www.autofile.co.nz

JANUARY 2025

autofile

THE TRUSTED VOICE OF THE NZ AUTO INDUSTRY FOR OVER 40 YEARS

Spotlight on funding for electric chargers

Action unveiled for public EV network, fuel excise duty, air-conditioning gases and cutting emissions

The government is launching a review into how public infrastructure for electric cars is paid for.

It comes on the back of plans for a network of 10,000 charging points by 2030 being laid down in New Zealand's second emissions reduction plan for 2026-30.

The coalition believes extensive public facilities will give consumers the confidence to shift to EVs by tackling range anxiety because concerns about the availability of charging locations will continue to hamper uptake.

It adds it's "timely" to review the co-investment approach, overseen by the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA), so it can reach its national network goal and maximise value.

The second emissions reduction plan (ERP2) was released last month and details "our journey towards net zero".

The 97-page document covers other initiatives affecting

The coalition believes more public chargers will boost EV sales

the transport industry, such as ensuring the clean car standard (CCS) is effective, and changes to fuel-excise duty and road-user charges (RUC).

Implementing a regulated product stewardship scheme for refrigerants, including the gases in cars' air-conditioning systems, is also on the agenda as is decarbonising the heavy-vehicle fleet.

ERP2 targets actions in sectors of the economy that produce the greatest emissions – agriculture, transport, energy and waste.

It includes others that Simon Watts, Minister for Climate Change, says will be "critical" in meeting targets, such as sustainable finance.

The emissions trading scheme (ETS), however, is one major policy the government will be relying on for New Zealand to hit its staggered targets, known as budgets, to reduce pollution from greenhouse gases (GHGs).

This scheme's settings for 2026-30 will be updated and its governance strengthened to support a "credible market".

Watts describes the ETS as "the main tool" to cut GHGs because it raises the cost of creating carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions and encourages businesses to find efficient ways to reduce them.

[continued on page 4]

ASSURANT®
Assurant Vehicle Care®

Marques open merger talks p28

NISSAN

AUTOHUB™
FORWARD TOGETHER
GLOBAL VEHICLE LOGISTICS
NZ - JAPAN - AUSTRALIA - UK - SINGAPORE

VEHICLE SHIPPING

We are specialists in transporting and exporting all types of Vehicles, Commercial trucks, vehicles of Special Interest and other RORO Heavy Cargo & Machinery.

GENERAL FREIGHT

We have developed a worldwide network of Agents who understand the commitment required to service our demanding market.

VEHICLE TRACKING

Finding out where your vehicle is at any one time of the process, gives you the ability to manage the collection and processing of documents and payment on time.

SHIPPING SCHEDULE

TRS and shipping services from Japan to New Zealand.

Tel: +64 9 825 0888
info@jacanna.co.nz
www.jacanna.co.nz

JACANNA GLOBAL LOGISTICS

NZ TEAM

Official Freight & Logistics Partner of the New Zealand Team

Drive your business forward with
provident insurance
Call Steve Owens now on 021 947 752

GUEST EDITORIAL

Substantial gap between agenda and expenditure

James McDowall says tolling is needed to build new roads but risk of a public backlash is high

JAMES McDOWALL
Head of advocacy,
Motor Trade Association

As we enter 2025, many transport and automotive challenges persist, underscoring what was an economically difficult 2024 for businesses and families across New Zealand.

A key feature of last year was the policy statement on land transport – the government's view as to where we need to get to and roughly how.

During my summer commutes on the 110kph Waikato Expressway, at last free of road cones, the looming funding gap for transport infrastructure came to mind. Again, we know where we need to get to. The issue is how the government can bring the public along for the rather expensive ride.

The tone was set though. Potholes are to be quickly fixed, road cones are in the bad books, climate initiatives are reset and motorists are promised big new roading projects. The gap, or delta, between funding and planned expenditure is significant.

Road tolling is a user-pays tool that can help but hasn't seen widespread use here. Tolling should be a feature if we are to build new roads sooner. However, the risk of public backlash is high, especially since it won't be the only new funding mechanism introduced.

If limited to new roads, like those of national significance, its usefulness could be hamstrung. Proving grounds include Otaki to north of Levin and the Takitimu North Link from Tauranga to Omokoroa.

Gaining public support will be key, especially with many changes occurring in the next election year.

The decision not to toll the Manawatu-Tararua Highway was a preview of how difficult a wider tolling rollout would be.

It's unhelpful that no cohesive system is in place for funding mechanisms.

If you drive on the Tauranga Eastern Link Toll Road, for example, you need to remember to go onto the NZTA's website, enter your credit-card details and pay your $2.30 – 70 cents of which is you paying the agency to toll you.

Otherwise, you eventually wind up with snail mail telling you that you're a bad person for not paying on time.

If this isn't sorted out, in time we will have road-user charges for all vehicles and ideally without labels, more tolled roads, congestion charging and registration fees all paid for independently.

In that, there might be an opportunity for a cottage industry of personal assistants to look after your car's admin. The rather excellent news is that solutions are being sought from the private sector.

Opportunities in 2025 remain in vocational education and immigration. Regarding work-based learning, the government has delayed decisions and is returning to industry for extra consultation.

In immigration, there are positive signs trades will receive the recognition they deserve, including a pathway to residency and fewer burdensome regulations for employers and employees.

There's much work to be done, but things are looking up.

autofile

DIRECTORS
Darren Wiltshire
dazzz@autofile.co.nz
ph. 021 0284 7428

Brian McCutcheon
brian@autofile.co.nz
ph. 021 455 775

DESIGNER
Adrian Payne
arpayne@gmail.com

EDITOR
Darren Risby
ris@autofile.co.nz

JOURNALISTS
Matthew Lowe
matthew@autofile.co.nz

Sue Brebner-Fox
sue@autofile.co.nz

MOTORSPORT
Mark Baker
veritas.nz@xtra.co.nz

Visit www.autofile.co.nz to subscribe to Autofile magazine and have it delivered monthly in print. The subscription rate is $78 plus GST for 12 issues per year.

Autofile magazine is also available online as a readable file or downloadable as a PDF.

Back copies dating to 2017 can be found on the website where you can subscribe to our Insight email alerts.

Copyright: Published monthly by 4Media Ltd

All statements made, although based on information believed to be accurate and reliable, cannot be guaranteed, and no liability can be accepted for any errors or omissions. Reproduction of Autofile in print or digital format in whole or part without written permission, whether by copying or any other means, is strictly forbidden.

All rights reserved.

ISSN 0112-3475 (print) **ISSN 2350-3181** (online)

FSC
www.fsc.org
MIX
Paper from responsible sources
FSC® C102598

Vinz
Vehicle Inspection NZ

NZ's independent vehicle inspection specialists

We offer a full range of services.

- Entry Certification for imported cars
- Vehicle Appraisals
- WoF/CoF Inspections
- Road User Charges
- Registration & Relicensing
- Exhaust Emission Testing

www.vinz.co.nz
Appointed by the NZ Transport Agency

[continued from page 1]

He says ERP2 sets the foundation to meet the country's net-zero 2050 target as early as 2044, as well as delivering the first and second emissions budgets.

"New Zealand needs to be stronger in a changing climate," adds Watts. "We want our way of life to be protected and to minimise the impacts of climate change.

"We can have affordable and secure clean energy, an efficient, competitive agriculture sector and a booming economy while meeting our commitments. This plan sets out how we can get there."

Simon Watts, Minister for Climate Change, and the second emissions reduction plan

HELPING THE SWITCH

Although the number of electric cars in the fleet is growing, it's likely to be restricted if there are insufficient charging facilities, claims the government.

The second emissions plan states this can be solved by co-investing with the private sector in locations for public charging.

This method of funding can also support specific sites that wouldn't attract private investment but are important for an effective nationwide network. For example, tourism hotspots can see high peak demand but have low demand for most of the year.

As the network scales up and regulatory barriers are removed, the private sector will likely be able to invest with more confidence.

"It is timely to review the government's co-investment approach so that it can reach its national network goal and maximise value," says ERP2.

Until now, most public-charging points have been set up via co-funding overseen by EECA.

The review will consider the scale of co-investment, how it is prioritised across types and locations of charging points, processes to receive co-funding and how it could change as the market develops.

A cost-benefit analysis will inform the design of an updated funding model after the government has engaged with the EV charging market.

"We expect decisions to be made in early 2025. This will support final decisions on changes, which will be implemented later in 2025."

The government adds the market for electric cars is expected to make a big impact on transport emissions in the 2030s and 2040s, although it predicts this will happen gradually as people and businesses replace vehicles.

By the end of November last year, there were about 117,000 EVs in New Zealand, including plug-in hybrids, which was up 9.3 per cent from January 1, 2024.

The country currently has about 1,250 public-charging points and 500 more were in development as of September. This creates a "good base network" including having fast chargers every 75km along most state highways.

However, our infrastructure is behind other markets. At the end of 2023, New Zealand had one public point for every 88 EVs. Most comparable countries have ratios of at least one to 40.

The government's target of 10,000 by 2030 is expected to meet all our public-charging needs.

Barriers to making switch

A technical bulletin issued with the government's second emissions plan flags "high upfront costs" as the main barrier for Kiwis buying electric cars.

It states: "Assumptions include that the cost disparity with light ICE vehicles will decline as technology improves. Therefore, this barrier will also decline."

However, there is no in-depth analysis that the clean car discount essentially increased domestic EV sales by reducing their sticker prices.

In addition, the subsequent impact on the market of scrapping the feebates scheme – lower demand for electric models followed by marques slashing prices to clear stock – is omitted from the technical bulletin.

The document continues: "A secondary barrier to light EV uptake, which directly influences consumers, is range anxiety – the fear of not being able to charge a vehicle while travelling longer distances.

"It is assumed that a denser network of public-charging points will reduce range anxiety.

"A minor barrier to EV uptake is EVs paying higher RUC compared to the fuel-excise duty paid by high-efficiency hybrids.

"In the case of used EV imports, the rate of uptake is limited by the global supply of used EVs available for import.

"The lack of charging points is currently a moderate constraint that reduces uptake by 10 per cent."

It adds that shifting all vehicles to RUC will remove incentives in the road-funding system for consumers to buy high-efficiency ICE vehicles over electric models, "overcoming a barrier to EV uptake".

ERP2 states some possibilities include ultra-rapid charging on highways, more fast chargers at destinations such as shopping malls, gyms and marae, and slower alternating-current charging points where EVs will be parked for longer periods, such as at workplaces, hotels and holiday parks.

The "supercharging EV infrastructure" work programme outlines actions to facilitate private investment and review government co-investment.

These include making the installation of public-charging points a permitted activity under the Resource Management Act and enabling standards to help consumers shift home EV charging demand away from network peaks.

With the Electricity Authority, barriers such as high connection costs and ensuring efficient application processes for charging connections across all 29 electricity distributors are being assessed.

"Modelling has assumed a modest improvement in EV uptake due to reduced range anxiety and that this will have a small effect on transport emissions," notes the technical bulletin attached to the main ERP2 report.

Simeon Brown, Minister of Transport, at the opening of Jolt's first EV charger in Wellington last year

"The EV proportion of all road kilometres travelled in 2030 is projected to increase from nine per cent in the baseline to 9.2 per cent with the policy."

CUTTING FLEET EMISSIONS

From January 2027, the coalition plans to return to regular increases of fuel-excise duty and RUC.

The government policy statement on land transport for 2024-34 has already signalled jumps of 12 cents per litre to fuel tax in January 2027 and six cents in January 2028 before a four-cent rise at the start of 2029.

The purpose of these hikes is to support extra investment in transport infrastructure.

Owners of light EVs started paying RUC in 2024 and currently may pay more than equivalent petrol vehicles, such as efficient hybrids, in excise duty.

"The government will transition the entire light fleet to RUC and away from fuel tax by 2027," states ERP2. "This will ensure all road users contribute to the upkeep of our roads whatever vehicle they drive.

"We will also introduce legislation to set up time-of-use schemes. This will improve traffic flows and shorten journey times by charging users depending on how busy roads are."

When it comes to the CCS, the government will signal "achievable targets well in advance" to help with compliance, and minimise supply and price impacts for consumers.

The standard, which came into effect in January 2023, aims to progressively reduce the average CO2 emissions of cars entering the fleet by setting annual targets that suppliers must meet across light-vehicle imports.

The government reviewed the standard last year and concluded its 2025-27 targets, except the 2025 target for passenger vehicles, were too stringent and were unlikely to be achieved.

The targets out to 2027 were eased to ensure the CCS is effective, and the scheme will continue to support vehicle availability, affordability and consumer choice.

[continued on page 6]

Scheme for F-gases

The government wants to launch a regulated product stewardship scheme for synthetic refrigerants this year.

The idea is to provide for mandatory participation in a scheme to collect and destroy these gases, which are sometimes known as fluorinated or F-gases.

Refrigerants and other synthetic GHGs are already priority products under the Waste Minimisation Act, which enables regulations to be introduced.

Regulated by the Ministry for the Environment, the scheme will achieve lower emissions by capturing, recycling and reusing materials from 2027 onwards.

F-gases make up less than two per cent of our gross GHGs. They are mainly used as refrigerants in heating and cooling appliances.

Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) are a subset of F-gases. Despite being emitted in relatively low quantities, their global-warming potential can be thousands of times greater than CO2.

R-134a is one of the most common HFCs for refilling cars' air-conditioning systems. This HFC is being phased out gradually with newer vehicles using R-1234yf, which is greener.

Most refrigerant emissions are from leaks and the disposal of end-of-life equipment.

EPR2 states these types of emissions aren't necessary for effective heating, ventilation and air-conditioning in New Zealand, and "can be prevented with existing technology and practices".

Stewardship will "reduce emissions through improved training standards, and ensuring the purchase and disposal of synthetic refrigerants is done in accordance with the scheme".

[continued from page 5]

Boosting ETS

The government is relying on the ETS as its main tool to support "cost-effective climate action".

To ensure it fulfils that role, it proposes to restore confidence in the scheme by committing to not placing an expiry date on New Zealand units (NZUs).

The coalition also wants to strengthen governance to manage risks of misconduct and clarify market information.

It will align the supply of NZUs with the ETS cap by making annual updates to its settings.

Specifically, the cap will be aligned with projected emissions for sectors subject to the scheme, which include transport.

One NZU represents one metric tonne of CO2 or the equivalent of any other GHG from industries covered by the ETS. Businesses in the scheme must give the government one NZU for each tonne of emissions produced.

The electric truck fleet run by WM New Zealand clocked up two million kilometres by October 2024. The government says the decarbonisation of the heavy fleet will help the country hit its climate-change targets

Additionally, targets were added for 2028 and 2029.

As for New Zealand's heavy fleet, it accounts for 28 per cent of national transport emissions compared to light at 63 per cent.

Zero-emissions heavy vehicles (ZEHVs) make up less than 0.13 per cent of national truck numbers.

With the freight and other commercial sectors "best placed" to lead decarbonisation, the government expects significant improvements with heavy vehicles globally.

Our strength comes from knowing our customers' needs, understanding and fulfilling them

Mechanical Breakdown Insurance

Comprehensive Motor Vehicle Insurance

Credit Contract Indemnity Insurance

Guaranteed Asset Protection Insurance

Mechanical Breakdown Insurance
EV & Hybrid option available
Uber & Taxi cover available

Contact:
Simon James 027 239 0253
SimonJ@questinsurance.co.nz

Quest insurance

"This is likely to include better fuel efficiency in internal combustion engine [ICE] trucks, and more makes and models of ZEHVs," states ERP2.

The extra weight of electric batteries may put e-trucks in a higher driver-licence category than ICEs, which adds costs to businesses. Because of this, the regulatory system will be reviewed for barriers to ZEHV uptake, although "any change must be balanced against increased wear and tear on roads and bridges from heavier vehicles".

Also included in the second emissions plan is the low-emissions heavy vehicle fund (LEHVF).

Last year's budget provided $27.75 million for the fund, which aims to help early adopters overcome upfront cost barriers and accelerate the uptake of battery electric, hydrogen fuel cell or hybrid models.

EECA's early modelling estimates up to 500 diesel vehicles could be replaced by low or zero-emitters by 2028 through the LEHVF.

The fund offsets the capital costs of fleet conversion by funding up to 25 per cent of the purchase price of a new low or zero-emissions heavy model or 25 per cent of the cost to convert an ICE to approved clean energy.

The government will also consider extending the exemption of heavy electric vehicles from RUC, which is due to expire at the end of 2025.

THE BIGGER PICTURE

There are eight key policies included in the second emissions plan that have the greatest potential emissions savings for the next five years, says the government.

These include 10,000 EV charging points by 2030, a product stewardship scheme for refrigerants from 2025, and recognising carbon capture, utilisation and storage in the ETS.

Others are introducing pricing for agricultural emissions, which are excluded from the ETS, by 2030, incentivising the uptake of new technologies, enabling more renewable energy projects and exploring private-sector partnerships to plant trees on low-conservation crown-owned land.

The government also wants to leverage the Waste Minimisation Fund to enable resource-recovery systems and infrastructure to process organic waste, and improve organic waste management and landfill-gas capture rates.

Watts says: "The private sector plays an important role in reducing New Zealand's emissions. Achieving our goals will require collaboration across all sectors to reduce emissions, unlock renewable energy, foster innovation and leverage nature-based solutions.

"Now is the time to lock in the infrastructure we need to support a low-emissions economy. We will create jobs and enable businesses to transition to electric alternatives faster by increasing renewable energy."

The government is also amending the first ERP so it reflects the coalition's approach to meeting the first emissions budget.

Watts adds: "Current projections indicate we are on track to meet the first emissions budget even with changes in policy."

accelerate your business
with our finance solutions

- ✓ Multi-tier finance
- ✓ Competitive rates
- ✓ Flexible solution
- ✓ Easy online application
- ✓ Fast approval*
- ✓ 7 days a week service
- ✓ Knowledgeable team
- ✓ National coverage
- ✓ Solution focused

*Avanti Finance lending criteria and conditions apply.

SCAN ME

Applying is simple, and we're here to help.

0800 003 111
dealersupport@avantifinance.co.nz

AVANTI | FINANCE

BRANDED FINANCIAL SERVICES

Industry backs per-car charges

The automotive industry is calling for a flat fee per vehicle when charges to recover the estimated $5.5 million annual cost of running the clean car standard (CCS) are launched.

The NZTA will soon decide how to structure its administration fee before rolling it out in mid-2025.

Assuming a flat amount per vehicle, it expects the fee to be about $18-$23 per unit based on average annual imports of 270,000 to 300,000 light vehicles.

The agency has sought views on charging per vehicle or importer, at what stage the fee should be paid and if it should vary depending on the type of vehicle.

The Motor Industry Association (MIA) is strongly advocating for a flat fee per unit because it's straightforward and equitable.

"The new-vehicle market is highly complex," says Aimee Wiley, chief executive. "Adding further unnecessary complexity is neither desirable nor practical."

The MIA is urging officials to include the charge in on-road costs paid by consumers because the new-vehicle sector cannot absorb further cost increases without passing them on, and this way "promotes transparency, accountability and ensures the most effective outcome".

The MIA also supports a flat fee per vehicle regardless of type, motive power or other factors as they all require the same administrative and compliance efforts.

"However, it's essential to differentiate fees between new and used," adds Wiley. "Fees should reflect the true cost drivers, ensuring each sector is charged in proportion to the burden they place on the regulator.

"The new-vehicle industry manages substantial information through the MIAMI [MIA Model Information] system, which feeds directly into the motor-vehicle register. This is more efficient and streamlined than the system for entering used-vehicle data."

She says the MIA takes on an admin role, funded by its members to support this data entry and compliance effort.

"Given these efficiencies and existing contributions, it's only fair fees are allocated proportionally, reflecting costs each sector imposes on the system."

The Imported Motor Vehicle Industry Association (VIA) also supports a per-vehicle charge at first registration but is concerned about equity impacts.

Kit Wilkerson, head of policy, says a uniform fee may affect affordability by adding greater relative cost to lower-value models, which make up a big proportion of used imports.

"Used-vehicle importers predominantly serve buyers seeking affordable options, including low-income households, first-time buyers and those where public transport is limited. A flat fee risks affecting these groups."

Wilkerson recommends the NZTA reviews equity impacts and, if necessary, mitigate them through mechanisms, such as sliding-scale fees which would adjust the charge based on vehicle attributes like emissions or value.

Other options suggested by VIA include targeted credits or rebates to offset the extra cost.

"By designing a cost-recovery system that reflects the market's diversity, the CCS can achieve its goals without compromising affordability or accessibility."

Overall, VIA supports charging on a per-vehicle basis as it aligns with industry practices and allows smaller operators to compete with larger businesses.

The Motor Trade Association (MTA) has provided feedback on the CCS charge at meetings with government officials.

James McDowall, head of advocacy, says: "With dealers already facing significant pressure, adding extra administration fees at the point of vehicle entry would have been an additional burden.

"The MTA submitted consumers should be directly charged at point of registration instead. This makes sense since several fees are already included in on-road costs, which consumers are familiar with when buying a vehicle that needs first-time registration in New Zealand."

FROM JAPAN TO NEW ZEALAND
ON TIME, EVERY TIME

TOYOFUJI SHIPPING SCHEDULE

Toyofuji vessels	Voyage	JAPAN				NEW ZEALAND			
		Moji	Osaka	Nagoya	Yokohama	Auckland	Lyttelton	Wellington	Nelson
New Century 2	192	20 Dec	24 Dec	25 Dec	27 Dec	12 Jan	15 Jan	16 Jan	17 Jan
Trans Future 7	157	—	8 Dec	10 Dec	14 Dec	3 Feb	TBA	TBA	TBA
New Century 1	193	—	23 Dec	25 Dec	28 Dec	7 Feb	—	—	—
Dream Jasmine	41	—	20 Jan	21 Jan	24 Jan	6 Feb	T/S TF5 v158	T/S TF5 v158	T/S TF5 v158
Trans Future 5	158	—	13 Jan	14 Jan	18 Jan	7 Feb	9 Feb	10 Feb	11 Feb

T/S = Tranship to next available TFS vessel

TFSNZ TOYOFUJI SHIPPING NEW ZEALAND LIMITED

Contact: Adam Stone adam.stone@toyofujinz.co.nz
www.toyofujinz.co.nz

Policy stability key for sales

The Ford Ranger was the country's overall best-selling model of 2024. Toyota's RAV4, above, was the top new car while its Aqua was the most popular used import

What was almost a perfect storm of shifting consumer preferences, the economic downturn and regulatory changes impacted the automotive industry in 2024.

These issues shaped trends across all light-vehicle categories, according to the Motor Industry Association (MIA), and were coupled with broader market adjustments.

It reports that overall new-vehicle registrations, which came in at 128,828, tumbled by 13.5 per cent in 2024 when compared to 148,973 in 2023. When stacked up against 2022, the decline was even steeper at 21.8 per cent.

Aimee Wiley, the MIA's chief executive, notes last year's overall decline highlights a "pressing need for policy stability to support sustained market growth and resilience".

She says: "Looking ahead, the primary challenge will be navigating the stricter clean car standard targets introduced from January 1 while simultaneously supporting the transition to lower-emissions vehicles [LEVs].

"Achieving this balance is essential to avoid significant vehicle price inflation in 2025 and beyond."

MIA statistics show there were 87,435 new passenger vehicles registered in 2024, the start of which marked the end of the clean car discount (CCD). That total was down by 20.9 per cent from 110,466 in 2023 and a drop of 24.8 per cent from 2022.

The total for light commercials was 33,715. That was up by 10.1 per cent from 30,602 in 2023, but the CCD's demise introduced distortions for year-on-year comparisons.

Comparing 2024 to 2022 reveals an 18.2 per cent decline, or 7,527 fewer light commercials, and highlights "broader market adjustments and evolving purchasing patterns".

Heavy-vehicle registrations declined by 2.9 per cent and 228 units last year versus 2023 to align with "moderate market adjustments". That said, 2024's total was 6.3 per cent higher than in 2022, underscoring a "positive longer-term trajectory".

Wiley stresses that consumer preferences remain clear with SUVs and light commercials continuing to dominate New Zealand's market.

She also highlights encouraging trends in demand for hybrid models across all segments last year, which reflected a gradual shift to LEVs, but stricter carbon dioxide (CO_2) targets present importers with major challenges.

"Consumer demand simply does not align with the stringent CO_2 targets for light passenger vehicles," says Wiley.

"Importers face a delicate balancing act to meet these targets and avoid penalties, which could lead to vehicle price inflation unless genuine demand for EVs rebounds significantly in 2025.

"The industry must work collaboratively to address these challenges while ensuring vehicles remain affordable and accessible."

LIGHTS DIM ON ELECTRIC

MIA statistics show 6,748 battery electric vehicles (BEVs) were sold in 2024 for a 5.2 per cent share of the new market. That compared with 21,611 units and 14.5 per cent in 2023.

Plug-in hybrid (PHEV) numbers came in at 3,484 and 2.7 per cent – down from 9,005 and six per cent.

Hybrids claimed 27 per cent of last year's market with 34,736 units, which was up from 29,319 and 19.7 per cent in 2023.

Meanwhile, the number of internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles sold slipped from 89,038 to 83,860, but their market share still rose from 59.8 per cent to 65.1 per cent.

A further breakdown of the statistics shows the same trends in the light passenger sector, where the share of BEVs fell from 19 per cent to 7.3 per cent as sales tumbled from 21,026 to 6,362. PHEVs slid from 8.1 per cent to 3.9 per cent on the back of registrations falling from 8,985 to 3,423.

In contrast, hybrid sales rose from 29,319 to 31,209, giving them a share of 25.5 per cent and 35.7 per cent in the past two years respectively.

Light passenger ICEs sold in 2024 came in at 46,441. This was down from 51,136 in the year prior, but this category's market share rose from 46.3 to 53.1 per cent.

UTE TAKES OUT TOP SPOT

The Ranger has been crowned the country's most popular vehicle. Ford's ute notched up 11,741 registrations in 2024, according to NZTA statistics, and was 1,211 ahead of Toyota's RAV4, which came second overall on 10,530.

The Toyota Hilux finished second on the new commercials ladder and came third overall with 7,295 sales. Mitsubishi's Triton was next up with 4,230. The Nissan Navara was fourth with 1,892 and Toyota's Hiace came fifth.

The RAV4 was New Zealand's best-selling new passenger vehicle with a 12 per cent share of its part of the market. Next up were two Mitsubishis – the ASX on 3,763 and Outlander with 3,248 for market shares of 4.3 and 3.7 per cent respectively.

The top three used-imported cars in 2024 mirrored the previous two years with Toyota's Aqua and Prius first and second, and Mazda's Axela third. The Aqua secured 9,740 registrations for a 10 per cent market share, the Prius 7,325 and 7.5 per cent, and Axela 3,898 and four per cent.

Fourth place was taken by Toyota's Corolla with 3,787 units and Nissan's Note came fifth on 3,374.

Overall, there were 97,819 used-imported passenger vehicles registered in 2024. That was down by 14.8 per cent compared to 114,859 in 2023 and below the 110,758 in 2022.

In the used commercials space, Toyota's Hiace claimed a market share of 37.6 per cent with 2,292 registrations. Nissan's NV350 was second with 772 units and the Toyota Regius third on 332.

Last year's total for this sector was 6,103 compared to 6,018 in 2023, which delivered an increase of 1.4 per cent.

Regulations receive refresh

Changes to the clean car standard (CCS), a shake-up of industry training, the long-awaited start of a stewardship scheme for old tyres and amendments to lending laws made the headlines in 2024.

After consultation with industry associations, the government made a late change to the vehicle emissions rule and announced it would be softening CCS targets from 2025.

Several senior figures left the industry last year, with executives boasting more than 100 years of collective experience stepping down from their respective roles at Toyota, Suzuki, Inchcape NZ, the Giltrap Group and Autohub NZ.

Drive Electric warned January's canning of the CCD – and the weakening of the CCS – would impact on sales of low and zero-emissions models

JANUARY: CLEAN-CAR CALLS

The Imported Motor Vehicle Industry Association (VIA) urged the government to create demand incentives for consumers to switch to lower-emissions vehicles following the axeing of the clean car discount (CCD). It outlined concerns around the clean-car programme and wanted a greater focus on policies to encourage a refresh of the existing fleet. VIA said it wasn't opposed to removing the feebates scheme, which ended on December 31, 2023, but said other measures different from the CCD needed to be considered to stimulate purchases of low and zero-emissions models.

Drive Electric warned any weakening of the CCS in addition to abolishing the CCD could mean between 100,000 and 350,000 fewer electric vehicles (EVs) on our roads by 2030. It said such action would also risk increasing carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions by 900-3,000 kilotonnes, and might push up economic costs by between $900 million and $3.5 billion. Kirsten Corson, its chair, added research showed New Zealand needed an alternative form of incentive for consumers to buy electric cars.

Steve Prangnell retired as Toyota NZ's vice-president of sales and operations. His 40-year career with the company started on the floor of its factory in Christchurch in 1983 before he shifted to its headquarters. He took on several business lines, such as parts and assembly, new and used-vehicle sales, franchise development, distribution and logistics, and held leadership positions. "The thing that has kept me with Toyota is I love the brand," he said. "I've given the best 40 years of my life to Toyota and it's given me the best 40 back."

FEBRUARY: CONSULTATION TIME

The Minister of Transport promised "extensive consultation" with the automotive industry after ordering officials to conduct a review of the CCS. Simeon Brown said the government was supportive of the scheme to ensure the market continued to receive low and zero-emissions vehicles being made overseas. However, he added the CCS needed to strike "the balance between reducing transport emissions and ensuring that New Zealand's policy settings continue to allow the automotive sector and wider economy to grow".

The Motor Trade Association (MTA) wanted the government to put the car industry in the driving seat to develop training to ensure future programmes kept up with the likes of advances in EVs. It put together a proposal calling for changes to the current regime, and believed its recommendations could help deliver "immediate improvement and longer-term change". Its suggestions were backed by eight industry groups, including the Motor Industry Association (MIA), VIA and Rental Vehicle Association.

Tyrewise was launched in March to the delight of the 3R Group's Adele Rose

Changes in the way New Zealand funded the management of end-of-life tyres (ELTs) were due to come into play on March 1 when the first stage of regulations to reduce environmental harm from ELTs would take effect. Tyre retailers were being urged to register with Tyrewise, the country's first regulated product stewardship scheme, before its first stage got under way and stewardship fees started to be charged.

The government began the process of shifting the country's fleet into the road-user charges (RUC) system after confirming owners of light battery electric vehicles (BEVs) and plug-in hybrids (PHEVs) would be brought into the scheme from April 1. Owners of BEVs would be charged $76 per 1,000km, the same as equivalent diesel-powered vehicles. Drivers of petrol-powered PHEVs faced a reduced fee of $53, which was later lowered to $38, because they were also taxed at the pump.

MARCH: FOCUS ON BATTERIES

A stewardship scheme to recycle and reuse batteries from EVs could start in about 18 months if the government kept them among its priorities for reducing waste. After launching Tyrewise, the 3R Group, implementation project manager, and Auto Stewardship NZ wanted to next create a circular economy for EV batteries.

Vehicles more than 15 years old should be required to undergo six-monthly warrant of fitness inspections, said the MTA. It also called for a review into the testing regime to ensure it was fit for purpose and for in-service emissions to be assessed. The MTA described the requirement that only vehicles registered before 2000 must have six-monthly warrants as "dangerously outdated".

Mazda NZ announced it was dropping the BT-50 from its line-up, marking an end to 58 years of the company retailing utes. It sold 347 units of the model in 2023, which was less than six per cent of its

[continued on page 12]

Introducing:

Assurant Vehicle Care®

Offering a comprehensive suite of vehicle protection products designed to help dealers stay ahead of the evolving vehicle ownership experience. Products offered under Assurant Vehicle Care include:

- Motor Vehicle Insurance
- Mechanical Breakdown insurance
- Motorcycle Insurance
- Classic Vehicle Insurance
- Guaranteed Asset Protection
- Payment Protection Insurance

www.assurant.nz | 0800 776 832

ASSURANT®

Protecta INSURANCE an ASSURANT® company

[continued from page 10]

total new-vehicle registrations, and there were several months of stock in showrooms. The BT-50's sales total for 2023 dropped from 746 in 2022, or by 53.5 per cent. They fell by 64.2 per cent from 2,025 in 2021.

Sir Colin Giltrap, founder of the Giltrap Group, passed away in April 2024

APRIL: EMISSIONS UPDATE

A last-minute change to the new emissions rule was expected just weeks before it came into effect, prompting VIA to urge the government to maintain "good dialogue" when updating regulations. Concern over a clause inserted into an amendment to the Land Transport Rule: Vehicle Exhaust Emissions 2007 was raised because it would have required imports inspected at the border before April 30 to "enter into service" within four months. The NZTA said it was revisiting the amendment.

There were fears sales of light EVs would tumble and dealerships specialising in such models were at greater risk of closing after the government started applying RUC to cars with plugs. The legislation came into effect on April 1 after the Road User Charges (Light Electric RUC Vehicles) Amendment Bill progressed through parliament in March. The law change was the first stage of the coalition's plans to eventually apply RUC to all vehicles. Automotive experts warned the government the new charges would likely hurt sales of electric cars, which were already suffering after the CCD was axed.

Wallis Dumper bid farewell to his colleagues at Inchcape NZ after leaving his position as managing director. He held the position for Subaru from 2010 after previously leading the company between 1996 and 2006. His role was rejigged in July 2023 to include heading up Inchcape NZ after the company entered retail operations when it became the importer and distributor for LDV and SsangYong. A restructuring of the business resulted in Dumper taking voluntary redundancy.

Tributes were paid to the former publisher of magazines and websites covering the automotive industry. Vern Whitehead's death on March 15 came suddenly although after an extended period of poor health. The 83-year-old was the founder of Autofile and Autodeal, a computerised reference guide for car traders.

Tom Peck retired as chief executive officer of Suzuki NZ after more than 38 years' continuous service with the company. He joined as an apprentice mechanic before becoming service manager over a seven-year period. Peck then had an overseas break before moving to Whanganui where he rejoined Colemans when it was selling out. "After it became Suzuki NZ, I was national service manager for motorcycles before adding marine and then motor vehicles," he recalled.

MAY: TRADERS SPEAK OUT

Car dealers unhappy about upcoming price rises to list on Trade Me Motors were looking at alternative advertising options with some complaining bills from the website were now their biggest operating expense. Others reported the cost of packages with the online platform had made regular double-digit percentage jumps in recent times. The last hike came in September 2023 and some dealers said they faced having to pay an extra 30-plus per cent to remain on similar deals from July 1. Trade Me Motors said a new pricing structure had been created because its plans from July would be based on how prominent dealers wanted listings and extra features.

The Financial Services Federation (FSF) welcomed an overhaul of lending laws, describing them as a "return to common sense". Amendments to the Credit Contracts and Consumer Finance Act (CCCFA) were unveiled by the government in April. Lyn McMorran, the FSF's executive director, said revoking prescriptive affordability assessment regulations would make obtaining credit for all purposes easier for consumers.

VIA welcomed a last-minute change to the emissions rule that meant used light vehicles wouldn't be required to "enter into service" within four months of being border-inspected under a revised land-transport rule. "This amendment relieves significant stress for the industry, which faced uncertainty in the treatment of imports," said Greig Epps, chief executive.

Autofile spoke to dealers who were concerned about Trade Me's dominance of used-car advertising and its increasing cost

Autofile celebrated more than 40 years' reporting on the car industry. The first issue of the magazine came out on June 5, 1984

A service to celebrate Sir Colin Giltrap's life was held at Holy Trinity Cathedral, Auckland, on May 1. The founder of the Giltrap Group and philanthropist passed away on April 17, aged 84. He had been battling ill health since suffering a fall in London in 2023.

Simon Meade, Suzuki NZ's executive general manager of motorbikes, died after a car accident on May 18. The company said: "Simon was far from just an employee. He became a great friend and mentor to many of us, our dealers and everyone he dealt with."

JUNE: IMPORTERS MAKE PLEA

The new-vehicle sector was hoping for swift action by the Minister of Transport once he received advice from officials about possible changes to the CCS. The MIA said its members needed at least six months' notice of any shake-up of emissions targets for light imports. A review of the legislation was being conducted by the Ministry of Transport (MoT) and it expected to deliver its recommendations to the minister by the end of June.

Toyota NZ temporarily stopped Yaris Cross deliveries amid a safety-test scandal embroiling carmakers in Japan. Its parent company announced it was suspending shipments of the Japan-built hybrid due to issues with certification testing. After internal verifications confirmed no contravention of laws, Toyota Motor Corporation advised there was no need to stop using affected vehicles. Nevertheless, it decided to halt shipments and sales of Yaris Cross models made in Japan until it had provided detailed explanations to authorities.

A pioneer of our car industry became a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit. Fred Lewis, who established the Enterprise Motor Group in Gisborne, was honoured for services to sport and philanthropy.

Autofile celebrated more than four decades – the magazine's first issue came out on June 5, 1984.

JULY: LENDING RELIEF

Proposed changes to lending rules were backed by the finance industry after some regulations introduced by the previous government led to an increase in loan applications being rejected. The FSF voiced its support for amendments to the responsible lending code, CCCFA and other reforms put forward by the coalition. It said its members had incurred extra compliance costs under existing "inflexible" and "onerous" rules.

Industry associations were concerned over plans to introduce "outrageous" charges on importers after a government bill to amend CCS legislation was passed under urgency. The new laws meant the Minister of Transport could change CCS targets through regulation rather than primary legislation and the scheme would shift to a user-pays model from July 1, 2025. The MIA warned importers would have to pay about an extra $47 per unit, while VIA called for the extra costs to be applied to vehicles at registration.

[continued on page 14]

[continued from page 13]

A survey showed the historic and classic sector's economic footprint comes in at $16.5 billion

The annual cost of registering vehicles was set to increase by $50 over the next two years as the coalition sought to generate more money to fund its transport plans. Details were revealed in the government policy statement on land transport 2024-34, which stated one way of boosting the national land-transport fund would be lifting the annual licensing fee component of motor-vehicle registration for the first time since 1994. The government proposed increasing rego by $25 in January 2025 and a further $25 in January 2026.

AUGUST: PRICE PARITY AHEAD

The cost of buying a new fully electric vehicle was tipped to reach price parity with fossil-fuelled cars within the next eight years. Draft advice from the Climate Change Commission on New Zealand's fourth emissions budget, which covers 2036-40, also expected BEVs to be 15 per cent cheaper for consumers to purchase than their equivalent petrol models by 2040. The predictions came as officials suggested all new and used light vehicles entering the fleet would need to be fully electric by 2040 if New Zealand was to remain on course to reach net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

An overhaul of the CCS' targets for the next five years moved New Zealand from having goals that would have led globally to ones that followed leading jurisdictions. That was the view of MoT officials who, after reviewing the scheme, said most of the previous targets for imported light vehicles between 2025 and 2027 were too stringent. The minister took heed of this advice and announced the CCS goals importers needed to aim for would be adjusted to align with Australia's.

A survey showed the economic footprint of the historic and classic vehicle sector came in at $16.5 billion. That was the major finding of market research commissioned by the NZ Federation of Motoring Clubs. Included in that figure were personal investments by owners of an estimated total of 279,200 vehicles, and all their expenses from insurance to garaging and servicing to restoration.

Greg Hedgepeth, chief executive officer of Turners Auto Retail, became VIA's new chairman. He joined the association's board in July 2023 and after VIA's annual general meeting replaced Frank Willett, chief executive of Autohub NZ, in the top role. Matt Battle, of Moana Blue, rejoined the board. The other directors for 2024/25 were Robert Young, of Nichibo NZ, and GVI's Hayden Johnston.

Neeraj Lala ended his 26-year association with Toyota NZ, including the last four as chief executive, when he resigned in July. "I'm proud of what we've accomplished together," he said. "At 50, it feels like the right time in my life and career to transition out of the role, especially with Toyota in such good health." Tatsuya Ishikawa was appointed acting CEO.

SEPTEMBER: WORKING TOGETHER

The MTA was spearheading the industry's response to a proposed overhaul of vocational training to ensure it spoke to the government with a "unified voice".

The coalition was committed to disestablishing Te Pūkenga – the NZ Institute of Skills and Technology, and restoring individual industry training organisations, institutes of technology and polytechnics as standalone entities. The MTA had long called for automotive training to be returned to MITO, which under the previous government was set to become absorbed into Te Pūkenga.

Sales of low and zero-emissions cars risked falling behind Climate Change Commission projections, and putting the country at danger of missing targets in its second and third emissions budgets. That was according to a monitoring report produced by the crown entity that showed transport and agriculture at the greatest risk of not achieving reductions. The commission said cutting passenger transport pollution primarily involves moving from internal combustion engines to zero or low-emissions options.

A new listings website was set to launch soon, and be "partially owned and run by the industry". A version of Only Cars, which had been running in Australia for more than three years, was being adapted for New Zealand. The idea was for it to run here as an equity-share model, said general manager Todd Fuller.

Samantha Barrass, left, of the Financial Markets Authority, with Lyn McMorran, of the Financial Services Federation, at the latter's annual conference in October

OCTOBER: CONCERNS OVER STOCK

Excessive stock holdings were causing more immediate concerns in the industry than other cost pressures. Aimee Wiley, the MIA's chief executive officer, said it had been a tough year for many operators and the new-vehicle sector was no exception. "From an overall industry perspective, shipping costs are only one of many pressures right now," she said. "Excessive stock has resulted from the sudden shift in consumer demand for electric cars and the impact of selling fewer vehicles due to the economic environment." Wiley noted one-in-four light passenger vehicles sold in 2023 was an EV, compared with closer to one-in-11 in 2024.

The MTA laid out a plan to take ownership of the lead organisation for training in the automotive industry. The call to government was outlined in a submission to the Ministry of Education and Tertiary Education Commission. The "most critical" aspect of the MTA's proposal was transitioning MITO to be industry-owned and led to ensure more relevant programmes are aligned with current practices and future demands. The joint submission, which was the result of a taskforce of 20 organisations including the MIA and VIA, provided the government with a blueprint for future automotive training.

The owner of a vehicle compliance and certification company was looking for a new location to run his business after its Christchurch site was damaged in a blaze. Auto Inspection Services' workshop area and about 30 vehicles were written off. Nick Owens, managing director, said: "We're working through everything with our insurance company."

NOVEMBER: ELECTRIC IMPACT

Drive Electric warned the government's changes to policies and regulations were delaying efforts to transition the fleet to



From far left, industry veterans Steve Prangnell, Wallis Dumper, Tom Peck, Neeraj Lala, Dean Sheed and Frank Willett were among those to leave executive posts in 2024



low and zero-emissions models, and could cost the economy billions of dollars. It said New Zealand had gone from a world leader in the uptake of EVs to lagging behind many other countries, including Australia. After axeing the CCD at the end of 2023, it noted plans to increase the ACC motor-vehicle levy for zero-emitters, introducing RUC for BEVs and PHEVs, and "weakening" the CCS targets posed further threats to the sector. Kirsten Corson, chair of Drive Electric's board, told Autofile: "There have been successive moves by the government to put barriers up around decarbonising transport. That's costing the industry hundreds of millions of dollars because we've seen a 70 per cent reduction in EV sales this year."

The government faced legal action over its decision to adjust CCS targets for imported light vehicles. The Better New Zealand Trust, a member of the Global EV Alliance, lodged a claim in the high court with the support of Lawyers for Climate Action NZ. The group wanted changes made to the CCS in July 2024 to be quashed after describing the decision to "weaken" the standard as "unlawful".

Dean Sheed left the Giltrap Group in October after clocking up 37 years in the car industry. He was with Ford from 1987-99 before joining Giltrap as general manager of Volkswagen NZ, part of European Motor Distributors (EMD). In 2012, he became Audi NZ's general manager and 11 years later was appointed EMD's manager of branded finance and mobility.

DECEMBER: PRESSURE ON STOCK

The used-imports sector was calling for changes to rules limiting dealers' access to stock in Japan. Current emissions restrictions risked making our fleet older, less safe and more polluting, said Greig Epps, VIA's chief executive. He was keen to speed up talks with the government on the best way to align emissions standards in Japan with those of other markets as it sought to provide dealers with access to more vehicles.

The NZTA was seeking feedback on the structure of an administration charge for the clean car standard. Assuming it to be a flat rate, it anticipated the fee would be $18-$23 per unit based on average annual light-vehicle imports of 270,000 to 300,000.

Assurant completed a rebrand of Protecta Insurance, and said it was going to add more automotive products and solutions to the Kiwi business two years after acquiring it. Listings platform Only Cars launched here and was operating under an equity-share model that allowed participating traders to have shares in it.

Frank Willett stepped down as managing director of Autohub NZ with Jim Shi becoming new chief executive.

The industry mourned the loss of Gerald Lawrence at the age of 80. He was the inaugural general manager of VINZ.

And finally, the BYD Sealion 6 was voted AA Driven Car Guide New Zealand Car of the Year with the judges saying the hybrid was the "right car at the right time" for this country.

Drive Success in 2025 with Smart Finance

Here's to an amazing year ahead!

With fast, seven-days-a-week support from our team of 20+ expert advisers, we're here to help you and your customers hit the road with confidence. Whether it's securing the right finance or delivering exceptional service, we're built to make 2025 your best year yet.

Like to find out more? Let's talk.

better™ finance

0800 800 665
www.better.co.nz/dealer
enquiries@better.co.nz

Emissions rule set for update

The NZTA is calling for submissions on recognising new Australian Designs Rules (ADR) as an alternative to Euro 6d for light-vehicle imports.

It also wants to align our compliance dates with those across the Tasman, which would impact new models not sold in this country before.

New Zealand currently allows cars meeting European, Japanese, US and Australian exhaust emissions standards, or global UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) rules, to cross the border.

Our rule was last updated in 2023 to phase in Euro 6d/VI and include Australian Euro VI for heavy vehicles.

The NZTA now wants to incorporate alternative Euro 6d standards under the ADR for "because we share our new-vehicle market".

The NZTA says changes to the emissions rule will benefit new-car imports

It says: "This means new light vehicles made for Australia can be provided to New Zealand with no modification and at little additional cost to consumers."

Last April, Australia strengthened its emissions standards for light vehicles. Its new ADR are based on UNECE rules.

Compared to the current ADR 79/04, which is aligned with the Euro 5 regime, new ADR benefits include a 55 per cent cut in emissions limits for nitrogen oxide from diesels and limiting particle numbers to control fine-particle emissions from petrol models with direct-injection systems.

Others are tighter rules for on-board diagnostics monitoring emissions and improved tests to ensure reductions are realised during normal operation.

The NZTA's second proposal is for new-model light vehicles to comply with Euro 6d from December 1, 2025, rather than July 1, 2027. The government previously set a temporary date of July 1, 2028, for both new and existing models to meet Euro 6d.

The deadline for existing new light vehicles is the same as Australia's, but New Zealand's date of July 2027 for new models is different so the NZTA wants to change that to December this year, which will reduce "complexity and cost to importers".

"We have consulted with industry partners and suppliers who have told us bringing that compliance date for new-model light vehicles forward is manageable," adds the agency. "We do not expect the proposed change to pose any supply or cost risk for distributors who are suppliers."

Submissions were due to close on January 24 with a decision to be made in early 2025.

Electric car levies to rise

Owners of EVs will see the ACC levy part of their annual vehicle registration fee jump from $42.09 to $109.05 at the start of July.

It comes after the government announced a raft of changes to the system after consulting on proposals last year and advice from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment.

EVs and petrol cars currently attract the same ACC levy of $42.09, but it will more than double for electric cars from July 1 while the cost for petrol models will go up by 17.3 per cent to $49.38.

The difference in the figures is because EV owners don't buy petrol, which includes a motor-vehicle levy of six cents per litre.

The ACC fee for electric cars will climb to $115.34 in 2026/27 and to $122.24 in the financial year after that. For petrol models, the cost in those periods will be $56.75 and $64.26.

The extra expense for EV owners comes on top of road-user charges being introduced on zero-emitters and plug-in hybrids in April 2024.

Earners' and work ACC levies are also set to rise steadily over the next three years after cabinet approved changes to the system and rates.

Matt Doocey

Matt Doocey, Minister for ACC, says there will be a review of the system when it comes to claims management.

"ACC provides critical support to New Zealanders in times of need, but I'm concerned its performance has been declining for a decade," he adds.

"Rehabilitation rates are down, weekly compensation costs are up and average costs per claim are up. This imposes significant costs on households."

Company's profits climb

Geneva Finance has reported a pre-tax profit of $3.7 million for the first half of its financial year, up by $1.1m and 45.1 per cent on the same period in 2023/24.

Its lending performance for the first quarter declined by 21 per cent but a big second quarter resulted in total lending of $29.5m for the six months, slightly ahead of last year.

In the floorplan segment, the net-receivables ledger increased to $105.8m, up by $2.9m, lending fell by $800,000 to $7.3m and securitised receivables exceeded $100m for the first time since July last year.

Geneva's half-year result included $500,000 to shift from the NZX to the USX. Funding costs climbed by $600,000.

Loan-impairment charges of $1.2m were up by $400,000, primarily driven by increased arrears in a particular sector during the second quarter.

Quest Insurance's pre-tax profit of $3.9m was up by $800,000. Earned premiums of $24m jumped by $4.7m and 24.3 per cent. It maintained strong solvency surpluses over 2023/24's first half.

AM Best has reaffirmed Quest's credit ratings, maintaining a financial strength rating of B (fair) and a long-term issuer credit rating of bb+ (fair) with both carrying stable outlooks.

FPF Tonga's operations reported a pre-tax profit of $1m, which was up by $200,000.

"Current lending-market indicators show arrears levels are increasing and any flow-on effect would mean possible increases in our provisioning levels in the remainder of this financial year," states the company.

"Recent reductions in the official cash rate are lowering funding costs. These will positively flow into our quarter three and quarter-four profit."

Road ahead for digital marketing

The start of a new year often inspires us to reflect on what the next 12 months may hold and how the landscape could evolve by the end of it.

In the fast-paced world of digital marketing, one thing that's certain as we progress through 2025 is new technologies will emerge to change the way advertisers operate.

Digital marketing is already amid a profound transformation fuelled by advancements such as augmented reality, voice-activated search, AI-powered personalisation and interactive advertising.

In the automotive industry, these innovations are reshaping how manufacturers, dealers and marketers do business by impacting everything from customer engagement and brand building to sales strategies and revenue growth.

AUGMENTED REALITY

Virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technology is set to revolutionise customer experience by allowing people to explore cars in 3D from the comfort of their own home using mobile devices.

They will be able to enter virtual showrooms, interact with product features and even do test drives.

Leading brands have started experimenting with AR in marketing strategies. Porsche, for instance, has included AR in its app, which allows users to view different models in real-time and visualise them in environments such as their driveway.

This technology not only enhances customer engagement, but helps build excitement and confidence in purchasing decisions.

As AR technology matures, expect more sophisticated applications to emerge. Innovations may include VR-assisted test drives with users able to simulate driving models in different settings, or AR-based tutorials so customers can learn about features and maintenance, enhancing customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.

AI & INTERACTIVE ADS

In coming years, AI will enable advertisers to deliver hyper-targeted adverts based on consumer behaviour, preferences and predictive analytics. This will increase ads' relevance to individuals for improved engagement.

JAMES HENDRY
Director, sales and operations
AdTorque Edge NZ

Once a prospect has shown interest, AI will be able to personalise automotive shopping to individual profiles by recommending vehicle and finance options, and suggesting service packages.

Advertising is set to become far more interactive in coming years, offering dynamic experiences adapted to people's preferences. Clickable video content and banners will engage more users by allowing them to explore features, access real-time price quotes and configure vehicles.

WHAT ELSE IS COMING

As voice assistants become more advanced, consumers will rely on them to search for cars, inquire about features and book test drives. It will become more important that brands optimise content for voice queries, shifting from traditional text SEO to conversational voice-search strategies.

When autonomous vehicles gather more data, advertisers will be able to leverage insights to create predictive, location-based marketing campaigns. For example, marques could offer in-app promotions or localised service reminders when a vehicle is close to a dealership or service centre.

With the rise of 5G technology, advertisers can deliver high-quality, real-time interactive content to create more engaging ad experiences. Faster connection speeds will support live-streamed events, VR experiences and real-time product demonstrations.

And chatbots powered by AI will provide instant support by guiding users through the buying journey by answering questions, scheduling appointments and providing personalised recommendations. These systems will be available 24/7, improving customer satisfaction and increasing the likelihood of conversions.

The car industry has always been at the forefront of embracing technological advancements from assembly lines to integrating autonomous driving systems. This extends into digital advertising.

As we consider the future of digital marketing in the automotive space, cutting-edge technologies will not only improve customer experience but will also set the stage for more immersive, effective and data-driven strategies.

Industry movers


John Staples


Jon Tamblyn

JOHN STAPLES, director of Bridgestone's New Zealand tyre business, is retiring after 44 years with the company.

He will be succeeded by Bridgestone Australia's general manager of retail operations, Jon Tamblyn, who started this month ahead of Staples' final day at the end of March.

"I'm deeply grateful for the opportunities and support I've received during my career," says Staples. "It has been an honour to lead the business."

He has held numerous positions in the company, such as retread management, store management and field sales before entering the New Zealand head office as commercial products manager in 1995.

Significant milestones he oversaw included Firestone and Bridgestone merging, developing Firestone's retail channel, the acquisition of Tony's Tyre Service and integrating Bridgestone's Kiwi operations with Australia.

Tamblyn, meanwhile, started with Bridgestone in 2007 as an original equipment engineer before advancing through the business.

He was previously group technical field-service manager on both sides of the Tasman, and national commercial and business manager for Australia. Since 2022, he has been general manager of retail operations for Australia.

Tamblyn says: "I'm looking forward to building on the incredible work John contributed throughout his notable career."

GILLIAN WATSON has been re-elected as director of the Colonial Motor Company. She has a business background in real estate and has worked in production management in the television industry.

Watson is a significant shareholder in Colonial who has had a lifelong interest in the company. She is member of the Institute of Directors and became Colonial's first female in September 2021.

ZANE ERWEE has been appointed by UD Trucks New Zealand as retail sales manager to lead growth in the North Island.

Erwee has 17 years' industry experience in this country and South Africa.

He relocated here in 2019 and worked for NZ Trucks. Most recently, he was working for a leasing company managing truck and equipment maintenance, and after-sales.

SCOTT CAMPBELL has joined Port of Tauranga's board as part of the Institute of Directors' Future Directors programme.

He is managing director of Strategicly Consulting advising iwi, government agencies and corporates on strategy, reputation and risk management.

Campbell has been appointed until October 2025. The programme aims to develop the next generation of directors.

ANTONY VRIENS and **ALISTAIR PETRIE** have rejoined the board of Turners Automotive Group. They retired by rotation before offering themselves for re-election at the company's annual general meeting.

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


Brian Dewil

Ex-rideshare founder 'perfect fit' for switch

Brian Dewil, the former founding managing director of Ola New Zealand, has become Drive Electric's chief executive officer.

He spent six years at the rideshare company, leading it from pre-launch in 2018 to capturing a 40 per cent share of the market and achieving $65 million in annual recurring revenue within three years.

As a board director with Ola NZ, Dewil provided strategic oversight on regulatory compliance and legal matters while spearheading enterprise partnerships on both sides of the Tasman.

Kirsten Corson, Drive Electric's board chair, says many skilled and highly qualified applicants applied for the role at the not-for-profit, which aims to accelerate the uptake of e-mobility.

Dewil's understanding of the EV landscape, along with his proven leadership and commitment to sustainability, she adds, makes him the perfect fit to guide Drive Electric forward.

"To date, we have focused on light vehicles," says Corson. "Now we're looking to expand into commercial and heavy vehicles.

"We are excited to have Brian on board and look forward to the electrifying journey ahead."

Dewil is focused on building meaningful partnerships between industry leaders, government bodies and communities "to strengthen New Zealand's EV ecosystem".

He says: "Our priorities are clear. These are advocating for forward-thinking EV policies, expanding our charging network, growing membership into light commercial and heavy EVs, and making electric mobility accessible to everyone living in Aotearoa.

"We're committed to fostering innovation while delivering practical solutions that benefit both our environment and our communities."

Dewil is also looking forward to working alongside Drive Electric's stakeholders to create "lasting change and contribute to a sustainable future".

He's described by his new employer as an accomplished executive who has consistently grown and scaled companies, particularly in the mobility and technology sectors.

Since August 2024, he has held Microsoft artificial-intelligence certification, and helps businesses to optimise databases and record-keeping systems for integration with this technology.

His other experiences include domestic and international leadership roles at the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, and strategy and business growth consultancy roles at New Zealand businesses.

Dewil also spent two years from 1988 as a safari guide in Africa and was director of tourism business, Call of Africa Safaris, which is based in South Africa, from 1989 to March last year.

In June 2014, Drive Electric was rebranded having previously been known as the Association for the Promotion of Electric Vehicles.

It was established in 2011 and seed funded by the Fukutake family when there were about 20 EVs registered in New Zealand.

Making rules work for everyone

When it comes to regulating imports, the devil's in the detail. Our push for cleaner, safer cars is noble, but the road to achieving it isn't always straight.

If we're not careful, these policies will leave low-income buyers and our environment worse off, and limit fleet turnover. We must ensure rules don't inadvertently encourage the wrong behaviours or impacts.

When a new regulation kicks in, used imports usually take a big hit. Volumes can drop because importers cannot find sufficient vehicles overseas.

After the Euro 3 emissions standard was introduced in 2009, used imports fell by nearly 20 per cent and it took about two years for them to recover. When Euro 4 was brought in for used imports in 2012, the market felt an immediate impact with volumes dropping by about 18 per cent.

New-vehicle importers saw little impact on volumes from these rules. While they complain about change and the cost to margins, manufacturers can build vehicles to meet standards right off the production line.

Used cars depend on what's already out there in overseas markets. If compliant models aren't widely available or if competition for them is fierce, importers are stuck with fewer options and cars that can be sourced will be more expensive.

The disparity hits lower-income buyers the hardest. Even though only 50 per cent of all imported vehicles are purchased for personal use, 70 per cent of used imports fall into this category because they are more affordable.

Many are smaller cars and more fuel-efficient. Nearly half of the used imports from Japan are petrol hybrids. These are a win for the environment and make economic sense for families on tight budgets.

In contrast, new cars represent 30 per cent of the personal market with the rest bought by businesses. They are dominated by larger SUVs and diesel utes, which – on average – are heavier, less fuel-efficient and produce more emissions.

They may protect occupants better in crashes but do so by transferring more risk and harm to other road users, such as pedestrians, cyclists and people in smaller cars.

It's an inequitable trade-off that doesn't align with broader public health or environmental goals.

Programmes like the clean car standard (CCS) aim to incentivise cleaner models. While such policies are steps in the right direction, they can have unintended consequences.

Because of the CCS' weight-adjustment calculation, a large new plug-in hybrid SUV may qualify for a rebate despite having a bigger environmental footprint than a small used petrol hybrid, which could even receive a penalty.

KIT WILKERSON
Head of policy and strategy
kit@via.org.nz

This kind of incentive structure doesn't just skew consumer choice. It also undermines the policy's environmental goals. The option of buying a smaller, cleaner vehicle should be a viable strategy to cut emissions, but it's nullified by the design of the CCS.

We need to roll out regulations more thoughtfully and they need to align with the supply of compliant vehicles from source markets.

Regulations need to align with the supply of compliant vehicles from source markets

For example, if Japan's fleet hasn't yet transitioned to newer emissions standards or if competition for those models is high, it's unrealistic to expect immediate compliance in used imports. Phasing in changes gradually allows the market to adjust, ensuring a steady supply of affordable vehicles.

This approach would prevent sharp declines in used-import volumes we've seen in the past and avoid forcing low-income buyers to stick with older, higher-emissions models already in the fleet. Recycling older vehicles has the effect of ageing the fleet and evidence shows we never recover when this occurs.

The likes of the CCS should focus on absolute emissions with cleaner cars receiving the highest incentives no matter the mass of the vehicle.

By focusing on cleaner models, we can also reduce noxious emissions, which cause four times the harm of crashes in New Zealand and improve road safety for everyone.

Adjustments aren't just about market dynamics, they are also about fairness and sustainability.

Regulations that disproportionately affect used imports risk creating a two-tiered system with lower-income buyers stuck with fewer options and higher costs as wealthier people continue to drive larger vehicles that harm the environment and make roads less safe.

By rolling out policies that account for the realities of the used-import market, its importance to buyers and adjusting incentive programmes to favour sustainable choices, we can achieve three things.

We can ensure affordable, efficient vehicles remain accessible, reduce emissions and prioritise cleaner choices, and minimise risks posed by larger vehicles.

Regulations are essential for building a cleaner, safer fleet, but need to avoid unintended consequences.

Gradual implementation that reflects the realities of source markets can stabilise used-import volumes. At the same time, rethinking the way incentives are structured can align new-vehicle choices with broader safety and environmental goals.

VIA
Imported Motor Vehicle Industry Association
Advocate ▪ Advise ▪ Connect

The month that was... January

January 26, 1998

LTSA accused of double standards

An Auckland dealer was planning to take on the might of the Land Transport Safety Authority (LTSA).

Stephen Ward, of Frontier Motors, was incensed about what he saw as "double standards" being employed to the car industry's detriment.

He believed there was a great deal of anecdotal evidence that pointed to the LTSA deliberately making it more difficult and expensive for importers of used vehicles, especially those coming from Japan.

Ward cited, as an example, that compliance rules had failed to keep pace with technology. He said: "Any imported Windom – sold new here as a Lexus – had to have its custom-made seatbelts taken out and replaced with inferior belts.

"As a result, its computer assumes there's no-one in the driver's seat and automatically disconnects the airbag system.

"People are paying top money for a product which will not give them the protection they believe they are paying for."

Ward had been fighting bureaucracy, behind the scenes, for years before going public with his concerns.

January 26, 2007

OCR unchanged at 7.25%

The official cash rate (OCR) remained unchanged at 7.25 per cent. In making the announcement, Reserve Bank governor Alan Bollard said indicators showed economic growth was continuing to be moderate in 2006's third quarter.

However, it was increasingly apparent that domestic demand had since rebounded with retail trade picking up, a resurgent housing market, and consumer and business confidence recovering strongly.

"The main drivers appear to be the decline in petrol prices since last October, a pick-up in net immigration and an expansionary fiscal policy," added Bollard. "Headline inflation has reduced because of lower oil prices and strengthening of the exchange rate in the fourth quarter.

"Annual CPI inflation fell to 2.6 per cent in December and is projected to decrease considerably further through 2007, thus helping to lower inflation expectations.

"The medium-term outlook is less rosy with annual inflation projected to return to the upper part of our target range into 2009.

"While the near-term inflation outlook is relatively benign, we remain concerned about the upside risk to medium-term inflation."

January 20, 2006

Emissions law coming

Land Transport NZ had released the public consultation draft of a rule governing emissions.

The proposed requirements to existing standards for cars manufactured from 1990 were in addition to what was mandated by the Land Transport Rule: Vehicle Exhaust Emissions 2003.

They would introduce visible smoke testing for vehicles as part of regular inspections to ensure those entering or already in the fleet weren't gross polluters.

At the time, the police could ticket smokey vehicles and those entering the country had to meet approved emissions standards, but exhaust emissions weren't checked as part of warrant of fitness (WOF) or certificate of fitness (COF) processes.

The draft rule proposed to include simple visible smoke checks as part of WOF and COF inspections.

Frank Willett, of the Independent Motor Vehicle Dealers Association, said the proposals were more likely to affect cars already in-service rather than newly arriving used imports.

Reducing the time for exhaust systems to remain smokey from 10 seconds to five seemed to be a move in the wrong direction because the law already had a 10-second limit.

January 30, 2009

GM announces sales growth

Despite its gloomy financial state, General Motors (GM) was reporting sales growth in some parts of its operations.

In 2008, GM sold 5.37 million vehicles outside the US accounting for 64 per cent of its total global sales volume compared with 59 per cent one year ago.

In the fourth quarter, GM sales of 1.7m were down by 26 per cent compared with the same quarter a year prior. Most of that decline was reflected in 379,000 fewer vehicles sold in North America.

GM Asia-Pacific's sales grew by three per cent and Chevrolet sales in China increased by 16 per cent to nearly 200,000 vehicles.

Chevrolet broke through 500,000 with a record market share, and Opel set records in central and eastern Europe with volumes up 13 per cent.

GM topped the industry with more than 1.27m sales in Latin America, Africa and the Middle East led by the top-selling Corsa, Celta and Aveo. Its nearly three per cent growth in Asia-Pacific, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East partially offset a 21 per cent decline in North American and growing pressure in Europe.

Don't go searching for news. Let the news come to you.

Subscribe now to INSIGHT for twice-weekly updates www.autofile.co.nz/subscribe

Getting to grips with ratings

It's that time again in New Zealand. The stars are out with safety ratings being updated by the NZTA in early December.

There have been two major changes with used cars' crash-avoidance features and carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions now being included.

Before we look at changes to the used car safety ratings (UCSR), let's just review the three primary sources for ratings.

The Australasian New Car Assessment Program, known as ANCAP, assesses new vehicles through rigorous crash tests.

Its ratings are based on a model's performance in controlled crash scenarios, and these include frontal, side and pedestrian impacts.

The tests simulate common types of accidents and measure their impacts on the vehicle and its occupants. The results are then analysed to determine structural integrity and the effectiveness of safety features.

The UCSR, meanwhile, are updated annually and are derived from real-world crash data.

These ratings are based on evaluations of the safety performances of used vehicles from accident reports filed by the police in New Zealand and Australia, which are then analysed by Monash University's accident research centre in Melbourne.

This method provides a practical insight into how cars perform in everyday driving conditions, and includes information on the types of crashes, severity of injuries and vehicles involved.

By comparing this data, Monash identifies which models offer better protection in real-world scenarios.

The UCSR system applies to around 88 per cent of light vehicles in New Zealand's fleet, including passenger vehicles, SUVs, utes and vans.

For models that don't have an ANCAP or UCSR rating, the vehicle safety risk ratings (VSRR) provide an alternative assessment.

The VSRR system uses statistical models to estimate safety performance based on vehicle weight, size, design, year of manufacture, and features of comparable makes and models.

Two changes were made to the used-car ratings on December 1 when some methodology improvements were added to Rightcar's online platform.

One was crash-avoidance features, which is similar in approach to what's applied in the new-vehicle sector. The other was expanding the "great choice" criteria to include used cars.

Ratings for used vehicles' crash-

LARRY FALLOWFIELD
Sector manager – dealers, Motor Trade Association

avoidance systems are based on real-world accident data and measure how well a car can avoid collisions thanks to key safety features.

The rating considers the availability of automatic emergency braking, electronic stability control, lane-keep assist, daytime running lamps, roll stability control and reversing cameras or sensors.

To qualify for the "great choice" criteria, used and new vehicles need high overall safety, CO_2 emissions and air-pollution ratings.

The great-choice label is based on the follow criteria:

- Four or five-star overall safety rating on a scale from one to five.
- Five or six-star rating for CO_2 emissions and air pollution on a scale from one to six.

With used and new models being assessed under various systems, ratings become different over time and more than one million used vehicles' overall safety stars have changed since 2023.

The annual safety-rating update is in line with the government's objectives of continuing to "increase awareness of the importance of safe vehicles including better understanding of ratings and encouraging consumers to purchase the highest safety-rated vehicle they can".

CO_2 emissions and safety ratings may not be big driving factors for first-car buyers or for parents who are recommending or purchasing those first vehicles, but they should be.

Thirty years ago, your first car would be lucky to reach the open-road speed limit quickly. You might have needed a steep downhill decent with a brisk southerly behind you. Now you can do it in less than five seconds.

Having our least experienced drivers in the lowest safety-rated vehicles on the road isn't the ideal scenario.

We know from the statistics that mistakes happen. When you mix low safety features with speed, bravado or self-induced impairment, the rate of an accident happening increases and survival plummets.

Higher star-rated vehicles can play a key role in keeping our loved ones safer.

Dealers are being encouraged to familiarise themselves with the 2024 used-car safety ratings and to print and display updated labels, which can be generated online, to ensure accurate information is being provided to customers.

We're in the know

Enjoyed this column?

MTA membership gives you direct access to all our industry experts, for business advice and services.

mta.org.nz/become-a-member 0800 00 11 44

mta ASSURED

Previewing designs of the future

Cadillac's Opulent Velocity concept

The Opulent Velocity (OV) is a design study which Cadillac says heads up its commitment to fully electric and autonomous cars.

The four-seat coupe with scissor doors combines advanced technology with bespoke luxury.

With level-four autonomous capability, the concept is designed to give a hands-free immersive experience with multi-sensory modes via a full widescreen display and augmented reality head-up display (HUD).

When triggered by touching the multi-functional controller, it morphs from autonomous, or "opulent", mode to velocity for a more focused drive.

Cadillac says the velocity experience "provides the user with the maximum thrill of a hypercar while keeping the sense of luxury of the V-Series".

The front seats encompass the cantilevered Y-shaped console and are linked directly to the door to help secure the motorist for high-speed driving.

The velocity experience is inspired by Cadillac's Blackwing track-proven engineering and conceptualises a "ghost car" function that displays on the HUD screen serving as the user guide.

This mode presents a competitive course that allows drivers to improve their lap times or compete against peers.

Front and rear entry is via large butterfly doors with expansive openings, while the exterior's "subtle transitions and controlled surfaces celebrate its bold graphics and proportions".

The concept gives an insight into future Cadillac design with the integration of next-generation technology as seen on the 3D information-enabled widescreen display, a fully digital cockpit, racing-inspired Y-shape steering wheel, voice-command user experiences and intuitive infotainment system.

FROM CRADLE TO GRAVE

The Emblème hydrogen fuel-cell EV is more than just a design and technology preview.

Renault says it's "emblematic" of being committed to radically reducing emissions over the lifecycle of its vehicles.

The concept has been conceived from the ground up as a model that could – as part of a planned system for sourcing, manufacturing and recycling – cut carbon dioxide-equivalent (CO_2e) "from cradle to grave" by 90 per cent compared to vehicles with internal combustion engines (ICEs).

Renault has unveiled EVs in numbers over recent years to meet its short-term targets of a 35 per cent emissions reduction by 2025 compared to 2019 levels and by 65 per cent by 2030.

The Emblème, however, represents the marque's longer-term goals of complete carbon neutrality in Europe by 2040 and worldwide by 2050.

For example, a 90 per cent reduction in emissions would, according to Renault, result in five tonnes of CO_2e over a vehicle's full cradle-to-grave cycle compared to today's EVs being forecast to have lifecycle emissions of 15-25 tonnes and ICEs' 40-50 tonnes.

The company hasn't confirmed if the Emblème previews an imminent new model, but describes the "shooting brake" as a 4.8-metre long family car riding on a 2,900mm wheelbase – well beyond the Koleos' 2,690mm footprint.

Its electric motor has no rare-earth materials. Its hydrogen fuel cell means it features a smaller, 40kWh battery than would be needed for a BEV of this size.

The Emblème can cover 1,000km as rapidly as an ICE "without charging but with just two stops for hydrogen refuelling, less than five minutes each time, for a range of 350km".

AERODYNAMIC ADDITIONS

The Concept BST electric sportscar is based on the Polestar 6 although the marque has yet to reveal specifications or outputs.

The paint choice, a classic motorsport-style silver, is adorned with a large wrap-around decal.

At the front is a large splitter matched with a diffuser at the rear, while the car runs on flared arches and a lowered stance.

Its 22-inch alloys and performance tyres are met with hints of gold as the large brake calipers shine through the rims.

The extensive rear wing is a first for Polestar. It's "a theoretical and

VEHICLES WANTED
DEALERS BUYING NOW

Automotive excellence since 1993.
Your official Audi, Porsche, Jaguar, Land Rover and Volvo dealer

Armstrong's
Wellington
66 Cambridge Terrace,
Te Aro, Wellington | 04 887 1306

To advertise here, contact:
advertising@autofile.co.nz or ph 021 455 775


The Genesis Neolun


Kia's PV5

a design exercise, but showcases what aerodynamic additions could look like".

Thomas Ingenlath, chief executive officer, says: "This car is a demonstration of how far we can push our performance brand and apply the BST formula to our line-up in the future."


The Renault Emblème

'STIMULATE' YOUR SENSES

Two concepts from Genesis include the Neolun, its first full-size electric SUV, and the GV60 Magma.

The Neolun's exterior revolves around the principle of "reductive design", which is characterised by clean, refined lines.

The most prominent features are its distinctive coach doors with no b-pillars connecting the body and roof. They provide a more open interior and access, and electric side steps are automatically deployed when needed. After the doors close, they integrate back into the car.

The Neolun's body-integrated lamps blend with the SUV's front and rear design, and there's a pop-up type roof rack.

The swivelling function of the front-row seats maximises space and practicality for passengers, while the large adjustable screen and flexible display that unfolds from the rear-seat headliner offer a sensory-stimulating experience.

The GV60 Magma, meanwhile, marks Genesis' expansion into high performance. It ultimately aims to develop a Magma for each production model in its line-up.

This concept elevates the design and performance of the existing GV60, the brand's first dedicated EV, with improved battery and motor technology.

To enhance stability during sporty driving, the car has been widened and lowered, giving it a more dynamic stance and allowing for a lower centre of gravity.

At the front, a wider and lower main air intake in the bumper cools the batteries, motor and brakes, while air curtains enhance aerodynamics.

Three stamped holes above the main intake provide extra cooling, while added canards assist in generating downforce on the front axle.

The enlarged fenders and integrated wheelhouse outlets help reduce kinetic energy and improve brake cooling.

Fins have been placed on the roof to control the aerodynamic flow and channel it to the rear wing, generating rear downforce.

FUTURE WITHOUT DRIVING

Kia's Platform Beyond Vehicle (PBV) future strategy will see its business initially based around introducing a modular model, previewed by its Concept PV5.

It has been presented alongside a multi-phase plan that will see PBVs "revolutionise" the industry while helping to advance Hyundai Motor Group's ambitions in robotics, advanced air mobility and autonomous driving.

The PBVs "combine fit-for-purpose EVs with advanced software solutions" based on Hyundai's software-to-everything strategy.

Kia aims to launch a range of customised types of vehicles to meet buyers' individual requirements.

Introducing the PV5 is phase one. It's a versatile EV optimised for major domains, such as hailing, delivery and utilities, as well as featuring conversion capability for consumer needs.

Enhanced connectivity between vehicle and external data, such as route or delivery information, will enable convenient operation of multiple vehicles as a software-defined fleet.

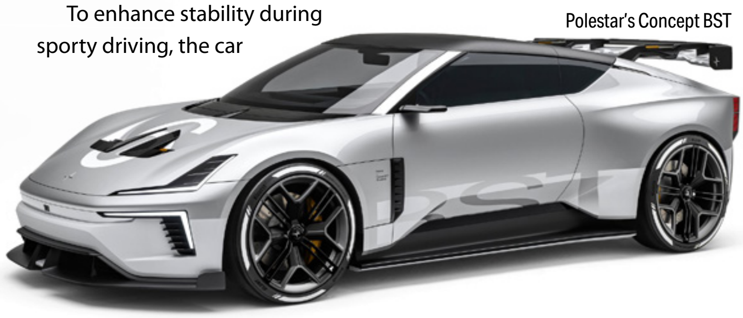
Customised fleets and PBV-specific solutions mean less downtime and enhanced cost-effectiveness, so the thinking goes.

Phase two will see a dedicated line-up completed with PBVs evolving into AI-based mobility platforms as new forms of business linked with robotics and other future technologies emerge.

In phase three, Kia's PBVs will evolve into highly customisable, bespoke mobility solutions.

The company sees connected self-driving cars being managed as part of a single smart-city operating system.

Polestar's Concept BST



Young guns battling it out

Ajay Giddy is the youngest driver to compete in the GR86 championship

Youth is strongly represented in the 25-strong grid for the 2024/25 Bridgestone GR86 Championship.

The youngest driver to ever compete in the series is Ajay Giddy, a year-nine student at Orewa College, north of Auckland.

At just 13, he showed considerable potential in official tests for the series, which sees him racing alongside some of New Zealand's top rising stars as well as plenty of seasoned and battle-hardened drivers, but he's up for the challenge.

"There's plenty to learn for sure," says Giddy. "However, I'm really enjoying the car and the team around me. I only have one objective, and that's to get better and spend the year learning."

One month before the series started, Giddy took part in the three-hour South Island Endurance Racing event at Ruapuna near Christchurch where he shared a GR86 with former category champion Tom Alexander.

It's going to be a busy year for the youngster, who will race in the BMW series as well as the GR86 championship. He is being run by Mackenzie Motorsport with support from Opie Contractors.

Giddy is part of what championship organisers are dubbing the "next wave" of top Kiwis.

Other young racers in this summer's series include Arthur Broughan, who is 15. The Marlborough Boys High School student started his racing career in karts in 2017 and switched to circuit racing last season by moving into the Mazda RX8 series.

"Obviously, I'd love to win but I'm here to learn and get myself known," says Broughan. "The high level of competition is a guarantee with this championship and it's going to be an important stepping stone in my career."

The 16-year-olds taking part this season are Ray Mallin, Emerson Vincent, Caleb Byers, Cameron Hill and Australian Jett Murray.

They will be back in their GR86s for the series' second round at Hampton Downs on January 17.

The championship then heads to Invercargill and the 69th New Zealand Grand Prix meeting at Highlands Motorsport Park.

SUBSCRIBE TO AUTOFILE MAGAZINE

For **$78 plus GST**, you will receive 12 issues a year full of need-to-know news covering New Zealand's car industry and connected sectors.

Just visit **autofile.co.nz/subscribe** to sign up.

autofile THE TRUSTED VOICE OF THE NZ AUTO INDUSTRY FOR NEARLY 40 YEARS

James Penrose in action

Four wins out of four

James Penrose had a successful return to Formula Ford competition at the third round of the 2024/25 Yokohama South Island Formula Ford Championship.

The former South Island and New Zealand champion, of 2020/21 and 2021 respectively, won all four races at Teretonga Park near Invercargill last month.

"It was my first time in this car on the Friday when it all came together at the last minute, so I was realistic in my expectations for the weekend," says Penrose.

"It's just as competitive as last time, so it was nice to be racing. It doesn't get much better that racing a Formula Ford."

Will Neale finished on the podium three times as Dylan Petch moved into second overall with four podiums from the round. Neale continues to lead the overall series.

The drivers and teams will now be preparing for the fourth round in Timaru at the end of January. It also doubles up as the first round of four in the NZ Formula Ford Championship.

Meanwhile, Toby McCormack made a clean sweep of the North Island Formula Ford Series round at Manfeild Circuit Chris Amon, winning all four races.

He has won six consecutive races out of 10 held so far this season and sits second overall, just two points behind leader Blake Dowdall.

Gilmour celebrates return to form

Emma Gilmour and co-driver Malcolm Read claimed third in the Asia-Pacific Rally Championship

She's New Zealand's fastest and most successful female rally driver, although Emma Gilmour prefers to be thought of as simply "a competitor".

This arguably sells short her status as a trailblazer for women in motorsport and the automotive world down under.

It all started with the Gilmour family's deep involvement in vehicle sales and servicing. Her father's career as a mechanic sparked an interest in all things cars.

Her involvement from a young age spurred a career that went right to the front of New Zealand's rally scene, then to international rallycross and driving for the McLaren team in Extreme E.

The latter was a high point, but also saw her crash out in a life-threatening high-speed smash.

Since then, her return to top form in New Zealand rallying has been all about resilience.

Gilmour started in rallying as a navigator. When she got a chance to drive, things got interesting.

"Navigating was cool and going fast on dirt roads was awesome. But it wasn't until I got to drive that I thought, 'oh my God, this is the best feeling in the world'."

Gilmour was quickly launched on a rally career that sat alongside her automotive career – she is dealer principal of Gilmour Motors in Dunedin, where she was born.

As a factory driver for the Hyundai US Global Rally Cross team in 2014, she reached the finals in Las Vegas and semi-finals of the X Games.

Gilmour became the first woman to win a round of the NZ Rally Championship (NZRC) when she claimed victory in the 2016 Rally of Canterbury and she was runner-up in the NZRC over three consecutive years against world-class competition.

Gilmour had a bittersweet end to 2023. Having become the first Kiwi to drive for McLaren in Extreme E, she had a huge crash and suffered concussion, a neck injury and broken ribs. It put her out of the series.

Gilmour flying high with McLaren in Extreme E

"With Extreme E, I got to see amazing parts of the world that many people don't. I always knew it couldn't last forever, so I rode the wave for as long as I could and thoroughly enjoyed it all. No regrets at all."

So onto the 2024 NZRC when Gilmour's Citroen C3 Rally2 would run as part of Hayden Paddon's "stable".

At the opening round, the very fast Otago Rally, she had first-day issues but recovered to finish sixth overall and fourth in the standings.

At the second round, the Rally South Canterbury, Paddon won ahead of Stokes, Hunt, Zeal Jones and Gilmour.

At the third round, the Southern Lights Rally in Southland, Gilmour again placed fifth.

The Daybreaker Rally, traversing Manawatu and Rangitikei, returned to the championship last year, and Gilmour and co-driver Malcolm Read claimed a top-five finish in slippery, tricky conditions.

"We had a really good day and started out stronger in the morning before the conditions deteriorated in the afternoon," she says. "It worked well with Malcolm co-driving and I enjoyed changes that I made to the C3."

Gilmour set a string of top five times. "I struggled a little bit to find the rhythm in the afternoon when the stages cut up and got wet and slippery. Overall, though, it was a positive day."

The penultimate round was Rally Bay of Plenty. Gilmour took a hard-fought third overall, which was a welcome boost to her championship points tally.

"I credit our strong performance to the amount of seat time I had over the previous six weeks, including winning the two-day Catlins Rallysprint in August.

"Then we had the Daybreaker, Ashley Forest Rallysprint and Bay of Plenty Rally in quick succession."

At the final round, Gilmour was targeting a championship podium and she delivered.

"I've always enjoyed the Rally of Whangarei's stages and have had strong results there in the past.

"I was so stoked to get third in the championship. It's been amazing having Malcolm on the pace notes and awesome having the Paddon Rallysport team running the car."

JEVIC
09 966 1779
www.jevic.com
SPECIALISTS IN **PRE-SHIPMENT INSPECTIONS**
MPI biosecurity inspections
Biosecurity decontamination
Heat treatment
Odometer verifications
Pre-export appraisals
NZTA border inspections
Lost documentation reports

Buyer claims she was misled by not being told car was accident damaged in Japan


A 2012 Toyota Aqua

The case: The buyer wanted to reject her Toyota Aqua because it had an undiagnosed shudder. However, she failed to attend the second tribunal hearing and provided no diagnostic evidence about the issue. The trader said it hadn't been given an opportunity to assess the hybrid and make any repairs.

The decision: The tribunal ruled it didn't have the evidence needed to make a ruling so the claim made under two pieces of legislation was dismissed.

At: The Motor Vehicle Disputes Tribunal via video link.

Background

Jasmin Shirley purchased a 2012 Toyota Aqua for $10,059 from 2 Cheap Cars on February 12, 2023.

She wanted to reject the hybrid due to various post-supply faults, obtain a refund of the purchase price, and recover $1,077 for insurance and loan payments.

Shirley also claimed the trader engaged in misleading conduct by failing to disclose the Toyota had been involved in an accident in Japan.

The dealer said Shirley wasn't entitled to reject the Aqua because the issues she complained of had been fixed, and it should have been given a chance to assess and repair it when she later provided evidence of it shuddering.

The case

After the parties had a hearing on May 17, 2024, the adjudicator asked Shirley to provide a diagnostic report by May 27 that confirmed the root cause of the shuddering and a quote to fix it.

The trader was to file its comments by May 30 before a video hearing on June 12. But Shirley didn't appear at that hearing and provided no further information. Therefore, the tribunal had to make a decision based on evidence before it.

About eight months after purchase, the Aqua's engine and oil light came on. The car began beeping and then stopped so Shirley had it towed to her home.

On October 30 last year, she emailed the trader with an overview of the vehicle's issues and the trader collected it for inspection.

The next day, the dealer emailed Shirley stating the mechanic found issues with the fuel-pump wiring, airflow sensor and exhaust gas recirculation (EGR) valve.

On November 13, the trader told the buyer it had repaired those issues free of charge and she could collect her car.

The purchaser replied via email, requesting reassurance the Aqua would pass a warrant of fitness on November 16. The trader responded if there was an issue with that it would help her.

Shirley did a historical check on CarJam and found the vehicle had been in an accident in Japan, which wasn't disclosed to her at purchase.

She felt a strong shudder while driving the Aqua so she had it inspected by Main Auto Centre, which reported the right-hand front-top engine mount needed replacing.

Shirley told the hearing the trader mentioned the faulty mount was likely due to the accident in Japan, which was consistent with the CarJam report, but that she wouldn't have purchased the vehicle had she known about its history.

She claimed that by not disclosing that incident, the trader had engaged in misleading conduct.

Shirley also claimed the Aqua wasn't of acceptable quality considering the issues identified by the repairer and because it hadn't been properly repaired after the accident.

The trader said the problems occurred about nine months post-purchase, and were consistent with the car's age and mileage.

It added the engine-mount damage hadn't been caused by the accident in Japan because the vehicle passed compliance with no concerns.

The finding

The tribunal found the Aqua wasn't of acceptable quality under section six of the Consumer Guarantees Act due to the faulty fuel-pump wiring, the airflow sensors and EGR valve. However, it was satisfied those defects were minor and fixed by the trader.

The dealer had also offered to assess and repair the vehicle in light of the repairer's report, but the buyer hadn't taken up its offer.

She only noticed the faulty mount about eight months after purchase and having driven about 10,000km in it.

The Aqua's entry certification showed it wasn't imported as damaged. While it couldn't be ruled out the damage occurred due to the accident, the tribunal believed it was more likely the faulty mount was due to the wear and tear consistent with the vehicle's age and mileage.

After the first hearing, Shirley was asked to provide a diagnosis to confirm the root cause of the shudder.

As this hadn't been provided, the tribunal didn't have sufficient information to determine whether this related to the Aqua not being of an acceptable quality when it was sold.

Shirley purchased the 11-year-old car when it had an odometer reading of 121,000km.

A reasonable consumer buying such a vehicle should understand it would have pre-existing wear and tear consistent with its age and mileage, and that defects might arise from time to time.

In this case, 2 Cheap Cars was prepared to reassess the Aqua and perform repairs, but Shirley didn't want to give the trader a second chance.

That said, she had failed to provide the information requested so the tribunal was uncertain as to the shudder's cause.

Shirley submitted the dealer engaged in misleading conduct by representing the Aqua was in perfect condition and failing to disclose its accident history.

The tribunal wasn't satisfied the trader represented that the vehicle was in that condition and free of any undisclosed known defects in breach of section nine of the Fair Trading Act.

When the Aqua was imported, it went through compliance testing without any issues.

The failure to disclose the accident wasn't ideal but as it seemed minor and as the car wasn't a damaged import, the tribunal didn't find Shirley had been misled by the dealer.

Order

The claim was dismissed.

Reasonable consumer would expect fully functional key to be supplied with vehicle

The case: The buyer wanted the trader to supply a functioning key for his Volvo because the one he was given at purchase didn't lock the car. The trader said it had met its obligations under the Consumer Guarantees Act (CGA) by supplying a key that operated.

The decision: The tribunal found that the vehicle wasn't of an acceptable quality due to the absence of a key that worked. The dealer was ordered to supply one that did its job.

At: The Motor Vehicle Disputes Tribunal, Auckland.

Background

Andre Currie bought a 2017 XC90 from ZAH Contract Management Ltd, trading as Century Car Sales, on December 18, 2023.

He said he was only given one key for the Volvo at purchase and that it didn't work properly, so the trader advised him it would supply another one.

The buyer added that after multiple requests the trader finally sent him another key, but the replacement was also faulty.

He then took the second key to a local dealer, who advised that it needed to be replaced at a cost of $855.

Currie filed this claim with the tribunal to obtain an order for Century Car Sales to supply a functional key or pay for a replacement that worked.

The trader said, at the time of selling the vehicle, that it supplied a working key for the Volvo and an extra one might be supplied if it could be located.

It was surprised the first key was faulty.

The dealer added Currie had never raised this issue with it previously and, in Century Car Sales' view, it was certain one functional key was supplied with the vehicle. The trader didn't accept it needed to do anything else because it had met its obligations.

The case

The issues requiring the tribunal's consideration in this case were if the Volvo was of acceptable quality for the purposes of section six of the CGA and, if it wasn't, what remedy was the buyer entitled to.

In determining whether a vehicle is of acceptable quality, the situation is considered from the point of view of a reasonable consumer fully acquainted with its state and condition including any hidden defects.

The question the tribunal had to determine in this case was whether the sale of a car without at least one fully functional key rendered it not being of acceptable quality pursuant to the CGA's requirements.

The tribunal also needed to make a factual finding to determine whether the vehicle was sold with a functional key because the trader and buyer disagreed on this issue.

The dealer maintained a key that worked was supplied at the time of sale. It was of the view that it offered to supply the buyer with a second one if the trader was able to locate it.

Although a second key was supplied, the dealer was unsure why it wasn't functional. Ultimately, the trader maintained it had met its CGA obligations.

The buyer filed text messages between himself and the trader as evidence. These messages showed Currie was frustrated with the situation and wanted to send the vehicle back due to the lack of response from the dealer about supplying a new key soon after the purchase.

On the other hand, the dealer's recollection at the hearing seemed a bit hazy. The owner of the business said he was under the "impression" the key supplied at the time of sale worked and he didn't recall it had any problems.

The finding

The tribunal found that the buyer's evidence was more credible and the text-message exchange was consistent with his claim that a second key was promised as the first one wasn't working properly.

Applying the evidential threshold of the balance of probabilities, the tribunal was satisfied the key supplied at the time of sale wasn't functional.

That might have been down to a misunderstanding on the trader's part in that it believed the key supplied with the Volvo was working as intended so the second one was merely a back-up.

However, Currie believed a fully functional key was to be supplied after his purchase and was waiting for one to arrive.

It was also clear to the tribunal that the second key provided wasn't working. The buyer took it to BMW Manawatu and was quoted $855 to fix it.

Therefore, the question the tribunal had to answer was whether Century Car Sales was legally obliged to provide at least one functional key for the vehicle to be of acceptable quality under the CGA.

Currie said the key he was supplied with at the time of purchase didn't lock the vehicle but he could use it to start it. The buyer felt his Volvo was vulnerable to theft because it couldn't be secured.

The tribunal's assessor believed there might have been a circuit-board problem with the key.

In the tribunal's view, the key is an integral part of the vehicle and a reasonable consumer purchasing any car would expect it to be sold with at least one fully functional key unless the parties agree otherwise.

There was no suggestion in this case that Currie agreed to purchase the Volvo without at least one fully working key. As such, the tribunal was satisfied it wasn't of acceptable quality.

The relevant remedies available to buyers are contained in section 18 of the CGA. Because the tribunal had found that the Volvo wasn't of an acceptable quality due to the lack of a fully functional key, the adjudicator ruled the purchaser was entitled to obtain one from Century Car Sales.

Order

The dealer was ordered to supply a functional key to buyer in accordance with to section 18 of the CGA.

A 2017 XC90 Volvo

From left, Nissan's Makoto Uchida, Honda's Toshihiro Mibe and Mitsubishi's Takao Kato

Japanese marques 'fight back'

Nissan, Honda and Mitsubishi are officially in talks about a possible three-way merger.

Honda and Nissan have agreed to "start consideration towards a business integration" by establishing a joint holding company. Mitsubishi will decide about joining them by the end of January.

The joint venture will create the world's third-largest carmaker in terms of annual sales behind Toyota and Volkswagen as the industry faces a period of major upheaval.

While Toyota has remained relatively financially resilient thanks to its early lead in petrol hybrids, some Japanese brands have been struggling to come up with funding to invest in the switch from internal combustion engines (ICEs) to EVs.

At the same time, Chinese companies – such as BYD and SAIC Motor – have aggressively targeted the fully electric market to secure bigger slices of global sales.

Honda's market value when the merger was announced on December 23 was ¥6.74 trillion – or some NZ$75.4 billion – compared to Nissan's ¥1.67tn and ¥7b for Mitsubishi.

Nissan, which is worth about one-quarter of Honda, has been in crisis for several years amid falling profits and the turmoil after ex-chief executive officer Carlos Ghosn's arrest in 2018. He was smuggled out of Japan a year later.

A key driver behind the deal between the three Japanese companies will be to combat "the rise of Chinese power".

That's the view of Toshihiro Mibe, Honda's chief executive, who says the merger needs to be in place by 2030 or they risk being "beaten" by their rivals.

He says: "There is a rise of Chinese power and emerging forces, and the structure of the automobile industry is changing."

Mibe explains an industry change such as what's now being experienced globally only comes around once a century and he suggests the switch to EVs is as fundamental as the start of the mass market for cars.

He adds: "We hope Mitsubishi Motors' participation in the discussions will lead to further social change and that we will become a leading company in creating new value in mobility."

Mibe notes that any merger would depend on a turnaround at Nissan. However, any deal is likely to come under intense political scrutiny in Japan because it may result in job cuts.

Makoto Uchida, chief executive of Nissan, says: "Honda and Nissan will study the creation of significant synergies between the two companies in a wide range of fields.

"The talks started because we believe that we must build up capabilities to fight the current emerging forces by 2030. Otherwise, we will be beaten."

Uchida stresses the deal isn't a bailout of Nissan, which has been struggling with falling sales.

"It's significant that Nissan's partner, Mitsubishi, is also involved in these discussions," he adds. "If this integration comes to fruition, we'll be able to deliver even greater value to a wider customer base."

Takao Kato, president of Mitsubishi Motors, says: "In order to realise synergies and make the best use of each company's strengths, we will also study the best form of co-operation."

TIMETABLE FOR MERGER

Moving forward, the idea is for Nissan and Honda to set up a joint holding company that will be the parent of both marques.

This will be subject to approval at general meetings of both companies' shareholders and obtaining necessary approvals from relevant authorities for a merger based on the premise of Nissan turning around its performance.

Both businesses will be fully owned subsidiaries of the holding company, and the idea is for them to continue co-existing and developing their brands.

Shares of the newly established company are planned to be listed on the Tokyo Stock Exchange (TSE) in August 2026. That's when Nissan and Honda will be delisted from the TSE.

However, shareholders of both will continue to be able to trade shares in the joint holding company issued during the transfer.

The next stage – planned for June this year – is executing a "definitive agreement" concerning the merger. Extraordinary shareholders' meetings to approve the share transfer are slated for April 2026.

COSTS DOWN, PROFITS UP

A statement from Nissan and Honda explains the two companies will now set up a committee "to facilitate a smooth integration and conduct focused discussions".

They will analyse "synergies to become a world-class mobility company with sales revenue exceeding ¥30tn and operating profit of more than ¥3tn".

A merger will result in them scaling advantages by standardising vehicle platforms across different segments. They expect to create stronger products, boost development efficiencies and improve investments in this way.

Integration is projected to increase factory output and sales so they can slash development costs per unit while maximising profits.

By accelerating how their line-ups complement each other – including ICE, traditional hybrid, plug-in hybrid and fully electric models – they will be better positioned to "meet diverse customer needs".

The joint venture also aims to bolster research and development (R&D) capabilities.

Honda and Nissan have already started joint research into "fundamental" technologies for platforms in next generation software-defined models.

After the merger, they will integrate R&D functions to enhance technological expertise and reduce costs when these functions overlap.

Factories and energy-service facilities will be "optimised", along with improved collaboration via shared use of production lines.

Both brands intend to boost competitiveness by "streamlining" purchasing operations and sourcing common parts from the same supply chain.

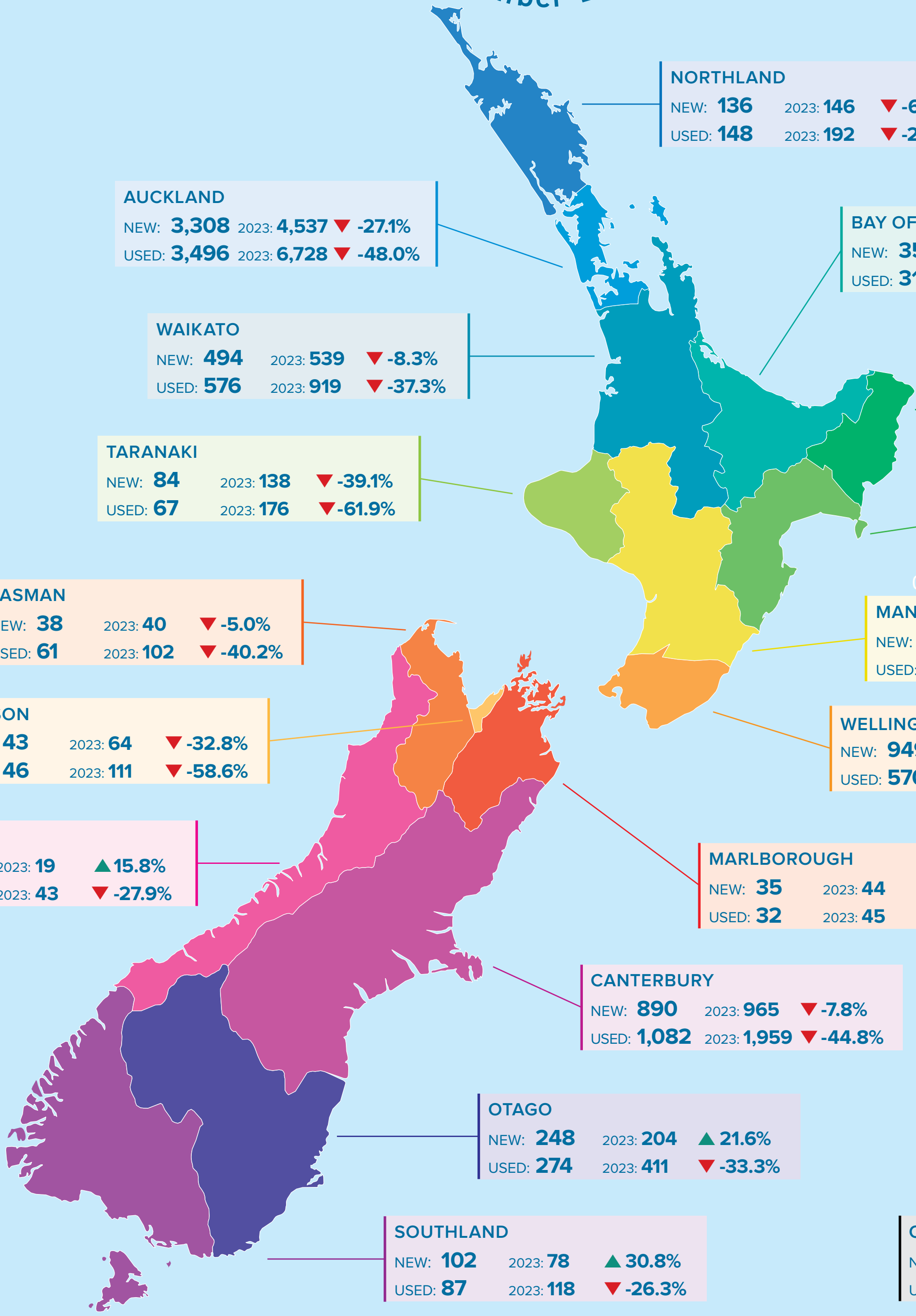
They expect that integrating systems and back-office operations, along with upgrading operational processes, will drive significant cost reductions.

Around the Country

December 2024

Total new cars
7,209
2023: 8,547 ▼ 15.7%

Total imported used cars
7,141
2023: 12,795 ▼ 44.2%



			2023	
NORTHLAND	NEW	136	146	▼ -6.8%
	USED	148	192	▼ -22.9%
AUCKLAND	NEW	3,308	4,537	▼ -27.1%
	USED	3,496	6,728	▼ -48.0%
BAY OF PLENTY	NEW	353	376	▼ -6.1%
	USED	315	439	▼ -28.2%
WAIKATO	NEW	494	539	▼ -8.3%
	USED	576	919	▼ -37.3%
GISBORNE	NEW	30	18	▲ 66.7%
	USED	55	42	▲ 31.0%
TARANAKI	NEW	84	138	▼ -39.1%
	USED	67	176	▼ -61.9%
HAWKE'S BAY	NEW	176	229	▼ -23.1%
	USED	112	225	▼ -50.2%
TASMAN	NEW	38	40	▼ -5.0%
	USED	61	102	▼ -40.2%
MANAWATU-WHANGANUI	NEW	296	268	▲ 10.4%
	USED	172	274	▼ -37.2%
NELSON	NEW	43	64	▼ -32.8%
	USED	46	111	▼ -58.6%
WELLINGTON	NEW	949	860	▲ 10.3%
	USED	570	965	▼ -40.9%
WEST COAST	NEW	22	19	▲ 15.8%
	USED	31	43	▼ -27.9%
MARLBOROUGH	NEW	35	44	▼ -20.5%
	USED	32	45	▼ -28.9%
CANTERBURY	NEW	890	965	▼ -7.8%
	USED	1,082	1,959	▼ -44.8%
OTAGO	NEW	248	204	▲ 21.6%
	USED	274	411	▼ -33.3%
SOUTHLAND	NEW	102	78	▲ 30.8%
	USED	87	118	▼ -26.3%
OTHERS (Chatham Islands, overseas, unknown)	NEW	5	22	▼ -77.3%
	USED	17	46	▼ -63.0%

Captions captions captions

FINANCE TO SHIFT YOUR BUSINESS INTO TOP GEAR

Your Vehicle Import Finance Specialist

To find out more visit us at www.blackbirdfinance.co.nz or call us on 0800 000 999

BLACKBIRD FINANCE

HEIWA AUTO

Imported Passenger Vehicle Sales by Make - December 2024

MAKE	DEC'24	DEC'23	+/-%	DEC'24 MKT SHARE	2024 YEAR TO DATE	2024 MKT SHARE
Toyota	2,559	7,054	-63.7	35.8%	35,983	36.8%
Nissan	961	2,091	-54.0	13.5%	13,388	13.7%
Mazda	881	914	-3.6	12.3%	13,115	13.4%
Subaru	750	409	83.4	10.5%	8,610	8.8%
Honda	679	693	-2.0	9.5%	8,367	8.6%
BMW	254	187	35.8	3.6%	2,989	3.1%
Suzuki	191	193	-1.0	2.7%	2,714	2.8%
Mitsubishi	135	505	-73.3	1.9%	2,364	2.4%
Mercedes-Benz	133	99	34.3	1.9%	1,834	1.9%
Audi	127	96	32.3	1.8%	1,781	1.8%
Lexus	123	172	-28.5	1.7%	1,885	1.9%
Volkswagen	91	151	-39.7	1.3%	1,872	1.9%
Land Rover	36	19	89.5	0.5%	481	0.5%
Ford	33	27	22.2	0.5%	362	0.4%
Tesla	25	28	-10.7	0.4%	129	0.1%
Jeep	24	5	380.0	0.3%	215	0.2%
Chevrolet	19	18	5.6	0.3%	158	0.2%
Volvo	15	12	25.0	0.2%	165	0.2%
Dodge	13	4	225.0	0.2%	98	0.1%
Porsche	13	7	85.7	0.2%	155	0.2%
Jaguar	12	14	-14.3	0.2%	216	0.2%
Chrysler	9	1	800.0	0.1%	92	0.1%
Mini	9	14	-35.7	0.1%	125	0.1%
Hyundai	6	8	-25.0	0.1%	64	0.1%
Holden	5	3	66.7	0.1%	54	0.1%
Cadillac	4	0	400.0	0.1%	23	0.0%
Aston Martin	3	2	50.0	0.0%	14	0.0%
Bentley	3	4	-25.0	0.0%	27	0.0%
Maserati	3	0	300.0	0.0%	12	0.0%
Peugeot	3	18	-83.3	0.0%	58	0.1%
Alfa Romeo	2	2	0.0	0.0%	29	0.0%
Buick	2	1	100.0	0.0%	15	0.0%
Fiat	2	1	100.0	0.0%	21	0.0%
Plymouth	2	1	100.0	0.0%	21	0.0%
Smart	2	4	-50.0	0.0%	17	0.0%
Others	12	38	-68.4	0.2%	366	0.4%
Total	**7,141**	**12,795**	**-44.2**	**100.0%**	**97,819**	**100.0%**

Imported Passenger Vehicle Sales by Model - December 2024

MAKE	MODEL	DEC'24	DEC'23	+/-%	DEC'24 MKT SHARE	2024 YEAR TO DATE	2024 MKT SHARE
Toyota	Aqua	735	3,093	-76.2	10.3%	9,740	10.0%
Toyota	Prius	442	1,836	-75.9	6.2%	7,325	7.5%
Toyota	Corolla	313	694	-54.9	4.4%	3,787	3.9%
Subaru	Impreza	288	195	47.7	4.0%	3,236	3.3%
Honda	Fit	242	267	-9.4	3.4%	3,128	3.2%
Mazda	Axela	225	361	-37.7	3.2%	3,898	4.0%
Nissan	Serena	221	191	15.7	3.1%	2,723	2.8%
Mazda	Demio	213	197	8.1	3.0%	3,010	3.1%
Nissan	X-Trail	211	204	3.4	3.0%	3,167	3.2%
Nissan	Note	195	643	-69.7	2.7%	3,374	3.4%
Toyota	C-HR	187	380	-50.8	2.6%	2,852	2.9%
Subaru	XV	177	124	42.7	2.5%	2,187	2.2%
Mazda	CX-5	160	133	20.3	2.2%	2,330	2.4%
Suzuki	Swift	147	130	13.1	2.1%	1,958	2.0%
Honda	Vezel	127	107	18.7	1.8%	1,555	1.6%
Toyota	Vellfire	109	33	230.3	1.5%	1,169	1.2%
Mazda	Premacy	97	75	29.3	1.4%	1,163	1.2%
Subaru	Legacy	91	23	295.7	1.3%	948	1.0%
Toyota	Alphard	83	34	144.1	1.2%	712	0.7%
Honda	Odyssey	75	18	316.7	1.1%	644	0.7%
Mazda	Atenza	73	57	28.1	1.0%	1,185	1.2%
Mitsubishi	Outlander	70	439	-84.1	1.0%	1,435	1.5%
Nissan	Leaf	68	876	-92.2	1.0%	800	0.8%
Toyota	Camry	66	101	-34.7	0.9%	1,048	1.1%
BMW	320i	64	17	276.5	0.9%	608	0.6%
Toyota	Spade	62	68	-8.8	0.9%	872	0.9%
Subaru	Forester	61	24	154.2	0.9%	870	0.9%
Toyota	Vitz	57	157	-63.7	0.8%	1,295	1.3%
Toyota	Estima	52	34	52.9	0.7%	500	0.5%
Volkswagen	Golf	52	99	-47.5	0.7%	1,223	1.3%
Subaru	Outback	50	15	233.3	0.7%	525	0.5%
Lexus	CT 200h	47	69	-31.9	0.7%	592	0.6%
Nissan	Elgrand	47	13	261.5	0.7%	281	0.3%
Honda	Accord	46	40	15.0	0.6%	431	0.4%
Honda	Shuttle	41	87	-52.9	0.6%	401	0.4%
Others		1,947	1,961	-0.7	27.3%	26,847	27.4%
Total		**7,141**	**12,795**	**-44.2**	**100.0%**	**97,819**	**100.0%**

HEIWA AUTO®
WHAT DO YOU WANT
FROM YOUR
VEHICLE SUPPLIER?

Business expands retail footprint

A "mega site" near New Zealand's first Ikea store is being described as 2 Cheap Cars' "most exciting development" to date.

Angus Guerin, chief financial officer, says the dealership in Mount Wellington, Auckland, will be the company's largest yard.

It will eventually cater for more than 150 vehicles and is expected to open this year.

"The traffic that the store is expected to generate is unprecedented," says Guerin. "Most of it will drive past and be exposed to 2 Cheap Cars.

"At close to 5,000 square metres, 150 cars on site and minimal capital investment, this is a major step forward for us. It's strategically located in front of New Zealand's first Ikea, which is due to open in late 2025."

He describes the company's other plans for Auckland as being "well advanced". For example, it opened a 1,700sq m site in Wairau Road on the North Shore in July.

As for its "flagship" facility at 620 Great South Road, Greenlane, Guerin enthuses: "Our site has brilliant street frontage. Having a major yard there will not only be a game-changer for sales, but enhance our brand presence."

Its previous Greenlane site delivered the group's highest vehicle margins and the new premises promise "even better potential".

"It makes sense to invest in our brand by developing a site consistent with the more upscale environment, including digital signage on a road with its daily average traffic of 21,000 vehicles."

The 2 Cheap Cars branch in Smales Road, East Tamaki, has been permanently closed for some time because of major health and safety concerns at an adjacent site.

"Fortunately, we were able to swiftly secure a new site in Allens Road, Botany, which opened three weeks after the forced closure," explains Guerin. "The impact on trading was minimised as much as possible."

The company's property strategy is based on the right sites and scale at the right time, focused on big urban centres.

"Last year, we doubled the size of our Christchurch yard with sales up 56 per cent year on year," says Guerin.

"We will develop mega and satellite sites depending on scale.

"Our rationale is additional sites require very low overheads to run and, given our business model, most new yards require minimal capital investment."

The company says it will continue to refine its processes to achieve all possible efficiencies from logistics.

In-housing, expanding and improving operations at its vehicle-processing hub in Onehunga, south Auckland, have provided advantages for the business.

During 2023/24, Car Safety NZ was added to the group, which now provides integrated in-house compliance.

Guerin says: "More than 60 per cent of cars receive certification at our hub, removing the need to transit them and pay an external provider.

"We have nearly finished upgrading panel and paint at the hub, which is a significant part of refurbishment and costly to outsource."

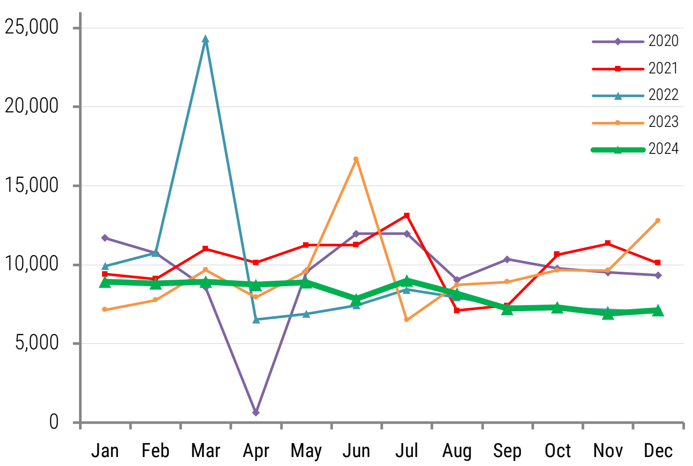
Big drop

Used-imported passenger vehicle sales came in at 7,141 last month for a decrease of 44.2 per cent compared to 12,795 during December 2023.

The best-selling model of last month was Toyota's Aqua with 735. It was followed by the Prius on 442 and Corolla with 313. Next up were Subaru's Impreza with 288 and Honda's Fit on 242.

December's top marque was Toyota with 2,559 units.

Used Imported Passenger Registrations - 2020–2024



Used Imported Passenger Vehicle Sales by Motive Power - December 2024

MAKE	DEC'24	DEC'23	+/-%	DEC'24 MKT SHARE	2024 YEAR TO DATE	2024 MKT SHARE
Full battery electric	102	988	-89.7%	1.4%	1,047	1.1%
Plug-in hybrid electric	57	624	-90.9%	0.8%	1,091	1.1%
Non plug-in petrol hybrid	3,072	8,172	-62.4%	43.0%	43,339	44.3%
Petrol	3,798	2,950	28.7%	53.2%	50,986	52.1%
Diesel	112	60	86.7%	1.6%	1,355	1.4%
Others (includes non plug-in diesel hybrid, fuel cell)	0	1	-100.0%	0.0%	1	0.0%
Total	**7,141**	**12,795**	**-44.2%**		**97,819**	

HEIWA AUTO

✓ SOLID COMPANY
✓ QUALITY VEHICLES
✓ CHOICE & VARIETY OF STOCK
✓ EXPERIENCED AGENTS
✓ DEALER ONLY SUPPLIER
✓ GREAT VALUE FOR MONEY

contact: Koh Nagata
email: nagata@heiwa-auto.co.jp
www.heiwa-auctions.com

Inspector issued warrants illegally

The NZTA has welcomed the sentencing of an ex-inspector for dishonestly accessing the motor-vehicle register and issuing fraudulent warrants of fitness (WOFs).

Diosdado Junior Subayno Pugosa has been given five months' home detention by North Shore District Court for the offending.

Following a tip-off, an investigation by the transport agency found that between August 20, 2022, and July 24 last year Pugosa recorded and issued 94 WOFs for vehicles he hadn't properly inspected.

When he was sentenced, the judge acknowledged the public-safety concern of Pugosa failing to properly check the vehicles before issuing warrants.

The court decided he needed to be held accountable for the harm done to his employer and the WOF system on which the community depends.

As soon as the fraud was identified, Pugosa's appointment as an inspector was suspended before being cancelled by the NZTA.

The WOFs issued by him were revoked. Affected owners were asked to get new warrants to ensure their vehicles were safe to drive.

The transport agency says the outcome of the court case should serve as a deterrent to others.

Nicole Botherway, the NZTA's senior manager for safer vehicles, adds: "We take swift action and hold inspectors to account whenever safety is compromised.

"A WOF is a general safety check. The consequences of a vehicle not being thoroughly checked and passed as safe to be driven are high.

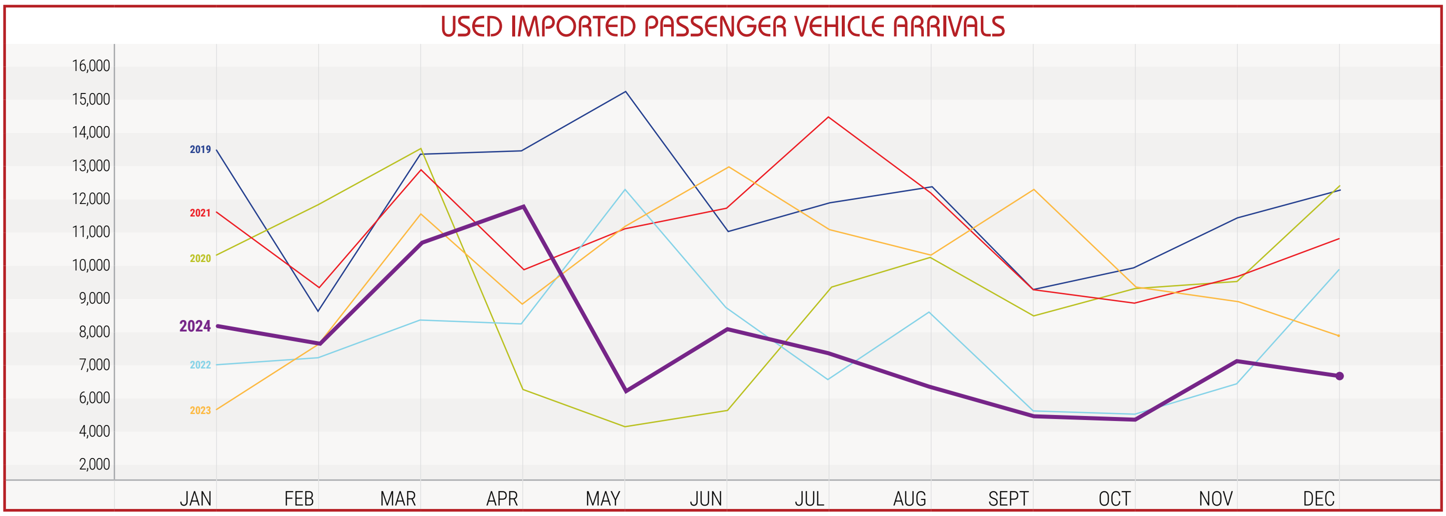
"An unsafe vehicle on the road puts the driver, passengers and other road users at risk."

The agency's safer vehicles team regularly reviews inspecting organisations and inspectors to check compliance. If serious non-compliance is found, it ensures the right regulatory response is applied, including enforcement.

ANNUAL DROP OF 24%

There were 6,650 used cars imported in December to take 2024's total to 88,242. That was down by 23.8 per cent compared to 115,753 crossing our border during 2023. The difference came in at 27,511 units.

Last year, 86,033 units were imported from Japan. Next up were Australia with 1,319, Singapore on 255, the UK on 251 and the US with 234.



Used Imported Passenger Vehicles By Country Of Export

	2024														2023		2022	
COUNTRY OF EXPORT	JAN '24	FEB '24	MAR '24	APR '24	MAY '24	JUN '24	JUL '24	AUG '24	SEP '24	OCT '24	NOV '24	DEC '24	DEC MKT SHARE	2024 TOTAL	2023 TOTAL	MRKT SHARE	2022 TOTAL	MRKT SHARE
Australia	72	106	101	157	121	79	108	83	111	109	153	119	1.8%	**1,319**	1,263	1.1%	2,353	2.6%
Great Britain	19	23	14	14	21	14	13	15	26	32	47	13	0.2%	**251**	272	0.2%	512	0.6%
Japan	7,984	7,255	10,190	11,332	5,827	7,750	6,988	6,003	4,877	4,541	6,816	6,470	97.3%	**86,033**	113,462	98.0%	87,740	95.6%
Singapore	18	43	28	19	31	12	36	12	5	14	22	15	0.2%	**255**	250	0.2%	423	0.5%
USA	12	21	11	17	26	15	18	36	21	16	17	24	0.4%	**234**	265	0.2%	487	0.5%
Other countries	12	9	9	12	44	5	13	7	5	18	7	9	0.1%	**150**	241	0.2%	250	0.3%
Total	**8,117**	**7,457**	**10,353**	**11,551**	**6,070**	**7,875**	**7,176**	**6,156**	**5,045**	**4,730**	**7,062**	**6,650**	**100.0%**	**88,242**	**115,753**	**100.0%**	**91,765**	**100.0%**

Home detention order for fraud

A company director has been ordered to pay reparations of $83,564 and has been sentenced to nine months' home detention after falsifying records and dishonestly incurring debts.

Christchurch District Court heard that Colin Fitzgibbon, of ACK Contractors Ltd, entered into an invoice purchasing contract in 2018 with Canterbury Invoice Finance, trading as Fifo Capital NZ.

In early 2020, ACK held a contract for work with the Christchurch Northern Corridor (CNC) Alliance and was also sub-contracted to HEB Construction for road maintenance on behalf of the city council.

Between January and March 2020, Fitzgibbon provided fraudulent invoices valued at $668,393 to Fifo Capital. ACK was then advanced $535,665.

On April 28, 2020, receivers were appointed for ACK. Invoicing issues were later detected when they then sought to recover purported debts from CNC and HEB, which told the receivers the invoices were fraudulent and no monies were owed to ACK.

Vanessa Cook, national manager of criminal proceeds integrity at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), says this was moderately sophisticated offending whereby Fitzgibbon generated invoices based on forecasted data for the month ahead.

She adds: "He sold invoices to Fifo Captial so his company could get cash faster than it would have received if it had waited for monthly payments made by client companies.

"The offending was premeditated. While Fitzgibbon intended to complete the work, he was aware there was a risk of causing loss."

Cook's team at MBIE investigates complaints on behalf of the Registrar of Companies and the Official Assignee of New Zealand.

When appropriate, it can also prosecute individuals who breach the Companies and or Insolvency Acts.

DEALER SALES UP

Traders sold 15,208 second-hand cars to members of the public in December. That was up by 10.7 per cent from 13,743 during the same month in 2023.

Trade-ins totalled 12,437 for a 5.7 per cent rise from 11,769. There were 38,443 private transactions, up by 4.4 per cent.

SECONDHAND CAR SALES - December 2024

	DEALER TO PUBLIC				PUBLIC TO PUBLIC			PUBLIC TO DEALER		
REGION	DEC '24	DEC '23	+/- %	MARKET SHARE	DEC '24	DEC '23	+/- %	DEC '24	DEC '23	+/- %
Northland	513	449	14.3%	3.4%	1,788	1,759	1.6%	187	137	36.5%
Auckland	5,258	4,539	15.8%	34.6%	13,113	12,419	5.6%	5,522	5,148	7.3%
Waikato	1,596	1,385	15.2%	10.5%	3,761	3,563	5.6%	1,011	993	1.8%
Bay of Plenty	996	918	8.5%	6.5%	2,607	2,614	-0.3%	587	545	7.7%
Gisborne	134	126	6.3%	0.9%	367	337	8.9%	53	51	3.9%
Hawke's Bay	565	531	6.4%	3.7%	1,331	1,326	0.4%	362	346	4.6%
Taranaki	313	340	-7.9%	2.1%	970	947	2.4%	161	164	-1.8%
Manawatu-Whanganui	721	742	-2.8%	4.7%	1,981	1,821	8.8%	587	711	-17.4%
Wellington	1,450	1,254	15.6%	9.5%	2,972	2,849	4.3%	1,094	1,092	0.2%
Tasman	143	115	24.3%	0.9%	460	436	5.5%	10	16	-37.5%
Nelson	133	120	10.8%	0.9%	359	357	0.6%	171	134	27.6%
Marlborough	121	121	0.0%	0.8%	313	366	-14.5%	52	51	2.0%
West Coast	110	104	5.8%	0.7%	262	248	5.6%	39	39	0.0%
Canterbury	2,117	2,032	4.2%	13.9%	5,141	4,934	4.2%	2,007	1,820	10.3%
Otago	717	657	9.1%	4.7%	2,012	1,781	13.0%	435	404	7.7%
Southland	275	262	5.0%	1.8%	881	951	-7.4%	159	118	34.7%
Other	46	48	-4.2%	0.3%	125	130	-3.8%	0	0	0.0%
NZ Total	**15,208**	**13,743**	**10.7%**	**100.0%**	**38,443**	**36,838**	**4.4%**	**12,437**	**11,769**	**5.7%**

Visit autofile.co.nz/jobs to view the latest jobs in the automotive industry

New Passenger Vehicle Sales by Make - December 2024

MAKE	DEC'24	DEC'23	+/-%	DEC'24 MKT SHARE	2024 YEAR TO DATE	2024 MKT SHARE
Toyota	1,849	1,738	6.4	25.6%	20,697	23.7%
Mitsubishi	996	710	40.3	13.8%	9,915	11.3%
Kia	587	395	48.6	8.1%	8,673	9.9%
Honda	406	581	-30.1	5.6%	3,175	3.6%
Ford	298	653	-54.4	4.1%	4,659	5.3%
Suzuki	297	333	-10.8	4.1%	5,192	5.9%
Subaru	286	86	232.6	4.0%	2,000	2.3%
MG	256	801	-68.0	3.6%	3,066	3.5%
Tesla	250	558	-55.2	3.5%	1,287	1.5%
GWM	237	219	8.2	3.3%	2,632	3.0%
Hyundai	183	392	-53.3	2.5%	3,641	4.2%
Mazda	173	137	26.3	2.4%	3,728	4.3%
BMW	159	120	32.5	2.2%	1,486	1.7%
Lexus	139	101	37.6	1.9%	1,328	1.5%
Volkswagen	132	137	-3.6	1.8%	2,188	2.5%
Mercedes-Benz	123	91	35.2	1.7%	1,368	1.6%
BYD	112	651	-82.8	1.6%	908	1.0%
Nissan	103	109	-5.5	1.4%	2,441	2.8%
Mini	93	92	1.1	1.3%	883	1.0%
Skoda	90	111	-18.9	1.2%	1,240	1.4%
Audi	72	44	63.6	1.0%	1,102	1.3%
Omoda	63	0	6,300.0	0.9%	468	0.5%
Land Rover	61	54	13.0	0.8%	1,062	1.2%
KGM	46	0	4,600.0	0.6%	221	0.3%
Peugeot	30	55	-45.5	0.4%	459	0.5%
Cupra	28	49	-42.9	0.4%	360	0.4%
Jaecoo	27	0	2,700.0	0.4%	237	0.3%
Polestar	17	70	-75.7	0.2%	229	0.3%
Mahindra	16	3	433.3	0.2%	285	0.3%
Isuzu	15	1	1,400.0	0.2%	218	0.2%
Jeep	12	70	-82.9	0.2%	199	0.2%
Volvo	9	20	-55.0	0.1%	380	0.4%
Jaguar	7	10	-30.0	0.1%	203	0.2%
Fiat	6	34	-82.4	0.1%	85	0.1%
Opel	6	39	-84.6	0.1%	81	0.1%
Porsche	6	1	500.0	0.1%	479	0.5%
Alfa Romeo	3	5	-40.0	0.0%	69	0.1%
SsangYong	3	33	-90.9	0.0%	189	0.2%
Yamaha	3	3	0.0	0.0%	42	0.0%
Ineos	2	0	200.0	0.0%	55	0.1%
Leapmotor	2	0	200.0	0.0%	6	0.0%
Maserati	2	0	200.0	0.0%	32	0.0%
Rolls-Royce	2	0	200.0	0.0%	10	0.0%
Citroen	1	15	-93.3	0.0%	55	0.1%
Others	1	26	-96.2	0.0%	359	0.4%
Total	**7,209**	**8,547**	**-15.7**	**100.0%**	**87,392**	**100.0%**

New Passenger Vehicle Sales by Model - December 2024

MAKE	MODEL	DEC'24	DEC'23	+/-%	DEC'24 MKT SHARE	2024 YEAR TO DATE	2024 MKT SHARE
Toyota	RAV4	996	438	127.4	13.8%	10,530	12.0%
Mitsubishi	Eclipse Cross	603	266	126.7	8.4%	2,393	2.7%
Mitsubishi	ASX	239	51	368.6	3.3%	3,763	4.3%
Toyota	Land Cruiser Prado	201	70	187.1	2.8%	800	0.9%
Ford	Everest	179	33	442.4	2.5%	2,337	2.7%
Subaru	Outback	168	28	500.0	2.3%	858	1.0%
Kia	Seltos	164	9	1,722.2	2.3%	3,136	3.6%
Suzuki	Swift	150	219	-31.5	2.1%	2,698	3.1%
Mitsubishi	Outlander	135	357	-62.2	1.9%	3,248	3.7%
Toyota	Corolla	131	130	0.8	1.8%	1,852	2.1%
Tesla	Model Y	127	356	-64.3	1.8%	826	0.9%
Tesla	Model 3	123	202	-39.1	1.7%	461	0.5%
Kia	Sportage	121	5	2,320.0	1.7%	1,727	2.0%
Honda	ZR-V	119	124	-4.0	1.7%	910	1.0%
MG	ZS	118	138	-14.5	1.6%	1,527	1.7%
GWM	Haval H6	108	50	116.0	1.5%	1,081	1.2%
Toyota	Corolla Cross	105	161	-34.8	1.5%	1,400	1.6%
Toyota	Camry	102	20	410.0	1.4%	392	0.4%
Honda	HR-V	92	0	9,200.0	1.3%	551	0.6%
Honda	CR-V	89	25	256.0	1.2%	710	0.8%
MG	MG3	86	8	975.0	1.2%	925	1.1%
Toyota	Yaris	85	261	-67.4	1.2%	986	1.1%
Toyota	Yaris Cross	85	357	-76.2	1.2%	1,840	2.1%
Subaru	Forester	74	20	270.0	1.0%	468	0.5%
Suzuki	Jimny	72	10	620.0	1.0%	1,152	1.3%
GWM	Haval Jolion	66	54	22.2	0.9%	994	1.1%
Nissan	X-Trail	66	23	187.0	0.9%	1,097	1.3%
BMW	X1	65	16	306.3	0.9%	299	0.3%
Mazda	CX-5	63	32	96.9	0.9%	1,651	1.9%
Hyundai	Kona	60	202	-70.3	0.8%	1,180	1.4%
Honda	Jazz	57	432	-86.8	0.8%	828	0.9%
Kia	Carnival	56	0	5,600.0	0.8%	594	0.7%
Kia	Stonic	55	97	-43.3	0.8%	1,596	1.8%
Omoda	C5	53	0	5,300.0	0.7%	418	0.5%
Honda	Civic	49	0	4,900.0	0.7%	176	0.2%
Kia	Niro	47	78	-39.7	0.7%	549	0.6%
Volkswagen	Tiguan	47	3	1,466.7	0.7%	741	0.8%
Mini	Countryman	45	18	150.0	0.6%	441	0.5%
Toyota	C-HR	45	44	2.3	0.6%	616	0.7%
Ford	Puma	44	111	-60.4	0.6%	727	0.8%
Lexus	RZ	44	4	1,000.0	0.6%	98	0.1%
Hyundai	Tucson	43	42	2.4	0.6%	1,027	1.2%
Kia	EV9	42	4	950.0	0.6%	197	0.2%
Kia	EV6	40	151	-73.5	0.6%	108	0.1%
Suzuki	Vitara	40	40	0.0	0.6%	429	0.5%
Others		1,710	3,858	-55.7	23.7%	27,055	31.0%
Total		**7,209**	**8,547**	**-15.7**	**100.0%**	**87,392**	**100.0%**

Trading cars over two levels

A dealership has shifted into new premises with product displays, offices and customer parking all under one roof.

The 34 employees at Lexus of Auckland City have moved into the two-storey facility in Newmarket with its owner, the Giltrap Group, wanting to create a client-focused location in Great South Road.

Sharlene Van Dijk, chief executive officer, says the business had outgrown its former site on Great North Road, Grey Lynn.

She adds: "Our belief in the brand and its growth potential gave us the confidence to invest in this.

"Lexus is about beautiful design and the best in technology. We wanted to reflect those qualities in our new home. My team is deeply committed to delivering on the brand's promise of 'experience amazing'."

The fully enclosed dealership, which comes in at 2,800 square metres and includes a cafe-style lounge, can house at least 48 Lexus units on-site and has charging for six electric cars.

Owners taking in their vehicles have the option of a courtesy loan car, an Uber voucher or drop-off service.

Andrew Davis, vice-president of Lexus NZ, says the store's location will expand the marque's reach to its target markets in central Auckland.

Lexus of Auckland City – outside and inside

"Over the past 34 years, you have seen the brand become a leader in the luxury automotive market," he adds.

Sharlene Van Dijk

"We're embracing electrification as a core part of its future with a growing range of electrified vehicles that align with increasing demand for low-carbon transport options.

"As Lexus continues to expand its line-up of electrified vehicles, including models such as the all-electric RZ and hybrid LBX, it aims to cater to environmentally conscious consumers."

The opening of the Newmarket dealership follows other franchise partners around the country investing in the marque.

A new Lexus of Christchurch opened in Tuam Street in May, Lexus of East Auckland is under construction in Botany and Lexus of Wellington is aiming to move to Taranaki Street early in 2025.

CHEAPEST TO RUN

The ever-popular Suzuki Swift Hybrid has been named as 2024's cheapest new car to own and operate.

The five-door hatchback was overall winner of a survey across the Tasman after the running costs of 87 models were evaluated in 12 categories.

According to the Royal Automobile Club of Queensland, the analysis could help save motorists thousands of dollars in ongoing running costs.

The club says the Swift Hybrid's running costs were calculated by factoring in fuel, servicing, tyres, registration and insurance based on 15,000km per annum for five years.

The Swift has been New Zealand's favourite compact for several years and is also a best-seller in 169 countries, reaffirming its position as the marque's most popular model for the past decade.

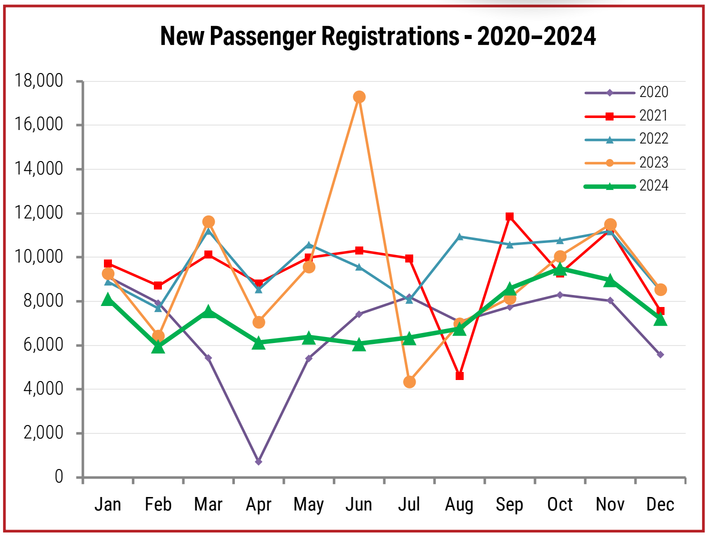
The latest fourth generation and self-charging GLS Smart Hybrid 12V ISG manual is priced at $25,990 plus on-road costs. Its automatic variants retails from $27,990 while the range-topping RSC I has a sticker price of $29,990.

Toyota double

Registrations of new cars totalled 7,209 in December, down by 15.7 per cent compared to 8,547 in the same month of 2023.

Toyota's RAV4 was the most popular model with 996. It was followed by two Mitsubishis – the Eclipse Cross on 603 and ASX with 239. The Toyota Land Cruiser Prado was fourth on 201 and Ford Everest was fifth with 179.

Toyota was December's top marque thanks to 1,849 units. Second spot went to Mitsubishi with 996.



New Passenger Vehicle Sales by Motive Power - December 2024

MAKE	DEC'24	DEC'23	+/-%	DEC'24 MKT SHARE	2024 YEAR TO DATE	2024 MKT SHARE
Full battery electric	843	3,351	-74.8%	11.7%	6,363	7.3%
Plug-in hybrid electric	693	987	-29.8%	9.6%	3,422	3.9%
Non plug-in petrol hybrid	2,892	2,636	9.7%	40.1%	32,327	37.0%
Petrol	2,304	1,336	72.5%	32.0%	38,010	43.5%
Diesel	460	237	94.1%	6.4%	7,251	8.3%
Others (includes non plug-in diesel hybrid, fuel cell)	17	0	0.0%	0.2%	19	0.0%
Total	**7,209**	**8,547**	**-15.7%**		**87,392**	

French marque expands presence

Farmer Autovillage in Tauranga has been appointed to represent Fiat Professional.

The brand now has eight dealerships across New Zealand as well as 15 parts and service locations.

Tourism operator Jucy Rentals has been a fleet customer of the French marque for the past two years.

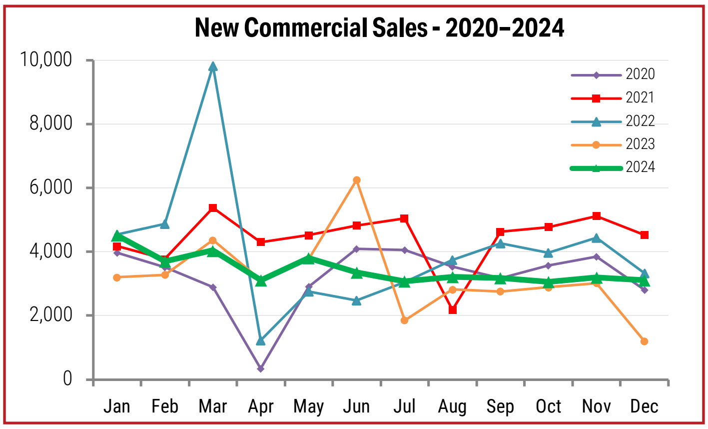
"We're looking forward to adding more Ducatos to our fleet," says Brendan McKenna, chief operating officer of Travvia, which owns Jucy and Star RV.

"Doing business with them in New Zealand has been accessible from the get-go.

"They are responsive to servicing and maintenance requirements, and offer flexibility with delivery timing to ensure we keep our fleet's uptime high."

Jucy has custom-built the interior of the Ducato to create its four-berth Cruiser campervan.

As for the mid-size Scudo, Fiat Professional is returning it to the market with deliveries starting in late January.



It has an eight-speed automatic transmission and Euro 6D compliant Multijet III turbodiesel engine to deliver 106kW of power and 370Nm torque, offering high efficiency and lower carbon-dioxide emissions.

The Ducato range has been given an updated look, connectivity systems and next-generation advanced driver-assist systems.

Available in long and extra-long wheelbase, its 2.2-litre turbodiesel produces 130kW of power and 450Nm of torque. It's paired with a nine-speed automatic transmission.

The Ducato comes with more customer options, including converter vans, cab chassis and 12-seat minibus configuration.

New Commercial Sales by Make - December 2024

MAKE	DEC'24	DEC'23	+/-%	DEC'24 MKT SHARE	2024 YEAR TO DATE	2024 MKT SHARE
Ford	1,581	227	596.5	50.9%	13,211	31.9%
Toyota	510	149	242.3	16.4%	9,495	22.9%
Mitsubishi	179	28	539.3	5.8%	4,232	10.2%
Isuzu	121	120	0.8	3.9%	2,376	5.7%
Volkswagen	95	18	427.8	3.1%	1,175	2.8%
Fiat	86	125	-31.2	2.8%	743	1.8%
Mercedes-Benz	80	91	-12.1	2.6%	1,111	2.7%
Nissan	73	3	2,333.3	2.4%	1,892	4.6%
LDV	61	113	-46.0	2.0%	716	1.7%
Hyundai	36	8	350.0	1.2%	437	1.1%
Iveco	36	48	-25.0	1.2%	541	1.3%
Hino	30	28	7.1	1.0%	591	1.4%
Scania	28	31	-9.7	0.9%	655	1.6%
CRRC	27	0	2,700.0	0.9%	84	0.2%
Ram	23	7	228.6	0.7%	253	0.6%
BYD	18	0	1,800.0	0.6%	61	0.1%
Fuso	18	69	-73.9	0.6%	833	2.0%
GWM	17	0	1,700.0	0.5%	268	0.6%
Chevrolet	13	6	116.7	0.4%	230	0.6%
Peugeot	13	7	85.7	0.4%	111	0.3%
Others	60	118	-49.2	1.9%	2,369	5.7%
Total	**3,105**	**1,196**	**159.6**	**100.0%**	**41,384**	**100.0%**

New Commercial Sales by Model - December 2024

MAKE	MODEL	DEC'24	DEC'23	+/-%	DEC'24 MKT SHARE	2024 YEAR TO DATE	2024 MKT SHARE
Ford	Ranger	1,476	197	649.2	47.5%	11,741	28.4%
Toyota	Hilux	426	106	301.9	13.7%	7,295	17.6%
Mitsubishi	Triton	179	28	539.3	5.8%	4,230	10.2%
Ford	Transit	105	30	250.0	3.4%	1,470	3.6%
Fiat	Ducato	86	125	-31.2	2.8%	742	1.8%
Nissan	Navara	73	3	2,333.3	2.4%	1,892	4.6%
Mercedes-Benz	Sprinter	69	77	-10.4	2.2%	941	2.3%
Toyota	Hiace	63	31	103.2	2.0%	1,714	4.1%
Isuzu	D-Max	53	24	120.8	1.7%	1,295	3.1%
Volkswagen	Amarok	53	3	1,666.7	1.7%	762	1.8%
Isuzu	N Series	33	44	-25.0	1.1%	495	1.2%
Iveco	Daily	31	34	-8.8	1.0%	429	1.0%
Volkswagen	T6	29	3	866.7	0.9%	131	0.3%
Isuzu	F Series	25	38	-34.2	0.8%	441	1.1%
Hyundai	Staria Load	24	0	2,400.0	0.8%	343	0.8%
LDV	Deliver 9	23	28	-17.9	0.7%	314	0.8%
LDV	T60	23	6	283.3	0.7%	150	0.4%
Ram	1500	23	7	228.6	0.7%	237	0.6%
Toyota	Land Cruiser	21	12	75.0	0.7%	458	1.1%
BYD	Shark 6	18	0	1,800.0	0.6%	61	0.1%
Others		272	400	-32.0	8.8%	6,243	15.1%
Total		**3,105**	**1,196**	**159.6**	**100.0%**	**41,384**	**100.0%**

FLEXING MUSCLES

Toyota NZ has been going to great lengths to show off the capabilities of its new Hilux Hybrid.

Staff have been towing a trailer around the country with on-board giant stainless-steel letters exclaiming, "just a Hilux Hybrid towing a 3.5 tonne headline".

While that weight is heavier than most baby elephants, says the company, it was chosen because it's the maximum towing rate for the model and shows that a hybrid "can do the heavy lifting".

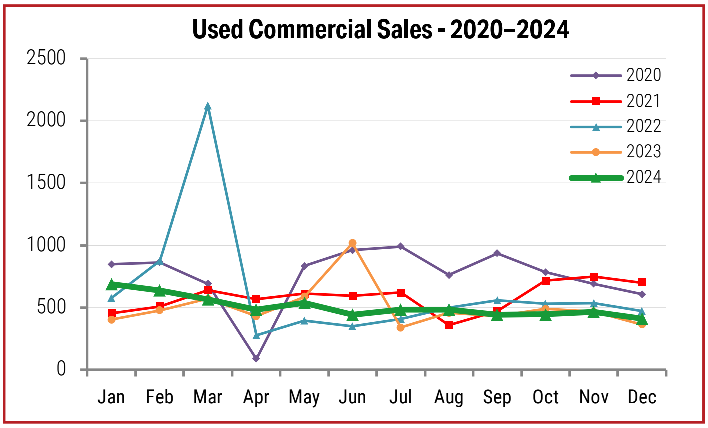
Susanne Hardy, Toyota NZ assistant vice-president, says: "We've been focused on a multi-powertrain approach to ensure we meet all customers' needs.

"At the same time, we need to ensure the capability of the Hilux Hybrid isn't compromised."

The ute is the first Toyota to transition to a turbodiesel engine with a hybrid system with no loss of functionality. It also means a lower carbon-emitting option is available to fleet buyers looking for a four-wheel drive and double-cab variant, such as the SR.

The Hilux Hybrid, which is available in SR, SR5 and SR5 Cruiser grades, precedes the new Land Cruiser Prado, which recently arrived. It also boasts a 48-volt hybrid system.

The massive headline on the ute was too big to make as one piece and it's fully recyclable. It was scaled to fit the legally maximum trailer – six metres long and four metres high – and required a triple axle and independent braking.



RANGER TOPS LADDER

Sales of new commercials climbed by 159.6 per cent to 3,105 last month compared to 1,196 in December 2023.

Ford's Ranger led the way with 1,476 units for a market share of 47.5 per cent and to be New Zealand's top new model of 2024 with 11,741 sales.

Toyota's Hilux came second with 426 and Mitsubishi's Triton was third on 179.

The blue oval was the top marque last month on 1,581 units with a 50.9 per cent market share and Toyota was second with 510.

Last month's total for used-imported commercials was 408 – up by 12.1 per cent from 364 in December 2023.

Toyota was the top marque with 181 vehicles sold and a market share of 44.4 per cent.

Used Commercial Sales by Make - December 2024

MAKE	DEC'24	DEC'23	+/-%	DEC'24 MKT SHARE	2024 YEAR TO DATE	2024 MKT SHARE
Toyota	181	140	29.3	44.4%	3,043	49.9%
Nissan	67	68	-1.5	16.4%	1,244	20.4%
Ford	48	7	585.7	11.8%	312	5.1%
Isuzu	25	31	-19.4	6.1%	303	5.0%
Fiat	13	5	160.0	3.2%	48	0.8%
Hino	13	40	-67.5	3.2%	332	5.4%
Mitsubishi	10	23	-56.5	2.5%	222	3.6%
Daihatsu	9	8	12.5	2.2%	79	1.3%
Mazda	6	3	100.0	1.5%	70	1.1%
Suzuki	6	4	50.0	1.5%	80	1.3%
Chevrolet	5	6	-16.7	1.2%	52	0.9%
Volkswagen	5	5	0.0	1.2%	53	0.9%
Holden	4	1	300.0	1.0%	29	0.5%
Dodge	3	1	200.0	0.7%	24	0.4%
LDV	2	0	200.0	0.5%	14	0.2%
Peugeot	2	1	100.0	0.5%	5	0.1%
SsangYong	2	0	200.0	0.5%	4	0.1%
DAF	1	2	-50.0	0.2%	6	0.1%
GMC	1	0	100.0	0.2%	4	0.1%
Iveco	1	0	100.0	0.2%	7	0.1%
Others	4	19	-78.9	1.0%	172	2.8%
Total	**408**	**364**	**12.1**	**100.0%**	**6,103**	**100.0%**

Used Commercial Sales by Model - December 2024

MAKE	MODEL	DEC'24	DEC'23	+/-%	DEC'24 MKT SHARE	2024 YEAR TO DATE	2024 MKT SHARE
Toyota	Hiace	124	100	24.0	30.4%	2,292	37.6%
Nissan	NV350	37	36	2.8	9.1%	772	12.6%
Ford	Transit	30	1	2,900.0	7.4%	135	2.2%
Toyota	Regius	25	13	92.3	6.1%	332	5.4%
Isuzu	Elf	16	25	-36.0	3.9%	212	3.5%
Toyota	Dyna	14	14	0.0	3.4%	184	3.0%
Fiat	Ducato	13	5	160.0	3.2%	46	0.8%
Nissan	Caravan	12	12	0.0	2.9%	189	3.1%
Daihatsu	Hijet	9	8	12.5	2.2%	78	1.3%
Hino	Dutro	9	29	-69.0	2.2%	240	3.9%
Ford	Ranger	8	3	166.7	2.0%	95	1.6%
Toyota	Hilux	8	6	33.3	2.0%	53	0.9%
Fuso	Canter	7	18	-61.1	1.7%	161	2.6%
Isuzu	Forward	6	5	20.0	1.5%	59	1.0%
Nissan	NV200	6	2	200.0	1.5%	134	2.2%
Suzuki	Carry	6	4	50.0	1.5%	75	1.2%
Ford	F-150	4	0	400.0	1.0%	23	0.4%
Nissan	Atlas	4	7	-42.9	1.0%	60	1.0%
Nissan	Civilian	4	6	-33.3	1.0%	31	0.5%
Toyota	Land Cruiser	4	0	400.0	1.0%	22	0.4%
Others		62	70	-11.4	15.2%	910	14.9%
Total		**408**	**364**	**12.1**	**100.0%**	**6,103**	**100.0%**

Operation gets global rebranding

Shrinking stock

Imports of new cars in December came in at 6,949. This was up by 2.5 per cent when compared to 6,779 units in November and down 6.5 per cent from the 7,435 recorded in the same month a year ago.

Registrations of 7,209 new passenger vehicles were completed last month, which was 19.5 per cent lower than November's total. It was also down by 15.7 per cent from 8,547 units in December 2023.

The numbers have resulted in the stock of new cars still to be registered falling for a fourth consecutive month, dropping by 260 to 72,136.

Daily sales, as averaged over the previous 12 months, stand at 239 units per day – down from 302 a year ago.

December's results mean stock at-hand has edged up to 301 days if sales continue at the current rate. In the same month of 2023, it stood at 236 days.

Sime Darby Berhad has rebranded itself as Sime to reflect the multinational's focus on the automotive and industrial equipment markets.

The new identity and its fresh tagline "bridging opportunities" have been rolled out across all Sime operations and Asia-Pacific.

The global trading and logistics group has its headquarters in Malaysia and the change means its operation on our shores is now called Sime Motors NZ.

In this country, the group employs 1,200 people. It imports, distributes, sells and services a range of truck, transport and car marques, and offers used vehicles and leasing solutions.

"Our new name acts as a bridge between our 100-year history and a new era focused on bringing the best products and solutions to help New Zealand and the wider Asia-Pacific region move and develop," states Sime Motors NZ.

Sime was founded in 1910, is listed on the Bursa Malaysia, and partners with more than 60 automotive and industrial equipment brands. It has three business operations, which are now known as Sime Industrial, Sime Motors and Sime UMW.

"For more than 100 years, we have adapted to shifting market dynamics," says Jeffri Salim Davidson, group chief executive officer. "This brand evolution stands testament to our agility and resilience.

"We are especially excited about the vast prospects in Asia-Pacific where we are at the heart of enormous growth potential. This transformation enables Sime to better serve our stakeholders while establishing a more distinctive identity in the market."

TOYOTA SECURES TITLE

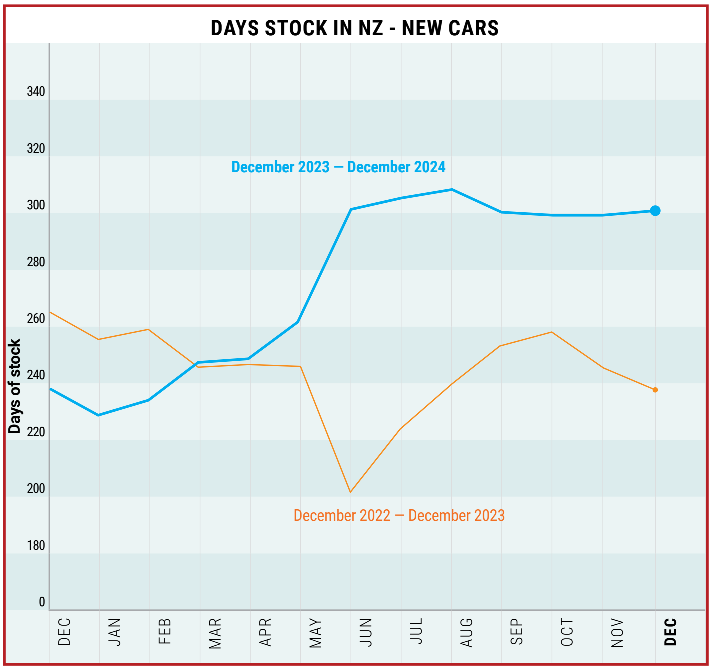
New Zealand's top-selling brand for the 37th consecutive year is Toyota. It reports 31,520 registrations of new vehicles in 2024.

Its highlights of last year include the RAV4 keeping its position as best-selling car and it being people's choice in the AA Driven Car Guide NZ Car of the Year awards.

Toyota enjoyed further success at those awards with its Hilux coming third in people's choice and the C-HR being winning best city SUV.

Dealer stock of new cars in New Zealand

	CAR SALES		VARIANCE	STOCK	DAILY SALES - 12-MONTH AVERAGE	DAYS STOCK AT HAND
	IMPORTED	REGISTERED				
Dec '23	7,435	8,547	-1,112	71,480	302	236
Jan '24	4,154	8,098	-3,944	67,536	299	226
Feb '24	7,608	5,923	1,685	69,221	298	232
Mar '24	8,882	7,538	1,344	70,565	287	246
Apr '24	6,180	6,110	70	70,635	285	248
May '24	7,800	6,350	1,450	72,085	276	261
Jun '24	8,006	6,059	1,947	74,032	245	302
Jul '24	9,313	6,334	2,979	77,011	251	307
Aug '24	7,205	6,750	455	77,466	250	310
Sep '24	6,739	8,579	-1,840	75,626	251	301
Oct '24	8,433	9,489	-1,056	74,570	250	298
Nov '24	6,779	8,953	-2,174	72,396	243	298
Dec '24	**6,949**	**7,209**	**-260**	**72,136**	**239**	**301**
Year to date	**88,048**	**87,392**				
Change on last month	**2.5%**	**-19.5%**		**-0.4%**		
Change on Dec 2023	**-6.5%**	**-15.7%**		**0.9%**		
	Less Imported	Less Sold		More Stock		



MOANAblue
independent vehicle shipping & logistics
SPEED
SERVICE
RELIABILITY

MOANAblue
independent vehicle shipping & logistics

Toyota launched its first fully electric car, the bZ4X, in New Zealand last year

Tatsuya Ishikawa, acting chief executive officer, says the results show the company is offering models that resonate with Kiwis and further Toyota's electrification targets.

"We're proud to have earned the trust of drivers for so many years," he adds. "Being New Zealand's number-one car brand is an honour.

"The fact that all three of our award-winning vehicles are available in hybrid powertrains, and only available as hybrid powertrains in the case of the RAV4 and C-HR, highlights customers' preference for lower-emitting vehicles."

Electrified models accounted for 77.2 per cent of new vehicles sold by Toyota in 2024, which helped cut its average emissions by five per cent year on year to 156g of carbon dioxide (CO_2) per kilometre.

This drop was supported by the marque rolling out its first fully electric car, the bZ4X, and the Hilux Hybrid in 2024, and capping the amount of its utes available.

Sales of used vehicles through Toyota Signature Class and Toyota Certified totalled 10,158 last year, up by 39 per cent from 2023.

Toyota NZ says it retained a strong focus on its sustainability journey in 2024, reaffirming its commitment to CO2-reduction targets.

This includes action across its operations, reducing the lifetime emissions of new vehicles it sells, and progressing initiatives at its national customer centre in Palmerston North and 60 stores.

"Our focus isn't only on delivering great vehicles, but also on creating a better future for New Zealand," explains Ishikawa. "Sustainability remains at the heart of everything we do, from improving the efficiency of our vehicles to reducing our operational footprint."

The company says its other highlights in 2024 included being named as the country's most reputable brand in the Kantar Corporate Reputation Index.

Also, it was a sponsor of Emirates Team NZ's successful defence of the America's Cup, continuing a partnership that started more than 30 years ago.

Looking ahead, Toyota NZ says it remains focused on empowering customers, advancing sustainability and contributing to communities.

Ishikawa says: "We are excited to continue delivering vehicles and solutions that meet the needs of New Zealanders while working to create a cleaner, more sustainable future."

Daily sales drop

There were 6,650 used cars imported last month, a decrease of 5.8 per cent from November when 7,062 units crossed our border.

The latest figure was also down by 14.4 per cent from 7,768 in December 2023.

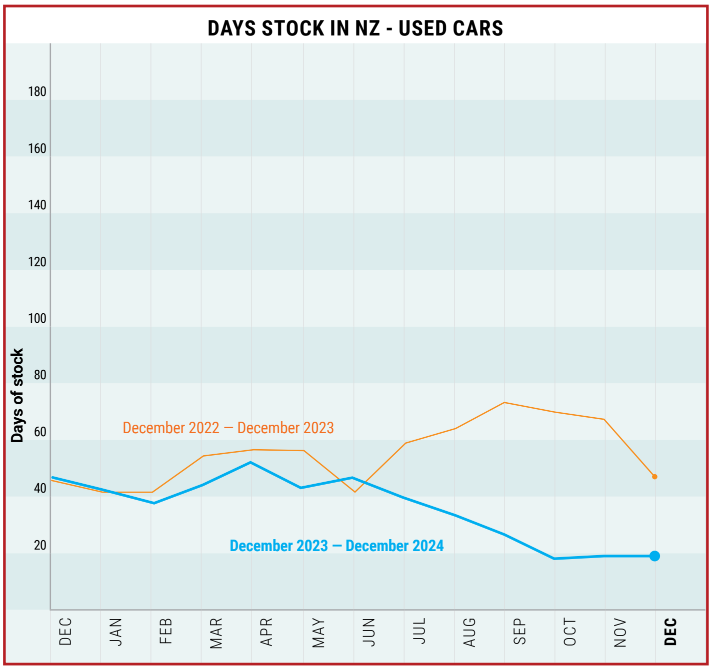
Some 7,141 units were registered in December, which was the second-lowest monthly total of 2024.

The number was 44.2 per cent lower than 12,795 registered in the same month of 2023, but was up 3.3 per cent from the 6,915 units sold in November.

With 491 fewer used cars imported than registered last month, unregistered stock on dealers' yards or in compliance shops came to 4,962 units.

This was 65.9 per cent lower than the 14,539 a year ago and down by nine per cent from 5,453 at the end of November.

Average daily registrations for December were 268 and compared to 315 a year ago, while there's 19 days' stock remaining.



Dealer stock of used cars in New Zealand

	CAR SALES IMPORTED	CAR SALES REGISTERED	VARIANCE	STOCK	DAILY SALES - 12-MONTH AVERAGE	DAYS STOCK AT HAND
Dec '23	7,768	12,795	-5,027	14,539	315	46
Jan '24	8,117	8,901	-784	13,755	320	43
Feb '24	7,457	8,818	-1,361	12,394	322	38
Mar '24	10,353	8,935	1,418	13,812	320	43
Apr '24	11,551	8,722	2,829	16,641	323	52
May '24	6,070	8,878	-2,808	13,833	321	43
Jun '24	7,875	7,822	53	13,886	297	47
Jul '24	7,176	8,993	-1,817	12,069	303	40
Aug '24	6,156	8,174	-2,018	10,051	302	33
Sep '24	5,045	7,202	-2,157	7,894	297	27
Oct '24	4,730	7,318	-2,588	5,306	291	18
Nov '24	7,062	6,915	147	5,453	283	19
Dec '24	**6,650**	**7,141**	**-491**	**4,962**	**268**	**19**
Year to date	**88,242**	**97,819**				
Change on last month	**-5.8%**	**3.3%**		**-9.0%**		
Change on Dec 2023	**-14.4%**	**-44.2%**		**-65.9%**		
	LESS IMPORTED	LESS SOLD		LESS STOCK		

Simply Shipping & Logistics
NO STRINGS ATTACHED
www.moana-blue.com | sales@moana-blue.com | 0800-662 622

Armacup
NZ
DRIVING THE PACIFIC
doing our bit for cure kids
For our latest schedule:
armacup.co.nz/schedules/asia-to-oceania
0800 ARMACUP
(0800 276 2287)
enquiries.NZ@armacup.com
www.armacup.com
MORNING CRYSTAL