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Tougher import rules dent Japanese stock


New Zealand has dropped out of the top three takers of used vehicles from Japan

More used-vehicle dealers turn to buying locally as they grapple with costs of clean car standard

The annual number of imported used vehicles from Japan has tumbled by more than 30,000 with the clean car standard (CCS) and its cost implications being cited as a key factor for the downturn.

New Zealand has previously been the third biggest taker of used cars from Japan, behind the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Russia. However, it was overtaken last year by Mongolia and ended up in fourth spot.

Some 81,290 units were imported into this country from Japan in 2024, giving Aotearoa a 5.2 per cent share of the market. This compares with 114,252 and 7.4 per cent in the previous year.

Mongolia's market share climbed from 79,765 used imports, or 5.2 per cent, to 111,625 and 7.1 per cent over the same period.

The UAE was the top destination for used vehicles from Japan last year with 226,698 units and a 14.4 per cent share of the market, while Russia snared 199,098 cars for 12.7 per cent.

Industry figures spoken to by Autofile have given their views on what's behind the shift.

They say legislation changes, increased buying from rival markets and exchange rates have contributed to the drop for Kiwi importers.

Jim Shi, managing director of Autohub NZ, says the reduction in volumes can be attributed to domestic economic constraints

[continued on page 4]

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GUEST EDITORIAL

Procurement policy helps to switch fleet

Aimee Wiley says government's EV mandate matters when it comes to future transition

AIMEE WILEY
CEO, Motor Industry Association

In the global shift to zero-emissions transport, government fleet procurement is no bureaucratic footnote – it's a strategic market lever.

As other developed nations tighten regulations, electrify fleets and phase out fossil-fuel vehicles, any move by New Zealand to scrap its all-of-government (AoG) procurement mandate for EVs would send a troubling signal.

It risks stalling our momentum as the rest of the world accelerates.

The role of government in leading by example has never been more critical. Public-sector fleet procurement shapes markets, sends long-term signals and builds confidence in the zero-emissions transition.

New Zealand's AoG procurement rules, which currently prioritise electric cars, have been a quiet but essential part of our national emissions reduction strategy.

They have provided certainty in a shifting market, helping suppliers, fleet operators and infrastructure providers plan with confidence. They've also supported a growing second-hand EV market, improving access for households and businesses that might otherwise be priced out.

Removing this mandate now would slow progress at a pivotal stage. In a small, price-sensitive market like ours, public-sector leadership does more than model good practice. It de-risks investment and enables scale.

Pulling back the signal could create hesitation across fleet buyers and the broader EV ecosystem.

Overseas, the direction is clear. The European Union is phasing out internal combustion engine vehicle sales by 2035 with public procurement mandates already in place.

China is steadily increasing zero-emissions targets for government fleets and electrifying city transport. Australia now targets 75 per cent of its federal fleet to be low emissions by 2025, alongside new fuel-efficiency standards to unlock supply.

Even amid political shifts in the US, many states are holding firm on electrification goals. These aren't fringe policies, but represent mainstream thinking on climate, energy and industrial renewal.

In this context, deprioritising EVs in New Zealand's public sector would place us further out of step with global norms and risk weakening domestic confidence. It could also jeopardise our emissions targets and reduce the economic gains of transport decarbonisation.

Our industry understands the need for flexibility in fleet management, but clarity of direction is equally essential.

The AoG mandate is a proven tool for aligning public investment with national goals and should remain in place.

Retaining the AoG EV procurement requirement will ensure public spending remains aligned with our climate commitments and continues to support long-term market growth.

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[continued from page 1]

and regulatory factors, particularly the CCS.

He notes the Imported Motor Vehicle Industry Association (VIA) is actively engaging with Chris Bishop, the Minister of Transport, to advocate for a more pragmatic approach to the government's vehicle-emissions policy.

"As an importing nation, New Zealand's CCS targets must be aligned with market realities," explains Shi. "While ambitious environmental targets are commendable, we must recognise the supply chain is largely dependent on other countries.

"The regulatory framework must account for the availability of compliant vehicles, ensuring that policies remain effective and sustainable in the long run.

"New Zealand dealers are increasingly constrained by the cost implications of the CCS. The standard imposes an additional financial burden, which directly influences bid strategies at auctions.

JAPAN'S USED-VEHICLE EXPORTS: TOP SIX COUNTRIES

	2021		2022		2023		2024	
	GLOBAL SHARE	TOTAL EXPORTED	GLOBAL SHARE	TOTAL EXPORTED	GLOBAL SHARE	TOTAL EXPORTED	GLOBAL SHARE	TOTAL EXPORTED
1. United Arab Emirates	10.9%	133,233	12.2%	150,718	13.2%	204,404	14.4%	226,698
2. Russia	13.2%	162,249	17.3%	213,526	14.1%	218,191	12.7%	199,098
3. Mongolia	5.2%	63,509	3.7%	46,229	5.2%	79,765	7.1%	111,625
4. New Zealand	8.6%	104,954	6.8%	84,083	7.4%	114,252	5.2%	81,290
5. Tanzania	5.1%	62,428	5.8%	71,651	5.3%	81,683	5.0%	77,978
6. Chile	7.2%	88,782	4.6%	56,487	4.3%	65,644	4.1%	64,666
Vehicles exported		**1,224,954**		**1,237,814**		**1,542,798**		**1,572,714**
Top six countries		**615,155**		**622,694**		**763,939**		**761,355**
Percentage made up by top six		**50.22%**		**50.31%**		**49.52%**		**48.41%**

"This cascading effect extends across the entire supply chain, making vehicle acquisition more expensive and – in turn – limiting consumer affordability."

The CCS was introduced in January 2023 and sets specific carbon-dioxide emissions targets for importers of light vehicles. Models with an emissions-to-weight ratio that exceed certain levels incur charges, while those below the limits earn credits.

The targets, which have been set until 2029, get progressively tougher at the start of each year as the government seeks to make the country's fleet cleaner.

However, Shi says there's a growing need to reassess how effective the CCS is as a policy. "The current structure is inadvertently restricting consumer choice and pushing buyers towards vehicles that may not align with their preferences.

"New Zealanders have a strong preference for SUVs, utes and multi-purpose vehicles, yet the CCS framework could impose heavy penalties that render these vehicles commercially unviable for many consumers.

"Finding a balanced approach, one that facilitates sustainable environmental outcomes without disrupting affordability and supply-chain viability, I think is critical.

"VIA is doing a great job. Its advocating efforts are aimed to align New Zealand's stance with Australia's more pragmatic regulatory framework around used-vehicle emissions. Gaining traction on this front will be instrumental in achieving a more balanced policy landscape."

Besides CCS challenges, Shi notes the industry is monitoring the activity of other international markets at auctions in Japan. This includes countries such as Sri Lanka, which has recently lifted its ban on private-vehicle imports.

"While Sri Lanka would possibly be targeting more lower-tier vehicles that may not meet New Zealand's compliance standards, the emergence of new high-demand markets inevitably impacts auction dynamics.

"As international demand intensifies, heightened competition at Japanese auctions naturally places upward pressure on prices.

"This presents additional challenges for New Zealand dealers, who must comply with more stringent regulatory frameworks compared to other markets."

New Zealand's number of used-vehicle imports from all jurisdictions last year only reached five figures in March and April, when 10,353 and 11,551 units crossed our borders respectively.

The monthly tally fell for four consecutive months from July to ▶

The United Arab Emirates imports the most used cars from Japan

October when it hit a low of 4,730 before climbing to finish the year with 7,024 in November and 6,679 in December.

"On a positive note, we are beginning to see signs of stabilisation in the automotive import sector," says Shi. "Customs data over recent months indicates imports have been holding steady at approximately 6,500 units per month following a prolonged period of volatility when numbers were in decline.

"Looking ahead, macroeconomic indicators suggest a gradual recovery.

"Inflationary pressures have eased, and the continued reduction in the official cash rate is expected to enhance liquidity and stimulate consumer confidence, which is favourable for our industry."

Shi believes New Zealand's car industry may have to adjust to a new baseline for used imports and the era of regularly bringing in more than 10,000 units per month may be over.

As a result, he suggests businesses recalibrate their forecasts and financial structures accordingly.

"Our strategic planning reflects this shift, ensuring that our projections align with what's expected to be the 'new normal'.

"Furthermore, Japan's automotive manufacturing sector hasn't been in a state of oversupply in recent years."

SOURCING LOCALLY

Mac Passmore, chief executive of AutoFlip NZ, has similar views to Shi on factors influencing the volume of imported vehicles coming from Japan and notes that some companies are looking closer to home for used cars.

"We're observing a trend where dealers, traditionally focused on imports, are expressing a growing interest in sourcing stock locally," he told Autofile.

"It's not just a few dealers. The number is significant. This shift began in November last year and we've observed a marked increase in this trend since then.

"This shift is driven by the increasing difficulty and cost of

Jim Shi, of Autohub

Mac Passmore, of AutoFlip NZ

acquiring vehicles from Japan at competitive prices. It's making it difficult for Kiwi dealers to import and sell with a reasonable margin.

"Businesses need to be adaptable. Local stock is a viable option at the moment and dealers need to be open to trying different channels for sourcing stock anywhere they can."

Passmore notes another factor affecting importers is that they not only have to consider the cost of any car they are interested in, but also the potential CCS penalties it may attract.

"CCS fees changed on January 1 and will change again next year, which impacts your ability to make a fast decision at auction.

"Legislation is increasing the need for adaptability, thereby heightening the risk of financially unsound decisions. This makes the process of purchasing and importing vehicles more complex and challenging."

Shifting regulations also impact on operational costs because importers and dealers have to allocate personnel or personal time to evaluate the compliance of cars they want to bring in. This diversion of resources detracts from "core activities", such as sales and vehicle processing.

Passmore stresses being adaptable has been key for much of the automotive industry over the past five years and the consistent need to change shouldn't be new to anybody. The current situation reinforces that.

When it comes to legislation, he notes this is driving a shift towards climate-friendly vehicles.

Some new Chinese models "exemplify this trend" and are performing well here.

"The pricing of new Chinese vehicles is highly competitive. Should prices of used cars continue to rise, it could significantly impact market balance."

Patrick Davey, chief executive officer of Davey Japan, which is a wholesale car exporter, also believes Kiwi importers and dealers are trying to get to grips with new laws while CCS targets have influenced activity at Japanese auctions and spurred some businesses to instead seek vehicles locally.

"Probably the biggest impact in New Zealand has been on the dealer network not really understanding legislation and struggling to work out how much vehicles they would want to buy will land for," he says.

"This was certainly the case in the first few months of this year. For a lot of dealers, I think it has just become easier to source local stock and not have to worry about the CCS fees, exchange rates, shipping delays and so on."

LIMITS ON SUPPLY

The challenge of securing used Japanese stock appears to be widespread and no makes or models are immune from rising domestic demand in Japan, according to feedback AutoFlip has been receiving.

"Demand from other countries is a factor influencing the price of

[continued on page 6]

[continued from page 5]

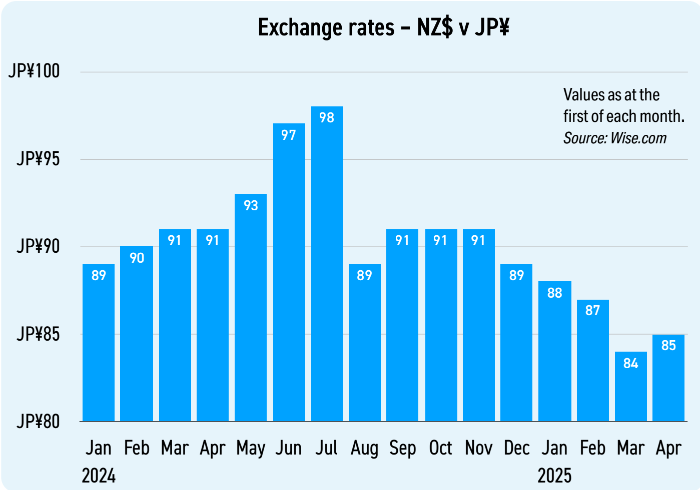
vehicles at auctions and, secondly, a lack of supply in Japan," says Passmore.

"The number of Japanese cars coming through is a lot less because the Japanese domestic market is changing its habits. Consumers appear less inclined to dispose of second-hand cars and buy a new vehicle.

"They're keeping second-hand cars longer. When they do change, they are now more inclined to buy another used one. People in Japan are tightening their belts and saving as much as they can."

Passmore notes the situation in Japan is also making it harder for dealers to source stock in New Zealand because more businesses are looking to buy cars already in the fleet.

"Currently, rental and lease companies find it easy to move vehicles in bulk. This trend highlights the growing demand from dealers, who are increasingly purchasing more stock locally than in the past.



"A flow-on effect of that is likely to be higher prices for New Zealand stock. Dealers are paying more than we would expect in some scenarios and the trend in demand is very much for Japanese makes. It's not something that's so far affected European brands."

Passmore doesn't foresee prices skyrocketing but predicts consumers will end up paying more for cars in the short and medium term if current conditions persist.

This is because dealers need to maintain profitability and the limited ability to import from Japan, coupled with a growing preference for locally sourced cars, is creating market pressure.

He notes the current situation could create a similar dynamic to the Covid-19 period when sales of new vehicles increased substantially compared to used.

"If the cost of purchasing used cars is high and the price difference to new is minimal, the attractiveness of buying new vehicles increases," Passmore explains. "This shift enhances the viability of acquiring new cars, rather than repeatedly selling the same used one in the fleet.

"In the long term, we may witness a fundamental shift when the sale of New Zealand-new vehicles reaches a level that makes local sourcing more reliable. Consequently, reliance on Japanese imports may diminish compared to previous years."

ECONOMIC HEADWINDS

Japanese vehicle auctions are reported to have experienced heightened international demand of late with the likes of the UAE, Malaysia and Mongolia significantly increasing their procurement volumes.

Davey points out Russia and the UAE have been the two dominant markets for used Japanese imports for a long time.

"While competition from other

Challenges with cross-rate

The fluctuation of exchange rates has affected the buying power of New Zealand importers when bidding for used cars at auctions in Japan.

The kiwi was equivalent to 98 yen in July 2024 before tumbling to 89 in August and was at 84 at the start of last month – the lowest in more than a year.

While the New Zealand dollar has weakened recently, Patrick Davey, of Davey Japan, believes the exchange rate of 84 in early March was still in a competitive place for efficient trading.

He says: "There have been a couple of times over the past 25 years when the kiwi only bought around 40-45 yen and we saw it drop to around 64 in March 2020 when Covid-19 issues started to arise.

"While trading in the 90s is preferred, trading in the low to mid-80s should still be possible. It's worth noting that for the cheaper stock, like the 2012-16 Toyota Aqua, minor exchange-rate downturns shouldn't have too much of an influence over landed cost. It does make a difference with higher-priced vehicles."

Jim Shi, of Autohub, says foreign-exchange analysts have forecast the cross-rate may range from the mid-high 70s to mid-high 80s over the next quarter, "underscoring the volatility in markets".

"As a globally integrated operation, we are inherently exposed to foreign-exchange risk and geopolitical volatility," he adds.

"Uncertainty surrounding global trade policies, such as tariff realignments, introduce an extra layer of unpredictability to currency markets.

"Given this uncertainty, we've done different financial modelling to ensure we remain adaptable to macroeconomic shifts."

markets will always take place when buying used vehicles from Japan, there are certain makes and models that are specific to New Zealand, meaning they only really work for the Kiwi market. This includes a lot of Mazda and Subaru products.

"Crossover models – vehicles that other markets also try to buy – have become harder to buy of late, mainly due to the extra CCS costs associated in New Zealand.

"I feel the main reason for the downturn in numbers of used vehicles from Japan is more due to the fact New Zealand's economy has been struggling for a while and buyers are simply not out there at the moment. For regular Kiwis, the cost-of-living crisis means upgrading their current vehicle isn't a priority."

As for when the outlook for the market may improve, Davey notes data for January 2025 showed New Zealand in seventh place for used vehicles exported from Japan.

"The general economy in New Zealand needs to rebound before we see volumes increase," he says.

> **The general economy in New Zealand needs to rebound before we see volumes increase**
> – Patrick Davey

"I also feel the current market price in New Zealand needs to lift as margins for stock out of Japan are a little slim to make it work for small to medium-sized dealers."

Autohub's Shi also notes an increased demand from international buyers exacerbates the competitive landscape, making it more difficult for Kiwi dealers to secure stock from Japan at what are viable price points.

At the same time, New Zealand's purchasing power has remained subdued due to domestic economic headwinds and exchange rates.

While many of the influences currently weighing on the automotive market are external, Shi says Autohub is looking at what it can do internally to mitigate the impact of fewer used-vehicle imports.

"We've been proactive in adapting to these challenges by reinforcing our financial resilience. Like all businesses, Autohub must maintain financial sustainability while navigating an evolving economic landscape.

"While external factors remain beyond our control, we have taken a dual-pronged approach to optimising operational efficiencies and exploring avenues to bolster top-line revenue growth.

"Our immediate focus has been on cost efficiencies, ensuring every dollar spent delivers maximum value. Simultaneously, we're actively leveraging market opportunities to drive revenue expansion.

"In essence, we are leaving no stone unturned in our efforts to sustain growth and navigate these market conditions effectively.

"While some of these external factors will continue to shape our industry, having a proactive approach will ensure we remain resilient in the face of ongoing challenges."

Red light for electric mandates

A plan by the coalition to scrap requirements for its agencies to buy zero or low-emitting models has been criticised by an organisation committed to speeding up the switch to electric.

The proposal is among changes politicians want to make to procurement rules so it's easier for businesses to win government contracts, which are collectively worth more than $50 billion a year.

Under the current regulations, mandated agencies must opt for a battery electric vehicle (BEV) or a plug-in hybrid (PHEV) if a fully electric model is inappropriate.

However, Drive Electric is concerned that removing requirements for government departments to prioritise EVs undermines years of progress, and sends a troubling signal to the market and consumers.

"These changes represent a significant step backward in our transition to a low-carbon transport future," says Kirsten Corson, chair of the organisation.

"We believe these procurement changes are inconsistent with our national climate commitments and lack any long-term strategy.

"This government has committed to 10,000 chargers and has outlined it wants a market-led approach.


Drive Electric says the economic advantages of electric cars will only grow as lithium-ion battery costs continue to decline and EV technology matures

"However, government fleet purchases have been crucial in establishing a robust second-hand EV market, which makes EVs more accessible to everyday New Zealanders and provides confidence to install public chargers."

When it comes to the immediate impact on the electric-car sector of scrapping the procurement mandate, Corson believes it could be "substantial" with government fleet purchases having represented a significant portion of new EV sales in this country.

Removing this demand will reduce overall registrations, potentially leading suppliers to reconsider their offerings and "when we see our neighbour Australia incentivising EV uptake, such decisions are perplexing".

The downstream effects on the second-hand market will be even more concerning. That's because government fleet vehicles typically enter the used sector after three to five years, providing more affordable electric options for everyday New Zealanders.

Corson told Autofile: "By reducing the flow of EVs into government fleets now, we're effectively cutting off the supply of affordable used EVs in coming years. This will dramatically slow the transition to clean transport for average Kiwis."

She says last month's announcement by government amounts to the latest in a series of policy reversals that have undermined EV adoption.

"The end of the clean car discount, removal of road-user charge [RUC] exemptions, increased ACC levies specifically targeting electric vehicles and now these procurement changes represent a systematic dismantling of New Zealand's EV policy framework.

"Each individual change might be manageable, but collectively they have created significant market uncertainty and slowed our transition to clean transport.

"This pattern of decisions appears to prioritise short-term considerations over the long-term benefits of electrification including reduced emissions, improved air quality, lower running costs and reduced fuel imports.

"These proposals send a deeply troubling message that New Zealand is retreating from its climate commitments and no longer prioritises the transition to clean transport.

"It suggests the government doesn't view climate action as economically viable, which contradicts the overwhelming evidence that EVs offer lower total cost of ownership compared to internal-combustion vehicles."

Corson stresses the economic case for EVs is clear. When considering total cost of ownership, they are already cheaper than their petrol counterparts over the vehicle's lifetime due to significantly lower fuel and maintenance costs.

This economic advantage will only grow as lithium-ion battery costs continue to decline and EV technology matures.

She says: "To the automotive industry, it signals reduced government commitment to electrification, potentially causing manufacturers and importers to reconsider their EV investment and supply strategies for New Zealand.

"To the public, it creates confusion and uncertainty about whether now is the right time to switch to an EV."

Drive Electric is keen to see more positive action to support the electric-vehicle industry.

This will dramatically slow the transition to clean transport for average Kiwis

– Kirsten Corson

While there have been government statements about supporting the transition to clean transport, it believes New Zealand would benefit from concrete policies that accelerate EV adoption.

The organisation has requested a meeting with Chris Bishop, Minister of Transport, and Simon Watts, who holds the climate change and energy portfolios, to discuss this. It is awaiting a response.

"We're looking for greater engagement with the sector to develop sustainable, fiscally responsible policies that advance electrification," says Corson.

"New Zealand needs a coherent strategy for achieving emissions-reduction targets in the transport sector, which accounts for approximately 20 per cent of our total emissions.

"Unfortunately, we have fallen behind many other OECD countries in EV adoption. Australia, which had previously lagged behind New Zealand, has now overtaken us with stronger policies.

"The UK has committed to ending the sale of new petrol and diesel cars by 2035, and is seeing rapidly accelerating EV uptake as a result.

"Meanwhile, countries such as Norway, which began implementing supportive EV policies as early as 1990, now see more than 90 per cent of new-car sales being electric.

"Even there though, only about 30 per cent of the total fleet is electric highlighting that the transition takes time and requires consistent policy support.

"This is particularly concerning when we consider New Zealand spends approximately $8-9 billion annually importing fossil fuels, a significant economic burden that could be substantially reduced through transport electrification.

"Additionally, the social costs of our current transport system – including healthcare costs from

[continued on page 10]

[continued from page 9]

air pollution, climate impacts and productivity losses – are estimated at $10.5b annually. EVs directly address these costs while keeping energy spending in our local economy."

LOW-INTEREST LOANS

When it comes to government policies to promote electric vehicles, New Zealand used to lead Australia. That was until the general election here in October 2023.

Since then, the National, Act and NZ First coalition has scrapped the clean car discount, abolished RUC exemptions on EVs and increased their ACC levies.

On the other side of the Tasman, the federal government has launched low-interest loans. The scheme is worth about A$150 million – or around NZ$166m – and is aimed at essential workers and those earning less than A$100,000 per year to boost sales of zero-emissions models.

Tony Weber, chief executive of the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries, says the loans, which started in December, represent "a good initial step to support a small and specific group of consumers".

He adds Australia has been mirroring global trends by experiencing a slowdown in BEV sales despite an increasing number of brands and models entering the market.

"Growth in demand for BEVs is easing around the world as governments remove incentives and consumers face the realities of making the shift, which include higher purchasing prices, availability of recharging infrastructure and models that meet their needs," he explains.

Weber notes it's significant the Australian government has recognised the need to do more to support sales of EVs if the automotive industry is to get close to achieving the emissions reduction targets under the new vehicle efficiency standard, which kicked in on January 1.

This policy is similar to the clean car standard already operating in New Zealand that targets light-vehicle imports.

Australia, which had previously lagged behind New Zealand, has now overtaken us with stronger EV policies, according to Drive Electric

Nicola Willis

In addition to the loans, an exemption to fringe-benefit tax has been available on eligible low or zero-emission models valued up to the luxury-car tax threshold of A$91,387 since July 2022. That said, PHEVs were excluded from April 1.

This scheme has reduced the cost of paying for electric cars and covering running costs through a novated lease by thousands of dollars per annum.

In some cases, it has made funding an EV purchase through such a lease cheaper in Australia than paying in cash, advises the Electric Vehicle Council (EVC).

Each state and territory has different policies and eligibility rules in addition to federal schemes.

The Australian Capital Territory has discounts on registration and stamp duty as well as zero-interest loans of up to A$15,000.

There's a A$3,500 rebate for consumers in Western Australia buying EVs with sticker prices of up to A$75,000, while Tasmanians can get A$2,000 back after switching to a new or used electric car.

The Northern Territory has registration and stamp-duty concessions of up to A$1,500 for BEVs and PHEVs priced up to A$50,000.

Rebates in Queensland ended in September 2024. However, EV owners there are eligible for a one per cent discount on stamp duty and a small amount off their annual registration.

Owners of electric cars in South Australia and Victoria can get registration discounts, but their subsidy schemes have closed, while the New South Wales government abolished its stamp-duty exemption and rebates for all eligible EV purchases in January last year.

A spokesman for the EVC says: "While NSW, South Australia and Victoria have made progress in promoting EV adoption through rebates, it's disheartening these governments have decided to prematurely scrap incentives.

"The NSW incentives played a crucial role in driving a remarkable 400 per cent increase in EV sales with a shift towards suburban and middle-income communities.

"These sudden policy changes not only jeopardise our climate targets, including the 43 per cent emissions-reduction goal and the broader aim of achieving net-zero emissions, but also disproportionately affect those who cannot lease vehicles, particularly in regional areas.

"The EVC calls on all Australian governments to maintain incentives for uptake until our market reaches at least 30 per cent EV sales."

REDUCING RED TAPE

Nicola Willis, as Minister for Economic Growth, announced the coalition's proposal to scrap requirements for its agencies to buy BEVs and PHEVs on March 12.

The changes to the procurement rules include introducing an economic benefit test and canning 24 regulations that have put "unnecessary obstacles" in the way of Kiwi companies.

"This test will require government agencies to consider the wider benefit to New Zealand of awarding contracts to New Zealand firms when making procurement decisions," she says.

"Doing so will create export and employment opportunities, and help businesses to grow.

"Currently, there are 71 rules that agencies must follow when tendering contracts. We are proposing to reduce that number to 47 by scrapping rules that are redundant or unnecessary, duplicate content, repeat statutory and regulatory requirements or have never been applied in practice."

The government wants to dispense with requirements for its agencies to build non-residential government buildings to five-star rating standards, to buy office supplies that produce low amounts of waste and or are recyclable, and pay the living wage in contracts for cleaning, catering and security guard services.

Willis says: "Many of these requirements will be replaced by the economic benefit rule. This will apply to all goods, services and refurbishment contracts worth more than $100,000 and all construction works worth more than $9m.

"For contracts below these levels, agencies will be expected to award contracts to New Zealand businesses that have the capability to deliver."

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Supreme awards for excellence

A dealership based in Christchurch has taken out a supreme award at Toyota and Lexus' business excellence awards.

Miles Toyota also scooped honours for its finance and insurance and used-vehicle operations to cap off a great 2024 for Mark Mills, its chief executive officer, and his teams.

Toyota's supreme award requires all areas of a franchise to perform at the highest level, deliver exceptional experiences for customers and strengthen its connection to its local community.

Bruce and Kay Miles founded the company in 1980. They also own Pacific Toyota in Tauranga, which took home the service excellence and citizenship awards.

The latter recognises the contributions and impact that the two marques' dealerships have made in the communities where they operate.

Pacific Toyota landed the award for its long-term partnership with Good Neighbour, which supports people with food rescue and distribution, firewood distribution and neighbourhood clean-ups.

Lexus of North Shore in Auckland won that brand's

From left, Andrew Davis, Mark Mills, CEO of Miles Toyota, and Tatsuya Ishikawa

supreme award for the second year in a row at the ceremony in Tākina, Wellington Convention and Exhibition Centre.

It was a successful evening for the capital's Rutherford & Bond and King Toyota Group with the premier leadership award going to new CEO, Derek Tilyard. It also won the branch of the year for its Porirua business.

The president's award, which rewards customer satisfaction and retention, went to South Canterbury Toyota in Timaru, now a four-time winner.

Northland Toyota, Whangarei, won the parts and accessories award, and Otorohanga's Prescott Toyota was recognised for new-vehicle excellence.

Lexus of Auckland City, which recently moved to a new flagship showroom in Newmarket, scooped the marque's sales and marketing excellence award.

Tatsuya Ishikawa, Toyota NZ's acting chief executive, says: "Leadership teams at our stores are invested in creating a thriving business that's not only great for the customer, but is also well-connected to communities."

Ishikawa says the awards reflect the "continued strength" of the Toyota brand and its offering in this country and describes 2024 as a strong year with 31,520 sales.

"We not only held onto our number-one slot, but broke our own sales record with Lexus reaching number two in the luxury-vehicle market.

"We're proud to continue to deliver vehicles that meet the needs of our customers, not to mention all the other services we offer."

Category winners

PREMIER AWARDS:

Toyota supreme: Miles Toyota
Lexus supreme: Lexus of North Shore
President's award: South Canterbury Toyota
Leadership: Rutherford & Bond and King Toyota
Citizenship: Pacific Toyota

OTHER RECIPIENTS:

Branch: Rutherford & Bond Toyota Porirua
New vehicles: Prescott Toyota
Used vehicles and F&I: Miles Toyota
Parts and accessories: Northland Toyota
Service: Pacific Toyota
Lexus sales and marketing: Lexus of Auckland City

Sharlene van Dijk, of Lexus of Auckland City, with Craig Burton, sales and operations manager of Lexus NZ

Craig Martin, left, of Rutherford & Bond Toyota Porirua, with Dave Rhodes-Robinson, senior manager of franchise development at Toyota NZ

Aaron Budrewicz, of Northland Toyota, with Michelle Povey, Toyota NZ assistant vice-president

Chris Bussenschutt, of Pacific Toyota

Derek Tilyard, of Rutherford & Bond and King Toyota

Ryan Prescott, of Prescott Toyota

Mark Jago, of Lexus of North Shore

Mark Patterson, of South Canterbury Toyota

City secures double honours

Two dealerships in Christchurch have claimed top spot in their marque's annual awards.

The city's BMW franchise scooped the brand's dealer of the year award for 2024 while its Mini Garage took out its equivalent title.

The winners received their prizes at the group's awards ceremony, which was held at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki.


Adam Shaver, far left, and Jean-Philippe Parain, fourth from left, with BMW and Mini dealers and staff

Jean-Philippe Parain, senior vice-president of sales regions Asia-Pacific, Eastern Europe, Middle East and Africa, attended the event to acknowledge the role of dealer partners and their teams in the company's success domestically and globally.

Adam Shaver, managing director of BMW Group NZ, says the awards celebrate employees and business partners who engage with customers every day and help strengthen the company's market position.

He adds: "Last year presented challenges on many fronts, making it even more important to come together.

"That was to not only recognise the exceptional achievements of our retail partners, but to also celebrate the collective efforts that have driven our brand's success.

"We know every link in the chain is essential to our success, so a big thank you to every dealer and their teams for their contributions in 2024.

"Their commitment to customer satisfaction, achieving sales targets, marketing and representing our brand with excellence has been instrumental in the BMW Group's success globally and here in New Zealand."

MEET AWARD WINNERS

Dealer of the year: Christchurch BMW. **Customer support:** Hawke's Bay BMW, Hastings. **Customer service:** Coombes Johnston BMW Tauranga. **Marketing:** Continental Cars BMW, Auckland. **Financial services:** Auckland City BMW.

Sales manager, group two: Mark Ireland, of Cooke Howlison BMW, Dunedin. **Sales manager, group one:** Pierre Jean Kleinhans, of Auckland City BMW. **Sales consultant used cars:** Ethan Zhang, of Auckland City BMW.

Sales consultant, group two: Dylan Boddis, of Coombes Johnston BMW Tauranga. **Sales consultant, group one:** Gary Su, of Auckland City BMW. **Financial services:** Margie Sanders, of Auckland City BMW.

Mini dealer of the year: Christchurch Mini Garage.

Mini sales consultant, group two: Caelen Chadwick, of Coombes Johnston Mini Garage, Hamilton.

Mini sales consultant, group one: Selena Andreassend, of Christchurch Mini Garage.

Porsche store gets makeover


Inside the Porsche store in Wellington


The dealership's workshop


People mixing at the opening

Armstrong's has officially opened a refurbished dealership after a multi-stage investment.

The transformation of the site in Cambridge Terrace, Wellington, has taken two-and-a-half years with more developments planned over the next decade.

The Porsche facility, which has cost $14 million, boasts an improved layout, and space to showcase special and rare vehicles.

The workshop now caters for a range of vehicles, including hybrids and EVs. It's kitted out with bays for electric cars, in-ground hoists and a bunker.

"Over the past three decades, Armstrong's has pursued organic growth, building and diversifying a leading brand and strategic real-estate portfolio across Dunedin, Wellington, Christchurch and Auckland," says Troy Kennedy, Armstrong's chief executive officer.

"Wellington has always been a cornerstone of our operations and remains central to our long-term plans. The new showroom and workshop are testament to this commitment.

"We've had a fantastic team of local designers and builders involved, stimulating activity for local businesses and some great people.

"While the current economic climate is difficult for a lot of people, we believe in taking a long-term approach rather than shrinking in the short term.

"This has proven itself through major economic events from the global financial crisis to the cycle we are confronting today."

Founded by Rick Armstrong in 1993, the company operates 18 dealerships representing some 19 brands.

Japan hits back at US

Japan is looking into "all possible options" in response to America announcing tariffs on imports of motor vehicles and automotive parts.

Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba says his government needs to assess what action will be most effective while "keeping all possibilities in mind".

He adds: "We've made investments in the US, created jobs and paid the highest wages. Japan's investment in the US ranks first."

His government is now considering "whether it's appropriate to apply the same measures to all countries equally".

Tokyo has failed on multiple occasions to persuade Donald Trump's administration to exempt Japan from new tariffs.

The president announced on March 26 that 25 per cent tariffs on all motor vehicle and automotive part imports would be imposed from April 3, claiming such importations "threaten to impair" national security.

Japan's automotive exports to America were around US$40 billion – or about NZ$70b – in 2024, which was 28.3 per cent of total exports and the largest single category of exports to the US.

Aimee Wiley, of the Motor Industry Association, says if America sticks with the tariffs it may prompt Chinese marques to try to sell more vehicles in other markets, including New Zealand.

She notes some brands in China already build left and right-hand-drive models, while some car parts may become more expensive if specialised suppliers overseas are affected.

That said, our country's strong trade relationships and diversified markets should help cushion these effects.

Annually, Japanese marques export around 1.37 million vehicles to the US, down from a peak of 3.43m in 1986.

Embrace value of digital partners

It's no secret that right now we're navigating a challenging economic landscape.

The cost of living is high meaning consumers and business owners are looking for ways to cut expenditure.

For many company managers including dealer principals, this involves evaluating partnership arrangements to ensure they deliver clear cost benefits.

Marketing agencies often find themselves on the chopping block at such a time as business owners decide to bring more work in-house to eliminate consultancy and management fees.

Although this may save money in the short term, it often results in lower overall advertising returns due to a lack of expertise of those administering campaigns. With the right digital partnership in place, however, dealerships can save money by maximising return on advertising spend (ROAS).

I have experienced first-hand the true benefit of an effective digital partnership. Our agency had two dealership clients of a similar size and representing the same brand.

Over a three-month period, one of those businesses ran some of its campaigns in-house while delegating other aspects of its marketing strategy to multiple external partners.

The second dealership, on the other hand, outsourced all key elements of its strategy to a single digital partner.

JAMES HENDRY
Director, sales and operations
AdTorque Edge NZ

The advertising efforts of the first dealership generated 1,961 unique visits to its website and eight enquiries. In contrast, the second dealership received 7,156 online visitors and 47 enquiries for a 488 per cent increase in performance compared to its competitor.

In today's fiercely competitive car market, digital marketing has become the backbone of a successful advertising strategy.

But achieving real, measurable results requires more than just a generalist's knowledge of marketing.

Dealership marketing teams are hired to drive brand awareness for their business and are expected to have a broad understanding across advertising techniques. They aren't digital experts.

By partnering with a quality agency, you gain access to a team of specialists with each member highly experienced in their own channel be it social media, search-engine optimisation (SEO), Google Ads, or programmatic video and audio.

The knowledge of these experts means that they are best placed to create, analyse, optimise and report on your digital activity to deliver high-quality traffic and leads, and maximum ROAS.

Few dealerships would have the funds or resources available to recruit their own specialist digital team. Even if they did, such a team's exposure would be limited to their immediate business, restricting their ability to keep up with the ever-evolving digital landscape.

Outsourcing to a digital agency provides top-tier expertise without overhead costs such as salaries, training and equipment. Also, its exposure to a range of clients and industries means it can continually upskill to remain across any emerging digital innovations and consumer behaviours.

In addition to outsourcing, the success of the previously mentioned dealership can also be attributed to the fact it ran all digital activity through a single provider.

Many businesses tend to rely on separate agencies for social media, Google Ads, SEO and so on. This, however, can lead to a disjointed strategy with limited performance capacity and gaps in reporting.

Outsourcing all your business' advertising to one provider gives it access to all data and insights so campaigns can be optimised holistically. This leads to stronger performance, more accurate reporting and ultimately a far greater return.

Selecting a digital partner is an important decision for any business, particularly in an industry as fiercely competitive as automotive.

A first-rate marketing agency can support you in navigating the increasingly complex digital space by bringing the expertise, resources and innovation needed to outperform under-resourced internal teams or fragmented third-party providers.

Before you opt to cut those agency fees to reduce expenses, consider the true value of your digital partner and how its efforts could be what ends up driving you forward.

Industry movers

JORDAN HAINES has become the brand manager of Geely Auto NZ ahead of its launch in April. Its official distributor here is the Giltrap Group.

Haines, pictured, has 13 years of car-industry experience and has been with Giltrap since 2018, most recently as Volkswagen NZ's national sales manager.

"Geely is a transformative brand with innovation and sustainability at its forefront," he says. "It will bring world-class engineering at an affordable price within the reach of all New Zealanders."

The EX5, a mid-sized electric vehicle, will be the first model to enter the Kiwi market. It will be followed by a range of powertrains as well as showrooms opening across the country.

Steve Kenchington, chief executive of Giltrap, says: "This is an exciting time for Geely with its global growth trajectory and increased model range over the coming years."

Stephen Coutts

STEPHEN COUTTS and **JULIA BENTLEY** have been appointed to MTF's future directors programme run with the Institute of Directors.

The scheme aims to mentor aspiring directors and allows participants to witness boardroom dynamics, make contributions and create value.

Julia Bentley

Coutts has been an MTF shareholder for 30 years through Cartown, his dealership in Palmerston North.

He will sit on the board from May 1 to August 31 this year.

Bentley will be a future director from October 1 to December 31. She previously worked for Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, ANZ and RentPlus, and co-owned an MTF originator business for nearly seven years.

"As a member organisation, it is vital we develop new directors from within our shareholder base," says Mark Darrow, MTF's chairman.

Paul Johnston

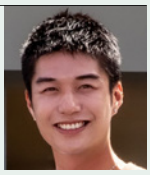
PAUL JOHNSTON has taken over as interim chief executive officer of Tower after Blair Turnbull's resignation.

Johnston was previously chief financial officer, a position he took up in January 2022 when joining the company.

He worked at Chubb for almost six years, firstly in London as European financial controller, and then as director and CFO for the Far East in Tokyo. He has also worked for AIG, Deloitte, National Australia Bank and Meridian Energy.

Angus Shelton

ANGUS SHELTON, who was Johnston's deputy, has stepped up to interim CFO. He has held senior finance positions at Tower since 2017.



ALBERT CHO has partnered with KGM NZ to showcase the all-new Torres. Known for his restaurant reviews, he is an influential voice in the food and digital spaces.

Cho is also operations manager of the Namu Group, overseeing some of Auckland's culinary hotspots including Aigo, Candy Shop and his personal project, Tobi.

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

From left: Sturrock Saunders, chair of the Inspiring Futures Foundation board, scholarship recipient Michelle Findlater, Verna Niao, MITO's executive director

Dealer principal set to study at Harvard

Michelle Findlater is looking forward to learning from global leaders at Harvard University in the US after winning a scholarship from MITO and the Inspiring Futures Foundation.

The dealer principal of Southern Automobiles in Invercargill is this year's recipient of the Janet Lane MNZM Scholarship.

She will use it to complete the Harvard Division of Continuing Education's certificate of leadership excellence in strategy and innovation.

The scholarship, named after MITO's ex-longstanding chief executive, is awarded to an individual annually to support intensive study in management and leadership study.

Findlater has more than 20 years' experience in the automotive industry, and held senior roles at Scania NZ and GWD Motor Group before joining Southern Automobiles in 2024.

MITO says she has a demonstrated commitment to governance and leadership.

She has also been dedicated to continued learning after completing bachelor's and master's degrees in applied management while doing her job.

Findlater says: "This opportunity represents a critical step in my academic and professional journey, and I look forward to learning from and contributing to the esteemed Harvard community."

The certificate programme will take a year to 18 months to complete. She will do three courses online and complete one course on campus at Harvard.

"This in-person experience will be an invaluable opportunity for networking and learning from global leaders," adds Findlater.

"I'm excited to learn from an institution at the cutting-edge of knowledge and to gain the skills I will need to navigate our rapidly evolving business landscape.

"My studies will help me enhance our business performance at Southern Automobiles, and will also allow me to foster innovation, strategy and effective leadership in future governance roles."

'Perfect choice' for role

Lee Robson

Avanti Finance has appointed Lee Robson as general manager – auto for New Zealand.

He joined the company in February 2022 as national sales manager and had been acting in his new position since December last year.

Robson's extensive knowledge of the business and driving results made him the "perfect choice" to lead the team forward.

"Lee's leadership has been invaluable in the acting GM role," says Fred Ohlsson, group chief executive officer. "We're excited to see what the future holds under his guidance."

Before joining the company in 2020, Robson was national sales manager at Vertex Oil NZ.

Outcomes should serve everyone

I have always been strongly supportive of lanes for bicycles. The reasoning was obvious because promoting cycling as a mode of transport would reduce congestion.

By providing safe and dedicated lanes, more people would feel encouraged to take to two wheels, easing traffic flow for those who genuinely need to drive.

Cyclists wouldn't necessarily give up their cars entirely. They would simply choose that option when it suited them and retain vehicles for specific situations, such as rainy days, weekend outings or longer trips.

When confronted with criticism, particularly the argument that cycle lanes are pointless because "no one bikes", I was sceptical.

To me, this reasoning was flawed. It was like deciding against building a bridge because very few people choose to swim across rivers.

Swimming like this is neither practical nor safe, much like cycling on busy roads without infrastructure. My belief was that providing safe, specific spaces would inherently lead to an increased number of bicycles.

However, I recently had a shift in perspective, sparked by reconsidering my analogy.

It dawned on me that constructing a bridge isn't the only viable solution for crossing a river. You could use a ferry because it's much cheaper, potentially equally effective and easier to initially implement.

Applying this train of thought back to transportation planning, the cycle lane would represent the expensive bridge while improved public transport would act as the more cost-effective ferry.

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

This realisation led me to re-evaluate the fundamental goals behind advocating for cycle lanes, which are improving road safety, reducing congestion and increasing transport accessibility for all.

I would always make the issue personal because of my concerns about the safety of children riding to school.

Cycle lanes seemed like a necessary condition for their safe travel because I had genuine fears about other road users' unpredictability.

On reflection, buses emerged as a viable alternative with equal or greater safety, reliability and convenience at significantly lower cost. Importantly, they also have an inclusivity factor that infrastructure solely for bikes lacks.

While cycle lanes are fantastic for those physically able and willing to embrace pedal power, public-transport solutions cater for everyone regardless of age, fitness or preference. This wider inclusivity makes buses more universally accessible as a mode of transport.

Recognising this broader accessibility highlights an essential consideration. The aim isn't just fewer congested roads, but roads that serve the transport needs of everyone in our community, and not merely those able and willing to cycle.

Moreover, buses and other public transport don't just serve the community's practical needs. They also encourage economic efficiency.

By investing more significantly in robust public transport, economies of scale can be achieved to enable more regular services at lower per-user costs.

Transport providers can respond to shifts in demand, and scale routes and frequency to match actual usage patterns.

They could potentially provide services on demand, which is a flexibility much harder and costlier to achieve with dedicated infrastructure.

Yet my recognition of public transport's practicality doesn't mean I'm opposed to cycle lanes.

Rather, it has prompted me to rethink how we approach their development. Initially, cities and towns might avoid large, expensive, permanent investments in infrastructure for bicycles.

Instead, they could begin by creating temporary, low-cost cycleways, such as simple gravel paths or basic, minimally developed tracks.

These cost-effective measures can then serve as trials, allowing planners and communities to observe usage patterns and understand actual demand.

Routes experiencing regular and sustained use could subsequently justify investment in more durable, long-term cycle infrastructure.

This approach is comparable to deploying portable bridges along a river first, observing crossing patterns and then deciding on the optimal placement of permanent structures.

In transport planning, temporary cycleways could also serve this purpose by providing real-world evidence about where they are most needed to ensure investments aren't merely hopeful, but data-driven and justified.

This phased approach not only ensures fiscal responsibility. It actively encourages community engagement because people can see how facilities directly benefit them without facing upfront large-scale costs.

This methodology could build stronger public support for cycling infrastructure in the long term, mitigating objections based on initial underuse.

Moreover, fostering public acceptance through incremental development could naturally increase cycling numbers, further highlighting the need for something more permanent.

Rather than being seen as opponents, bus and bike lanes become complementary solutions. My revised stance embraces a balanced, pragmatic approach to transport policy. I remain committed to the benefits of lanes for two-wheelers and advocating for a balanced, staged strategy.

Recognising buses' effectiveness and cycle lanes' potential means investing in both intelligently to ensure solutions serve everyone.

Ultimately, the aim isn't to champion a single mode of transport but create flexible systems that maximise safety, accessibility, efficiency and sustainability for everyone.

The month that was... April

April 20, 1998

Used-vehicle sales turn the corner

For the first time in 12 months, sales of second-hand vehicles showed an upturn, according to the Land Transport Safety Authority.

Its figures for March 1998 indicated that registrations in that part of the market rose by nearly 10 per cent.

The extra good news was almost all that increase came from the higher number of second-hand cars sold while those of trucks went up by 11 per cent.

Sales of second-hand passenger vehicles rose in each of the main centres during the month – by 11 per cent in Auckland, 14 per cent in Wellington, 17 per cent in Christchurch and six per cent in Dunedin.

However, downward registration trends afflicting the new and used-imports market continued.

In the new market, a 10 per cent drop in car sales was recorded in March, but that appeared to herald a significant slowing in the recent slide. New commercials fell by 11 per cent.

A total of 5,773 new vehicles were registered in March – 4,651 cars and 1,122 new commercials – down from 5,187 and 1,255 year on year.

April 11, 2008

Fuel-labelling update

The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA) congratulated the industry on the smooth implementation of its fuel-labelling scheme.

"We'll be continuing to work on improvements," said a spokesman.

One issue that had been highlighted was when cars were not yet registered, the vehicle identification number (VIN) wouldn't get you a label. That was because in the database the VIN was only linked to fuel-economy information when the car was registered.

If a vehicle wasn't registered, the dealer would be able to use the chassis number for used imports or the model code for new cars.

The database was updated once a month. If the information wasn't in the database, users would get a "label not available" message.

"We understand this can sometimes be frustrating," said EECA. "If you have entered the vehicle details correctly and you do not get a label, then you don't have to do anything else. You are not obliged to display a label and you will not be fined."

EECA also advised it was unacceptable to handwrite information on labels. The regulations required the labels to be printed with only database information on them.

April 13, 2007

Holden stops supplying SoCs

Holden NZ announced it would stop supplying statements of compliance (SoCs) for used imports.

The Independent Motor Vehicles Dealers Association (IMVDA) said the change would affect all General Motors models. That meant not only Holden, but also Buick, Cadillac, Chevrolet, Daewoo, GMC, Isuzu, Oldsmobile, Opel, Pontiac, Saturn and Vauxhall.

"This means any GM-branded vehicle that has been purchased, shipped to New Zealand, is waiting or has been requested will not be able to be complied until this is sorted out," said Frank Willett, the IMVDA's technical services manager.

"Holden's policy change has now left the trade with the difficulty of having to establish new relationships for the supply of information."

Perry Kerr, chief executive officer of the Motor Industry Association, explained: "Holden is downsizing and has decided the SoC business is no longer relevant to its New Zealand operations.

"Importers now have to go back to the official distributor in the country where they are purchasing vehicles."

The IMVDA's chief executive, David Vinsen, said: "What this situation does is highlight the need for Land Transport NZ to have robust certification system that doesn't rely on the whim of manufacturers to provide information on vehicles to be complied."

April 17, 2009

Top apprentice meets V8 stars

The call came out of the blue to apprentice James Downie while on the job in Jim Wright Nissan's workshop in Hamilton.

Greg Murphy was on the phone to invite the 21-year-old to be part of his SprintGas V8 SuperCar team for the Hamilton 400 Street Race that month.

"It was a shock," said Downie. "I didn't know what to say at first, but I recognised his voice and knew it was the real thing. I'm stoked to be asked to join his pit crew. I'm confident I can contribute to the team."

Downie's confidence came from his achievements at the Waikato Institute of Technology where he was one of the top automotive apprenticeship students.

Each year, the Motor Trade Association (MTA) worked with Murphy and SprintGas Racing to give an apprentice a once-in-a-lifetime chance to join the team. Andy Cuming, the MTA's communications manager, said: "It's also a chance for us to acknowledge the commitment of employers such as Jim Wright Nissan."

Wild ride to start of new year

LARRY FALLOWFIELD
Sector manager – dealers, Motor Trade Association

With the first quarter of 2025 now in the rear-view mirror, it's safe to say it was a whirlwind start to the year.

The MTA has been juggling a variety of hats, so let's review what has been happening in the transport sector before giving the windscreen a quick wipe to see what's on the horizon.

The association has been busy in the education space.

With the coalition continuing the disestablishment of Te Pūkenga – the New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology, we are looking forward to being part of the government's industry-targeted consultation process on the way forward.

We will continue to advocate that training should be focused on the businesses it aims to support.

More communications were completed on the motor-vehicle register annual reporting, known as the NZTA's section 241 requirements, as the March 31 deadline approached and came to pass.

The fuel sector has been a hot topic as has retail crime, and we have worked hard on diverting plastic vehicle waste away from landfills.

Car technology and driver errors have also appeared on our radar, while we've been preparing for carbon dioxide (CO2) changes for two-wheelers to come in on April 30 and again in January 2027.

On top of that, public submissions closed on the government proposing a user-pays model to cover the administration costs of the clean car standard.

The Land Transport (Drug Driving) Amendment Bill has had its third parliamentary reading.

Legislation for time-of-use charging – better known as congestion charges for Auckland's motorways – had its first reading and is now at the select committee stage as is the right to repair under the Consumer Guarantees Amendment Bill.

Albeit not overly automotive focused, submissions on these matters were still required.

Back in MTA land, we launched our annual wage, salary and charge-out surveys.

Our human-resources team has been dealing with employee challenges and immigration, and our mediation team is working through the public's over-reaching expectations when buying a vehicle and getting it serviced or repaired.

That's quite a lot of work on a plethora of issues we've already covered off this year.

Driving forward, one important area of change will soon come into effect and another has just kicked in.

From the end of April this year, regulations under the Vehicle Exhaust Emissions Amendment Act come into effect.

These changes will impact classes LA, LB, LC, LD and LE, which are commonly known as motorbikes and mopeds.

To be entry certified in New Zealand, they will have to comply with one of the following emissions standards – Euro 4m, US2010m, or Japan 2012m.

Extra changes are scheduled for the start of January 2027. For more information, visit the MTA Toolbox or the NZTA's website.

The next project is my very own Plastic Fantastic, which is even bigger than New Zealand's entry of KZ 7, Kiwi Magic, in the 1987 America's Cup.

Since November 2022, the MTA has been working on a viable closed-loop solution to divert more than 100,000 car bumpers that end up in landfill every year.

Last June, we set up an industry working group. It's been great having it assist us in taking this to the next level. The project will finally stop some old vehicle bumpers going into the ground.

The Plastic2eco initiative aims to promote sustainability and reduce landfill waste by repurposing plastic parts.

The programme was launched in Auckland in late March after a successful solution to the problem was reached.

It will not only help protect our precious ecosystem, but the scheme will add to New Zealand's circular economy by creating jobs in the manufacturing, transportation and waste-management sectors.

The initiative will be strategically rolled out across the North Island in late 2025 and early 2026 before reaching the South Island around the middle of next year.

Working with key partners, we're bringing innovative recycling solutions and efficient processes to the industry.

Initially starting in the collision-repair space with bumpers and guard liners, it's intended for the project to expand to incorporate other plastic waste generated during the repair process.

The next stage will be to include other MTA members that have challenges with such waste to ensure we divert as much as we can away from landfills.

If you're having challenges disposing of plastic rubbish from vehicles, please get in touch with me so we can see if the Plastic2eco programme can assist.

Getting charged into entry level

The Mercedes-AMG CLE 53 4MATIC+ Coupé

With Mercedes-AMG performance enhancements and an upgraded double-charged six-cylinder powerplant, the CLE 53 4MATIC+ Coupé provides a "compelling" entry point to its segment.

The latest iteration of the model family diversifies a two-door range that combines the sportiness of the C-Class with E-Class space.

Under the raked bonnet is a modified version of the M256 three-litre six-cylinder unit. It now features double charging via a new exhaust-gas turbocharger and an extra electronic compressor.

Driven by an integrated starter generator (ISG) that also feeds the 48-volt onboard electrical system, this configuration developed by Mercedes-AMG produces 330kW of maximum power and up to 560Nm of torque with up to 600Nm overboost possible for 12 seconds.

The combination of the new turbocharger and electric compressor offers a 0.4-bar increase in boost pressure to 1.5-bar. This contributes to higher torque, which is more available and responsive.

The turbocharger was able to be made larger, contributing to even higher peak performance.

This makes the engine more efficient when combined with the ISG, which allows for hybrid functions such as short-term boosting – up to an extra 17kW and 205Nm, recuperation, load-point shifting, sailing and "almost imperceptible" restarts following start-stop function actuation.

All this contributes to a tested combined fuel-consumption figure of 9.6l/100km.

The upgraded turbo six and speedshift TCT 9G transmission deliver "the performance promised" by the coupé's silhouette with its front apron, precisely shaped bonnet, flared front and rear fenders, and muscular rear.

Further emphasising the sporty appearance is a wider track than other CLE models with an extra 58mm at the front and 75mm at the rear, combined with 20-inch Y-spoke light-alloys.

DRIVER-FOCUSED FEATURES

The car's comprehensive makeover includes the combination of 4MATIC+ all-wheel drive. This can continuously and variably transition power between rear wheel and all-wheel drive with performance-tuned ride-control suspension.

The latter offers extra agility, more neutral cornering behaviour and higher traction, while a sporty spring-damper set-up and adaptive adjustable damping at each wheel combine driving dynamics with ride comfort.

Standard rear-axle steering not only generates more precise steering inputs when cornering at higher speeds. It also contributes to improved manoeuvrability at lower speeds when the rear wheels can oppose the front ones to create the effect of virtually shortening the wheelbase. This results in more agile turning.

Three-stage speed-sensitive steering adapts to the driving mode selected, offering the driver more feedback as speeds rise.

AMG's standard "dynamic plus" package adds enhancements including a selectable "race" driving program in addition to the "sport" and "sport+" options.

Race mode delivers track-ready performance with maximum sporty character at the push of a button. Drivers experience more spontaneous response and more direct accelerator-pedal characteristics.

The integrated "track pace" system can record more than 80 data points, such as speed, acceleration, steering angle and brake-pedal actuation while the CLE 53 Coupé is being driven around a circuit. It includes a display of lap and sector times, plus training and analysis tools.

The TCT 9G transmission boasts adapted shift times, quick reactions, a double-declutching function and multiple downshifts.

HIGH-QUALITY INTERIOR

Inside the coupé, there's unique equipment, premium materials and the latest MBUX infotainment system.

There is also a freestanding 12.3-inch fully digital display, while an 11.9-inch central display in portrait format is orientated toward the driver.

Black-leather seats combine sportiness with strong lateral support, and are finished with AMG graphics and red topstitching.

The CLE 53 4MATIC+ Coupé retails from $164,800 including GST and on-road costs.

Range boasts four variants

The 2025 model-year Mazda3 has shifted to a hatchback-only line-up.

With more than 33,000 on New Zealand's roads, the fourth iteration builds on the success enjoyed by the model being on the market for two decades.

With clean lines, the four-variant range starts with the two-litre Mazda3 Hatch GSX and its recommended retail price from $38,890 including GST but excluding on-road costs.

The GSX continues to offer "compelling" value along with high levels of technology and safety as well as equipment for comfort and convenience.

A colour active-driving display is projected onto the windscreen with all-important data for the driver and is accompanied by a seven-inch display in the instrument cluster.

Supplemented with cylinder deactivation technology, the two-litre petrol engine delivers 114kW of power and 200Nm of torque for fuel consumption and carbon-dioxide emissions of 6.6l/100km and 153g/km respectively.

The SP25 variant restores a nameplate to the range. Superseding the GTX, its 2.5-litre petrol engine's output figures are 139kW and 252Nm.

Finished in gloss black, the 18-inch alloys are striking particularly when paired with gloss-black exterior mirrors and black exterior accents. Red stitching adds a dynamic highlight to the interior trim.

The Mazda3 Homura – with its electric glass sunroof and adaptive LED headlights – joins the range in place of the Limited.

Its interior features leather upholstery with heated and electrically adjustable seats, and a high-power Bose 12-speaker audio system.

This variant adds a 360-degree view-monitor camera system to its "already generous" levels of standard equipment.

Headlining this year's range is the Takami, which costs from $54,490, and its Skyactiv-X M Hybrid engine.

With its ability to burn fuel more efficiently thanks to its spark-controlled compression ignition, it makes more power yet produces fewer emissions than a comparable petrol powertrain.

It returns 6.1l/100km in fuel economy and its emissions are 150g/km. Its headline outputs are 132kW and 224Nm.

The Takami is available with a burgundy-red leather interior, which "provides an even greater sense of opulence" in the cabin.

The new Mazda3

Electric two-seater

The all-new and all-electric Cyberster is a "groundbreaking addition" to MG's line-up, says the marque, and represents progress in technology and design.

At 4,535mm long and 1,913mm wide, the two-seater's proportions "imitate" those of a front-engined machine with a long bonnet, set-back cockpit and short boot lid "reminiscent of the old days when the MGB was around".

The pointed nose sweeps up and back, while the rear end is broken up by union flag-inspired LEDs. The arrows pointing in the direction of the indicators "pay their respects to the origin of the brand".

The EV, which is priced from $129,000 plus on-roads, can generate up to 375kW of power and boasts a 0-100kph time of 3.2 seconds.

There's a 77kWh battery set between the axles featuring an electric motor at each end for four-wheel drive for a WLTP range of up to 443km.

The Cyberster's rapid-charging capability can power it up from 10-80 per cent in 40 minutes via a 150kW CCS public charger.

MG's Cyberster

Ride on the wild side

The Forester Strong Hybrid

Subaru will launch the all-new Forester mid-year and it will be the first model in New Zealand with the brand's next-generation hybrid powertrain.

The Strong Hybrid integrates the 2.5-litre Boxer engine and electric motors, and retains the SUV's capability, low centre of gravity and optimal handling while adding extra range.

The Forester comes standard with EyeSight driver-assist technology, a tablet-style 11.6-inch multimedia system and a 12.3-inch digital gauge cluster on selected variants.

The next-generation model has all-wheel drive, x-mode dual mode with hill-descent control and active-torque vectoring.

Its 220mm of ground clearance is greater than many SUVs, yet this compact model maintains a low step-in height for front and rear passenger entry.

"New Zealanders have trusted the Forester for decades," says Kym Mellow, Inchcape's general manager, which distributes the marque here.

"For all these years, this popular model has turned heads in our cities while navigating the rugged demands of our backcountry."

'Driver's paradise' at Thunder Ridge

Project organisers say racing and circuit access is out of reach for many New Zealanders because of cost

A racetrack being proposed for TECT Park in the Bay of Plenty could be up and running by the end of 2026.

The scheme's backers are pitching the facility at grass-roots categories, and point out that the loss of Pukekohe Park Raceway, south of Auckland, to horses and housing has meant these categories have no suitable venue in the upper North Island.

Hampton Downs in north Waikato is no longer priced for lower-level motorsport, which has prompted grumbling from many casual racers.

Even Taupo International Motorsport Park is currently priced at a level that rules out many of those involved in club racing.

Thunder Ridge Motorsport Park is the brainchild of Hampton Downs co-creator Tony Roberts, long-time racer Roger Williams and Gary Stirling, former circuit manager at Pukekohe and Hampton Downs.

The new circuit at TECT Park, which is midway between Tauranga and Rotorua on SH36, will be 3.2km long.

It will boast eight corners, some featuring high-speed banking which have been designed by racing drivers.

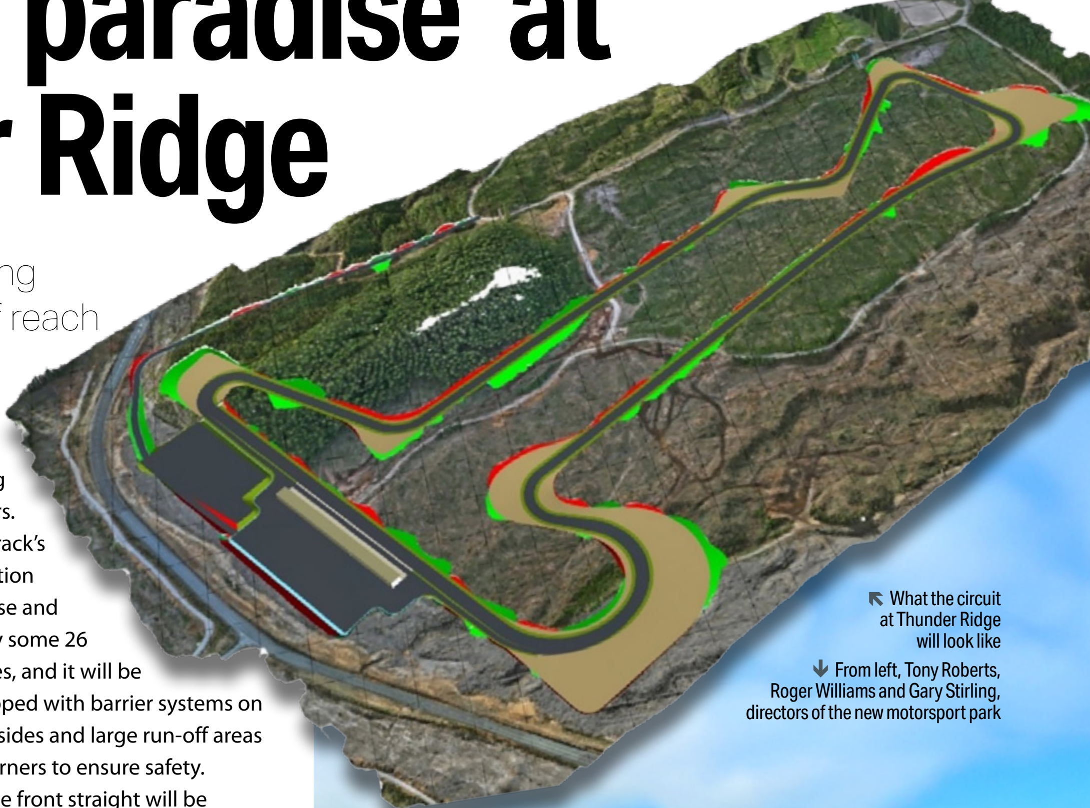
The track's elevation will rise and fall by some 26 metres, and it will be equipped with barrier systems on both sides and large run-off areas on corners to ensure safety.

The front straight will be home to 24 pit garages, a central control room for officials, CCTV monitoring, an announcer's booth and timing room. There will be natural viewing platforms for spectators on either side of the pit building.

The 70-hectare development also includes a clubhouse, rest rooms, café, camping grounds and 48 garages built in four blocks of 12 for subleasing to competitors to store their cars on site year-round.

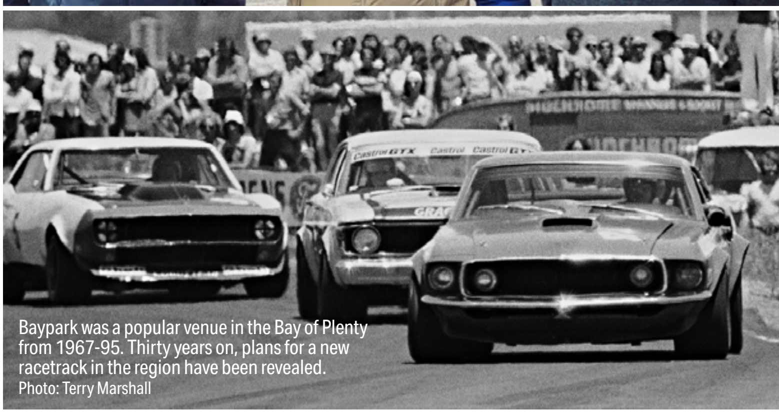
The garages come in at 66sqm with four-metre studs and will be located near the pits within a security compound. There's an option to install a hoist, making them ideal for vehicle maintenance or extra storage.

They will have powered three-metre roller doors, water and air supply, high-performance LED lighting and swipe-card entry,



What the circuit at Thunder Ridge will look like

From left, Tony Roberts, Roger Williams and Gary Stirling, directors of the new motorsport park



Baypark was a popular venue in the Bay of Plenty from 1967-95. Thirty years on, plans for a new racetrack in the region have been revealed. Photo: Terry Marshall

An artist's impression of the development

Suitable for Thunder Ridge will be smaller race vehicles, such as this Mini 7

The new track will be FIA-rated for categories like the F5000s. Photo: Euan Cameron

Thunder Ridge will host events for Central Muscle Car Series racers, such as Peter Anderson and his Ford Falcon

while ample space around the garages will allow for easy and convenient access.

Those behind Thunder Ridge say it will be a "flexible" facility for the region, the New Zealand events and automotive industries, and wider motorsport community.

The circuit will require no public funding and will comply with strict standards set by FIA, the world governing body of motorsport.

Roberts says: "Our vision is for Thunder Ridge to be a place where young people and the average person in the street can participate in racing or just indulge their passion for cars or bikes, just like the old Baypark experience at Mount Maunganui.

"The circuit, combined with supporting facilities, will be a driver's paradise. Planning permission has been granted. The project now just needs a finalised lease from Western Bay of Plenty Regional Council before work can commence."

Roberts adds Thunder Ridge will be "a place where everyone with an interest in cars, bikes or even cycling and running competition will be able to indulge in their passion".

Everyone will be welcome and made to feel welcome because it's going to be a facility that was conceived and designed with that philosophy at its core.

"This is the place where new drivers can learn under expert tuition at an affordable price, and where our younger car-mad generation can come along and play with their vehicles rather than creating hazards on public roads.

"That alone will be of huge benefit to the wider region Thunder Ridge will serve."

Williams says Thunder Ridge will bring motorsport back within the reach of many aspiring competitors.

"We are three directors with a love of motorsport and considerable motorsport experience," he adds. "We want to build this facility and work with like-minded clubs at TECT Park.

"Lately, motor racing and circuit access in New Zealand – like just about everything – has become out of reach for many because of rising costs.

"The sad demise of Pukekohe Park only made that problem worse and heightened the need for something new.

"Some of our international superstars, such as Liam Lawson in Formula One, Scott Dixon in Indycars and Mitch Evans in Formula E, all started at grass-roots level and relied on everything being affordable.

"When the vision becomes reality, we should be welcoming our first customers in 2026."

Club-level weekends that will include Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays in the price will be a mainstay at Thunder Ridge.

Also in the pipeline at a reasonable charge are practice days and fun-focused play events when owners can take their road or track cars onto the circuit with or without an expert instructor alongside them.

There will also be private test days, car-club meetings, motorcycle-rider training days, cycle racing and customer events for the automotive industry, as well as those for charities and road-running.

TECT Park is already a recognised venue for a wide range of sports.

Offroad racing, extreme four-wheel-drive competitions, enduro motorcycling, mountain-biking and orienteering have dedicated areas at the facility, which is owned by Western Bay of Plenty and Tauranga councils.

Meanwhile, a multi-purpose motorsport facility at Lake Macquarie, New South Wales, is set to open next year with a 5.4km course created by F1 circuit designer Herman Tilke.

To be rated FIA grade two, it will be complemented by a go-kart track, off-road course and skid pad.

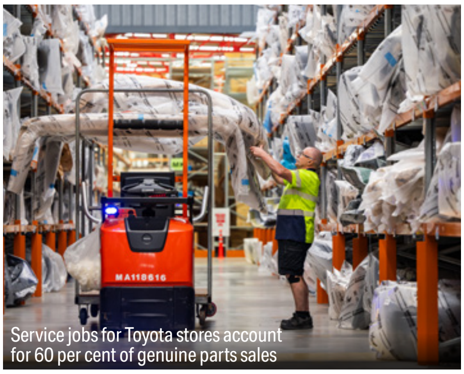
Once completed, the asphalt circuit will feature 165m of elevation changes across 23 turns. While tight and twisty in parts, it will also have an 800m-long main straight.

Genuine parts are the real deal

Toyota Genuine Parts are held in a 38,000sqm warehouse in Palmerston North

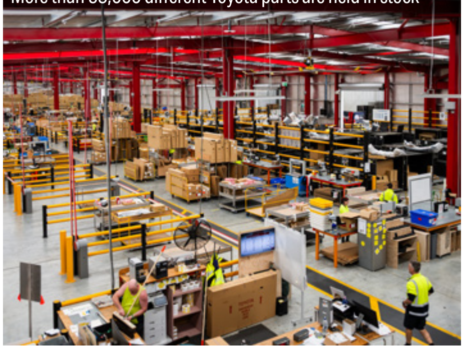
BY THE NUMBERS

Toyota parts warehouse size	38,000sqm
51	Full-time equivalent staff
Total number of active parts	53,000+
24,417	Collision parts
Mechanical parts	11,806
14,799	Maintenance parts
Accessories	2,205
729	40ft containers unloaded in 2024



Service jobs for Toyota stores account for 60 per cent of genuine parts sales

More than 53,000 different Toyota parts are held in stock



Toyota New Zealand's genuine parts business continues to expand as it aims to immediately have available what a customer's car needs to get back on the road 95 times out of 100.

The business operates out of a 38,000sqm warehouse in Palmerston North that has more than 53,000 different parts in stock for Toyota models.

Toyota Genuine Parts are designed and manufactured for the Japanese vehicle-maker, and they are available to consumers and trade garages exclusively from Toyota's store network.

Paul Bowness, parts and accessories manager, says growth for the Toyota Genuine Parts business is tied to car sales and the number of vehicles serviced through the brand's stores. There were 1,033,524 registered Toyotas in New Zealand as of the end of 2024, according to NZTA figures.

"The more Toyotas on the road, the greater the demand for parts," says Bowness. "The range of parts Toyota must carry also has to increase to support as many models as possible."

Toyota NZ holds parts for many models at its national customer centre in Palmerston North, which it notes is centrally located for logistical efficiency. These cover categories such as mechanical, maintenance, collision-replacement parts and Toyota accessories.

The warehouse operates from 6am-10.30pm daily and staff pick customer orders to send out to the store network and replenish the shelves with fresh stock when it arrives from suppliers overseas.

Toyota Genuine Parts are classified by how often they are ordered, which means their location in the warehouse is determined by how quickly they will be shipped out across the country.

Henry Boon, supply chain manager, says Toyota NZ maintains a significant stock holding to ensure parts are readily available to help keep "Toyotas on New Zealand roads well-looked after".

"Fast-moving parts are ordered by Toyota stores and trade garages often. There is a long history of how many have been ordered each month, over many years, which informs future ordering of stock.

"The freight partners on the Toyota team can distribute parts very quickly throughout the country, minimising inconvenience to customers when cars need service or repair."

Toyota New Zealand targets a 95 per cent service rate, which means 95 times out of 100 the part needed by the customer is available in its warehouse and can be despatched to get their car back in action.

Maintaining an ample supply of parts also allows the marque to honour the Toyota Service Advantage, a programme for new vehicles that offers "up to five years of worry-free ownership".

The scheme lowers the standard servicing costs to a capped amount for the first five years of cover or 60,000km, whichever occurs first, and servicing is performed by Toyota using the company's genuine parts.

"When a customer has a car that is under a Toyota warranty or covered by Toyota Service Advantage, the demand for genuine parts is more organic as the majority of the servicing is carried out by Toyota stores," Bowness explains.

"Keeping warranties valid relies on technicians fitting genuine parts to ensure that the specifications match the original part being replaced.

"Toyota stores also supply parts to trade garages nationwide, so any Toyota owner can ask the technician to use only genuine parts, even in older vehicles.

"Sourcing these parts is easy for trade garages through Toyota stores and economical with trade-grade line pricing on common mechanical maintenance parts."

Toyota store service jobs account for 60 per cent of genuine parts sales and the remaining 40 per cent is from genuine parts available through trade garages for servicing cars.

"Genuine parts are made to the same high-quality standards as the car itself, designed to fit each model perfectly," Bowness says. "They meet Toyota's safety, regulatory and environmental requirements and come with a Toyota warranty.

"Technicians who fit genuine parts can be assured that they are competitively priced, and they give customers peace of mind for many kilometres as there is no compromise with materials and specifications."

Looking ahead, Bowness says the Toyota Genuine Parts business aims to continue to grow and to offer parts for a wider range of models that are readily available with good lead times.

Toyota continually reviews its trade-grade parts offering to ensure customers get what they need, "to keep their Toyota a Toyota".

We don’t just do Toyota Genuine Parts.
We do great value Toyota Genuine Parts.

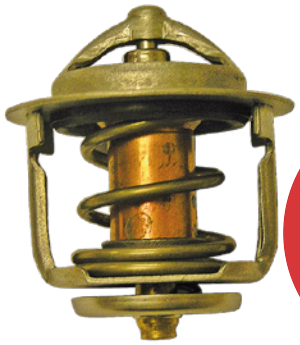
Disc Pad Set

RTP GST Excl.
Front Set x4 Pads
$76.05
Rear Set x4 Pads
$72.15

Brake Hose

RTP GST Excl.
$31.20

Thermostat



RTP GST Excl.
$21.45

Thermostat Gasket

RTP GST Excl.
$12.35

Radiator Cap

RTP GST Excl.
$13.65

Radiator Hose

RTP GST Excl.
$29.90

Line price parts available at your Authorised Toyota Store*

Genuine Parts

*The advertised RTP is the Recommended Trade Price and excludes some Toyota parts, and all Lexus and Daihatsu parts. The RTP is recommended only and the actual price may vary. Contact your Authorised Toyota Dealer to place your order or for more information.

Tribunal dismisses claim by consumer who lost confidence in vehicle two years post-supply

The case: Two years after purchase, the Haldex unit in a Volvo V40 developed a fault for the second time during the buyer's ownership so he wanted to reject it. The trader said it was again prepared to fix the traction system if his customer hadn't caused the problem.

The decision: The adjudicator ruled the issue with the vehicle was beyond the reach of statutory guarantees in the Consumer Guarantee Act (CGA) so the purchaser's application was dismissed.

At: The Motor Vehicle Disputes Tribunal via video link.

Background

Christopher Larsen bought a 2014 Volvo V40 with an odometer reading of 79,000km for $18,640 from Vision Auto Sales on May 9, 2022.

He claimed it had persistent issues with its Haldex unit. He wanted to reject the car or trade it in at the purchase price.

The dealer was prepared to fix the part provided the issue wasn't due to damage caused by the consumer.

The case

Larsen's daughter test drove the V40 because she lived nearby. She reported a vibration to the trader, which said it would be fixed.

The dealer said that prior to supply, its mechanic inspected the car and removed a stone in one of its discs, which might have been causing the vibration.

Larsen collected the Volvo from the trader's premises in Auckland on May 14 and drove it back to New Plymouth the next day.

On his way home, he noticed that when he travelled through a left-hand corner or turned into a street at low speed, shuddering occurred in the car's left rear.

The next day, Larsen emailed the trader about this and asked what it had done to correct the issue prior to supply. In a series of emails, both parties discussed what the V40's problem could be.

Based on symptoms reported by the buyer, the dealer suspected it was the Haldex unit. It asked Larsen to take the Volvo to a mechanic.

New Plymouth's AA Auto Centre and Advantage Tyres confirmed an issue with the unit and metallic traces in the vehicle's oil. It estimated repairs to be about $4,000.

Larsen emailed the trader rejecting the car. The dealer stated it would send a replacement unit to the repairer, and pay for its installation and any costs regarding the oil issue.

Vision Autos Sales maintained it was obliged to repair the Volvo and wasn't required to allow Larsen to reject it.

By subsequent agreement between the parties, Larsen returned the V40 to the trader for it to conduct the repairs.

The dealer offered a 36-month warranty on the part, installation and materials. The odometer was on 79,611km.

Two years later, Larsen again noticed the shuddering, which he suspected was due to faults with the Haldex unit.

On August 12, 2024, AA Auto Centre inspected the Volvo and serviced the unit. Its invoice noted that it changed the part's oil and cleaned out its filter.

The repairer also told the buyer that the unit's filter was blocked, likely with clutch material, and it hadn't fixed the blockage during the service. The odometer reading was 106,079km.

Larsen said that the car ran normally for the first few days after AA Auto Centre had serviced the unit, but the shuddering returned.

The tribunal's assessor told the hearing the blockage could be fixed by replacing the Haldex clutch.

That work might have been covered by the 36-month warranty. However, Larsen said he no longer had confidence in the unit and wanted to reject the car for a full refund or trade it in at the price he originally paid in May 2022.

The trader said it was prepared to remedy any issue with the part within the warranty period provided it wasn't due to damage caused by Larsen.

The finding

The issue that required the tribunal's consideration in this case was whether the V40 had complied with section six of the CGA.

It found that the Haldex unit's fault in May 2022 was most likely a breach of the guarantee of acceptable quality.

However, Vision Auto Sales replaced the clutch and provided Larsen with the 36-month warranty.

This posed the question as to whether the second fault with the unit also breached the CGA's guarantee of acceptable quality.

The Volvo had travelled 26,468km and more than two years had passed before issues with the car's unit returned.

Given the overall age and mileage of the vehicle, the tribunal found the second unit fault was likely due to wear and tear.

Accordingly, it ruled that the second fault was beyond the reach of the statutory guarantee.

The tribunal also considered whether the second Haldex fault gave Larsen a right to reject the car for loss of confidence in the ongoing reliability of the vehicle.

There is basis for such an argument under section 21 of the CGA.

In the matter of Cooper versus Ashley & Johnson Motors, the district court found that a purchaser might reject a car when there had been an accumulation of defects even if those issues could not in themselves be described as substantial.

The court noted that a point would eventually be reached when the buyer could "say convincingly that he or she had no confidence in the reliability of the vehicle".

However, the tribunal wasn't satisfied that the Volvo's second fault was a failure of substantial character.

Larsen suggested the problem was a major breach because it would cost about $13,000 for the unit to be replaced and without that work the Volvo was worthless.

The tribunal disagreed because its adviser said the fault could be remedied by replacing the Haldex's clutch at a cost of about $1,300.

Order

The claim was dismissed.

A 2014 Volvo V40

Trader argues lack of information with hybrid imported damaged was due to system error

A model-year 2015 Toyota Aqua

The case: The buyer wanted to return his 2015 Aqua six days post-purchase because he said the trader misrepresented it as a fresh import and didn't disclose it was imported as damaged. He added the Toyota didn't have a current warrant of fitness (WOF) nor registration. The trader said the misinformation was due to an administrative mistake and offered to replace it.

The decision: The tribunal upheld the buyer's right to have the transaction cancelled under the Fair Trading Act (FTA).

At: The Motor Vehicle Disputes Tribunal, Auckland.

Background

Ravi Subburaman bought a 2015 Toyota Aqua for $14,000 from Kiwi Cheap Cars on August 18, 2024, using a bank loan.

He wanted his money back because he claimed it was misrepresented that it was freshly imported from Japan and it wasn't brought into New Zealand as damaged. He wanted a full refund and compensation.

The dealer accepted it wrongly advertised the Aqua by saying it wasn't a damaged import, but denied saying Subburaman would be its first Kiwi owner.

The case

The Aqua came in from Japan during May 2023 and, after a border inspection, it was flagged as "imported as damaged".

Kiwi Cheap Cars registered it in the name of Danish Motors until it was bought by Subburaman.

The consumer information notice (CIN), signed by both parties, noted the vehicle was last registered in Japan and hadn't been registered in New Zealand nor that it was imported as damaged.

Days after purchase, Subburaman discovered the registration and WOF had expired, so he obtained a $18.90 report from CarJam and a $23.95 AA report to confirm the former's findings.

CarJam noted the Aqua's registration expired on June 28, 2024, the WOF expired on August 10, 2024, it was imported with structural damage after the border-check inspection and its first New Zealand registration date was December 29, 2023. The AA report confirmed that information.

The buyer said it was important to him to be the vehicle's first New Zealand registered owner because he believed it would increase its resale value.

Kiwi Cheap Cars explained the Aqua had been registered with Danish Motors for business purposes only, so Subburaman was the first owner in this country.

The buyer returned the car to the trader on August 24 and said he wanted a refund due to misrepresentations.

On August 29, the dealer emailed him to say it had updated the registration and WOF, and offered an engine-oil change and full car grooming as compensation.

Subburaman rejected this offer and returned to the trader on September 11 to ask why the purchase hadn't been cancelled.

He said Kiwi Cheap Cars instead offered to replace the car, and provide compensation for the stress and hassle he had experienced.

When a claim is first filed, the respondent is advised of their obligation to discuss the matter with the applicant and then report the outcome to the tribunal within 14 days.

During that time, the trader offered to fully unwind the purchase, but the buyer declined and chose to proceed with his claim.

At the hearing, Subburaman explained he had been waiting for a refund since August 24.

The finding

Kiwi Cheap Cars was obliged under the Motor Vehicle Sales Act to disclose on the CIN that the Aqua was imported as damaged, but it failed to do so.

This amounted to the trader engaging in misleading conduct in breach of section nine of the FTA.

The dealer claimed the misrepresentation was caused by an oversight in its IT system and there was no intention to mislead Subburaman.

The tribunal noted to breach section nine there was no requirement that there was an intention to mislead or deceive, so the fact the trader accidentally made the incorrect statement was irrelevant.

On the Aqua's CIN, the dealer also indicated it wasn't registered in New Zealand, again breaching the FTA.

The adjudicator found that Subburaman was misled on these two issues and had suffered loss because of the trader's actions.

This was because he paid more for the car than it was worth and its resale value was reduced because it was a damaged import.

Conversely, the tribunal ruled he hadn't suffered loss because the vehicle wasn't previously registered in New Zealand because the number of owners of an imported vehicle here is unlikely to affect its value.

The adjudicator was satisfied that Subburaman wouldn't have purchased the Aqua if he had known it was imported as damaged and he likely paid more than it was worth, and ruled the purchase contract was void.

The trader was ordered to pay $830.69 to the buyer – $42.85 for the CarJam and AA reports and the $787.84 that he paid to Heartland Bank, which included the principal, interest and fees.

Subburaman's ongoing rights and obligations under his collateral credit agreement with Heartland were assigned to the dealer.

The tribunal also awarded all the payments he had made to Heartland because he had returned the Aqua to the dealer after six days of ownership, so hadn't benefited from the car during his ownership.

The buyer also requested "compensation for the stress and hassle I have gone through".

However, there is a high threshold for awarding general damages for these reasons and the tribunal wasn't satisfied this case merited such an order.

Subburaman asked to be reimbursed for the four days, at $250 per day, that he was unable to work due to the stress he had suffered in dealing with this matter, but he presented no evidence to that effect.

Orders

The vehicle offer and sale agreement was declared void and the trader was ordered to pay $830.69 to the buyer. The rights and obligations under the collateral credit agreement were assigned to the dealer.

Mexican lands brand's top job

Nissan has opted for a two-decade company veteran as its next chief executive officer.

Ivan Espinosa has been promoted into the position from chief planning officer, ending weeks of speculation over Makoto Uchida's successor.

The 46-year-old first joined Japan's third-largest carmaker in Mexico, his homeland, in 2003. He has also held positions in Europe and south-east Asia.

Uchida had faced mounting pressure to step down following the collapse of recent merger talks with Honda in addition to Nissan's profits plummeting by more than 90 per cent in the nine months until the end of December.

It's unclear whether Espinosa's appointment, part of a broader shake-up of the company's top management, will put those talks back on the table or open a pathway for investment from another partner.

Espinosa has experience in product planning and development. He has also managed Nissan's global product strategy and portfolio.

"We can unlock a lot of possibilities," he said last month when declining to comment on possibly restarting talks with Honda.

He pledged to steer the carmaker back onto a growth path saying, "I sincerely believe that Nissan has so much more potential than what we are seeing today."

Uchida acknowledged his responsibility for failing to revive the company, saying at the news conference he had been "unable to gain the confidence of some of our employees" and that "making a fresh start will be in the best interests of Nissan."

He added: "I deeply regret that I had to pass the baton to my successor in these circumstances."

Ivan Espinosa

Other senior Nissan executives stepping down include chief technology officer Kunio Nakaguro and Hideyuki Sakamoto from manufacturing and supply-chain management.

The changes include Guillaume Cartier, chief performance officer and chairman of the management committee for Africa, Middle East, India, Europe and Oceania, taking on an expanded role that includes global marketing and customer experience.

Nissan is simplifying its top management structure and cutting positions by 20 per cent to try to make decision-making more efficient as part of its turnaround efforts. The changes aim to create "a streamlined and borderless organisation".

The carmaker has been badly hit in key markets such as China, where domestic marques have eaten away at its market share, and in the US where its line-up is seen as ageing.

Overall, it has suffered years of faltering sales and management turmoil. It seems to have never fully recovered from the 2018 ousting of ex-chairman Carlos Ghosn, who was accused by Tokyo prosecutors of financial misconduct.

Big reveal at all-electric event

Kia New Zealand has revealed the latest addition to its line-up at the company's inaugural electric vehicle day.

The EV4 was featured at last month's event in Auckland only weeks after its global debut.

Other models on display included the EV6, EV9 and EV5 midsize SUV, with people given the chance to get behind the wheel of the new products.

The all-new EV3 small SUV was also on show ahead of its first deliveries, which are expected this month. The launch line-up consists of the Light, which starts at $55,520 plus on-road costs, Earth and GT-Line models.

"The Kia NZ EV Day demonstrated our vision for a sustainable future when electric mobility is accessible to all," says managing director Todd McDonald.

"It was also an opportunity to reinforce our electrification leadership through showcasing products and technology, as well as creating an environment to stimulate engagement, start conversations and influence change."

The Kia EV4 and EV3

Key highlights of the marque's EVs include low servicing and running costs, he adds. New models boast increasing WLTP ranges to reduce driver anxiety while their instantaneous torque contributes to "unheralded" levels of acceleration.

"When it comes to Kia's EVs, there is a personal mobility solution for everyone and a vehicle to suit a wide variety of needs," says McDonald.

"With a broader range of options, it's easier than ever to make the switch to zero-carbon emissions motoring."

The number of new models in Kia NZ's electric line-up will increase to five with the EV3's imminent arrival and the EV4 coming in this year's third quarter.

"The EV3 has made its debut in Europe to critical acclaim especially for its design, convenience, space and technology.

"We think the new EV4, with its unique fastback design, will appeal to an entirely new buyer – quite possibly someone who hasn't considered an EV before.

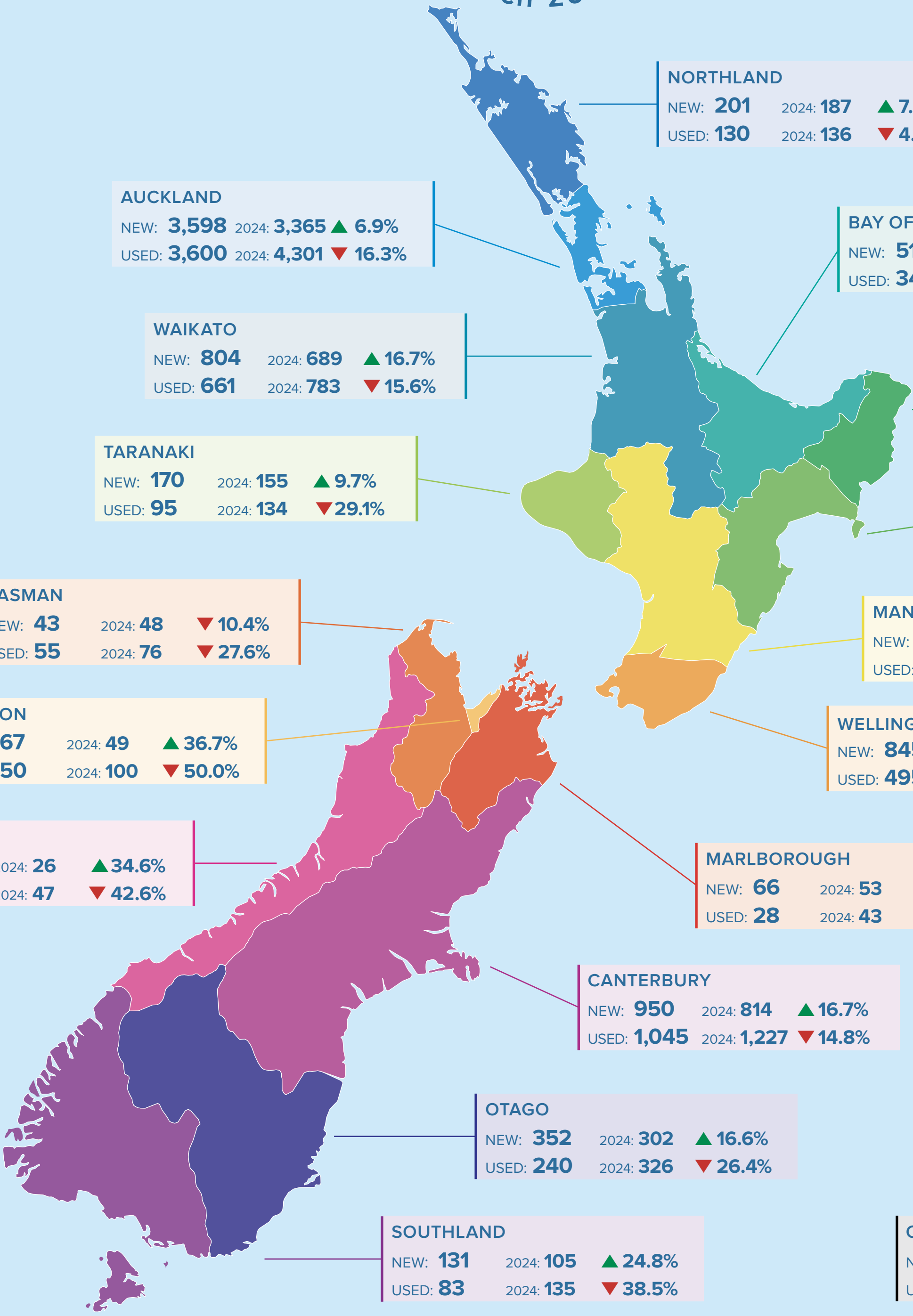
"It speaks to those who want something more than a 'traditional' or mainstream EV. It's an exciting model with the looks and attributes of a performance car."

McDonald confirms the recently revealed PV5 electric van, the marque's first dedicated platform beyond vehicle, will be coming to New Zealand next year.

Around the Country
March 2025

Total new cars
8,426
2024: 7,539 ▲ 11.8%

Total imported used cars
7,279
2024: 8,931 ▼ 18.5%



NORTHLAND	NEW:	201	2024: 187	▲ 7.5%
	USED:	130	2024: 136	▼ 4.4%
AUCKLAND	NEW:	3,598	2024: 3,365	▲ 6.9%
	USED:	3,600	2024: 4,301	▼ 16.3%
BAY OF PLENTY	NEW:	513	2024: 454	▲ 13.0%
	USED:	348	2024: 417	▼ 16.5%
WAIKATO	NEW:	804	2024: 689	▲ 16.7%
	USED:	661	2024: 783	▼ 15.6%
GISBORNE	NEW:	50	2024: 34	▲ 47.1%
	USED:	58	2024: 86	▼ 32.6%
TARANAKI	NEW:	170	2024: 155	▲ 9.7%
	USED:	95	2024: 134	▼ 29.1%
HAWKE'S BAY	NEW:	248	2024: 191	▲ 29.8%
	USED:	154	2024: 198	▼ 22.2%
TASMAN	NEW:	43	2024: 48	▼ 10.4%
	USED:	55	2024: 76	▼ 27.6%
MANAWATU-WHANGANUI	NEW:	343	2024: 325	▲ 5.5%
	USED:	195	2024: 257	▼ 24.1%
NELSON	NEW:	67	2024: 49	▲ 36.7%
	USED:	50	2024: 100	▼ 50.0%
WELLINGTON	NEW:	845	2024: 724	▲ 16.7%
	USED:	495	2024: 645	▼ 23.3%
WEST COAST	NEW:	35	2024: 26	▲ 34.6%
	USED:	27	2024: 47	▼ 42.6%
MARLBOROUGH	NEW:	66	2024: 53	▲ 24.5%
	USED:	28	2024: 43	▼ 34.9%
CANTERBURY	NEW:	950	2024: 814	▲ 16.7%
	USED:	1,045	2024: 1,227	▼ 14.8%
OTAGO	NEW:	352	2024: 302	▲ 16.6%
	USED:	240	2024: 326	▼ 26.4%
SOUTHLAND	NEW:	131	2024: 105	▲ 24.8%
	USED:	83	2024: 135	▼ 38.5%
OTHERS (Chatham Islands, overseas, unknown)	NEW:	10	2024: 18	▼ 44.4%
	USED:	15	2024: 20	▼ 25.0%

Imported Passenger Vehicle Sales by Make - March 2025

MAKE	MAR '25	MAR '24	+/-%	MAR '25 MKT SHARE	2025 YEAR TO DATE	2025 MKT SHARE
Toyota	2,734	3,498	-21.8	37.6%	7,901	36.8%
Nissan	1,020	1,184	-13.9	14.0%	2,906	13.6%
Mazda	953	1,214	-21.5	13.1%	2,682	12.5%
Honda	689	737	-6.5	9.5%	2,135	10.0%
Subaru	643	652	-1.4	8.8%	2,046	9.5%
BMW	234	228	2.6	3.2%	736	3.4%
Suzuki	192	268	-28.4	2.6%	598	2.8%
Mercedes-Benz	160	150	6.7	2.2%	459	2.1%
Audi	121	155	-21.9	1.7%	399	1.9%
Mitsubishi	121	247	-51.0	1.7%	379	1.8%
Lexus	114	193	-40.9	1.6%	320	1.5%
Volkswagen	93	170	-45.3	1.3%	282	1.3%
Land Rover	30	26	15.4	0.4%	105	0.5%
Jaguar	22	15	46.7	0.3%	55	0.3%
Mini	18	6	200.0	0.2%	37	0.2%
Tesla	16	9	77.8	0.2%	50	0.2%
Porsche	12	13	-7.7	0.2%	29	0.1%
Ford	11	27	-59.3	0.2%	55	0.3%
Chevrolet	10	20	-50.0	0.1%	25	0.1%
Volvo	10	14	-28.6	0.1%	43	0.2%
Chrysler	8	7	14.3	0.1%	12	0.1%
Hyundai	8	6	33.3	0.1%	19	0.1%
Jeep	8	19	-57.9	0.1%	35	0.2%
Dodge	7	17	-58.8	0.1%	15	0.1%
BYD	6	0	600.0	0.1%	10	0.0%
Daihatsu	4	1	300.0	0.1%	10	0.0%
Lincoln	4	0	400.0	0.1%	4	0.0%
Kia	3	4	-25.0	0.0%	8	0.0%
Renault	3	0	300.0	0.0%	9	0.0%
Aston Martin	2	1	100.0	0.0%	2	0.0%
Fiat	2	3	-33.3	0.0%	6	0.0%
Oldsmobile	2	0	200.0	0.0%	2	0.0%
Pontiac	2	2	0.0	0.0%	4	0.0%
Alfa Romeo	1	3	-66.7	0.0%	3	0.0%
Bentley	1	2	-50.0	0.0%	1	0.0%
Others	15	40	-62.5	0.2%	61	0.3%
Total	**7,279**	**8,931**	**-18.5**	**100.0%**	**21,443**	**100.0%**

Imported Passenger Vehicle Sales by Model - March 2025

MAKE	MODEL	MAR '25	MAR '24	+/-%	MAR '25 MKT SHARE	2025 YEAR TO DATE	2025 MKT SHARE
Toyota	Aqua	776	1,004	-22.7	10.7%	2,178	10.2%
Toyota	Prius	515	770	-33.1	7.1%	1,480	6.9%
Toyota	Corolla	373	341	9.4	5.1%	1,065	5.0%
Honda	Fit	294	284	3.5	4.0%	891	4.2%
Nissan	Note	284	362	-21.5	3.9%	731	3.4%
Mazda	Axela	282	365	-22.7	3.9%	813	3.8%
Subaru	Impreza	234	253	-7.5	3.2%	726	3.4%
Toyota	C-HR	226	258	-12.4	3.1%	644	3.0%
Nissan	X-Trail	211	235	-10.2	2.9%	638	3.0%
Subaru	XV	203	192	5.7	2.8%	596	2.8%
Mazda	Demio	188	297	-36.7	2.6%	566	2.6%
Mazda	CX-5	172	200	-14.0	2.4%	481	2.2%
Nissan	Serena	146	231	-36.8	2.0%	447	2.1%
Suzuki	Swift	127	189	-32.8	1.7%	454	2.1%
Honda	Vezel	122	150	-18.7	1.7%	377	1.8%
Toyota	Vitz	106	149	-28.9	1.5%	271	1.3%
Nissan	Leaf	103	81	27.2	1.4%	305	1.4%
Mazda	Atenza	78	104	-25.0	1.1%	209	1.0%
Toyota	Vellfire	75	71	5.6	1.0%	243	1.1%
Mazda	Premacy	74	94	-21.3	1.0%	204	1.0%
Toyota	Camry	73	125	-41.6	1.0%	196	0.9%
Mitsubishi	Outlander	72	168	-57.1	1.0%	229	1.1%
Toyota	Alphard	57	55	3.6	0.8%	154	0.7%
Volkswagen	Golf	57	112	-49.1	0.8%	167	0.8%
Subaru	Legacy	56	54	3.7	0.8%	218	1.0%
Honda	Odyssey	49	39	25.6	0.7%	177	0.8%
Nissan	Skyline	49	35	40.0	0.7%	114	0.5%
Honda	Shuttle	47	32	46.9	0.6%	111	0.5%
Nissan	Juke	47	54	-13.0	0.6%	116	0.5%
Toyota	Spade	45	82	-45.1	0.6%	158	0.7%
Toyota	Sai	42	67	-37.3	0.6%	121	0.6%
Toyota	86	41	29	41.4	0.6%	113	0.5%
BMW	320i	39	41	-4.9	0.5%	122	0.6%
Honda	Accord	39	26	50.0	0.5%	138	0.6%
Lexus	CT 200h	39	63	-38.1	0.5%	96	0.4%
Others		1,938	2,319	-16.4	26.6%	5,894	27.5%
Total		**7,279**	**8,931**	**-18.5**	**100.0%**	**21,443**	**100.0%**

Action on banned radio devices

The government's radio spectrum management (RSM) team has worked with online marketplaces to ensure prohibited and non-compliant devices are unavailable to buy in this country.

Thanks to techniques such as geo-blocking, RSM – part of the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment – removed more than 35,000 non-compliant product listings in the past financial year.

All radio-transmitting devices imported, sold or installed in New Zealand must only transmit within the conditions of a licence as set out in Radiocommunications Act.

Users of non-compliant systems face potentially hefty penalties of up to $30,000 for an individual and $200,000 for a body corporate, so it's an issue car importers, dealers and after-market suppliers need to be aware of.

"Vehicles imported into New Zealand, new or used, must meet this requirement," says Nathan Schaffer, manager of radio-spectrum investigations.

"Radio and communication systems installed in vehicles must operate under a licence to ensure they do not cause unwanted interference.

"However, vehicle wireless systems are generally harmonised worldwide to ensure compatibility in most countries."

In New Zealand, RSM has created radio licences for general users so vehicular wireless systems can operate within specific frequency bands without causing interference.

Schaffer told Autofile: "Second-hand vehicles from markets such as Japan may have built-in communication or telemetry systems that aren't compatible with New Zealand's spectrum plan.

"Differences in spectrum allocation between countries can result in interference with local networks, particularly if these systems operate on frequencies assigned to other services.

"After-market communication products installed in used-imported vehicles may pose interference risks if they aren't compliant with New Zealand regulations. These devices should be checked for compliance before use.

"The responsibility falls on importers to ensure second-hand vehicles meet local radio-frequency regulations before sale.

"Likewise, vehicle owners who purchase after-market communication equipment should verify these products adhere to New Zealand's standards to prevent interference and ensure seamless operation."

With the increasing ease of purchasing products via global platforms such as eBay, Facebook, Amazon, Trade Me, Alibaba and AliExpress, Kiwis are often unaware of the risks associated with buying non-compliant radio products.

Claire Smollett, national manager of RSM, says: "These products can operate on licensed channels and cause interference with critical communication systems, such as those used on aircraft and by ambulances.

"It's important New Zealanders are aware of their responsibility when purchasing radios on overseas sites."

Toyota top

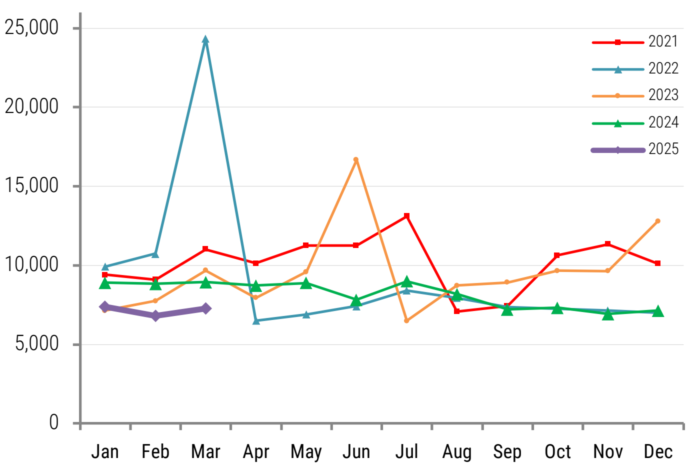
There were 7,279 used-imported passenger vehicles registered in March for a fall of 18.5 per cent when compared to 8,931 in the same month of 2024.

Last month's best-selling marque was Toyota with 2,734 units with Nissan second on 1,020.

Toyotas accounted for the top three models with the Aqua on 776 units, Prius on 515 and Corolla with 373.

Fourth place went to Honda's Fit on 294. The Nissan Note was fifth with 284.

Used Imported Passenger Registrations - 2021–2025



Used Imported Passenger Vehicle Sales by Motive Power - March 2025

MAKE	MAR '25	MAR '24	+/-%	MAR '25 MKT SHARE	2025 YEAR TO DATE	2025 MKT SHARE
Full battery electric	130	104	25.0%	1.8%	390	1.8%
Plug-in hybrid electric	59	128	-53.9%	0.8%	171	0.8%
Non plug-in petrol hybrid	3,429	4,321	-20.6%	47.1%	9,785	45.6%
Petrol	3,567	4,276	-16.6%	49.0%	10,782	50.3%
Diesel	94	102	-7.8%	1.3%	315	1.5%
Others (includes non plug-in diesel hybrid, fuel cell)	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	**7,279**	**8,931**	**-18.5%**		**21,443**	

Early signs of recovery seen

Port of Tauranga's net profit after tax up to December 31 has come in at $60.2 million for a 27.4 per cent jump on the same period in 2023/24.

Its trade rose by 6.9 per cent to 12.4 million tonnes and containers increased by 10.2 per cent to 591,934 twenty-foot equivalents.

The company's half-year announcement states its focus on service delivery resulted in further reductions in ships' waiting times and productivity improvements are being implemented.

It says: "Further gains remain challenging due to vessels continuing to arrive off schedule and berth-capacity shortages, which also make it difficult to accommodate new services.

"Capacity constraints can be alleviated with the Stella Passage development and an application is being prepared under the fast-track legislation."

Other highlights for the six-month period include ship visits increasing by 2.4 per cent to 690, imports climbing 14.9 per cent to 4.4m tonnes and exports going up three per cent.

The port has declared an interim dividend of seven cents per share, up by one cent a year ago.

Julia Hoare, chair, says the strong trade and financial results are positive outcomes amid ongoing depressed economic conditions.

"While the domestic economy remains sluggish, we are seeing what we hope are the early signs of a recovery, particularly in bulk imports and most export categories."

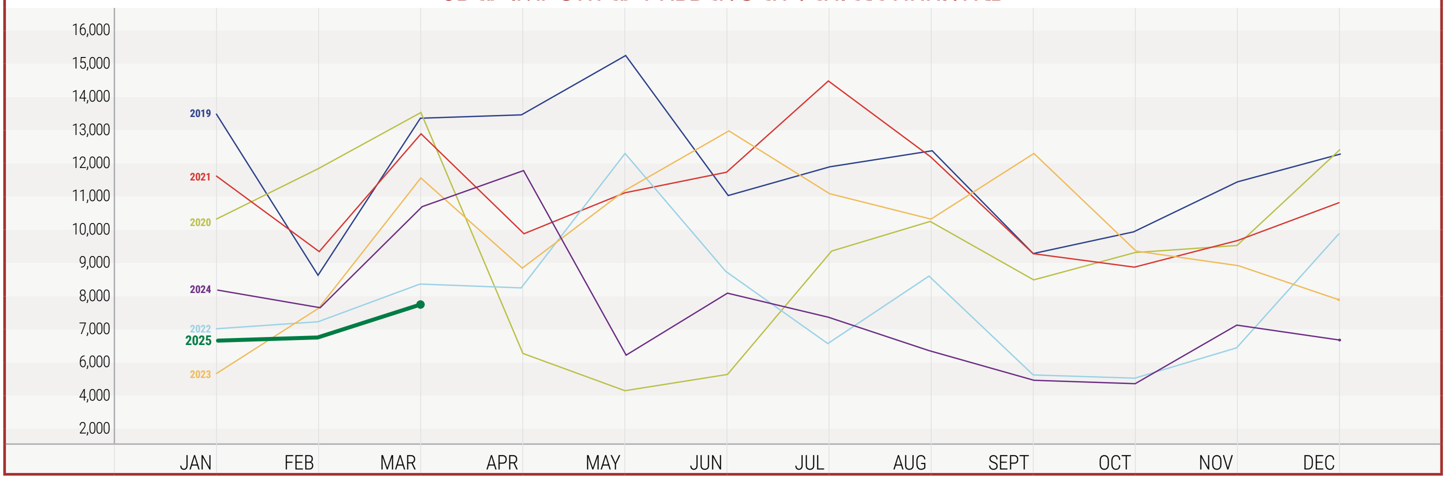
Leonard Sampson, chief executive, adds the port has proven its resilience thanks to diverse income streams and a focus on costs, and is preparing for growth and greater resilience through its investments in infrastructure for capacity.

As for the future, Hoare notes the short term remains challenging with the international geopolitical situation still unpredictable, but the company is "well-positioned for economic recovery".

NEW HIGH FOR YEAR

There were 7,739 used passenger vehicles imported during March, which was the highest monthly total of 2025. It brought the year-to-date total to 21,163.

Last month's total included 7,593 used cars from Japan. There were 100 arrivals from Australia and 23 from the UK. Next up were the US on 15 and Singapore with five.



Used Imported Passenger Vehicles By Country Of Export

COUNTRY OF EXPORT	2025					2024						2023	
	JAN '25	FEB '25	MAR '25	MAR MKT SHARE %	2025 TOTAL	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2024 TOTAL	MRKT SHARE	2023 TOTAL	MRKT SHARE
Australia	88	138	100	**1.3%**	**326**	279	357	302	347	1,285	1.5%	1,263	1.1%
Great Britain	18	29	23	**0.3%**	**70**	56	49	54	96	255	0.3%	272	0.2%
Japan	6,484	6,536	7,593	**98.1%**	**20,613**	25,429	24,909	17,868	17,834	86,040	97.5%	113,462	98.0%
Singapore	21	8	5	**0.1%**	**34**	89	62	53	52	256	0.3%	250	0.2%
USA	39	23	13	**0.2%**	**75**	44	58	75	72	249	0.3%	265	0.2%
Other countries	29	11	5	**0.1%**	**45**	30	61	25	54	170	0.2%	241	0.2%
Total	**6,679**	**6,745**	**7,739**	**100.0%**	**21,163**	**25,927**	**25,496**	**18,377**	**18,455**	**88,255**	**100.0%**	**115,753**	**100.0%**

Agency wins enforcement case

Two men involved with unauthorised vehicle inspections in Auckland have been sentenced.

Juan Carlos Acarapi Scoria, an inspector, and mechanic Gideon Tali, both from Automotive New Lynn, have been given five months' community detention and 60 hours' community work respectively.

They have been sentenced in Waitakere District Court for accessing the NZTA's computer system WOF Online for dishonest purposes.

Acting on a tip-off, the transport agency found that Tali was conducting warrant inspections without being authorised to do so between June 7 and July 8, 2022.

He was following the instructions of Scoria, his employer, and was using the latter's vehicle-inspector approval to issue WOFs.

The NZTA's investigation established 121 such inspections were registered and 86 WOF labels were issued without a proper safety inspection by someone authorised to do so.

The judge acknowledged the seriousness and period of offending, that the vehicles might have been unsafe, and the issues of integrity and premeditation.

"We welcome the sentencing of these individuals and hope it serves as a deterrent," says Nicole Botherway, the NZTA's senior manager of safer vehicles.

"We don't tolerate misconduct by appointed vehicle inspectors and inspecting organisations.

"We will act whenever our investigations find unlawful behaviour. The actions of these individuals put road-users at risk.

"These vehicles hadn't been checked by an inspector vetted by the NZTA to ensure they had the necessary technical skills to understand and meet safety standards."

The agency cancelled all WOFs issued under Acarapi's name during the period in question and informed owners they needed to get their cars retested.

The NZTA's safer vehicles team regularly reviews inspecting organisations and vehicle inspectors to check compliance.

BOOST FOR TRADERS

Dealers sold 16,557 second-hand cars to the public last month for a rise of 11.8 per cent from 14,808 in March last year.

Trade-ins totalled 15,380 vehicles for a 24 per cent jump from 12,401. ⊕

SECONDHAND CAR SALES - March 2025

	DEALER TO PUBLIC				PUBLIC TO PUBLIC			PUBLIC TO DEALER		
REGION	MAR '25	MAR '24	+/- %	MARKET SHARE	MAR '25	MAR '24	+/- %	MAR '25	MAR '24	+/- %
Northland	513	441	16.3%	3.1%	1,973	1,944	1.5%	237	175	35.4%
Auckland	5,659	5,073	11.6%	34.2%	14,833	14,848	-0.1%	6,875	5,277	30.3%
Waikato	1,689	1,492	13.2%	10.2%	4,241	4,135	2.6%	1,308	1,132	15.5%
Bay of Plenty	1,084	969	11.9%	6.5%	2,977	3,016	-1.3%	756	641	17.9%
Gisborne	149	167	-10.8%	0.9%	405	427	-5.2%	60	50	20.0%
Hawke's Bay	637	578	10.2%	3.8%	1,452	1,533	-5.3%	469	390	20.3%
Taranaki	387	378	2.4%	2.3%	1,110	1,104	0.5%	178	168	6.0%
Manawatu-Whanganui	884	822	7.5%	5.3%	2,130	2,163	-1.5%	813	707	15.0%
Wellington	1,513	1,335	13.3%	9.1%	3,254	3,381	-3.8%	1,233	1,018	21.1%
Tasman	148	142	4.2%	0.9%	507	511	-0.8%	14	21	-33.3%
Nelson	172	105	63.8%	1.0%	467	465	0.4%	229	168	36.3%
Marlborough	155	118	31.4%	0.9%	380	401	-5.2%	69	67	3.0%
West Coast	111	96	15.6%	0.7%	320	343	-6.7%	53	46	15.2%
Canterbury	2,364	2,155	9.7%	14.3%	6,027	5,954	1.2%	2,384	1,936	23.1%
Otago	734	662	10.9%	4.4%	2,047	2,165	-5.5%	502	456	10.1%
Southland	307	221	38.9%	1.9%	1,073	981	9.4%	200	149	34.2%
Other	51	54	-5.6%	0.3%	120	157	-23.6%	0	0	0.0%
NZ Total	**16,557**	**14,808**	**11.8%**	**100.0%**	**43,316**	**43,528**	**-0.5%**	**15,380**	**12,401**	**24.0%**

New Passenger Vehicle Sales by Make - March 2025

MAKE	MAR '25	MAR '24	+/-%	MAR '25 MKT SHARE	2025 YEAR TO DATE	2025 MKT SHARE
Toyota	1,711	1,566	9.3	20.3%	4,913	20.9%
Kia	851	968	-12.1	10.1%	2,382	10.1%
Mitsubishi	822	807	1.9	9.8%	2,268	9.7%
Honda	555	318	74.5	6.6%	1,183	5.0%
Mazda	422	267	58.1	5.0%	1,062	4.5%
MG	404	307	31.6	4.8%	1,154	4.9%
Suzuki	400	376	6.4	4.7%	1,298	5.5%
Nissan	289	264	9.5	3.4%	772	3.3%
Ford	288	276	4.3	3.4%	922	3.9%
Hyundai	281	319	-11.9	3.3%	707	3.0%
GWM	251	281	-10.7	3.0%	798	3.4%
Subaru	210	147	42.9	2.5%	605	2.6%
BMW	209	194	7.7	2.5%	535	2.3%
Lexus	159	131	21.4	1.9%	405	1.7%
Volkswagen	146	157	-7.0	1.7%	488	2.1%
Tesla	145	199	-27.1	1.7%	263	1.1%
Audi	132	121	9.1	1.6%	277	1.2%
Mercedes-Benz	131	135	-3.0	1.6%	396	1.7%
Land Rover	120	145	-17.2	1.4%	302	1.3%
BYD	101	49	106.1	1.2%	376	1.6%
Mini	98	89	10.1	1.2%	251	1.1%
Skoda	93	113	-17.7	1.1%	260	1.1%
Omoda	90	3	2,900.0	1.1%	216	0.9%
Polestar	77	7	1,000.0	0.9%	187	0.8%
Jaecoo	67	0	6,700.0	0.8%	197	0.8%
Peugeot	62	42	47.6	0.7%	192	0.8%
Porsche	61	34	79.4	0.7%	184	0.8%
KGM	44	21	109.5	0.5%	168	0.7%
Volvo	38	36	5.6	0.5%	112	0.5%
Cupra	35	25	40.0	0.4%	79	0.3%
Jaguar	27	28	-3.6	0.3%	85	0.4%
Jeep	23	14	64.3	0.3%	84	0.4%
Mahindra	17	18	-5.6	0.2%	88	0.4%
Isuzu	12	3	300.0	0.1%	60	0.3%
Leapmotor	12	0	1,200.0	0.1%	28	0.1%
Fiat	10	2	400.0	0.1%	25	0.1%
Ineos	5	7	-28.6	0.1%	14	0.1%
Aston Martin	4	8	-50.0	0.0%	18	0.1%
Cadillac	4	0	400.0	0.0%	4	0.0%
Chevrolet	4	1	300.0	0.0%	7	0.0%
Lamborghini	3	1	200.0	0.0%	11	0.0%
Alfa Romeo	2	4	-50.0	0.0%	11	0.0%
Bentley	2	1	100.0	0.0%	9	0.0%
Can-Am	2	2	0.0	0.0%	9	0.0%
Others	7	53	-86.8	0.1%	71	0.3%
Total	**8,426**	**7,539**	**11.8**	**100.0%**	**23,476**	**100.0%**

New Passenger Vehicle Sales by Model - March 2025

MAKE	MODEL	MAR '25	MAR '24	+/-%	MAR '25 MKT SHARE	2025 YEAR TO DATE	2025 MKT SHARE
Toyota	RAV4	703	789	-10.9	8.3%	2,442	10.4%
Mitsubishi	ASX	364	307	18.6	4.3%	933	4.0%
Mitsubishi	Outlander	352	316	11.4	4.2%	993	4.2%
Kia	Seltos	295	325	-9.2	3.5%	941	4.0%
Toyota	Corolla	218	111	96.4	2.6%	418	1.8%
Suzuki	Swift	188	190	-1.1	2.2%	614	2.6%
MG	ZS	185	185	0.0	2.2%	543	2.3%
Mazda	CX-5	176	120	46.7	2.1%	431	1.8%
Toyota	Corolla Cross	167	180	-7.2	2.0%	432	1.8%
Ford	Everest	165	109	51.4	2.0%	494	2.1%
Kia	Stonic	161	327	-50.8	1.9%	476	2.0%
Nissan	Qashqai	141	110	28.2	1.7%	271	1.2%
Honda	HR-V	139	0	13,900.0	1.6%	292	1.2%
Toyota	Highlander	138	34	305.9	1.6%	239	1.0%
Nissan	X-Trail	136	121	12.4	1.6%	429	1.8%
Honda	Jazz	133	109	22.0	1.6%	278	1.2%
GWM	Haval H6	128	98	30.6	1.5%	361	1.5%
Honda	ZR-V	128	102	25.5	1.5%	243	1.0%
Kia	Sportage	121	165	-26.7	1.4%	359	1.5%
MG	MG3	121	56	116.1	1.4%	377	1.6%
Toyota	Yaris Cross	118	147	-19.7	1.4%	267	1.1%
Honda	CR-V	116	83	39.8	1.4%	260	1.1%
Hyundai	Tucson	116	90	28.9	1.4%	199	0.8%
Hyundai	Kona	114	121	-5.8	1.4%	273	1.2%
Toyota	Land Cruiser Prado	112	9	1,144.4	1.3%	449	1.9%
Kia	Niro	111	59	88.1	1.3%	185	0.8%
Subaru	Outback	100	34	194.1	1.2%	305	1.3%
Mitsubishi	Eclipse Cross	87	146	-40.4	1.0%	272	1.2%
GWM	Haval Jolion	86	87	-1.1	1.0%	233	1.0%
MG	HS	85	24	254.2	1.0%	188	0.8%
Omoda	C5	85	1	8,400.0	1.0%	187	0.8%
Volkswagen	Tiguan	83	59	40.7	1.0%	221	0.9%
Toyota	Land Cruiser	81	39	107.7	1.0%	162	0.7%
Tesla	Model 3	79	125	-36.8	0.9%	119	0.5%
Suzuki	Ignis	73	44	65.9	0.9%	164	0.7%
Suzuki	Jimny	73	83	-12.0	0.9%	259	1.1%
Polestar	Polestar 2	68	6	1,033.3	0.8%	163	0.7%
Jaecoo	J7	67	0	6,700.0	0.8%	197	0.8%
Tesla	Model Y	66	74	-10.8	0.8%	144	0.6%
Toyota	Yaris	66	119	-44.5	0.8%	197	0.8%
Ford	Escape	61	55	10.9	0.7%	124	0.5%
Mazda	CX-3	59	28	110.7	0.7%	115	0.5%
Subaru	Forester	58	36	61.1	0.7%	135	0.6%
Toyota	C-HR	56	71	-21.1	0.7%	159	0.7%
Mini	Countryman	50	44	13.6	0.6%	126	0.5%
Others		2,197	2,201	-0.2	26.1%	6,807	29.0%
Total		**8,426**	**7,539**	**11.8**	**100.0%**	**23,476**	**100.0%**

Electric charging revenue booms

ChargeNet has posted a 29 per cent hike in year-on-year revenue growth for 2024's second quarter.

Despite a changeable market with extra competition, use of its EV charging network outpaced an 11 per cent increase in electric-car registrations over the same period.

The company delivered 20 per cent more energy between July and December 2024 compared to the same time in the previous year.

Its continued growth highlights how the expansion and upgrade of its network has risen to accommodate unmet demand for high-speed charging infrastructure.

Danusia Wypych, chief executive officer, says the traditional peak in December saw record-breaking use with charging sessions exceeding 3,000 on several days.

"EV adoption continues to grow," she adds. "Our latest data shows that drivers are actively using our network to explore the country.

"We're seeing a positive shift towards greater utilisation of our high-powered 150kW and 300kW chargers, which make long-distance EV travel easier and more efficient."

As expected, en-route charging – hyper-rapid facilities on the likes of state highways – saw an uplift in activity over the summer.

Destination chargers, such as those installed at supermarkets, have also proven their value by meeting customer needs and showing strong early usage.

In 2024, ChargeNet added or upgraded more than 150 fast-charging points to expand its network by some 50 per cent. This investment aligns with its commitment to doubling the number of its chargers within three years.

The acquisition of a majority stake in the company by Genesis Energy last year will enable it to maintain investment in charging infrastructure.

Wypych acknowledges the increasing pressure of rising energy costs and need for continued innovation in the sector to manage these, and to ensure the long-term sustainability of the EV sector.

"Scaling a charging network in the face of rising costs and market dynamics requires constant innovation, but we're in it for the long game. In some markets, EVs could reach price parity with petrol counterparts as early as 2026, which will put some juice behind uptake in New Zealand."

Inside Kia NZ's new parts and distribution warehouse

Sales rise

Registrations of new cars totalled 8,426 during March for a jump of 11.8 per cent compared to 7,539 in the same month of last year.

The Toyota RAV4 was the top model on 703 units. It was followed by two Mitsubishis – the ASX with 364 and Outlander on 352. Toyota was the best-selling marque with 1,711 units. Second spot went to Kia on 851 while Mitsubishi was third with 822. Next were Honda on 555 and Mazda with 422.

CARRYING MORE PARTS

Kia NZ has shifted its parts and distribution warehouse to a new facility in east Auckland.

Significantly larger than the one it has replaced, it's located close to the company's head office in Highbrook, East Tamaki.

"Our increased ability to carry more stock lines will reduce wait times, and enhance customer experience and satisfaction," says managing director Todd McDonald.

"It makes parts supply quicker and easier, ensuring faster dispatch of Kia genuine parts to our dealers and customers."

The old warehouse offered 1,500sq m of space, while the new distribution centre's footprint comes in at 6,000sq m. It boasts twice the stud height for eight times the storage capacity and can manage as many as six containers at once.

McDonald adds: "With the new warehouse's opening, we're set up to keep pace with Kia's rapid growth well into the next decade and beyond."

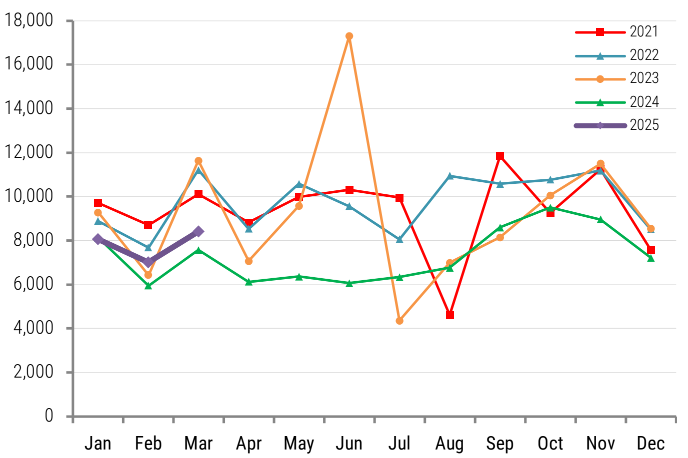
EXTRA BRAND IN TOWN

Ingham Great Lake in Taupo has boosted its line-up by adding GWM to the company.

The marque's range is set for significant expansion this year with plans to almost double its offerings. It has already captured the market's attention with several releases including New Zealand's first full hybrid ute, the Cannon Alpha.

"By introducing GWM to our portfolio, we are strengthening our ability to offer a broader selection of high-performance alternatives for our customers," says Hugo Richards, dealer principal.

New Passenger Registrations - 2021–2025



New Passenger Vehicle Sales by Motive Power - March 2025

MAKE	MAR'25	MAR'24	+/-%	MAR'25 MKT SHARE	2025 YEAR TO DATE	2025 MKT SHARE
Full battery electric	593	477	24.3%	7.0%	1,702	7.2%
Plug-in hybrid electric	305	225	35.6%	3.6%	1,092	4.7%
Non plug-in petrol hybrid	3,252	2,608	24.7%	38.6%	8,773	37.4%
Petrol	3,736	3,660	2.1%	44.3%	10,328	44.0%
Diesel	540	569	-5.1%	6.4%	1,581	6.7%
Others (includes non plug-in diesel hybrid, fuel cell)	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	**8,426**	**7,539**	**11.8%**		**23,476**	

Planning for hydrogen future

The government is hoping key steps in its hydrogen action plan will unlock private-sector investment.

It says some parts of the economy are impractical or impossible to electrify, which is where hydrogen could have a big role in cutting emissions.

The plan includes a review of regulatory barriers for low-emissions heavy models because decarbonisation of the commercial fleet is at an earlier stage than light vehicles.

Some companies are already exploring the merits of low and zero-emissions heavy vehicles and different technologies.

These include electrification and alternative fuels such as hydrogen, states the action plan released by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE).

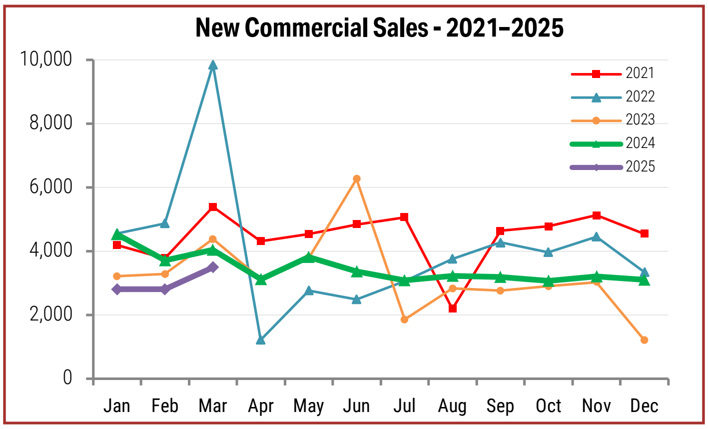
"A key role for the government is to remove regulatory barriers," it adds. "For example, vehicle dimension and mass rules can create barriers to getting hydrogen trucks on our roads because tanks on heavy vehicles can cause them to exceed volume constraints.

"There are also no inspection or crashworthiness requirements specific to hydrogen-fuelled vehicles.

"It's important to ensure our requirements align with leading international standards and deviate only where the New Zealand context requires it.

"There are opportunities to review barriers to the uptake of low-emissions heavy vehicles, including hydrogen vehicles, as part of work by the Ministry of Transport to review the regulatory system to ensure our rules are fit for purpose."

MBIE adds any changes to the ►



New Commercial Sales by Make - March 2025

MAKE	MAR '25	MAR '24	+/-%	MAR '25 MKT SHARE	2025 YEAR TO DATE	2025 MKT SHARE
Toyota	861	821	4.9	24.7%	2,408	26.5%
Ford	818	1,128	-27.5	23.4%	2,094	23.1%
Mitsubishi	488	680	-28.2	14.0%	1,005	11.1%
Nissan	383	289	32.5	11.0%	716	7.9%
BYD	169	0	16,900.0	4.8%	539	5.9%
Isuzu	131	189	-30.7	3.8%	429	4.7%
LDV	111	31	258.1	3.2%	294	3.2%
Fuso	56	133	-57.9	1.6%	141	1.6%
Volkswagen	47	120	-60.8	1.3%	165	1.8%
GWM	43	22	95.5	1.2%	101	1.1%
Hino	42	46	-8.7	1.2%	134	1.5%
Mercedes-Benz	40	90	-55.6	1.1%	157	1.7%
Scania	36	57	-36.8	1.0%	112	1.2%
Chevrolet	28	12	133.3	0.8%	53	0.6%
Hyundai	26	78	-66.7	0.7%	74	0.8%
Renault	24	16	50.0	0.7%	59	0.7%
Iveco	21	30	-30.0	0.6%	75	0.8%
Volvo	20	26	-23.1	0.6%	51	0.6%
Kenworth	18	20	-10.0	0.5%	64	0.7%
Fiat	16	34	-52.9	0.5%	76	0.8%
Others	112	223	-49.8	3.2%	328	3.6%
Total	**3,490**	**4,045**	**-13.7**	**100.0%**	**9,075**	**100.0%**

New Commercial Sales by Model - March 2025

MAKE	MODEL	MAR '25	MAR '24	+/-%	MAR '25 MKT SHARE	2025 YEAR TO DATE	2025 MKT SHARE
Ford	Ranger	709	1,002	-29.2	20.3%	1,788	19.7%
Toyota	Hilux	669	611	9.5	19.2%	1,883	20.7%
Mitsubishi	Triton	488	680	-28.2	14.0%	1,005	11.1%
Nissan	Navara	383	289	32.5	11.0%	716	7.9%
BYD	Shark 6	169	0	16,900.0	4.8%	539	5.9%
Toyota	Hiace	157	107	46.7	4.5%	420	4.6%
Ford	Transit	109	126	-13.5	3.1%	306	3.4%
Isuzu	D-Max	74	81	-8.6	2.1%	270	3.0%
LDV	T60	46	4	1,050.0	1.3%	99	1.1%
GWM	Cannon	43	22	95.5	1.2%	101	1.1%
Toyota	Land Cruiser	35	86	-59.3	1.0%	105	1.2%
Mercedes-Benz	Sprinter	32	60	-46.7	0.9%	122	1.3%
LDV	Deliver 9	31	12	158.3	0.9%	86	0.9%
Chevrolet	Silverado	25	10	150.0	0.7%	45	0.5%
Isuzu	N Series	25	55	-54.5	0.7%	76	0.8%
Isuzu	F Series	23	46	-50.0	0.7%	56	0.6%
Hyundai	Staria Load	21	74	-71.6	0.6%	58	0.6%
Volkswagen	Amarok	19	75	-74.7	0.5%	76	0.8%
Renault	Trafic	18	4	350.0	0.5%	38	0.4%
Fiat	Ducato	16	34	-52.9	0.5%	76	0.8%
Others		398	667	-40.3	11.4%	1,210	13.3%
Total		**3,490**	**4,045**	**-13.7**	**100.0%**	**9,075**	**100.0%**

system would need to be balanced against increased wear and tear on roads and bridges, and related higher maintenance costs.

The action plan's four priority areas include creating an enabling regulatory environment, and reducing barriers for consenting hydrogen projects through Electrify NZ and Resource Management Act reform programmes.

The others are promoting a cost-effective and market-led transition to a low-emissions economy, and supporting access to international investment and markets.

The hydrogen action plan delivers against one of the priorities in the coalition agreement between National and NZ First to plan for transitional low-carbon goals, including the infrastructure needed to increase methanol and hydrogen use to achieve "sovereign fuel resilience".

RECORD FOR TRUCKS SET

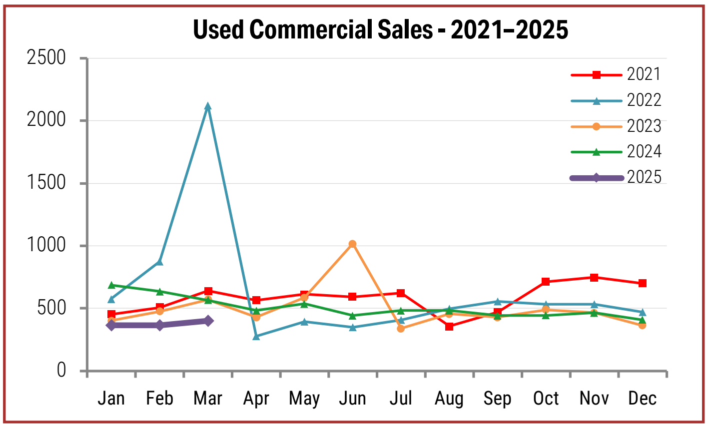
Kiwis have come together to smash the record for the most Toyota Hiluxes in one place.

The event near Lake Wakatipu in Southland saw 1,440 utes beat the previous unofficial world record of 495 set in South Africa in 2010.

Organised by Invercargill-based GWD Toyota and Real Country Farm, the invitation went out to owners of all models and vintages to take part.

Glen Rutherford, chief executive officer of the franchise, says: "People came all the way from the North Island to participate. This was an incredible achievement and a proud moment for all Hilux fans in New Zealand."

The oldest ute at March 2's event was a 1978 model year. The newest was a 2024 Hilux Hybrid.



UTES TAKE TOP FIVE

There were 3,490 new commercials registered last month, which was down by 13.7 per cent from 4,045 in March 2024.

The top model was Ford's Ranger on 709 units for a year-on-year decrease of 29.2 per cent.

Toyota's Hilux came second with 669, up by 9.5 per cent, and Mitsubishi's Triton was third on 488, down 28.2 per cent. Nissan's Navara was fourth with 383 and BYD's Shark fifth on 169.

There were 400 used commercials registered for a 29.1 per cent drop.

Used Commercial Sales by Make - March 2025

MAKE	MAR '25	MAR '24	+/-%	MAR '25 MKT SHARE	2025 YEAR TO DATE	2025 MKT SHARE
Toyota	190	290	-34.5	47.5%	561	49.6%
Nissan	67	116	-42.2	16.8%	204	18.0%
Hino	27	36	-25.0	6.8%	67	5.9%
Mitsubishi	27	20	35.0	6.8%	54	4.8%
Isuzu	20	32	-37.5	5.0%	62	5.5%
Ford	15	16	-6.3	3.8%	53	4.7%
Chevrolet	8	3	166.7	2.0%	16	1.4%
Daihatsu	6	3	100.0	1.5%	9	0.8%
Holden	5	4	25.0	1.3%	7	0.6%
Suzuki	5	3	66.7	1.3%	19	1.7%
Mazda	4	10	-60.0	1.0%	10	0.9%
Dodge	3	5	-40.0	0.8%	6	0.5%
Iveco	3	1	200.0	0.8%	6	0.5%
Mercedes-Benz	3	1	200.0	0.8%	10	0.9%
Volkswagen	3	4	-25.0	0.8%	8	0.7%
Fiat	2	3	-33.3	0.5%	6	0.5%
Fuso	2	1	100.0	0.5%	3	0.3%
UD Trucks	2	4	-50.0	0.5%	2	0.2%
Alexander Dennis	1	0	100.0	0.3%	1	0.1%
Factory Built	1	2	-50.0	0.3%	5	0.4%
Others	6	10	-40.0	1.5%	23	2.0%
Total	**400**	**564**	**-29.1**	**100.0%**	**1,132**	**100.0%**

Used Commercial Sales by Model - March 2025

MAKE	MODEL	MAR '25	MAR '24	+/-%	MAR '25 MKT SHARE	2025 YEAR TO DATE	2025 MKT SHARE
Toyota	Hiace	137	224	-38.8	34.3%	429	37.9%
Nissan	NV350	33	72	-54.2	8.3%	87	7.7%
Toyota	Dyna	22	16	37.5	5.5%	43	3.8%
Hino	Dutro	19	28	-32.1	4.8%	48	4.2%
Fuso	Canter	19	12	58.3	4.8%	36	3.2%
Isuzu	Elf	16	20	-20.0	4.0%	38	3.4%
Nissan	NV200	13	12	8.3	3.3%	49	4.3%
Toyota	Toyoace	11	11	0.0	2.8%	29	2.6%
Nissan	Caravan	10	20	-50.0	2.5%	39	3.4%
Toyota	Hilux	8	3	166.7	2.0%	16	1.4%
Hino	Ranger	7	3	133.3	1.8%	16	1.4%
Toyota	Regius	7	34	-79.4	1.8%	27	2.4%
Daihatsu	Hijet	6	3	100.0	1.5%	9	0.8%
Nissan	Vanette	6	0	600.0	1.5%	11	1.0%
Ford	Ranger	5	7	-28.6	1.3%	13	1.1%
Suzuki	Carry	5	2	150.0	1.3%	19	1.7%
Nissan	Atlas	4	6	-33.3	1.0%	8	0.7%
Ford	Transit	3	4	-25.0	0.8%	25	2.2%
Chevrolet	Colorado	3	3	0.0	0.8%	4	0.4%
Isuzu	Forward	3	8	-62.5	0.8%	14	1.2%
Others		63	76	-17.1	15.8%	172	15.2%
Total		**400**	**564**	**-29.1**	**100.0%**	**1,132**	**100.0%**

Facing challenges with optimism

Registrations up

New car imports in March came in at 6,962. This was up by 17.3 per cent when compared to 5,937 units in February but down 21.6 per cent from 8,882 recorded in the same month last year.

Sales of 8,426 new passenger vehicles were completed last month, which was 20.4 per cent more than February's total and was also up by 11.8 per cent from 7,539 units in March 2024.

The numbers have resulted in the stock of new cars still to be registered falling for a seventh consecutive month, dropping by 1,464 to 67,343. Daily sales, as averaged over the previous 12 months, stand at 245 units per day – down from 287 a year ago.

March's results mean stock at-hand has fallen to 275 days. In the same month of 2024, it stood at 246 days.

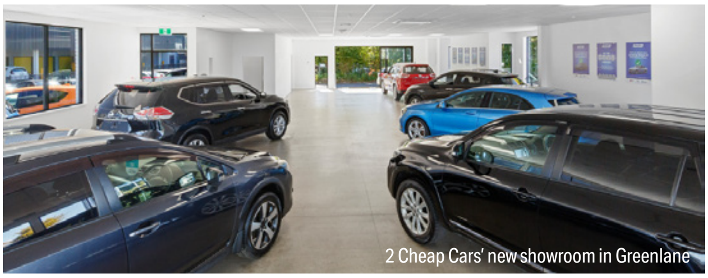
The sustained economic downturn, including persistent market volatility, continues to impact on 2 Cheap Cars' profitability.

While the company still anticipates net profit after tax to exceed $3 million for 2024/25, it notes the favourable impact of carbon credits carried forward from prior years will contribute to that result.

"While the trading environment remains challenging, there are plenty of reasons for optimism including our strong financial position," says David Sena, chief executive officer.

"We have optimal stock levels and we're hopeful declining interest rates will improve customers' access to finance."

The company's new flagship dealership in Greenlane opened on April 4. Coming in at 2,222sqm, it's more than twice the size of the previous premises there. It has a 422sqm indoor showroom with capacity for more than 70 vehicles, easy access, parking and a wider range of hybrid and petrol vehicles.



2 Cheap Cars' new showroom in Greenlane

The dealership's opening has coincided with the company selling more than 100,000 units nationwide since its launch in 2011.

It has also announced a new finance facility with ANZ Bank, its primary transactional banking partner.

Under the agreement, 2 Cheap Cars has secured "competitively priced" working capital, including a $5m trade finance loan and $1m commercial flexi-facility.

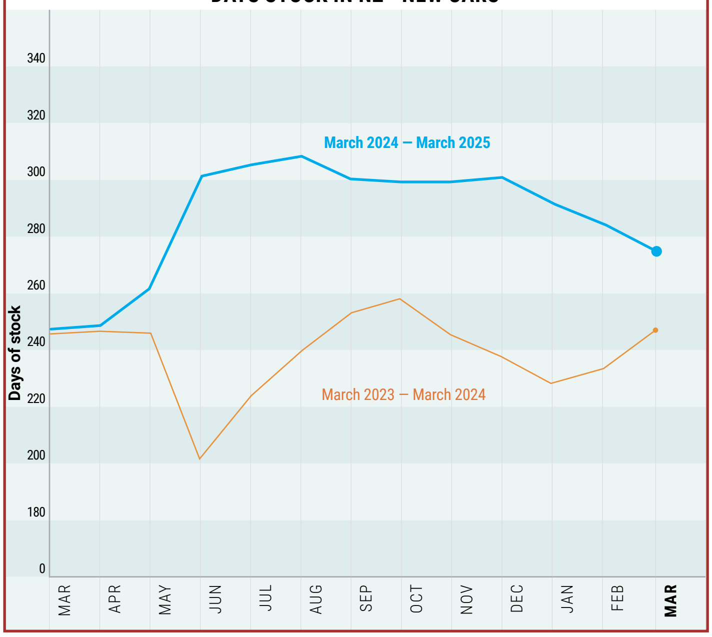
Sena describes the arrangements as a "significant milestone" to support inventory purchases and operational growth.

"This arrangement with ANZ strengthens our banking relationships and provides access to well-priced capital. Importantly, it positions us to confidently drive our expansion."

Dealer stock of new cars in New Zealand

	CAR SALES		VARIANCE	STOCK	DAILY SALES - 12-MONTH AVERAGE	DAYS STOCK AT HAND
	IMPORTED	REGISTERED				
Mar '24	8,882	7,539	1,343	70,567	287	246
Apr '24	6,180	6,110	70	70,637	285	248
May '24	7,800	6,350	1,450	72,087	276	261
Jun '24	8,006	6,056	1,950	74,037	245	302
Jul '24	9,313	6,333	2,980	77,017	251	307
Aug '24	7,205	6,750	455	77,472	250	310
Sep '24	6,739	8,575	-1,836	75,636	251	301
Oct '24	8,331	9,489	-1,158	74,478	250	298
Nov '24	6,771	8,953	-2,182	72,296	243	297
Dec '24	6,949	7,187	-238	72,058	239	301
Jan '25	5,862	8,052	-2,190	69,868	239	292
Feb '25	5,937	6,998	-1,061	68,807	242	284
Mar '25	**6,962**	**8,426**	**-1,464**	**67,343**	**245**	**275**
Year to date	18,761	23,476				
Change on last month	17.3%	20.4%		-2.1%		
Change on Mar 2024	-21.6% LESS IMPORTED	11.8% MORE SOLD		-4.6% LESS STOCK		

DAYS STOCK IN NZ - NEW CARS



CHINESE MARQUE LAUNCHED

Geely Auto has officially launched its brand and next-generation SUV, the EX5, in New Zealand and across the Tasman. Its expansion means it has a presence on five continents, and it will now focus on deepening its distribution channel and competitive advantages.

Jerry Gan, chief executive officer of the group, says: "2025 is the start of the Geely 2030 Vision. By the end of the year, we will enter the UK, Brazil, South Africa and other markets, and add more than 300 new sales and service outlets to achieve 1,100-plus channels."

THREE DIAMONDS BOOST

Mitsubishi Motors New Zealand (MMNZ) has expanded its partnership with a leading automotive business.

The Colonial Motor Company opened its standalone dealership as Manukau Autos on April 1. It also holds franchises for the marque in both Wanaka and Queenstown.

As the latest addition to MMNZ's 60-strong dealer network, it has replaced Auckland Motors and operates from Bakerfield Place, previously Southern Autos. It offers sales, parts and servicing.

"We are genuinely excited to expand our relationship with such a respected operator as Colonial," says Tony Johnston, MMNZ's chief operating officer. "This Kiwi-owned company has a proven reputation in our industry."

Jason Robb, dealer principal, adds: "It's clear MMNZ is truly passionate about the brand – an essential quality that will flow through our entire team. Customers in Manukau can expect great things from us."

Mitsubishi's range includes four of the top 10 vehicles sold in New Zealand in 2024, which Johnston says has as much to do with customer care provided by dealers as it does with its vehicles.

He adds: "We recognise the quality of relationships our customers receive is critical to our ongoing relationship with them, which is why we will only partner with the best representatives and Colonial is one of the best."

INCREASE IN EARNINGS

Assurant, which owns recently rebranded Protecta, has announced results for its full year ending December 31.

The US-based company delivered a second consecutive year of double-digit earnings in 2024 with profitable growth expected to continue in 2025.

Keith Demmings, president and chief executive officer, says: "2024 was a testament to the power of our differentiated business model as we delivered strong results."

The company's adjusted earnings before income tax, depreciation and amortisation increased by 15 per cent to US$1.57 billion – or about NZ$2.76b – in 2024 compared to 2023.

Stock rebounding

There were 7,739 used cars imported last month, an increase of 14.7 per cent from February when 6,745 units crossed our borders.

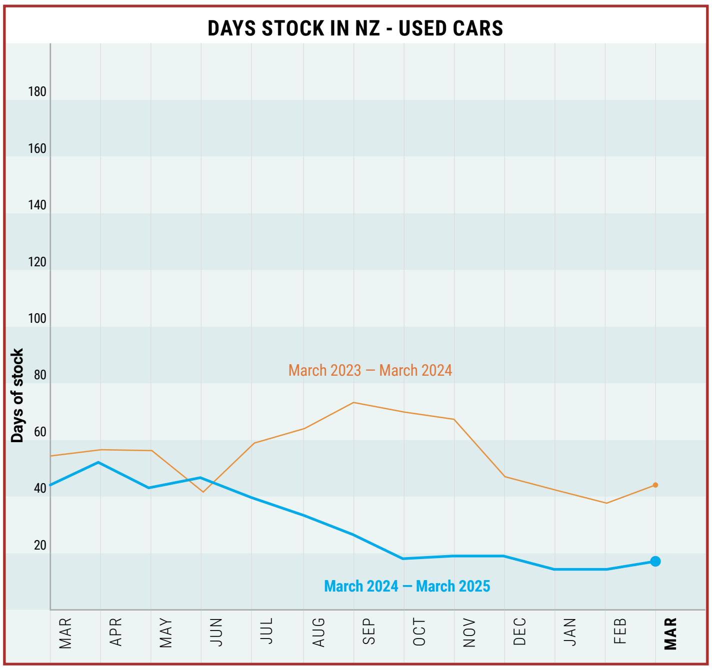
However, the latest figure was down by 25.2 per cent from 10,353 in March 2024.

Some 7,279 units were registered in March, a fall of 18.5 per cent from 8,931 registrations in the same month of 2024. However, the number was up 7.2 per cent from 6,791 in February this year.

With 460 more used cars imported than registered last month – the first increase since November 2024 – unregistered stock on dealers' yards or in compliance shops came to 4,651 units.

This was 66.3 per cent lower than the 13,819 units a year ago, but up by 11 per cent from 4,191 at the end of February.

Average daily registrations for March were 254, compared to 320 a year ago, and there's 18 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
Mar '24	10,353	8,931	1,422	13,819	320	43
Apr '24	11,551	8,718	2,833	16,652	323	52
May '24	6,070	8,878	-2,808	13,844	321	43
Jun '24	7,875	7,821	54	13,898	297	47
Jul '24	7,176	8,986	-1,810	12,088	303	40
Aug '24	6,156	8,174	-2,018	10,070	302	33
Sep '24	5,045	7,199	-2,154	7,916	297	27
Oct '24	4,714	7,318	-2,604	5,312	291	18
Nov '24	7,024	6,915	109	5,421	283	19
Dec '24	6,642	7,132	-490	4,931	268	18
Jan '25	6,679	7,373	-694	4,237	264	16
Feb '25	6,745	6,791	-46	4,191	258	16
Mar '25	**7,739**	**7,279**	**460**	**4,651**	**254**	**18**
Year to date	21,163	21,443				
Change on last month	14.7%	7.2%		11.0%		
Change on Mar 2024	-25.2% LESS IMPORTED	-18.5% LESS SOLD		-66.3% LESS STOCK		