose to do, it will likely be significantly cheaper than ripping thousands off the sticker price as your first go-to.

Spending a little to retain a lot is the best approach to protecting profitability on older stock vehicles.

Be proactive and look for ways to generate interest over the next few weeks before addressing any price issues.

If your price is way out of touch with the market, then it will be more difficult. However, if the price is right – as it generally is – then do what you can to retain bottom-line profits.

A good way to do this is by putting in place a policy and process within the dealership around aged stock.

Firstly, it could be defining what aged stock is to your dealership and, secondly, what the process is around being proactive with a vehicle once it reaches that point.

Putting some thought and effort into this area can potentially save your dealership tens of thousands of dollars over the course of the year.

The dealer solutions team at Motorcentral has plenty of ways it can help with this profit-protecting area of your business – from reporting with data insights, through to cost-effective actions you can take to increase the probability of getting vehicles sold.

If you want to have a chat, you can email the team at dealersolutions@motorcentral.co.nz. ☎

“Spending a little to retain a lot is the best approach to protecting profitability”



Whatever positive action dealers take to sell older stock, it will likely be cheaper than slashing thousands of dollars off sticker prices

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Innovation key to success

The new owners of Autotrader.co.nz say a fresh website and mobile platform that will deliver results is their top priority.

Ross Logue and Richard East, senior members of the sales team, have acquired the site and magazine from publisher Bauer Media following a management buy-out. They assumed full control of the operation on April 18 and are now running it under their new company Autotrader Media.

"Innovation is the key", says Logue of their plans for the future, adding the chance to buy was too good to pass up.

He told Autofile: "After working in the business for more than 12 years between us, we couldn't turn down the opportunity to make Autotrader a Kiwi-owned business again. We saw some missed



The Autotrader team. Back row from left, Richard East, Ross Logue and Cameron Coe; front row, Meila Wilson and Jordan Ashford

opportunities with the brand being stuck under a big media company for so many years."

As for the magazine, Logue says it continues to produce fortnightly results for car dealers so it will carry on.

"We've increased the distribution locations around Auckland since taking over. There has been an increase of up to 40 per cent in some areas, so we're excited to see what results come

about from this investment."

Logue and East will take the existing Autotrader team with them to new offices in Grey Lynn, Auckland, on June 3.

"The team is young and really excited to be a part of a dynamic company," enthuses Logue. "There will be opportunities to grow it in the future."

"It's business as usual, but it will be better. We have the same team, same clients and same

market without a multi-national corporation's restrictions.

"We're excited to be at the reins of a business with great history, a strong presence in the market and solid growth potential."

"With further investments in development and technology, we're committed to delivering the great product offering and value-added customer support that's made Autotrader.co.nz and its magazine New Zealand's number-one automotive-only classifieds outlet."

Terry King, general manager of publishing motoring at Bauer Media, says: "We're thrilled to have delivered it into the capable hands of two people who know the product so well."

"Ross and Richard's understanding of the brand – and its significance in the market – will help them grow the business in years ahead." ☺

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Bigger may not always be better

I have this recurring idea, which regular readers of my column are probably aware of. It's my view we should turn our definition of safety on its head and define a safe vehicle as one that minimises harm to others.

This is opposed to the current view of safety, which says a safe vehicle is one that keeps its own occupants safe.

My logic is simple – the primary factor leading to the chance of a fatality in a multi-car collision is the difference in mass between the vehicles.

Reducing the difference in mass between vehicles in the fleet will reduce the likelihood of fatalities in multi-vehicle accidents, especially when secondary safety systems, such as airbags, are present.

Lighter or lower-mass vehicles are also less likely to cause fatalities in incidents involving more vulnerable road users, such as pedestrians and cyclists.

Unlike current safety-rating systems, one based on mass would let us consider vehicle efficiency and, hence, the harm caused by vehicle emissions as part of a single rating system.

Manufacturers are always going to try to sell the biggest and most accessory-packed vehicles. Their easiest sell will be vehicles that are going to protect their occupants best.

The government, if it has a duty to promote one vehicle over another, should be using a system-based approach to safety – one that promotes the least risk to the general public.

We would, therefore, need a

single "impact rating" for vehicles. This would be calculated from two primary data points, potential for causing harm and efficiency – both inversely proportional to mass.

With that said, this article isn't intended to be another exposition on my logic. Instead, I wanted to share some research that supports such an argument.

RECENT FINDINGS

The only possible end-state of the current system, one in which occupant safety is promoted above all else, is an arms race. An arms race that will drive up the mass of vehicles.

This isn't hypothetical. This is a fact that may be seen occurring. The mass of the average new vehicle sold in the EU has increased

by 10 per cent in the past 20 years. In New Zealand, SUVs and utes now make up more than 65 per cent of sales of new cars.

Research out of the US suggests more people are killed because of SUVs and light trucks. In fact, this is quantified by estimating that for every "one million light trucks that replace cars, between 34 and 93 additional car occupants, pedestrians, bicyclists or motorcyclists are killed per year".

The same research, which can be found online at <https://econweb.ucsd.edu/~miwhite/>



KIT WILKERSON
Policy adviser and analyst
kit@via.org.nz

suv-jle.pdf, suggests replacing all SUVs and utes with lighter cars could have a similar effect on fleet safety as seatbelts.

Of course, some of the benefits could also be seen by increasing the mass of all cars in the fleet. However, that would not only increase

the risk to vulnerable road users, but also decrease the efficiency of the fleet by increasing emissions. Larger vehicles also use more space, taking up more land in car parks and on roads.

Another report out of Norway – <http://scienzenordic.com/heavier-cars-can-make-traffic-more-dangerous> – concludes "larger and heavier cars are the safest for those riding in them, but less for others. The largest and heaviest car usually has the greatest potential

for injuring others in traffic".

The report continues by explaining that if everyone were to buy cars with the greatest protection, the

road toll would rise because the "safest" cars are usually those that have the greatest potential for injuring others.

The Norwegian report concludes that, correspondingly, the total number of traffic deaths and injuries would decrease if cars were lighter on average. There's no reason the same shouldn't be true in New Zealand as well.

PROBLEM ILLUSTRATED
One obvious place to start making this happen is to make space in our fleet for lighter vehicles.

Most countries now have a vehicle class for quadricycles and heavy quadricycles – smaller vehicles that exist somewhere between a motorbike and car.

Objections to this type of vehicle in New Zealand have been based solely on the fact that they would fare poorly in a collision with a heavier vehicle – in other words, they're considered less safe even though they are less likely to cause harm and produce less emissions.

This illustrates the problem with the current system. The vehicles considered the safest will be the least efficient and the most efficient will be the least safe, so how can we possibly achieve both? Efforts to promote one necessarily detract from the other.

Look at it this way. In the current system, people who want to drive vehicles that would cause less harm are prevented from doing so, whereas those driving massive vehicles that are more likely to crush other road users and pollute are rewarded for having a "safe" vehicle.

The evidence is there that a lighter fleet will result in less fatalities and harm. From collisions and emissions, both have an almost equal impact on the "New Zealand Inc" bottom line.

Sometimes, when a solution is hard to find, it makes more sense to fix the questions rather than continuing to double-down on failed solutions. ☺

"A lighter fleet will result in less fatalities and harm"



Advocate ▪ Advise ▪ Connect

Tackling challenges in transport

A broad range of experts have come together to discuss transport issues of the future at a two-day conference.

Speakers and delegates at T-Tech 2019 explored a range of subjects, such as emerging solutions set to transform transport and how to make our cities more liveable.

The event in Christchurch was co-ordinated by Intelligent Transport Systems New Zealand (ITSNZ).

After rebranding as T-Tech last year, ITSNZ's 14th annual conference included insights on disruptive mobility solutions and business models, autonomous vehicles, mobility as a service, drones and personal aerial vehicles, and government projects and direction.

Executive director Simon McManus says: "The two-day summit acknowledged challenges created by urban



"Technology is changing every aspect of our lives"

– Dr Michelle Dickinson

migration, congestion, disruptive technologies and climate change, and explored solutions to help transport to evolve.

"T-Tech is a vital forum for decision-makers and planners to learn of emerging trends and innovations, and to explore their value to our country."

Acclaimed nanotechnologist Dr Michelle Dickinson, aka Nanogirl, was MC at the May 6-7 event, and led 40 speakers from the US, Australia and New Zealand.

They included Horace Dediu, a world-leading analyst on

micromobility. He also organises summits in Europe and the US that explore the global disruption of scooters, e-bikes and shared vehicles weighing less than 500kg.

Dickinson aims to encourage environmentally sustainable living through engineering design, and led a discussion on opportunities to address climate change through transport and mobility.

"Technology is changing every aspect of our lives – the way we learn, communicate, do business and get where we need to be," she says. "I was excited to be part of the

conversation at T-Tech alongside an incredible panel of technology and mobility experts."

David Vinsen, chairman of ITSNZ, says: "Our country is often viewed internationally as a leader in innovation. We stand to benefit as a country, socially and economically, by being prepared for changes coming by clever development of innovations here, by better use of data quality and by being informed on how to get the best from solutions in transport."

The programme for day one included a look at transformative transport modes, which was followed by papers and presentations from industry.

The second day covered climate issues, transport equality and behaviour change, innovations, emerging technology and business models, and policy designed to help pave the way for change. ☺



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Industry movers

DION JONES is taking over as chief executive officer of Instant Finance in August due to Richard de Lautour's retirement. He has been group general manager of finance at Turners Automotive Group for about two-and-a-half years.

Before that he was group general manager of sales – finance at Turners after being Turners Finance's general manager for three years.

That was preceded by a year as national sales manager for finance and insurance at the company. All up, Jones has about 23 years' experience in the finance sector.

As for de Lautour, company chairman Laurie Margrain thanks him for his leadership.

"Richard joined Instant Finance in 2003. He has helped grow the business through a period that saw the virtual collapse of the local finance industry followed by the global financial crisis.

"He has brought disciplines and processes to our financial management and customer-service culture that have helped us become successful."



Dion Jones

ANDREW SHERLIKER has started as manager of operations at 2 Cheap Cars after resigning as Manheim's general manager for New Zealand in March after holding that position for five years.

He started his career in the automotive industry at British Car Auctions in 1987 before moving into the leasing sector for Camden Motors and Dial Contracts as remarketing manager in the UK and France. Sherlike then joined Manheim UK where his positions included general manager and regional operations manager during his eight-year tenure.

Before moving to this country, he worked for the Sytner Group – Europe's largest prestige dealer group – as remarketing manager.



Richard de Lautour

ANNA RAWLINGS has been unveiled as chairwoman of the Commerce Commission when Mark Berry steps down at the end of May.

"She brings expertise and experience, having served as a member of the commission since 2014, and has frequently led its work on consumer matters," says Kris Faafoi, Minister of Commerce and Consumer Affairs.



JOSEPH LIAVA'A will work alongside Rawlings as an associate member. He has previously worked in consumer law-related roles in government and agencies.

"His wide experience working with vulnerable communities has given him in-depth insight on consumer issues," adds Faafoi.

MARK REUSS, former chairman and managing director of Holden, has been promoted to president of General Motors.

Previously global product chief, he succeeds New Zealander Dan Ammann, who now leads the company's Cruise autonomous vehicle unit.

JONATHAN ONYZSKEIWICS is taking over as chief executive of Auto Super Shoppes on May 13 from Kellie Tremayne.

He moved to New Zealand from Canada in 2013 to become franchise development manager and then general manager of Midas NZ.

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

NZ labour market report

WE ALL LOVE WATCHING

the rugby and why not, it's our national game.

The All Blacks are current world champions and one of the world's most highly regarded teams in terms of their win record – and especially how they win.

This year, they go to the world cup in Japan to try to do what no other team has done and may never have the opportunity to do, and that's win three titles in a row.

Why is this important, why am I writing about the All Blacks and the Rugby World Cup, and how does this matter to your dealership?

Behind every successful team, there's a reason why it achieves the results it does. It's as simple as doing the basics, getting them right and sticking to process when the pressure's on.

The All Blacks' win ratio is incredible, but what's fantastic about their record is how they do it and the time pressure they're under to achieve it.

I can remember when previous teams wilted under pressure and lost games in the last 20 minutes when they were leading. Now the All Blacks win matches with two minutes to go when down by three or five points.

When you look at your dealership and how it operates, review who you have in your business and how they're contributing to its success. When the pressure's on, how do they perform?

Also, think about how you found them, what skills they had when recruited, training and development you have provided, and how often you check in with them to see how they're going.

These four areas are just the tip of the iceberg to further review your people, and their performance and contribution to your business, operations and customers.

Steve Hansen may not always come across as engaging with



WILL ALLAN
Hello Monday

the media. However, his messages to the public are direct and about systems, processes and working with the players. He always puts his players and their welfare first.

What he has also done very well is nurture and

grow talent, so when there are injuries – serious or not – there's someone just as strong and capable to step in.

We've seen this in the lead-up before every world cup and this one will be no exception. The planning for the next tournament has already started.

Think about your team and how you are continually developing it, but also about the inevitable if one of your key people decides to leave or someone goes on leave for a long period. Think about who you want to attract into your business, and if it's equipped to lift and enhance their capabilities.

Importantly, having coaching

"Think about your team and how you are developing it"

conversations is key and something you need to make a priority. These are simple, straightforward 15 to 20-minute catch-ups with your staff. They

can be informal and can happen on the job.

If you notice someone in your dealership is doing something that isn't quite how you do things, take him or her aside. Find out why it was done that way and offer a solution. By asking that question, you may open up a lot more.

When I started in the workforce more than 20 years ago, the environment was "do as I say and don't ask questions, just get on with it".

Today's leadership style is about collaboration, coaching and being closer to your people. If you can make that little adjustment, you will be amazed at the results. Like the All Blacks, focus on the little things, get them right and success will follow. ☺

Unlocking more potential profits

Guaranteed asset protection (GAP) insurance protects customers financially against the physical total loss of their vehicles when secured under a credit contract.

Usually, the car will depreciate faster than the balance owed on the loan, which will leave the buyer far worse off than when it was purchased.

If the vehicle is deemed a total loss following an accident or theft, GAP pays the financier any shortfall owing – up to the specified amount – following insurance settlement. The specified amount depends on the policy sold, but can be as much as \$30,000.

This insurance product is excellent for low or no-deposit buyers because if they haven't purchased a GAP policy and have a balance owing on the loan, the finance company will request

for the balance to be settled due to the fact they no longer have the vehicle as security.

In many cases, it will not finance another car purchase because it doesn't want two loans for one customer, or it deems the consumer cannot afford the commitment of an extra loan.

This causes a lot of stress for buyers. Essentially, they don't own a vehicle, but still have the loan and can't afford another commitment.

Over the years, dealers have seen many instances of customers going in and asking if they can finance the outstanding balance of their vehicle loan. This is very difficult unless the purchaser has a solid profile and payment history with his or her finance company.



COLIN MARSHALL
Direct sales &
marketing manager
Protecta Insurance

Protecta is focused on assisting motor traders with maximising their profit opportunities. It spends a lot of time with dealer principals and business managers analysing where there's more profit to be earned, and sees GAP as an important product in the dealer's portfolio to build extra profits.

One of the great benefits of selling clients a GAP policy is retention of that customer. Usually in the event of that person facing a total loss, he or she often first calls the business manager or sales person.

If consumers have a GAP policy, you can guide them through the insurance process, get them back to the dealership to pick another vehicle and refinance that purchase.

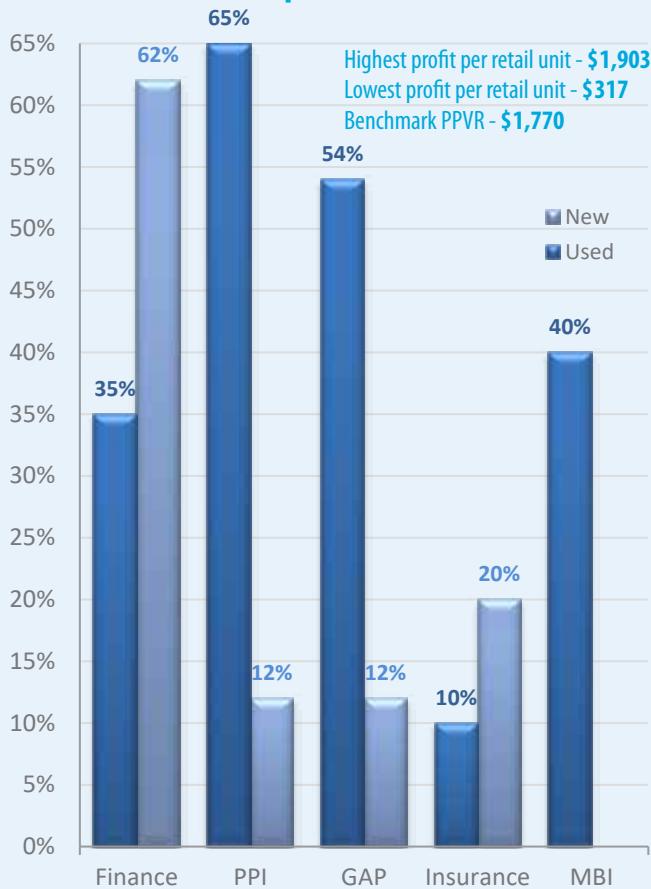
Great customer service like this will no doubt spread by word of mouth and creates new sales.

Protecta finds that the secret to selling GAP is actually in the extra benefits that the product has, whether there's a finance shortfall or not. It will cover the

- ▶ The insurance excess on the current policy.
- ▶ Comprehensive insurance policy for the new car.
- ▶ On-road costs for the new vehicle.
- ▶ A rental car to keep the customer mobile until a new one has been organised.

If you would like more knowledge, enhanced customer satisfaction and retention, and the ability to unlock the profit potential of selling GAP, contact your local Protecta sales consultant. We're more than happy to share our experience. ☺

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Engineering success from top

Marc Ebolo, the managing director of Holden NZ, has a deep connection to the brand.

"I've been around it for 20 years now. I've seen passion from dealers and customers for Holden, and how different that passion can be."

"Most of the time, we think it's around the Commodores and V8 Supercars. But passion for the marque can go way back to owning an Astra as a first car or experiencing some of the European products we've brought out."

Current reality paints a different picture with the lion-and-stone badge transitioning itself in-line with market trends.

"We've seen some big changes in our product line-up over the past couple of years," says Ebolo.

"Commodore manufacturing in Australia has ended and we've moved to its European-sourced range. And we've started importing products from the US. That's important for us and we've had nothing but positive reviews."

WORKING HIS WAY UP

Born and raised in Melbourne, Ebolo has always loved cars.

"I've always thought of automotive as an exciting industry. It's the reason I took up mechanical engineering and I always envisioned myself in it."



Marc Ebolo, managing director of Holden NZ

When I was young, I had a friend who was building up a rally car, an old Datsun. I got involved and was the navigator during races. That cemented my love for the industry and I couldn't think of anywhere else I would want to work."

Ebolo initially studied arts and engineering degrees with a minor in arts history and mechanical engineering. He dropped arts after realising double degrees were sought-after by employers, and picked up commerce focusing on marketing and management.

"I was at university for seven years, including an industry-based learning year. After that I did an MBA."

His education continued in the UK after gaining an international exchange scholarship to the London Business School for his MBA's five-month elective portion.

"It's still one of the greatest experiences I've had because of the range of students and lecturers, and because I was there during the global financial crisis."

"I had first-hand experience of the crisis in the middle of markets severely impacted. Overall, we were impacted in Australia, but nothing compared to the UK, Europe and the US."

Ebolo began his automotive career with a student year at Ford

Australia as a manufacturing engineer. "I was in the paint shop and a lot of our work involved changes made on the assembly line for model launches."

"Many assembly-line tools are specific to certain models. When new vehicles come out, they require different tools, such as those that keep doors open as cars go through the paint shop."

"Any time you talk about anything engineering-related, attention to detail is probably the most important thing."

A few years later in 2001, Ebolo joined Holden's graduate programme. For the first year, he rotated through departments to understand how the business worked before settling in programme quality, "which was like being the voice of customer satisfaction for new-model launches".

He was interested in building cross-functional experience in the company. He had manufacturing experience, and then as a quality manager exposed to new models and long-term product planning before moving into future-product planning.

"General Motors had just acquired Daewoo and, in 2005, we worked on the next-generation product from there. I was also involved in pricing and go-to-market launch strategies. Then it was into marketing and communications."

Ebolo was involved in Holden's first digital and social-media campaigns, which was a massive change in direction. His next role was in sales – looking after dealers in Western Victoria.

With some good mentors at work, he identified areas to improve his skills and being forecast manager gave him a wider range of experience.

A regional manager role came up with GM International in 2015 overseeing Malaysia, Brunei, Fiji and part of GM's south-east Asia group.

"That exposed me to other business aspects

Driving wagons 'year after year'

Marc Ebolo bought his first car – a blue 1983 Mazda 626 coupe for about \$8,000 – when he 18. "It had the full electric kit and a sunroof".

It was sold about three years later because, "they say you're not a true automotive enthusiast until you've owned an Alfa Romeo, so I traded it for a black 1984 Green Leaf Sprint – I had a love-hate relationship with it, more love than hate".

He adds: "I got to experience driving an Alfa, which was always

something I wanted to do. It's in my favourite top two cars. I loved the look of it and how it drove."

After a few years, Ebolo flicked it on for a 1986 Nissan EXA with a targa roof. "I loved the beach lifestyle and wanted a convertible. I started with Holden in 2001 and have driven Holdens since then".

To this day, the Adventra LX8 is his favourite, "a big wagon with all-wheel drive and a V8".

"Leasing Holden has allowed me to drive cars across the range.



A Calais V Tourer station wagon



Marc Ebolo, left, with Scott Brown, US Ambassador to New Zealand at the latter's official residence in Wellington for the launch of the Acadia

► – seeing how distributors run their operations, future planning, after-sales, ensuring all GM requirements from recalls were followed, parts availability and common marketing approaches across countries.

"Living in Kuala Lumpur was great after getting used to the heat and humidity, which only took a couple of months, and when you get used to how people drive there.

"I also got exposure to other markets, such as the Philippines. Many were focused on pick-up trucks due to industry or road conditions, especially in rural areas. Malaysia was in transition. It was demanding more safety features and technology."

During 2017, he returned to Australia as Holden's general manager of revenue strategies, working with the sales team and executive director of sales in strategy planning.

Since taking on the top job on these shores from Kristian Aquilina in July 2018, he has been impressed by staff at franchises.

"I've been to most dealers, which has allowed me to see New Zealand. The one thing that has stood out is their dedication. When we launch a campaign and events, our dealers are chomping at the bit to put in 100 per cent."

Looking ahead, Ebolo says the marque wants alignment and synergies across this and the Australian markets. "That's vitally important. It's more efficient than going it alone. But where there are differences, marketing executions will be different.

"This gives us the opportunity to trial different go-to market strategies in New Zealand, whether because it's a smaller market or due to different conditions. This is the role's most exciting aspect."

BEST PRACTICE 'PASSION'
Ebolo's career highlights include working with global teams on products coming out of GM Korea in 2005 when GM developed a new range of global architectures, such as for the Barina, Cruze and Spark. He was the Australian

representative on those teams.

"After moving into the sales network, I've developed a passion for helping provide tools or guidance to facilitate best practice, especially in dealer marketing and activations. That's something throughout my career that has been a focus and something we're working on – to help dealers in this country and provide support for best-practice local marketing."

"My international assignment was a highlight, as is being managing director for New Zealand. It has been an easy transition moving to Auckland, which is an amazing city, and we're having fun. My wife has settled in and my six-year-old daughter is enjoying school."

As for what's happening in the Holden NZ space, March saw the launch of a campaign to push its range of SUVs as the market continues to shift away from cars.

And the end of manufacturing in Australia Tasman has seen the marque tapping into GM production across Europe and in the US. "For example, the Acadia and Equinox, which are very different, are the first chances we've had to get American product into New Zealand."

ON THE ROAD AHEAD

Ebolo predicts the motor-vehicle industry will see more changes in the next 10 years than what it has experienced in the past 100.

"It's going to be the most exciting industry to work in during this time. It's a question of how quickly technology develops and that will determine its path."

"Whether we see the rise of electric vehicles or even how

big their rise will be, or whether we'll see technologies – such as hydrogen fuel cells – making a big impact. Regardless of what it is, it always comes back to fundamentals, such as what is the product offering, its price and if consumers are ready for what's on offer."

"There's a big question about infrastructure. Some countries are moving fast to become electric-based and a lot of that's being led by governments, while others are putting it in the hands of private businesses to prepare for the future. There is also research

and development on battery technology to resolve some current issues with it."

"It's exciting to see products GM is working on. For example, it has a zero-emissions, zero-congestion and zero-crashes strategy. It looks to the future, but beyond electric cars to connected vehicles and technologies that aid everyday use."

"There are so many factors at play that it's going to be hard to determine when new technologies will move from early adopters enter the mainstream." ☰

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Kiwis keep rivals in sight overseas

Invercargill's Brendon Leitch is showing good form in south-east Asia, shadowing the podium in his first run in the region's Formula 3 championship and doing double-duty in the single-make Lamborghini supercars series.

Racing in the pro-am division of the Super Trofeo Asia series, Leitch capped a fine weekend on debut with co-driver Lim Keong Wee to claim sixth overall and third in the pro-am division in the final race. That backed up a ninth overall and fifth in class in the first race.

Meanwhile, Kiwi racer Marcus Armstrong has been topping the timesheets in testing for the new

FIA Formula 3 championship, going place one and place two in the opening test.

Alongside his place in the Ferrari Driver Academy, he has also been inducted into the exclusive driver management organisation All Road Management, which maintains a close relationship with Ferrari and has strong networks

across the premier levels of motor racing.

Currently showing promising pace in testing for the new FIA F3 Championship, Armstrong says joining All Road Management marks an important step forward in his racing career. ☺

The South-East Asia F3 race schedule

DATE	CIRCUIT	EVENT
April 6-7	Sepang International, Malaysia	Round 1 (races 1-3)
May 11-12	Buriram International, Thailand	Round 2 (races 4-6)
June 22-23	Suzuka, Japan	Round 3 (races 7-9)
Sept 7-8	Shanghai International, China	Round 4 (races 10-12)
Sept 27	Shanghai International	Round 5 (races 13-15)



Double-duty for Brendon Leitch in Malaysia. From the Lamborghini Super Trofeo 2019 to Formula 3, the Invercargill driver is at the sharp end of the field

Paddon sticks to record-breaking word

In his interview with Autofile last month, rally driver Hayden Paddon hinted he was looking to break records and win events in his assault on the Asia-Pacific Rally Championship.

Well, he started as he means to go on at the Otago Rally by winning all but one stage and setting nine stage records in the opening round on April 13-14.

"The win is great for the car and great for Hyundai," he says. "I'm back in the rally groove, making and listening to pace notes, preparation and all that side of things."

"It doesn't matter if it's the WRC



Hayden Paddon in action in Otago

or NZRC, the way you prepare is very similar and it's important to be doing it on a regular basis."

Paddon's small, dedicated team ran a 2019 version of the Hyundai i20 AP4+ for him and navigator John Kennard, and they responded

to enthusiastic local support in true style by taking outright victory by more than nine minutes.

Ben Hunt, long-time Subaru driver and NZRC entrant, won the New Zealand rally category and was second overall to take top

points to the next round of the local championship.

Driving Mazda 2 AP4s, father-and-son team Andrew and Jack Hawkeswood finished in second and third in the APRC category.

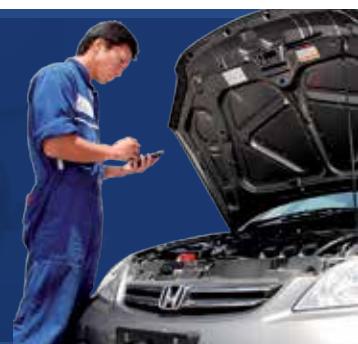
There were 132 entries in this popular round of the New Zealand and Asia-Pacific championships.

Otago Rally, top five outright:

- 1st – Paddon/Kennard, Hyundai i20 AP4, 2 hours 25 mins 53 seconds;
- 2nd – Hunt/Rawstorn, Subaru Impreza WRX, +7:16.9; 3rd – Turner/Read, Audi AP4, +8m:25.0; 4th – Campbell/Peden, Ford Fiesta AP4, +8:25.0; 5th – Hawkeswood/Cress, Mazda 2 AP4, +15:25.6. ☺

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The FC3 calendar

There is one race on each date given.

May 11-12: Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya, Montmelo; **June 22-23:** Circuit Paul Ricard, Le Castellet; **June 29-30:** Red Bull Ring, Spielberg; **July 13-14:** Silverstone; **August 3-4:** Hungaroring, Mogyorod; **August 31 to September 1:** Circuit de Spa-Francorchamps, Stavelot; **September 7-8:** Autodromo Nazionale Monza; **September 28-29:** Sochi Autodrom.

Recharging premier touring-car racing

He ran a young charger called Ayrton Senna da Silva in Formula 3 in the UK in the 1980s.

An avid talent-spotter, Dick Bennetts now has decades of race and championship wins behind him.

Dunedin-born, he often takes a "working holiday" back in New Zealand during the British winter, and can be seen watching young international and Kiwi racers doing battle during our summer's annual five-week season of the Castrol Toyota Racing Series (TRS).

"The series offers young drivers from Europe and the UK a great chance to do some testing and racing," he opines.

His company and team, West Surrey Racing (WSR), was founded in 1981. It has since won more than 70 races in F3, and taken countless class and outright wins in the British Touring Car Championship (BTCC).

It ran the New Zealand team in the 2005/06 A1GP and then switched to Team USA the following year.

Other names of note that have steered WSR F3 cars to championship victories include Jonathan Palmer, Mauricio Gugelmin, Mika Häkkinen and Rubens Barrichello. WSR and driver Colin Turkington are the current BTCC champions.

Bennetts was part of a diaspora of Kiwi racing talent in the UK in the 1970s, arriving in 1972. The first WSR foray into touring cars came in 1996 with the factory Ford



Dick Bennetts founded West Surrey Racing in 1981

Mondeos. Most recently, the team has run factory BMWs.

With such a pedigree, Bennetts has a unique perspective on single-seater and touring-car racing.

As New Zealand gears up to adopt the global TCR racing category, he sees this and the TRS as offering young Kiwis their best shot at international careers.

"There are two things in New Zealand, motor racing and rugby – oh, and a bit of yachting," says Bennetts. "There are permanent racetracks from one end of the country to the other. For a small country of about 4.6 million people in the South Pacific, that's pretty impressive."

So what's Bennetts' view of the forthcoming TCR category? "It could work very well to bring automotive brands and advertisers back into motor racing."

The TCR was launched in 2014

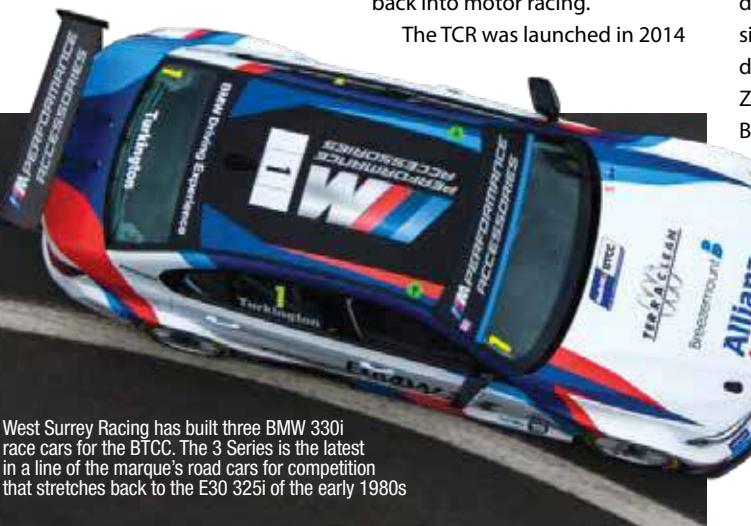
"The TCR could work very well to bring automotive brands and advertisers back into motor racing"

and has now been accepted as the category for the World Touring Car Championship.

The vehicles are based on four or five-door production cars powered by two-litre turbocharged engines. Much of the production vehicle is retained, such as the bodyshell and suspension layout, and the cars feature race brakes and aerodynamics.

The rules specify two-wheel drive and a spaceframe design similar to the AP4+ cars currently dominating rallying in New Zealand. They are fast, says Bennetts, and reasonably easy to set up. "Most modern car brands have eligible or homologated models already, so there's plenty of choice of current models, while late-model stuff out of Europe is good value for money."

Bennetts predicts the category will gain momentum rapidly in this country now that



West Surrey Racing has built three BMW 330i race cars for the BTCC. The 3 Series is the latest in a line of the marque's road cars for competition that stretches back to the E30 325i of the early 1980s

MotorSport NZ has been granted the rights to run the TCR here, a manager is about to be appointed and the cars will run in 2020 as a premier class in New Zealand's summer series.

Ironically, one of the few markets where the TCR struggles is the UK – "that's because we have the BTCC and it has a very loyal following".

The BTCC allows a wider range of vehicles than the TCR, and is the world's oldest and arguably most robust national touring-car category.

WSR is once more in the thick of the action and has brought the BMW 3 Series back into the BTCC, running a pair of Motorsport-derived BMW 330i four doors.

A BTCC weekend is a busy time for the team. There are three races in a compressed timeframe, and every second of free practice and qualifying time is precious.

"We only have one or two hours between races, so we need enough people to get a lot of work done quickly."

The team will have 27 or more people at a circuit. They include part-timer and Kiwi mechanical engineer Richard Oxton, who was interviewed by Autofile earlier this year. Bennetts and Oxton's motor-racing father David are best friends.

Factory support is essential, partly due to the massive spares inventory required to keep the vehicles running and handling well in such a bruising environment.

Part of the appeal of the TCR to teams, says Bennetts, is cost. With many more TCR cars being built than BTCCs, economies of scale apply to parts such as the suspension, brakes and drivetrain.

If the rules are written correctly, the inventory costs of taking part can be controlled, while the racing should be close and exciting with emphasis on strategy and driver ability.

MotorSport NZ has always recognised the category couldn't stand alone in New Zealand, which follows Australia where its first races start this month. ☺

Vehicle's wheels locked up because handbrake was accidentally activated

Background

Steven Cherrington wanted to reject his 2005 Nissan Murano because he said its transmission, brakes and tyres were defective.

He wanted Direct Car Imports, which sold him the car on April 27, 2018, to take it back and refund the purchase price of \$13,000.

The trader refused saying it appeared the brakes had overheated after the car was driven with its handbrake on. As for the tyres, Direct Car Imports said the Murano's WOF, dated on the day of purchase, showed all four were within legal tread limits.

The trader added it had told Cherrington to bring the vehicle back if he experienced transmission problems, but he hadn't done so.

The case

Cherrington initially purchased a BMW 320i from Direct Car Imports. He was unhappy with it because of brake and engine problems, so he traded it for the Murano.

However, he said that within 23 hours of owning the Nissan its torque converter "fully stuffed out".

Cherrington said the rear wheels locked up for about 20 metres while he was driving it. He heard squealing and burn-off sounds from the car, and a loud bang.

He texted Direct Car Imports' director Geoffrey Jones about the issue, who sent a tow truck to collect the Nissan. Jones said its back wheels weren't locked when it was collected.

The vehicle was taken to Oracle European Services, which scanned

it for diagnostic trouble codes.

It found that the variable valve-timing sensor had failed and replaced it. The \$510 repair bill was covered under the buyer's mechanical breakdown insurance (MBI) policy, apart from the excess of \$200, which was paid by Direct Car Imports.

One of Cherrington's complaints was that his MBI policy had been used for repairs without his consent.

The tribunal said there was nothing inherently wrong with traders making claims on behalf of consumers, although they should ensure the car owner agreed before submitting one.

Oracle's director Ashh Govind told the hearing that while the Nissan was at his workshop he drove it and found the rear wheels weren't locked. He checked its rear brakes and found them to be glazed black.

He reported that it appeared the brakes had overheated, probably due to the vehicle being driven with its handbrake on.

Jones also viewed the brakes while they were at Govind's workshop and confirmed his diagnosis. No repairs to the brakes were carried out and Cherrington collected the vehicle on May 11, 2018.

Cherrington also claimed the Nissan's tyres were bald. In evidence, he produced a VTNZ safety-inspection check sheet, which confirmed the left-rear tyre was below the legal tread limit at 1.1mm and the right-rear one was borderline with 1.8mm.

The trader produced the vehicle's WOF check sheet dated April 27, which was the day Cherrington bought the car. It showed four tyres were within the legal tread limits.

The tribunal's assessor agreed with Jones' and Govind's submission that the wheels had locked up because the handbrake was accidentally activated.

He noted the Nissan was a front-wheel drive, so there was no connection between the transmission and back wheels.

Therefore, Cherrington's allegation the torque converter had failed seemed unlikely and there was no other evidence produced to support that claim.

Cherrington reported a rattling noise from the transmission and problems changing through the gears.

However, he produced no expert evidence indicating any problem with the transmission and he said no transmission lights had appeared on the dashboard.

The finding

The tribunal had to determine if the Nissan failed to comply with the CGA's guarantee of acceptable quality.

Whether a vehicle is of acceptable quality is considered from the point of view of a reasonable consumer who is fully acquainted with the state and condition of the car, including any hidden defects.

The tribunal accepted its assessor's advice that the

The case: The buyer said his Nissan Murano's brakes, tyres and transmission were faulty, and he wanted to reject it. However, the dealer refused. It said the car passed its warrant of fitness (WOF) on the day of purchase and the brake issue was due to the vehicle being driven with its handbrake on.

The decision: The tribunal said evidence provided at the hearing showed the Nissan didn't breach the guarantee of acceptable quality in Consumer Guarantees Act (CGA).

At: The Motor Vehicle Disputes Tribunal, Auckland.

problems experienced with the Nissan's brakes and locked wheels were likely linked to accidental activation of the handbrake.

For that reason, the authority found Cherrington hadn't established any breach of the guarantee of acceptable quality in relation to the brakes, and there appeared to be no link between the transmission and rear wheels locking. The buyer also failed to produce any evidence indicating any transmission issues.

The tribunal said it was easy for a purchaser to inspect a vehicle's tyres and ensure there was sufficient tread at the date of sale.

It didn't ordinarily consider that worn tyres constituted a failure of acceptable quality as long as they were lawful on the date of sale, which in this case they were.

Accordingly, Cherrington failed to establish the tyres were not of acceptable quality.

Order

The only possible breach of the CGA was the sensor failure, which the trader remedied, so the claim was dismissed. ☺



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Refusal to deal with repairs opens trader to possible scrutiny from commission

Background

Matthew Cavanagh purchased a 2010 Volvo V50 from Universal Imports on September 1, 2018, for \$14,499. The car had no reported mechanical issues or damage history.

About three months following purchase, he noticed the carpet in the left-rear footwell was wet. After unsuccessfully trying to dry it, he realised there was an ongoing leak.

Cavanagh contacted the dealer asking it to remedy the problem only to be told it supplied a 90-day warranty on vehicles and refused to pay for repairs.

He took the vehicle to Archibald and Shorter, Auckland, which fixed the fault, and then applied to the tribunal to recover the \$1,726 bill.

The case

Cavanagh first noticed water soaking the carpet in the footwell and thought his son had spilled his drink.

He unsuccessfully tried to dry it out before concluding there was a leak. He emailed the trader on September 27 about the issue and asked it to inspect the Volvo.

Universal Imports employee Nikolay Pipa replied saying it had "a specialist who can have a look and fix the leak, going to organise an appointment".

About two weeks later, the dealer's director, Andrew Peck, phoned Cavanagh to say it only provided a 90-day warranty, but would get someone to repair the windscreen.

Cavanagh declined that because he didn't think the windscreen was the leak's source. Instead, he went to Archibald and Shorter, which found the drain from the sun roof was disconnected, possibly caused by a build-up of dirt and dust, and there were signs of recent panel work on the left-rear door.

The buyer again asked the dealer if it would consider the leak to be a "warrantable fault". The trader asked Cavanagh to take the Volvo in for inspection and possible repairs.

However, the buyer replied the car was undergoing repairs at Archibald and Shorter. Pipa responded "we didn't accept this repair, we repair all our cars ourselves", and again encouraged Cavanagh to take it in to the trader.

Cavanagh replied Peck had phoned him about two weeks after his first email saying the vehicle was out of warranty and he would have to repair it himself, therefore the dealer had waived its rights to fix the Volvo and he would send it the repair bill.

Peck told the tribunal the leak wasn't pre-existing because it would have been noticeable much sooner than three months after purchase due to Auckland's wet winter.

He also noted the car had been stored outside on his yard with no evidence of it leaking.

Cavanagh said he drove the Volvo infrequently, which might explain why it took him three months to notice the problem.

He added the vehicle was left in a carport on an angle with its nose uphill, allowing water to flow from the front of the car to the rear.

The tribunal's assessor said vehicles on Peck's yard were parked nose downwards, making it less likely water could have flowed as easily from the front to the back of the Volvo.

The finding

The tribunal considered it was likely the disconnected sun-roof drain was a pre-existing fault.

Even if the problem occurred post-purchase, a reasonable consumer wouldn't expect a substantial leak – requiring extensive investigation and repair work – to occur so soon after buying it.

Therefore, the Volvo failed to comply with the guarantee of acceptable quality in the Consumer Guarantees Act (CGA), so the buyer had to ask the supplier to fix that failure within a reasonable time.

Cavanagh's understanding was that any repairs carried out by Universal Imports would be at his own cost and the tribunal said there was no evidence to suggest otherwise.

The tribunal said it had the clear impression the trader refused to remedy the leak. While Universal Imports made several offers to have the vehicle assessed for repair, at no point did it inform Cavanagh it was prepared to foot the bill.

The case: After discovering a water leak in his Volvo soon after purchase, the buyer asked the trader to fix the problem. However, the dealer said the issues appeared to have occurred outside the three-month warranty offered to clients and told the purchaser he would have to fix the leak.

The decision: The trader was ordered to pay the buyer his repair costs of \$1,726 and the matter was referred to the Commerce Commission for consideration.

At: The Motor Vehicles Dispute Tribunal, Auckland.

The adjudicator found Cavanagh had established that as Universal Imports refused to remedy the failure, he was entitled to have the leak fixed elsewhere and obtain all reasonable costs incurred in fixing the car.

Orders

Universal Imports had to pay Cavanagh the \$1,726 repair bill.

The tribunal was concerned the trader had stated its vehicles only came with a 90-day warranty and outside that period it had no obligation to remedy faults.

The CGA's guarantees apply for a reasonable period. Traders have to assess each fault on its own merits and shouldn't base decisions solely on how long a consumer has owned a vehicle.

It is contrary to the Fair Trading Act to make a false or misleading representation concerning the existence of any guarantee, right or remedy available under the CGA.

The tribunal ordered a copy of its decision be referred to the Commerce Commission for it to consider whether to take any extra action against the trader. ☐

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LATEST SCHEDULE

	Port Calls	Lake Taupo v1910	Lake Como v1911	Carrera v1912	Lake Wanaka v1913
JAPAN	Moji	15 May	—	15 June	—
	Osaka	16 May	3 June	16 June	3 July
	Nagoya	17 May	4 June	17 June	4 July
	Yokohama	18 May	5 June	19 June	6 July
NEW ZEALAND	Auckland	6 June	21 June	7 July	21 July
	Wellington	10 June	8 July	10 July	27 July
	Lyttelton	9 June	6 July	11 July	25 July
	Nelson	14 June	8 July	16 July	27 July

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Total new cars
6,778
2018: 6,848 ▼ -1.0%

Total imported used cars
10,883
2018: 10,893 ▼ -0.1%

Whangarei
NEW: 142 2018: 183 ▼-22.4%
USED: 294 2018: 226 ▲30.1%

Auckland
NEW: 3,046 2018: 2,905 ▲4.9%
USED: 5,031 2018: 5,148 ▼-2.3%

Hamilton
NEW: 499 2018: 479 ▲4.2%
USED: 694 2018: 714 ▼-2.8%

New Plymouth
NEW: 111 2018: 123 ▼-9.8%
USED: 175 2018: 150 ▲16.7%

Wanganui
NEW: 85 2018: 96 ▼-11.5%
USED: 84 2018: 72 ▲16.7%

Palmerston North
NEW: 221 2018: 245 ▼-9.8%
USED: 289 2018: 283 ▲2.1%

Nelson
NEW: 106 2018: 104 ▲1.9%
USED: 202 2018: 252 ▼-19.8%

Westport
NEW: 2 2018: 1 ▲100.0%
USED: 5 2018: 0 ▲500.0%

Greymouth
NEW: 12 2018: 21 ▼-42.9%
USED: 35 2018: 34 ▲2.9%

Thames
NEW: 85 2018: 101 ▼-15.8%
USED: 97 2018: 108 ▼-10.2%

Tauranga
NEW: 321 2018: 280 ▲14.6%
USED: 450 2018: 470 ▼-4.3%

Rotorua
NEW: 103 2018: 126 ▼-18.3%
USED: 172 2018: 155 ▲11.0%

Gisborne
NEW: 31 2018: 37 ▼-16.2%
USED: 63 2018: 73 ▼-13.7%

Napier
NEW: 214 2018: 209 ▲2.4%
USED: 258 2018: 264 ▼-2.3%

Masterton
NEW: 66 2018: 70 ▼-5.7%
USED: 76 2018: 74 ▲2.7%

Wellington
NEW: 579 2018: 687 ▼-15.7%
USED: 885 2018: 881 ▲0.5%

Blenheim
NEW: 56 2018: 53 ▲5.7%
USED: 48 2018: 54 ▼-11.1%

Christchurch
NEW: 645 2018: 738 ▼-12.6%
USED: 1,438 2018: 1,316 ▲9.3%

Timaru
NEW: 66 2018: 62 ▲6.5%
USED: 84 2018: 83 ▲1.2%

Oamaru
NEW: 4 2018: 8 ▼-50.0%
USED: 12 2018: 18 ▼-33.3%

Dunedin
NEW: 244 2018: 222 ▲9.9%
USED: 333 2018: 367 ▼-9.3%

Invercargill
NEW: 140 2018: 98 ▲42.9%
USED: 158 2017: 151 ▲4.6%

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Imported Passenger Vehicle Sales by Make - April 2019

MAKE	APR'19	APR'18	+/- %	MAR'19 MKT SHARE	2019 YEAR TO DATE	2019 MKT SHARE
Toyota	2,392	2,644	-9.5	22.0%	9,731	21.4%
Nissan	1,976	1,970	0.3	18.2%	8,771	19.3%
Mazda	1,882	1,760	6.9	17.3%	7,514	16.5%
Honda	1,216	1,053	15.5	11.2%	5,083	11.2%
Subaru	614	623	-1.4	5.6%	2,553	5.6%
Suzuki	594	604	-1.7	5.5%	2,539	5.6%
Mitsubishi	530	379	39.8	4.9%	2,139	4.7%
BMW	394	471	-16.3	3.6%	1,662	3.7%
Volkswagen	339	371	-8.6	3.1%	1,430	3.1%
Audi	207	228	-9.2	1.9%	842	1.9%
Mercedes-Benz	146	222	-34.2	1.3%	618	1.4%
Lexus	118	77	53.2	1.1%	457	1.0%
Ford	66	88	-25.0	0.6%	319	0.7%
Volvo	51	53	-3.8	0.5%	223	0.5%
Jaguar	41	39	5.1	0.4%	167	0.4%
Chevrolet	39	39	0.0	0.4%	161	0.4%
Land Rover	31	32	-3.1	0.3%	150	0.3%
Mini	31	26	19.2	0.3%	123	0.3%
Chrysler	27	13	107.7	0.2%	87	0.2%
Holden	26	25	4.0	0.2%	113	0.2%
Jeep	24	23	4.3	0.2%	97	0.2%
Hyundai	20	23	-13.0	0.2%	88	0.2%
Dodge	16	20	-20.0	0.1%	110	0.2%
Porsche	13	16	-18.8	0.1%	73	0.2%
Kia	12	8	50.0	0.1%	39	0.1%
Peugeot	9	14	-35.7	0.1%	25	0.1%
Renault	8	8	0.0	0.1%	22	0.0%
Alfa Romeo	7	1	600.0	0.1%	14	0.0%
Daihatsu	6	9	-33.3	0.1%	27	0.1%
Maserati	4	3	33.3	0.0%	12	0.0%
Smart	4	12	-66.7	0.0%	18	0.0%
Cadillac	3	2	50.0	0.0%	18	0.0%
Citroen	3	3	0.0	0.0%	30	0.1%
Datsun	3	1	200.0	0.0%	3	0.0%
Pontiac	3	3	0.0	0.0%	13	0.0%
Others	28	30	-6.7	0.3%	191	0.4%
Total	10,883	10,893	-0.1	100.0%	45,462	100.0%

Imported Passenger Vehicle Sales by Model - April 2019

MAKE	MODEL	APR'19	APR'18	+/- %	MAR'19 MKT SHARE	2019 YEAR TO DATE	2019 MKT SHARE
Mazda	Axela	584	537	8.8	5.4%	2,434	5.4%
Suzuki	Swift	508	504	0.8	4.7%	2,194	4.8%
Honda	Fit	494	368	34.2	4.5%	2,178	4.8%
Mazda	Demio	460	409	12.5	4.2%	1,835	4.0%
Nissan	Tiida	407	391	4.1	3.7%	1,991	4.4%
Toyota	Prius	300	265	13.2	2.8%	1,238	2.7%
Toyota	Wish	295	231	27.7	2.7%	1,107	2.4%
Mitsubishi	Outlander	290	223	30.0	2.7%	1,246	2.7%
Nissan	Leaf	263	229	14.8	2.4%	1,083	2.4%
Toyota	Aqua	239	64	273.4	2.2%	804	1.8%
Subaru	Legacy	238	303	-21.5	2.2%	1,033	2.3%
Mazda	Atenza	237	248	-4.4	2.2%	934	2.1%
Toyota	Vitz	234	244	-4.1	2.2%	977	2.1%
Nissan	Dualis	215	159	35.2	2.0%	860	1.9%
Mazda	Premacy	209	186	12.4	1.9%	890	2.0%
Volkswagen	Golf	208	221	-5.9	1.9%	917	2.0%
Subaru	Impreza	206	154	33.8	1.9%	882	1.9%
Nissan	Note	175	149	17.4	1.6%	789	1.7%
Toyota	Auris	168	156	7.7	1.5%	624	1.4%
Nissan	X-Trail	150	86	74.4	1.4%	625	1.4%
Toyota	Corolla	139	139	0.0	1.3%	587	1.3%
Honda	Stream	134	136	-1.5	1.2%	563	1.2%
Nissan	Skyline	120	115	4.3	1.1%	469	1.0%
Mazda	CX-5	112	58	93.1	1.0%	368	0.8%
Honda	CRV	108	102	5.9	1.0%	380	0.8%
Toyota	Ractis	108	91	18.7	1.0%	374	0.8%
Mazda	Verisa	103	85	21.2	0.9%	412	0.9%
Nissan	Bluebird	97	100	-3.0	0.9%	416	0.9%
Toyota	Vanguard	94	64	46.9	0.9%	295	0.6%
Toyota	MarkX	88	222	-60.4	0.8%	411	0.9%
Mitsubishi	Galant	86	55	56.4	0.8%	311	0.7%
Honda	Odyssey	86	115	-25.2	0.8%	368	0.8%
Nissan	March	85	75	13.3	0.8%	354	0.8%
Nissan	Juke	84	53	58.5	0.8%	334	0.7%
Honda	Insight	83	27	207.4	0.8%	270	0.6%
Others		3,476	4,329	-19.7	31.9%	14,909	32.8%
Total		10,883	10,893	-0.1	100.0%	45,462	100.0%


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Profits on sales start to rise

Margins have continued to recover since the first quarter of the financial year, although pressure remains on used-vehicle imports, reports Turners Automotive Group.

In particular, demand in Auckland has remained soft, notes the company in updated guidance for the 12 months to March 31.

Excluding a one-off, non-cash adjustment of \$4.5 million relating to Buy Right Cars rebranding to Turners Cars, the company says this is consistent with the midpoint of previous guidance of five to 10 per cent below \$34-\$36m provided in November.

Todd Hunter, chief executive officer, says while market headwinds in the first half of the 2019 year have continued, the fourth quarter's trading performance was slightly ahead of expectations and an improvement on the third quarter.

"New Zealand's ageing fleet will see hundreds of thousands of cars needing replacement over the next decade and market conditions are leading to consolidation in the dealer market, which provides Turners with further opportunity to build market share," he adds.

Hunter notes the used-vehicle market is still fragmented, but "we will continue to focus on building our customer base and increasing market share by adding value to customers through our 'one-stop shop' and better service".

He says there will be continued progress in Turners' retail network with investment into it delivering operating contributions, while new sites in Wellington and New

Plymouth are trading above expectations.

Also, agreement has been reached to relocate Turners' site on Auckland's North Shore after the land was compulsorily acquired by the NZTA.

"The settlement helps to offset the significant costs of absorbing key staff into the wider business, increasing marketing to offset the high-profile 'billboard' building, the move to the new Wairau Valley location and reduced operating contribution from a closed branch."

The new North Shore branch will be operating towards the end of the second quarter of the 2020 financial year, while relocating the Whangarei branch to a higher-profile location was completed in March since then trading "has proven to be strong".

Hunter adds: "Outside of its automotive division, Turners' finance, insurance and EC Credit businesses continue to perform in-line with expectations."

As for last month, there was a slight drop in the used-imported passenger vehicle market nationally with 10,883 registered for the first time – the lowest total since June 2014 when 10,760 were sold.

April's result brought the year-to-date total to 45,462, a decrease of 3,039 units – or 6.3 per cent – compared to the same period in 2018.

The Mazda Axela was April's most popular model with 584 registrations.

It was followed by Suzuki's Swift with 508 and Honda's Fit on 494.

Toyota topped April's marques' ladder with 2,392 units, Nissan was second with 1,976 sales and Mazda third on 1,882.

Meanwhile, an interim report into the future of the upper North Island's ports has highlighted inefficiencies, but has yet to recommend how to fix them.

Ports of Auckland, Port of Tauranga and Northport are critical

to the country's freight movement, and account for two-thirds of import volumes.

A working group report released last month was the first of three to be published seeking advice on a range of legislative, biosecurity and network issues.

Major stakeholders have been canvassed with some concerns raised including the three ports competing with each other and failing to co-operate.

The group adds the status quo provides few incentives for logistics and freight companies to work together to achieve efficiencies.

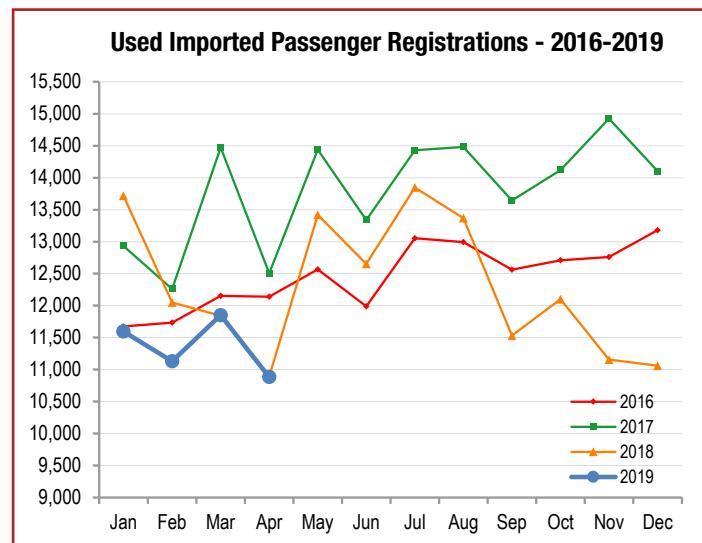
The government has previously signalled support for moving Auckland's port to Northland, but the group says there's no point further investing in Northport without developing the rail line into the country's biggest city.

That said, one idea being floated is for a vehicle servicing and import facility to be based at Northport. Another option is for a new mega-port in the Firth of Thames.

The report notes car importers have indicated a change in landing location from Auckland could add about \$100 per unit in costs, but this could be less than the land subsidy to store vehicles on Auckland's waterfront.

Ports of Auckland is New Zealand's largest importer of vehicles. In the year to June 2018, it handled nearly 300,000 units. This was a jump of 43 per cent from 2014 when it processed 207,591 cars.

The working group will release a second report in June with recommendations expected in September. ☺



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More used cars crossing ditch

The increasing availability of stock at the right price may be one of the reasons why more used passenger vehicles are being imported into New Zealand from Australia.

So far this year, 2,041 used cars have crossed the Tasman for a market share of 3.7 per cent.

The total is up by 30.5 per cent from 1,517 units during the same timescale of 2018, when Australia's market share was 1.9 per cent.

Frank Willett, chief executive officer of Autohub NZ, says certain cars may be on the market across the ditch at the right price-points

that make them attractive to Kiwi importers.

"There seems to be a raft of makes and models coming through," says Willett. "There has been an even volume of vehicles coming through from all categories, including statutory write-offs."

"There are many in the trade who tend to focus on particular types of vehicles. Some look at late-model, low-mileage cars, while others look at four-wheel drives and double-cab utes."

"Some don't really have buying patterns and purchase at what they believe is a good price. We have other customers who deal in high-

performance V8 vehicles, such as the Holden Commodores, the SS and R8."

Willett adds purchasing decisions also depend on where car importers' business cycles are at – and where they are at in regards to their market and stock levels.

"You may find some of them have got to a point where – given pricing in Japan is rather firm and it's often difficult to get good quality stock at the right price out of Japan – they may have elected to top up their stock with vehicles from Australia."

April was above average for imports of used passenger vehicles

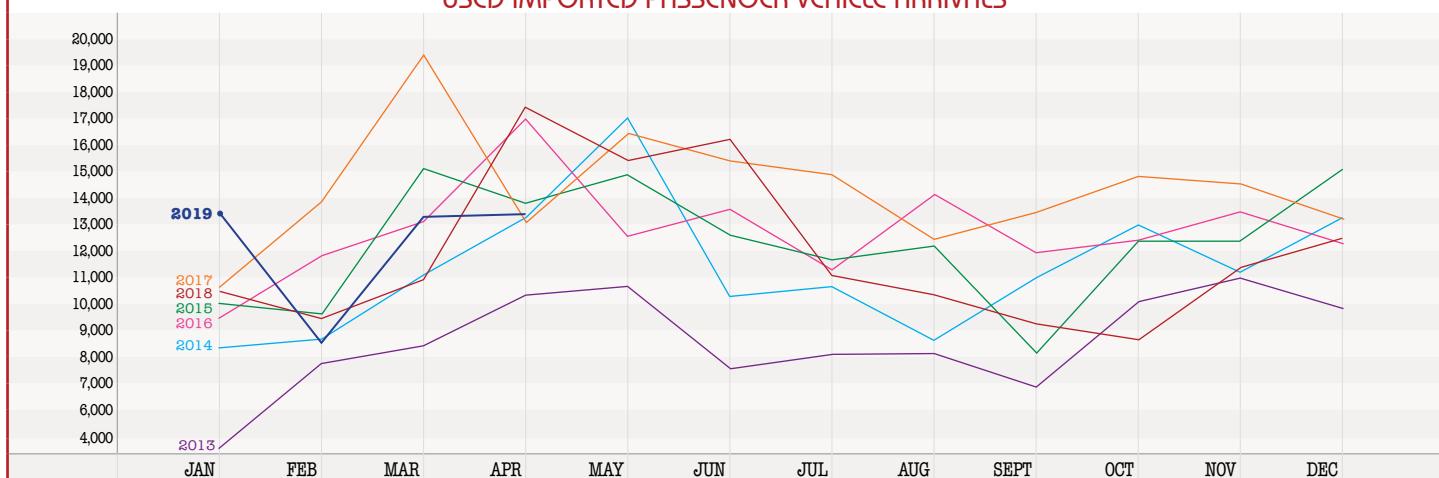
with the total coming in at 13,349.

But this represented a sharp decrease of 31.3 per cent, or by 6,089 units, when compared to the same month of last year, which was a catch-up following delays caused by stink-bug discoveries.

The year-to-date total is 461 units higher than the same period in 2018 with 48,882 units crossing our border so far in 2019.

There was a significant drop in used-car imports from New Zealand's main supplier, Japan, in April with 12,571 units being imported – down by 33.3 per cent on the same month in 2018. ☺

USED IMPORTED PASSENGER VEHICLE ARRIVALS



Used Imported Passenger Vehicles By Country Of Export

COUNTRY OF EXPORT	2019					2019 TOTAL	2018					2017		
	JAN '19	FEB '19	MAR '19	APR '19	APR MARKET SHARE %		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2018 TOTAL	SHARE	2017 TOTAL	MKT SHARE
Australia	279	619	647	496	3.7%	2,041	1,170	1,054	950	1,009	4,183	2.9%	5,540	3.2%
Great Britain	103	61	74	54	0.4%	292	280	229	235	282	1,026	0.7%	2,173	1.3%
Japan	12,856	7,841	12,287	12,571	94.2%	45,555	26,715	48,862	28,646	30,287	134,510	94.2%	160,822	93.8%
Singapore	142	175	163	158	1.2%	638	338	351	386	456	1,531	1.1%	1,202	0.7%
USA	61	47	73	41	0.3%	222	281	287	265	275	1,108	0.8%	1,419	0.8%
Other Countries	38	21	46	29	0.2%	134	153	80	73	109	415	0.3%	387	0.2%
Total	13,479	8,764	13,290	13,349	100.0%	48,882	28,937	50,863	30,555	32,418	142,773	100.0%	171,543	100.0%



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Slight decrease in dealer sales

April was a slow month for sales of second-hand cars by dealers to the public with 16,394 units.

This compared to 16,878 in the same month of 2019 for a drop of 2.9 per cent.

There was a six per cent decrease in public-to-trader transactions from 13,689 to 12,863 units, while private sales fell by 2.5 per cent to 40,603.

Oamaru notched up 39 dealer sales for a 34.5 per cent increase – the largest in percentage terms – from 29 in April 2018. Invercargill was runner-up with an 18.9 per cent rise.

Jasmit Singh, of Wholesale Autos in Takanini, South Auckland, reports sales during the first four months of 2019 have been similar to last year, but down compared to 2017.

"My personal feeling is the rest of this year will improve," he says. "It's a tough market, but it's still buoyant and we have to keep changing our strategies. We're all selling in the same market so any changes affect us all."

Singh describes every day a gamble to access the stock he requires, despite bidding on a lot of cars.

"Some days we don't end up

getting anything and other days we get the vehicles we want. Overall, there's not a big challenge getting late models and I'm getting the cars I want."

Ian Keatley, branch manager of Botany Toyota in East Auckland, says: "We get the odd hybrid vehicle traded-in, but mainly get older, imported trades."

High mileage and older trade-ins are usually passed onto used-car dealers, while many buyers have already sold their old vehicles on Trade Me when they approach the franchise for a new car.

"That's a common problem for dealers around New Zealand –

they're not getting as many trades as they used to," says Keatley. "However, that's not a problem for us. We stock Signature Class used vehicles, which are certified imports or New Zealand-new."

Andrew Collett, of Davie Motors Holden in Manukau, says there's no indication the business will be offered more trade-ins this year and it's always looking for good-quality trades because "there are never enough".

The rate and type of trade-ins his business is seeing is pretty much unchanged from 2018, although we're only one-third of the way into 2019. ☺

SECONDHAND CAR SALES - April 2019

	DEALER TO PUBLIC			PUBLIC TO PUBLIC			PUBLIC TO DEALER			
	APR'19	APR'18	+/- %	MARKET SHARE	APR'19	APR'18	+/- %	APR'19	APR'18	+/- %
Whangarei	595	580	2.6	3.63	1,899	1,907	-0.4	281	298	-5.7
Auckland	5,750	5,729	0.4	35.07	13,248	13,746	-3.6	4,975	5,107	-2.6
Hamilton	1,289	1,292	-0.2	7.86	3,204	3,226	-0.7	1,067	1,089	-2.0
Thames	277	311	-10.9	1.69	648	666	-2.7	178	182	-2.2
Tauranga	760	833	-8.8	4.64	2,012	2,034	-1.1	512	616	-16.9
Rotorua	375	357	5.0	2.29	923	1,026	-10.0	115	145	-20.7
Gisborne	134	127	5.5	0.82	368	369	-0.3	39	68	-42.6
Napier	603	632	-4.6	3.68	1,445	1,503	-3.9	439	417	5.3
New Plymouth	328	358	-8.4	2.00	898	965	-6.9	179	182	-1.6
Wanganui	227	247	-8.1	1.38	580	605	-4.1	183	155	18.1
Palmerston North	722	756	-4.5	4.40	1,555	1,482	4.9	1,025	1,300	-21.2
Masterton	204	198	3.0	1.24	471	483	-2.5	117	113	3.5
Wellington	1,417	1,502	-5.7	8.64	3,052	3,063	-0.4	941	1,169	-19.5
Nelson	265	322	-17.7	1.62	1,005	1,025	-2.0	159	215	-26.0
Blenheim	152	175	-13.1	0.93	449	455	-1.3	103	83	24.1
Greymouth	64	66	-3.0	0.39	166	174	-4.6	19	36	-47.2
Westport	8	9	-11.1	0.05	46	38	21.1	0	0	0.0
Christchurch	1,875	2,087	-10.2	11.44	4,933	5,166	-4.5	1,772	1,702	4.1
Timaru	184	194	-5.2	1.12	534	528	1.1	88	112	-21.4
Oamaru	39	29	34.5	0.24	112	120	-6.7	4	2	100.0
Dunedin	692	709	-2.4	4.22	1,998	1,973	1.3	415	467	-11.1
Invercargill	434	365	18.9	2.65	1,057	1,099	-3.8	252	231	9.1
NZ Total	16,394	16,878	-2.9	100.00	40,603	41,653	-2.5	12,863	13,689	-6.0

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New Passenger Vehicle Sales by Make - April 2019

MAKE	APR'19	APR'18	+/- %	APR'19 MKT SHARE	2019 YEAR TO DATE	2019 MKT SHARE
Toyota	1,112	712	56.2	16.4%	4,590	14.0%
Mazda	601	760	-20.9	8.9%	3,216	9.8%
Hyundai	562	398	41.2	8.3%	2,202	6.7%
Kia	537	511	5.1	7.9%	2,453	7.5%
Suzuki	460	539	-14.7	6.8%	2,196	6.7%
Mitsubishi	444	486	-8.6	6.6%	2,425	7.4%
Nissan	365	354	3.1	5.4%	1,579	4.8%
Holden	325	540	-39.8	4.8%	2,102	6.4%
Honda	305	317	-3.8	4.5%	1,966	6.0%
Subaru	299	373	-19.8	4.4%	1,318	4.0%
Ford	273	312	-12.5	4.0%	1,641	5.0%
Volkswagen	231	258	-10.5	3.4%	1,221	3.7%
Mercedes-Benz	159	183	-13.1	2.3%	772	2.4%
BMW	109	126	-13.5	1.6%	580	1.8%
Skoda	107	116	-7.8	1.6%	452	1.4%
Audi	98	140	-30.0	1.4%	486	1.5%
Land Rover	90	60	50.0	1.3%	532	1.6%
Jeep	82	88	-6.8	1.2%	324	1.0%
SsangYong	76	42	81.0	1.1%	270	0.8%
Lexus	74	61	21.3	1.1%	296	0.9%
Mini	58	46	26.1	0.9%	236	0.7%
Haval	52	47	10.6	0.8%	207	0.6%
Volvo	46	51	-9.8	0.7%	239	0.7%
Porsche	43	20	115.0	0.6%	174	0.5%
Peugeot	42	84	-50.0	0.6%	305	0.9%
MG	35	2	1,650.0	0.5%	38	0.1%
Jaguar	28	33	-15.2	0.4%	146	0.4%
Renault	28	26	7.7	0.4%	104	0.3%
Citroen	19	25	-24.0	0.3%	95	0.3%
Isuzu	19	20	-5.0	0.3%	84	0.3%
Tesla	15	30	-50.0	0.2%	61	0.2%
Seat	14	8	75.0	0.2%	51	0.2%
Alfa Romeo	12	8	50.0	0.2%	57	0.2%
Maserati	9	10	-10.0	0.1%	27	0.1%
Yamaha	6	5	20.0	0.1%	24	0.1%
Others	43	57	-24.6	0.6%	254	0.8%
Total	6,778	6,848	-1.0	100.0%	32,723	100.0%

New Passenger Vehicle Sales by Model - April 2019

MAKE	MODEL	APR'19	APR'18	+/- %	MAR MKT SHARE	2019 YEAR TO DATE	2019 MKT SHARE
Toyota	RAV4	525	107	390.7	7.7%	981	3.0%
Kia	Sportage	328	220	49.1	4.8%	1,319	4.0%
Mazda	CX-5	252	317	-20.5	3.7%	1,218	3.7%
Suzuki	Swift	231	245	-5.7	3.4%	1,090	3.3%
Hyundai	Tucson	218	94	131.9	3.2%	693	2.1%
Nissan	Qashqai	213	186	14.5	3.1%	738	2.3%
Toyota	Corolla	193	170	13.5	2.8%	1,398	4.3%
Mitsubishi	Outlander	188	140	34.3	2.8%	982	3.0%
Hyundai	Santa Fe	146	110	32.7	2.2%	523	1.6%
Mitsubishi	ASX	143	83	72.3	2.1%	875	2.7%
Hyundai	Kona	120	134	-10.4	1.8%	597	1.8%
Suzuki	Vitara	120	87	37.9	1.8%	411	1.3%
Nissan	X-Trail	114	110	3.6	1.7%	553	1.7%
Subaru	XV	103	141	-27.0	1.5%	472	1.4%
Honda	HR-V	97	52	86.5	1.4%	580	1.8%
Subaru	Forester	93	28	232.1	1.4%	357	1.1%
Ford	Escape	91	45	102.2	1.3%	376	1.1%
Toyota	Highlander	87	67	29.9	1.3%	516	1.6%
Honda	Jazz	84	161	-47.8	1.2%	606	1.9%
Holden	Commodore	83	107	-22.4	1.2%	553	1.7%
Honda	CRV	83	54	53.7	1.2%	539	1.6%
Mazda	Mazda3	82	160	-48.8	1.2%	555	1.7%
Volkswagen	Tiguan	79	126	-37.3	1.2%	512	1.6%
Mitsubishi	Eclipse Cross	78	142	-45.1	1.2%	316	1.0%
Volkswagen	Golf	78	63	23.8	1.2%	291	0.9%
Subaru	Outback	74	145	-49.0	1.1%	349	1.1%
Mazda	CX-3	71	80	-11.3	1.0%	364	1.1%
Mazda	Mazda2	70	96	-27.1	1.0%	370	1.1%
Toyota	Yaris	69	89	-22.5	1.0%	426	1.3%
Toyota	C-HR	65	45	44.4	1.0%	318	1.0%
Mazda	CX-9	65	81	-19.8	1.0%	328	1.0%
Toyota	Prius C	59	27	118.5	0.9%	188	0.6%
Kia	Rio	59	66	-10.6	0.9%	324	1.0%
Holden	Equinox	56	71	-21.1	0.8%	317	1.0%
Holden	Trax	51	50	2.0	0.8%	272	0.8%
Others		2,310	2,949	-21.7	34.1%	12,416	37.9%
Total		6,778	6,848	-1.0	100.0%	32,723	100.0%

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TEST DRIVES



Marque set for electric in-roads

New Zealand will become one of the first non-government subsidised electric-vehicle (EV) markets globally to take delivery of the new I-PACE when it lands in the coming months.

Steve Kenchington, general manager of Jaguar NZ, believes its pricing structure signals an intention to take a significant share of the emerging premier EV market and make the model accessible to as many Kiwis as possible.

The marque has slashed prices for its I-PACE SUV by \$15,000. The range now starts at \$144,900 for the S variant, \$154,900 for the SE and \$164,900 for HSE. They also apply to pre-purchases.

Kenchington says: "One of the challenges we've faced when establishing a new category is ensuring our price-point is aligned with market expectations and other premium EVs."

"What we've seen since the I-PACE was announced here is that market dynamics operate differently compared to countries where EV incentives are in place. Yet this hasn't hampered demand for this model."

Jaguar has already pre-sold more I-PACEs in New Zealand than in countries with much higher population densities, such as Singapore, Japan and South Korea – all before the first customer vehicles have landed.

"What this tells us is there's an opportunity for Jaguar to take a substantially larger share of this category," says Kenchington.

He adds Jaguar NZ operates as the distributor, and pricing is often

based on projected demand and its ability to get better terms with suppliers.

"While there are no subsidies for EVs here, we're working to negotiate better pricing – something that wouldn't be possible without a loyal customer base."

The past financial year was the marque's best in New Zealand and saw sales volume eclipse other premium German marques for the first time.

Kenchington says a range of factors influence local I-PACE demand, including growing interest in Formula E and Auckland Simon Evans taking out the inaugural I-PACE e-Trophy race in Saudi Arabia earlier this year. On top of that, the EV has scooped numerous awards, including world car of the year.

He believes the model represents an evolution in EV technology and is one of the most exciting the marque has introduced in recent years.

"In recent weeks, we've seen

interest lift as more Kiwis have had the chance to experience the performance of this next-generation EV."

As for new models boosting sales, especially in New Zealand's burgeoning SUV market, Kia has lifted the lid on its future by unveiling its SP Signature concept. It hints at a compact SUV expected on our shores in late 2019 for the 2020 model year.

As demand continues to swing in favour of compacts, the concept is the marque's first foray into this segment with its styling targeted towards younger buyers.

Todd McDonald, managing director of Kia Motors NZ, says: "Interest in the small SUV segment has been growing and our dealer network is looking forward to the arrival of the production version of the SP Signature."

Toyota NZ is confident the fifth-generation RAV4 "will build on its 25-year legacy by redefining the segment it created". It's New Zealand's biggest volume SUV

with 40,010 units sold here up to March 31.

Neeraj Lala, general manager of product and new-vehicle sales, says the range will include the debut of a hybrid powertrain.

"This new RAV4 is poised, once again, to change the game in our medium-sized SUV market," he says. "The hybrid version will lead the way with its tow rating and fuel efficiency."

It continues the electrification of Toyota's total range of models, which are all expected to offer an electrified option by 2025.

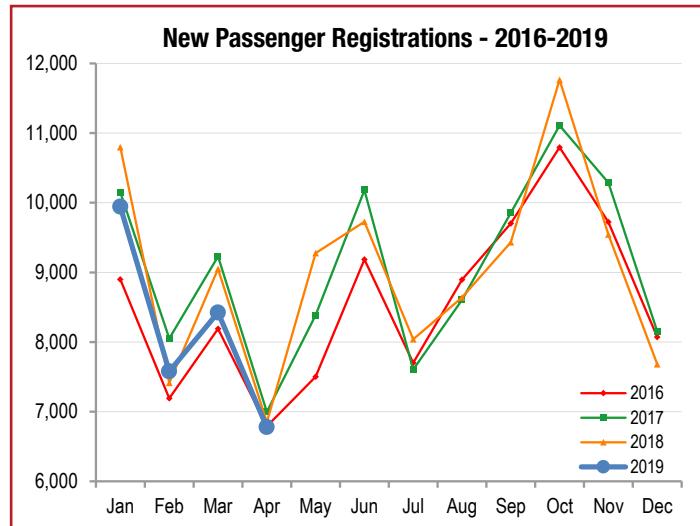
As for April's market, total registrations of new passenger vehicles and SUVs dropped by one per cent – or by 70 units to 6,778 – on April 2018's volumes.

The RAV4 was the month's best-selling with 525 units. It was followed by the Kia Sportage on 328 units and Mazda's CX-5 with 252.

Toyota topped the marques ladder with a 16.4 per cent share of the market and 1,112 units. It was followed by Mazda on 8.9 per cent thanks to 601 registrations, and Hyundai on 8.3 per cent with 562 units.

As for the overall market – when combining sales of new passenger and commercial vehicles – registrations in New Zealand last month grew by two per cent, or by 217 units, when stacked against the same month of 2018.

There were 10,640 new vehicles sold last month, which continued the up-and-down monthly trend for 2019. The overall market to the end of last month was down by 2.5 per cent on the first four months of 2018. ☺



April 2019 (▼ vs March 2019)

SALES

- Web - Dealer
- Web - Classified
- Repeat

- ▼ 11.7%
- ▼ 12.6%
- ▼ 15.2%



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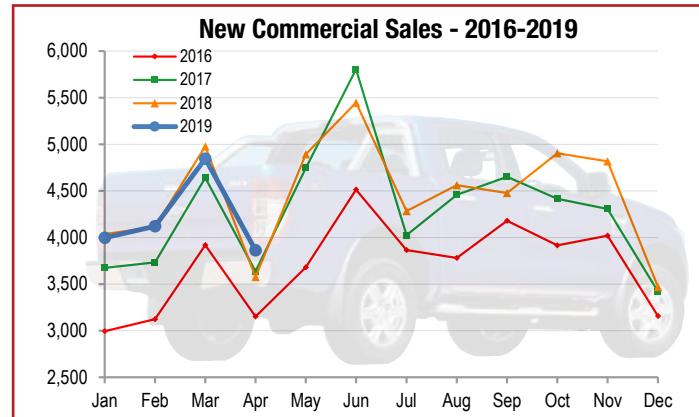
Similarities between two markets

Mirrored trends are being seen between New Zealand and Australia with ute sales booming to both.

"It's a bit different in the percentages of the markets that utes occupy because this country still has a large number of used imports coming in, which Australia doesn't have," says Marc Ebolo, managing director of Holden NZ.

"But, in overall trends, we're seeing similar things in both countries with the growth of new utes and SUVs, and a decline in passenger cars."

Ebolo predicts utes will become more car-like with each generation. "It's not like it was 10 to 15 years ago when you felt like



you were driving a farmer's truck. Interiors are far now more refined and they're becoming ultimate crossover vehicles.

"We're starting to see more on driveways, more top-specification

as "one of our big projects".

He says: "We're involving everyone in the planning from internal staff and our dealer network to any resources we can leverage from Australia.

"We've developed one of our most comprehensive plans for the Colorado in terms of making it exciting, showing what the truck is capable of and setting a path for some good sales this year."

"We have an aggressive target for it in 2019 and have spent six months developing plans to get us there."

Last month was the strongest month of April on record for sales of new commercials, which came in at 3,862 – eight per cent ahead of April 2018's total of 3,575. ☺

New Commercial Sales by Make - April 2019

MAKE	APR'19	APR'18	+/- %	MAR'19 MKT SHARE	2019 YEAR TO DATE	2019 MKT SHARE
Ford	865	803	7.7	22.4%	3,553	21.1%
Toyota	694	598	16.1	18.0%	2,842	16.9%
Mitsubishi	465	258	80.2	12.0%	2,010	11.9%
Holden	403	312	29.2	10.4%	1,551	9.2%
Nissan	268	268	0.0	6.9%	1,266	7.5%
Isuzu	254	281	-9.6	6.6%	1,091	6.5%
Mazda	154	133	15.8	4.0%	797	4.7%
Volkswagen	78	122	-36.1	2.0%	458	2.7%
LDV	73	144	-49.3	1.9%	497	3.0%
Mercedes-Benz	68	101	-32.7	1.8%	339	2.0%
Hino	62	54	14.8	1.6%	234	1.4%
Fuso	58	47	23.4	1.5%	281	1.7%
Fiat	57	60	-5.0	1.5%	218	1.3%
Hyundai	52	44	18.2	1.3%	317	1.9%
SsangYong	37	28	32.1	1.0%	149	0.9%
Foton	28	41	-31.7	0.7%	109	0.6%
Great Wall	27	14	92.9	0.7%	123	0.7%
UD Trucks	27	17	58.8	0.7%	87	0.5%
Iveco	26	28	-7.1	0.7%	100	0.6%
Kenworth	23	28	-17.9	0.6%	102	0.6%
Others	143	194	-26.3	3.7%	699	4.2%
Total	3,862	3,575	8.0	100.0%	16,823	100.0%

New Commercial Sales by Model - April 2019

MAKE	MODEL	APR	APR	+/- %	MAR'19 MKT SHARE	2019 YEAR TO DATE	2019 MKT SHARE
Ford	Ranger	760	745	2.0	19.7%	3,146	18.7%
Toyota	Hilux	542	457	18.6	14.0%	2,243	13.3%
Mitsubishi	Triton	464	258	79.8	12.0%	2,008	11.9%
Holden	Colorado	401	306	31.0	10.4%	1,523	9.1%
Nissan	Navara	268	268	0.0	6.9%	1,265	7.5%
Mazda	BT-50	154	133	15.8	4.0%	797	4.7%
Isuzu	D-Max	151	205	-26.3	3.9%	685	4.1%
Toyota	Hiace	136	120	13.3	3.5%	500	3.0%
Ford	Transit	105	58	81.0	2.7%	407	2.4%
Fiat	Ducato	57	60	-5.0	1.5%	217	1.3%
Volkswagen	Amarok	56	58	-3.4	1.5%	252	1.5%
Hyundai	iLoad	48	43	11.6	1.2%	303	1.8%
Isuzu	F Series	43	33	30.3	1.1%	186	1.1%
Isuzu	N Series	42	23	82.6	1.1%	130	0.8%
SsangYong	Rhino	37	0	3,700.0	1.0%	140	0.8%
Mercedes-Benz	Sprinter	33	45	-26.7	0.9%	133	0.8%
LDV	V80	31	39	-20.5	0.8%	187	1.1%
Hino	300	28	18	55.6	0.7%	74	0.4%
Great Wall	Steed	27	14	92.9	0.7%	123	0.7%
Hino	500	25	26	-3.8	0.6%	129	0.8%
Others		454	666	-31.8	11.8%	2,375	14.1%
Total		3,862	3,575	8.0	100.0%	16,823	100.0%

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Sales matching 2018's levels

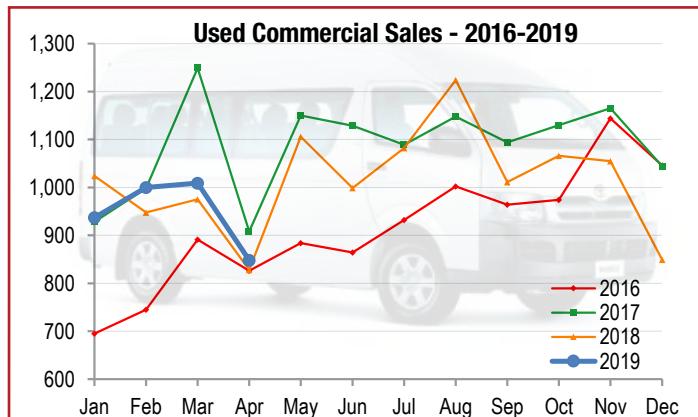
There were 848 used commercials sold in April – a 2.4 per cent jump on April 2018's total when 828 were registered.

Last month's result brought the year-to-date total to 3,794, an increase of 19 units compared to last year's first four months.

Toyota remained on top with 381 sales and its Hiace was first on the models ladder with 289 registrations.

Jasmit Singh, of Wholesale Autos in Takanini, says it has been tough lately getting the electric vehicles he wants with rising prices being among the challenges.

"We have a shipment arriving in May so I'm getting them, but prices



are definitely more than what we were paying early last year," he says.

Singh will not be looking at other markets, such as Australia and the UK, for used imports.

"I had a bad experience about

experience that again."

Tony Woods, director of Greenwoods Cars and 4x4s in Penrose, Auckland, says buying vehicles locally is hard and the right contacts are needed "because it's very difficult to get the stock you want".

"The whole industry is changing month by month now especially when things happen, such as the cost of fuel going up," he says.

"People were using that as an excuse not to purchase V6s and V8s, but now fuel prices have come down they want to buy them."

"You roll the dice daily when it comes to stock because when you buy a vehicle, you're hoping to make a margin on it." ☺

Used Commercial Sales by Make - April 2019

MAKE	APR'19	APR'18	+/- %	MAR'19 MKT SHARE	2019 YEAR TO DATE	2019 MKT SHARE
Toyota	381	389	-2.1	44.9%	1,716	45.2%
Nissan	209	174	20.1	24.6%	846	22.3%
Mazda	44	35	25.7	5.2%	195	5.1%
Isuzu	37	54	-31.5	4.4%	163	4.3%
Ford	34	38	-10.5	4.0%	176	4.6%
Hino	34	30	13.3	4.0%	152	4.0%
Mitsubishi	25	22	13.6	2.9%	109	2.9%
Holden	18	11	63.6	2.1%	64	1.7%
Chevrolet	11	13	-15.4	1.3%	64	1.7%
Fiat	10	4	150.0	1.2%	79	2.1%
GMC	6	1	500.0	0.7%	14	0.4%
Suzuki	6	2	200.0	0.7%	28	0.7%
Mercedes-Benz	5	8	-37.5	0.6%	11	0.3%
Hyundai	4	0	400.0	0.5%	8	0.2%
UD Trucks	4	1	300.0	0.5%	9	0.2%
Daihatsu	3	8	-62.5	0.4%	16	0.4%
Volkswagen	3	5	-40.0	0.4%	28	0.7%
Peugeot	2	0	200.0	0.2%	7	0.2%
Volvo	2	1	100.0	0.2%	14	0.4%
Alexander Dennis	1	0	100.0	0.1%	1	0.0%
Others	9	32	-71.9	1.1%	94	2.5%
Total	848	828	2.4	100.0%	3,794	100.0%

Used Commercial Sales by Model - April 2019

MAKE	MODEL	APR'19	APR'18	+/- %	MAR'19 MKT SHARE	2019 YEAR TO DATE	2019 MKT SHARE
Toyota	Hiace	289	286	1.0	34.1%	1,314	34.6%
Nissan	Caravan	65	44	47.7	7.7%	272	7.2%
Nissan	NV200	47	33	42.4	5.5%	179	4.7%
Toyota	Dyna	37	35	5.7	4.4%	153	4.0%
Mazda	Bongo	33	30	10.0	3.9%	141	3.7%
Nissan	Vanette	31	29	6.9	3.7%	102	2.7%
Nissan	NV350	30	26	15.4	3.5%	134	3.5%
Toyota	Regius	27	27	0.0	3.2%	114	3.0%
Hino	Dutro	24	15	60.0	2.8%	102	2.7%
Isuzu	ELF	21	23	-8.7	2.5%	114	3.0%
Nissan	Atlas	20	18	11.1	2.4%	87	2.3%
Ford	Ranger	17	18	-5.6	2.0%	49	1.3%
Mitsubishi	Canter	14	8	75.0	1.7%	70	1.8%
Toyota	Toyoace	13	16	-18.8	1.5%	66	1.7%
Fiat	Ducato	10	4	150.0	1.2%	79	2.1%
Isuzu	Forward	10	17	-41.2	1.2%	30	0.8%
Nissan	Navara	9	11	-18.2	1.1%	36	0.9%
Mazda	Titan	9	2	350.0	1.1%	33	0.9%
Holden	Colorado	8	4	100.0	0.9%	29	0.8%
Ford	F150	8	4	100.0	0.9%	30	0.8%
Others		126	178	-29.2	14.9%	660	17.4%
Total		848	828	2.4	100.0%	3,794	100.0%

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Company expands to fulfil demand

The largest Australasian-owned independent automotive distribution company has shifted its headquarters to meet growing demand for products made by its marques.

The Ateco Group has moved to a site with new offices, training and warehouse facilities to futureproof supply of stock to New Zealand, Australia and South Africa.

Neville Crichton, executive chairman, says the rapid growth of LDV, and the development of Maserati and RAM, resulted in the company outgrowing its previous premises.

"The new facility enables us to provide support services for sales and training at a level that will match sales growth, and meet the demands of a changing market."

The company now provides

products, parts and services to more than 100 dealers in Australia and New Zealand through its Sydney base office, which complements its operation in Mount Wellington, Auckland.

Its relocation means it now has triple the space for training purposes, including technical areas with hoists, tools and equipment.

Typically, the company provides up to 40 hours' training per technician for the launch of each new model into Australasia, as well as coaching in sales and marketing.

"Our multi-million-dollar move to Lidcombe represents the largest investment Ateco has made in facilities over the past 35 years," says Crichton.

"But this level of investment is essential in order to ensure we provide a benchmark quality of service to our dealers, the brands

we represent and customers."

"It's a clear and unequivocal sign of the group's commitment to the industry in New Zealand, Australia and South Africa."

As for last month's statistics, importations of new cars dropped by 22.3 per cent in April when compared to the same month of last year. The total was also down by 9.2 per cent on March.

There were 7,978 new passenger vehicles imported last month, while new car registrations fell by 19.5 per cent compared to March, but the total was down by only one per cent on the same month of last year.

That left a 1,200-unit variance to bring the number of unsold new stock sitting on dealers' yards or in storage facilities to 81,443 – or just over nine months' supply.

Liam Keatley, branch manager

of Botany Toyota, which opened on March 11 says new-car sales have continued to outstrip used.

"There has been a lot of interest from the community with people dropping in to see what the finished premises looks like because they have watched it being built."

"We've been lucky with the new RAV4 being launched in April. It has gone well with our customers."

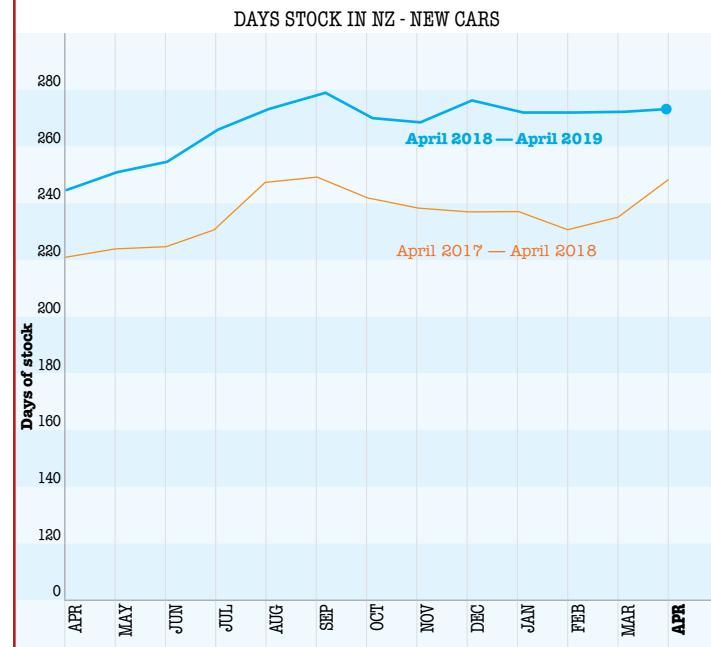
He adds the Limited Hybrid variant has retailed well across New Zealand and sold out within three weeks of being launched with demand huge in East Auckland.

Keatley has waiting lists for the hybrid and GXL, although petrol-powered RAV4 stock is still available.

"When petrol prices went up last year, Camry hybrid and Prius sales took off. Corolla hybrid sales have also taken off this year." ☉

Dealer stock of new cars in New Zealand

	CAR SALES IMPORTED	CAR SALES REGISTERED	VARIANCE	STOCK	DAILY SALES - 12-MONTH AVERAGE	DAYS STOCK AT HAND
Apr '18	10,268	6,848	3,420	73,810	297	249
May '18	12,102	9,275	2,827	76,637	299	256
Jun '18	10,138	9,725	413	77,050	298	259
Jul '18	11,503	8,040	3,463	80,513	299	269
Aug '18	11,175	8,639	2,536	83,049	299	278
Sep '18	10,382	9,431	951	84,000	298	282
Oct '18	9,921	11,765	-1,844	82,156	300	274
Nov '18	7,820	9,543	-1,723	80,433	298	270
Dec '18	9,317	7,681	1,636	82,069	296	277
Jan '19	7,462	9,942	-2,480	79,589	294	271
Feb '19	7,875	7,578	297	79,886	295	271
Mar '19	8,782	8,425	357	80,243	293	274
Apr '19	7,978	6,778	1,200	81,443	293	278
Year to date	32,097	32,723	(626)			
Change on last month	-9.2%	-19.5%			1.5%	
Change on Mar 2018	-22.3%	-1.0%			10.3%	
LESS IMPORTED				MORE STOCK		



Costs eating into margins

Car dealers have been steering away from importing used vehicles to stock yards because supply-chain costs have been decreasing margins.

Frank Willett, chief executive officer of Autohub NZ, says his company has been getting a lot of feedback from traders – who mostly deal in “bread and butter” used imports from Japan – struggling to on-sell at a profit.

“You can appreciate importers aren’t happy with any increased costs, be that in a buoyant market or a flat market like it is now,” he told Autofile.

Every time there’s an increase in costs – such as shipping rates going up or heat-treatment charges for stock coming in from Japan during the stink-bug season – it’s difficult for dealers to cope with.

“We’ve noticed a drop in the volume of used imports,” says Willett. “Although it’s starting to now pick up, dealers have reported to our reps that although they’re not importing as many cars as they were, they’ve substituted stock on yards by buying trade-ins from franchises or vehicles privately offered to them for sale.”

“That’s because, at the end of the day, they are finding there are less costs involved with these vehicles and there’s more of an appetite for someone to buy them with finance. It’s just a matter of stock that’s coming from a different place.”

Willett also points to recent decreases in immigration levels as affecting sales, and rental companies could be updating fleets, which would bring more second-hand New Zealand-new cars onto the market.

He adds there aren’t many other markets that dealers can purchase from with our country being right-hand drive.

“We also have a complex and stringent compliance regime, so it’s not every right-hand market that can supply us with good volumes of used cars that meet our standards,” says Willett. “There are only a few markets available to us.”

Nick Owens, of Auto Inspection Services in Christchurch, noticed buying conditions appeared hard when he recently went to Japan on business.

He says it was tricky to source suitable stock for the Kiwi market, although his compliance centre has been quite busy so far this year.

Jasmit Singh, manager of Wholesale Autos in Takanini, South Auckland, reports April as being a good month.

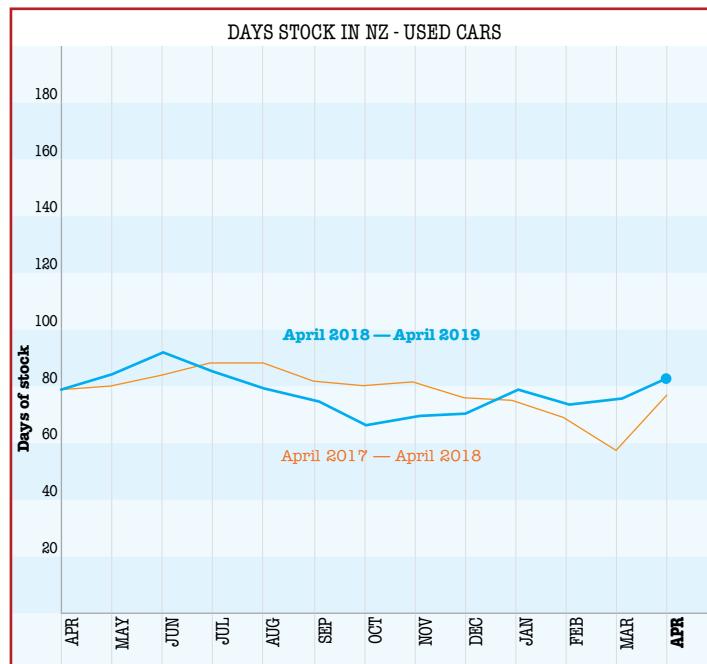
“We had some customers from outside the city come in over Easter to buy cars,” he says. “It’s a general perception businesses close during the holidays, but for us they aren’t a big issue and we still sell.”

Last month there were 13,349 used cars imported to New Zealand. This was down by 31.3 per cent on the same month of last year when 19,438 units crossed the border.

Registrations of used passenger vehicles dropped slightly to 10,883 units, which was a decrease of 0.1 per cent, or by 10 units, on April 2018’s total.

When taking into account last month’s used-car imports minus registrations, there was a variance of 2,466 units for an increase of stock on-hand to 33,158.

There are now 84 days’ stock on-hand, or 2.8 months’ worth if sales continue at the same rate. ☺



Dealer stock of used cars in New Zealand						
	CAR SALES		VARIANCE	STOCK	DAILY SALES - 12-MONTH AVERAGE	DAYS STOCK AT HAND
	IMPORTED	REGISTERED				
Apr '18	19,438	10,893	8,545	34,476	444	78
May '18	15,464	13,420	2,044	36,520	441	83
Jun '18	15,961	12,651	3,310	39,830	439	91
Jul '18	11,028	13,847	-2,819	37,011	438	85
Aug '18	10,282	13,368	-3,086	33,925	434	78
Sep '18	9,245	11,533	-2,288	31,637	429	74
Oct '18	8,669	12,100	-3,431	28,206	423	67
Nov '18	11,301	11,156	145	28,351	413	69
Dec '18	12,448	11,061	1,387	29,738	404	74
Jan '19	13,479	11,598	1,881	31,619	399	79
Feb '19	8,764	11,129	-2,365	29,254	396	74
Mar '19	13,290	11,852	1,438	30,692	396	77
Apr '19	13,349	10,883	2,466	33,158	396	84
Year to date	48,882	45,462	3,420			
Change on last month	0.4%	-8.2%			8.0%	
Change on Mar 2018	-31.3%	-0.1%			-3.8%	
	LESS IMPORTED	LESS SOLD			LESS STOCK	

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