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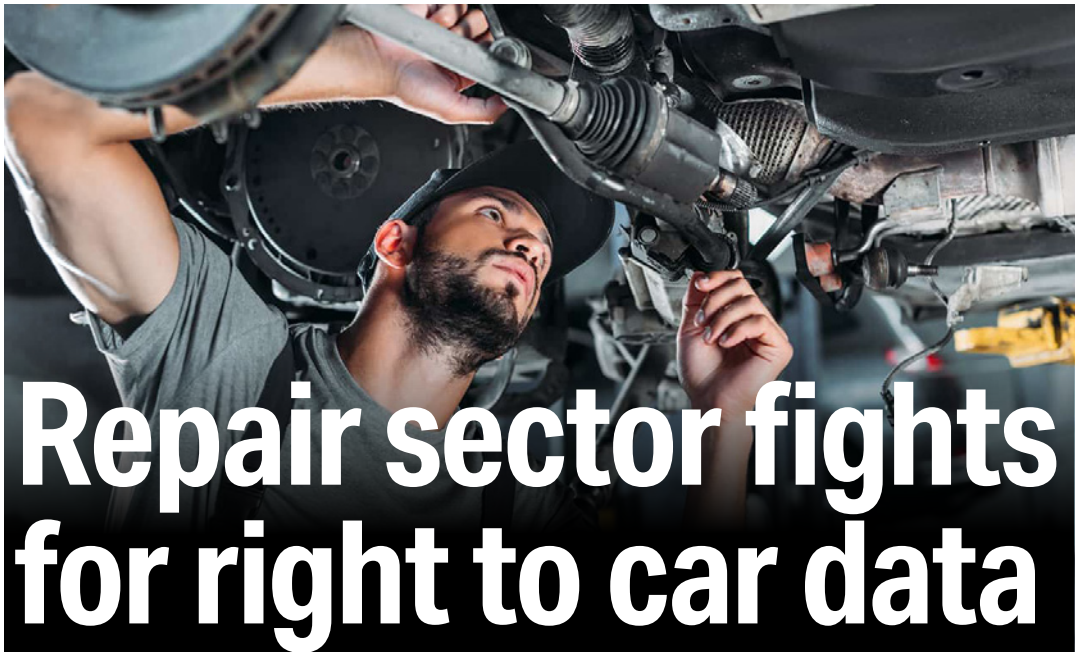

Repair sector fights for right to car data

Industry leaders campaign for law so technical information from manufacturers widely available

A group of industry leaders are upping their calls to give consumers the right to choose who services and repairs their vehicles, and help ensure the survival of New Zealand's independent automotive after-market.

They are seeking extra support from businesses and the public as they campaign for a formal government review on how to adapt and implement choice-of-repairer legislation similar to Australia's.

The New Zealand Choice of Repairer Industry Leaders Group says with developments in vehicle technology and an election approaching, the case for reform and competitive prices has never been stronger.

It wants regulations introduced that require companies making vehicles to supply independent repairers with the same remedial and service information they provide to their authorised dealer networks.

This would include supplying diagnostic information, repair specifications, technical service bulletins, software updates and digital service records.

The group says the new rules should cover all manufacturers selling cars in New Zealand and any marques that imported vehicles from 2002 onwards.

It suggests regulations should also provide a process for independent repairers to access environmental, safety and security-related technical information, and include a system for vetting those seeking such material and tracing its use.

The group notes all the data and information should be available on fair and reasonable terms.

Peter Morton, chairman, says

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GUEST EDITORIAL

Older fleet causing issues for everyone

Upgrade scheme creates incentive to refresh vehicles on our roads, says James McDowall

JAMES McDOWALL
Head of advocacy,
Motor Trade Association

In the final weeks of the election campaign, every party will have told us what it stands for. Not many of them have said much about cars.

Earlier this year, the Motor Trade Association (MTA) published research on the state of the fleet and the picture isn't flattering.

The average vehicle on our roads is 15 years old, up from 14.2 a decade ago.

The average light passenger vehicle is 15.2 years against 12.5 in the European Union. Used imports are arriving at an average age of nearly 10 years.

Warrant of fitness (WOF) fail rates climbed from 37 per cent in 2017 to 41 per cent in 2024.

Only two per cent of the fleet is fully electric. March's fuel-price spike produced a bump in EV sales, but it's too early to call that a structural shift.

If prices keep rising, as they have again, that may change.

The clean vehicle standard is doing some of the work, but slowly. Our research still expects liquid fuel to power more than half the fleet in 2045.

None of this will surprise anyone who sells or services cars for a living. What the research does is put numbers on it and numbers are what ministers need before they will move.

That's why a fleet upgrade scheme is in the MTA's election manifesto, The Road to Prosperity.

It's a simple idea and not new. It gives households an incentive to retire the oldest and least safe vehicles and replace them with something newer and safer.

The replacement doesn't need to be new. A 10-year-old car with modern safety features is a big step up from a 20-year-old one without them. A scheme like this would run through your yards, not around them.

We have put the proposal to every party. Some have engaged seriously, while others are still thinking about it. We will keep asking after the votes are counted.

There is a related issue. The government has begun moving to two-yearly WOFs, starting with newer vehicles. We supported taking that in stages and the second tranche, covering those up to 14 years old, has been held back to late 2027.

That pause matters, but it's not quite enough.

Extending intervals on an ageing fleet before the first stage has been evaluated would be a gamble. We've asked the parties to hold that line until the first tranche has been through a full two-year cycle.

The two issues are connected. A younger fleet makes a lighter-touch inspection regime easier to defend, but an older one makes it harder. Whoever forms the next government will need to deal with both.

If a candidate comes through your door in the next few weeks, ask them about the fleet and what they would do about it.

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[continued from page 1]

its long-running campaign has reached an important stage with the general election taking place on November 7.

"Awareness of the issue is growing, political engagement is increasing and the industry now has an opportunity to demonstrate the widespread support for choice of repairer," he told Autofile.

"We are increasing our current engagement with MPs because it's election season and members of parliament are actively seeking out the opinions of local businesses. Also, slowly but surely, our situation worsens because modern vehicles are increasingly dependent on manufacturer-controlled diagnostic information, software, security systems and digital service functions.

"The longer New Zealand waits to address access to this information, the greater the risk that independent repairers will be progressively locked out of servicing parts of the fleet."

The campaign for a choice-of-repairer law has been running for several years

Describing modern vehicles as "computers on wheels", the group notes that even the best technician can be locked out of a repair job without access to the right information.

When independent repairers are unable to obtain the best data to fix cars, it means "motorists lose choice, and when motorists lose choice they pay more".

Morton adds the group's current efforts are about gaining broader support, strengthening the industry's voice, and showing policymakers the call for choice-of-repairer regulations is a competition and consumer issue that requires action.

Backing for the campaign is reportedly strong from the independent automotive service and repair sector, consumers, parts suppliers and other businesses that rely on a competitive market.

"There is deep recognition that repairers should be able to access the same service and repair information made available to authorised networks on fair and reasonable commercial terms," notes Morton.

"There's also strong support from businesses that may compete with each other commercially but share the same concern that without a clear legal framework, access to the information needed to diagnose, service and repair modern vehicles can be restricted at the discretion of the manufacturer.

"In Australia, the law that requires car makers to make service and repair information available to independent mechanics is now broadly supported by all parts of the industry including authorised dealers."

The group claims in its campaign material that right-to-repair legislation across the Tasman has levelled the playing field between dealer networks and independent repairers while maintaining safety and security.

Meanwhile, a survey of independent repairers in New Zealand shows 48 per cent have had to turn away vehicles because they couldn't access the information, tools or data needed to complete work.

Morton says many of those repairers indicate the situation is getting worse. Every vehicle turned away means a motorist redirected ▶

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Focus on parts across Tasman

The NZ Choice of Repairer Industry Leaders Group is connected with the Australian Automotive Aftermarket Association (AAAA), which says free and open competition is the best way to ensure all car owners have access to affordable, high-quality repairs and parts.

The AAAA advocates that consumers have a right to information and the right to choose their repairer without being unfairly influenced by confusion or misinformation, be that intentional or otherwise.

It notes vehicle manufacturers often use the term "genuine" as a general reference to parts and accessories sold in their branded packaging.

"This vernacular is commonly used as a marketing tool by manufacturers to give the impression branded parts are in some way superior to 'non-genuine' spare parts," it adds.

"This can lead to unfounded apprehension for the vehicle owner."

It urges workshop staff to familiarise themselves with the common language used by brands as OEM parts are "routinely made under contract by outsourced suppliers and distributed through dealerships".

The AAAA adds the term "OEM supplier-branded parts" applies when a supplier uses its own branding on the same "genuine" parts offered by manufacturers.

As for independent parts, these replacement items are manufactured specifically for use after a car is built and are usually

back to a dealer network, longer wait times, less competition and fewer affordable options for consumers.

"This isn't about seeking access to a manufacturer's intellectual property or asking for information to be provided free of charge," he explains. "It's about ensuring qualified repairers can purchase the information and access what they need.

"Vehicles are becoming more connected, more digital and more dependent on software with every new model.

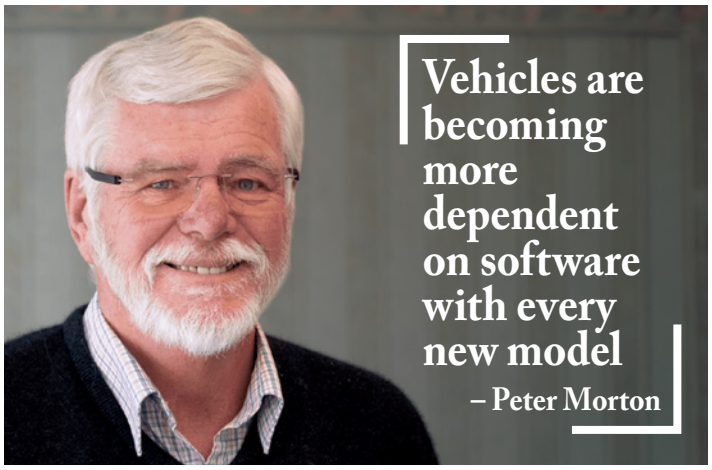
"The time to establish the rules is now before restricted access becomes entrenched across New Zealand's fleet."

Workshops are rarely locked out of every repair overnight, but there are concerns access becomes more difficult for vehicles and their various functions as modern cars become increasingly reliant on software.

"There may also be resistance from organisations that benefit from retaining control over vehicle information and repair pathways," adds Morton.

"Legislative change also requires government attention and political priority.

"The challenge is to show that this isn't simply an argument between different parts of the automotive industry. It is a competition, consumer choice and small-business issue."



> Vehicles are becoming more dependent on software with every new model
> – Peter Morton

'MONOPOLY ON DATA'

The NZ Choice of Repairer Industry Leaders Group has been campaigning for a choice-of-repairer law for several years.

Its board represents the country's four largest independent automotive repair networks, two biggest automotive parts and equipment suppliers, the largest vehicle glass-repair consortium, the Imported Motor Vehicle Industry Association and the AA.

It claims some car manufacturers make it easy for independent after-market businesses to access vital technical manuals, update bulletins, software patches and equipment, but many do not.

In the meantime, original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) ensure their service centres have automatic access to the data and equipment required, thereby cutting out competition independent repairers can offer.

The group says this creates an uneven playing field with New Zealanders paying the price for this "monopoly on data" because it limits the scope to reduce unnecessary costs and gives people less choice.

Morton says it is "increasingly critical" to introduce choice-of-repairer rules because independent workshops provide motorists with "choice, competition and convenient access to servicing and repairs".

He adds: "They are particularly important in regional and rural areas where the nearest authorised dealer may be a considerable distance away. Without fair access to service and repair information, consumers may gradually lose the ability to choose who repairs their vehicle.

"Independent workshops may be prevented from undertaking work they are otherwise fully capable of completing, and motorists may face higher costs, longer travel distances and reduced competition."

The group is keen for the

[continued on page 6]

Modern vehicles feature manufacturer-controlled diagnostic information

of similar quality as the originals but made by a different company to the OEM supplier.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission has previously issued guidelines stating the issue isn't who made the parts, but whether they are fit or appropriate for their intended purpose.

"If a part is non-genuine but interchangeable with the genuine part, it could be seen as being fit or appropriate for the purpose and would therefore not void the manufacturer's warranty," says the AAAA.

"It's important to remember most car manufacturers do not make parts themselves.

"They are almost always made by a third-party company and put in a box with the manufacturer's brand on it."

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[continued from page 5]

industry to speak with one voice and wants more organisations to join its plea for reform because "the louder the call, the harder it is to ignore".

It notes the car industry is large and diverse, and many repairers are small businesses focused on the immediate demands of running a workshop, which "can make collective engagement difficult even where there's widespread agreement with the campaign's objectives".

As a result, the group holds regular workshops and meetings with politicians to highlight the issue. Morton describes the response to these as constructive and encouraging, with MPs and officials understanding the importance of consumer choice.

"The campaign has also benefited from the experience of other markets. Australia now has a mandatory motor-vehicle information scheme, providing a practical example of how legislation can require manufacturers to share service and repair information with independent repairers.

Workshops want right-to-repair information provided to authorised dealer networks

"Our group has been engaging with political representatives and building an understanding of how a similar framework could operate locally.

"The discussions are progressing, but the campaign recognises that continued industry support will be essential to turn that interest into a firm policy and, ultimately, legislation."

Morton notes the group wants a clear commitment from the government as soon as possible, followed by a structured process to develop legislation in consultation with the automotive industry.

"The issue has already been considered and addressed in comparable international markets.

"We don't need to start from scratch and there's no reason for the process to take many years.

"New Zealand cannot afford to lose the strength of its independent automotive after-market. Motorists, communities and the economy cannot afford it.

"The priority is to establish the principle that manufacturers must provide independent repairers with fair access to the information needed to service and repair. The detailed implementation arrangements can then be developed with the industry and government."

IMPACT ON WORKSHOPS

Challenges around accessing technical service and repair data are increasing for many independent businesses, according to a study by the NZ Choice of Repairer Industry Leaders Group.

It warns a lack of access to reliable, cost-effective manufacturer services and repair information means many companies will be unable to recover all the time spent on jobs and need to charge Kiwis more.

"In the worst-case scenario, workshops will lose revenue as they have to turn away certain types of vehicles because they can't access the necessary information," the group says.

"A survey of workshops shows lack of access to service and repair information can add nearly three hours to repair work, of which more than half are then unable to fully recover this cost from customers. On average, it costs these businesses 1.9 hours of labour."

The group warns government policy needs to keep pace with the technology being used in modern vehicles because there's currently no guarantee that tens of thousands of independent mechanics can access basic information from manufacturers on behalf of owners.

"Without government action, the owners of five million cars in New Zealand could face a technology black hole," it says.

It notes computers control vehicle safety, environmental and road performance, and independent repairers have ongoing problems accessing technical information.

"Few manufacturers provide equivalent access to the technical information provided to their authorised dealers and preferred repairer networks, and many provide little or no information at all," the group states.

"Independent repairers are sometimes able to obtain technical information from sources other than the manufacturer. However, the information is commonly incomplete, not applicable to New Zealand models or offers no security of ongoing supply.

"Car manufacturers often list concerns about the sharing of some environmental, safety and security-related technical information to repair and service new cars.

"But these fears are unfounded because in other jurisdictions this information and data is securely shared with vetted independent repairers, and subject to safeguards to enable it to be shared."

Takeover bid reaches goal

A major used-vehicle importer is set to be delisted from the stock exchange and return to private ownership.

Sena & Co's takeover bid for 2 Cheap Cars (2CC) hit its minimum acceptance condition late last month after the offer was increased by 10 cents per share.

That means David Sena, the company's chief executive and co-founder, has now received acceptances for more than 90 per cent of its voting rights.

He held 75.924 per cent of shares when he launched his takeover bid on July 27, and acceptances increased to 18.718 per cent by 5pm on October 1 to give him control of 94.642 per cent of the business.

Sena has already signalled he will compulsorily acquire all remaining equity securities at the offer price of 90 cents and then apply for 2CC to be delisted from the NZX's main board.

In accordance with the Takeover Code, the offer's closing date has been extended from September 30 to October 9, which is 10 working days from the key acceptance condition being met.

Sena originally proposed paying 80c per share and the offer was previously due to close on August 24.

However, he upped it to 90c on September 16 just days before the company's annual meeting on the 28th. The extra 10c applies to acceptances made before and after the 16th.

Sena conceded it had become clear his offer would fail to clear the minimum acceptance condition at 80c.

"Increasing the offer price is in the best interests of all shareholders and will maximise the prospect of a successful takeover," he said, adding the higher offer represented an "attractive" premium to 2CC's share price before the takeover notice was lodged.

Uncertainties reinforce the benefits of operating as a privately owned business
– David Sena

The 90c offer was an increase of 36 per cent on 2CC's closing price on the NZX of 66c on July 9, the last trading day before the notice was lodged.

Sena said his revised offer of 90c represented 5.8 times 2CC's earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation of $8.1 million for the year ending March 31, 2026.

It was the "final and best price he was willing to pay". If the 90 per cent threshold wasn't reached, the offer would have lapsed.

In his letter of September 16, Sena urged shareholders who had yet to accept to read the offer document and target company

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statement. He also asked them to note the final offer price equalled the top end of an independent adviser's valuation range.

He pointed out trading in July was "weaker" than in the first quarter of 2026/27. The company reported unaudited net profit after tax (NPAT) of $330,000 for August as trading continued to be "volatile".

Trading in 2CC's shares was illiquid, he said, and no competing proposal had emerged for an alternative transaction. Sena added the share price may fall towards, or below, its pre-offer level should the takeover not go ahead.

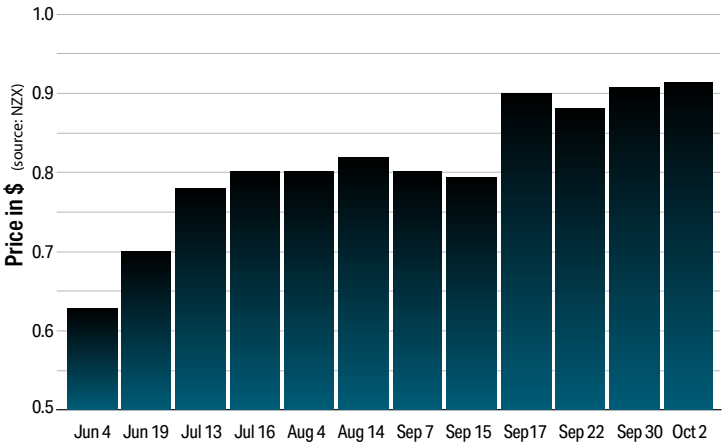
He emphasised the business was best positioned to realise its potential as a private company "enabling focused, founder-led decision-making".

"More specifically, being able to respond decisively to market conditions through investment is critical. This may result in periods of heightened investment to expand into areas such as providing finance to customers or an increase in sales yards or inventory.

"Being able to make such decisions without regard to minority shareholders, many of whom rely on dividends, will maximise the long-term value of the business."

Sena highlighted that economic conditions remained challenging and "a sustained higher interest-rate environment may adversely affect vehicle affordability and demand".

2 Cheap Cars share-price movements: June to October 2026



He added the upcoming general election had introduced extra uncertainty. "Opposition parties have proposed policy changes that, if adopted, could increase employment costs and strengthen the clean vehicle standard in ways that could materially increase vehicle acquisition costs. The precise policies ultimately adopted would depend on the election result.

"However, Sena & Co considers these uncertainties reinforce the benefits of operating 2CC as a privately owned business where management can respond quickly to changing economic, regulatory and market conditions, and make investment decisions with a longer-term focus."

Frequent updates on acceptances of Sena's offer have been issued to the NZX. By September 17, shareholders controlling nearly 8.5 per cent of 2 Cheap Cars had agreed to the deal with its deadline less than two weeks away.

This update announced those who had accepted included chairman Michael Stiassny. The disclosure notice stated he would receive $91,925.10 in cash, payable on settlement if the offer became unconditional, thanks to his holding of 102,139 shares.

Two other key figures at 2CC, chief financial officer Angus Guerin and independent director Gordon Shaw, also accepted the offer and are set to be paid $84,719.70 and $9,162.90 respectively.

SUPPORT TAKEOVER CALL

The independent directors of 2CC reiterated at the company's annual shareholders' meeting on September 25 their recommendation to accept the takeover bid.

By then, Sena had increased his offer to 90c per share and the deadline for acceptances had been pushed back to September 30.

Those attending the meeting, including Autofile, were told independent directors Stiassny and Shaw formed a committee to consider the takeover proposal after it was made on July 27. At that time, they recommended accepting the 80c offer.

Their reasons included that it represented a 21 per cent premium to the pre-announcement trading price of 2CC shares and no competing offer had emerged.

Sena's increased offer of 90c resulted in acceptances reaching 12.525 per cent three days before the annual meeting. That meant a further 1.321 per cent was needed to complete the deal, which was conditional on reaching 90 per cent or more.

Stiassny said the independent directors continued to recommend agreeing to the offer. Shareholders raised no questions about the takeover during the meeting.

BUSINESS PERFORMANCE

Stiassny told the annual meeting 2CC had been riding "the rollercoaster that is the New Zealand economy" through the 2025/26 financial year and into the start of the current one.

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Trans Future 5	169	—	5 Oct	6 Oct	10 Oct	28 Oct	T/S to DRA v66	T/S to DRA v66	30 Oct
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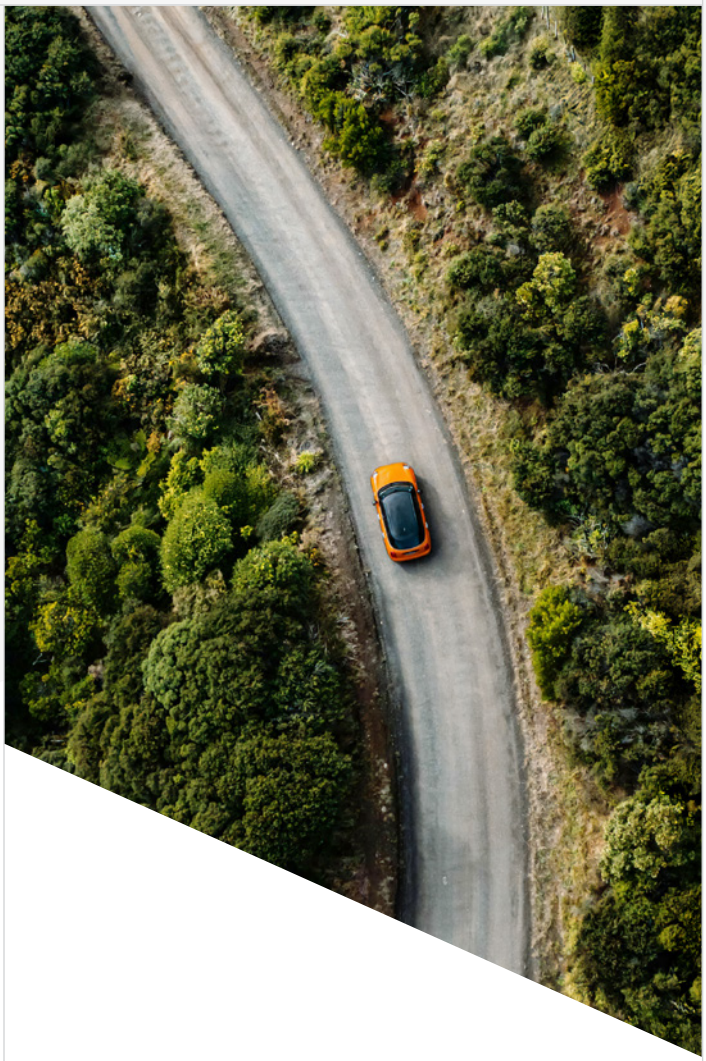

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"While there have been periodic improvements to economic data, these have often been short-lived or inconsistent and any green shoots shallow-rooted.

"Our strategic priorities – to improve execution, strengthen sourcing and continue to develop our retail network in a challenging market – have largely been implemented and saw the business deliver a credible result."

Stiassny said 2025/26 returned NPAT of $3.2m and "steady" revenue of $81.7m demonstrated "resilience".

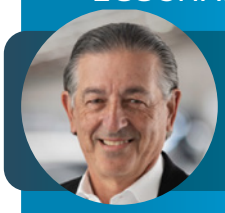
"The improvement from a first-half NPAT of $1.01m to a full-year result exceeding our January guidance of at least $3m was indicative of just how volatile the market was and remains.

"The clean car standard [CCS] remained a bone of contention, adversely impacting NPAT by approximately $1.7m relative to financial year 2025.

"The company did what it could in an uncertain regulatory environment by adjusting our compliance model and sourcing strategies, which provided some relief as revised settings took effect in the final quarter."

Stiassny reported early trading for 2026/27 had been encouraging but remained variable. "We do not expect conditions to stabilise or improve markedly in the short term, particularly with the election only weeks away."

2CC SHARES HELD BY KEY PLAYERS



Michael Stiassny
Company chairman
Shareholding: **102,139** Cash: **$91,925**

Angus Guerin
Chief financial officer
Shareholding: **94,133** Cash: **$84,720**

Gordon Shaw
Independent director
Shareholding: **10,181** Cash: **$9,163**

The above graphic shows how many shares of 2 Cheap Cars owned by Stiassny, Guerin and Shaw, and how much they will receive under the takeover offer price of 90 cents per share. Dollar amounts have been rounded. *Source: 2CC*

Guerin, as chief financial officer, delved into 2CC's annual results. He said 2025/26's first half was affected by higher carbon costs and subdued demand, while the second half benefited from firmer margins and better trading.

"That improvement allowed us to finish the year close to the previous year's profit despite pressures," he added.

"Total CCS fees increased through the first three quarters, reaching approximately $600,000 in the third quarter before falling to around $300,000 in the fourth quarter as revised settings flowed through.

"Profitability was improving before carbon costs reduced, supported by better margins, procurement, and finance and insurance performance. The reduction in carbon costs provided additional support in the final quarter.

"The stronger second-half result reflects operational improvements and the benefit of easing cost pressures. While encouraging, it also highlights how sensitive our earnings remain to market conditions."

As for the challenges, future government policy will remain important to 2CC's purchasing decisions and earnings.

"In short, regulatory uncertainty around the CCS remains one of the most significant external influences on our margins," said Guerin.

"As financial year 2027 plays out, we will need to remain flexible, responding quickly to changes in purchasing costs and customer demand, while maintaining our focus on product mix, finance performance and efficiency."

As for the company's footprint, 2 Cheap Cars has reshaped its network around larger, more productive locations, including a new branch in Wellington and securing a vehicle refurbishment hub in Christchurch.

Underperforming branches in New Lynn and Westgate in Auckland and Palmerston North have been closed. Elsewhere in Auckland, Sylvia Park is developing into a flagship location and Henderson opened in early August.

The company is also improving how vehicles move through the business, from purchasing to preparation and sale. The balance between work completed in-house and by external suppliers continues to be "fine-tuned".

Shareholders were told the main marketing initiative of the past financial year was rebuilding the company's website.

Guerin said: "We are working towards a more consistent look, tone and message across our website, advertising, social channels and branches. We're also working with a creative agency on a new brand campaign."

For the five months ending August 31, unaudited figures show the company sold 3,010 vehicles, down by two per cent year-on-year, while revenue rose by five per cent to $35.1m.

Gross margin increased from 19 to 25 per cent, and finance penetration went from 31 to 39 per cent. NPAT rose to about $2.3m from $800,000.

Looking ahead, it has identified opportunities to improve performance while remaining realistic about market conditions.

"We will better utilise our existing footprint through increased stock availability, faster preparation and more consistent execution," explained Guerin. "External factors, such as interest and exchange rates, may support customer financing and procurement, although both remain uncertain.

"We continue developing AI tools for vehicle selection, pricing and operational decisions. Our new brand campaign aims to increase awareness and attract more customers directly.

"However, challenges persist, including price-sensitive customers, strong competition for stock in Japan, lower-priced new vehicles from China and ongoing margin pressure from CCS charges. While encouraged by our progress, trading conditions remain volatile."

Market remains 'volatile'

During the takeover process, 2 Cheap Cars issued three trading alerts to the NZX.

The first one on August 4 advised unaudited accounts for June showed NPAT of about $500,000 and around $600,000 in April and May, taking the total to $1.7m for the first quarter of 2026/27.

"Trading conditions remain volatile and the company is not providing financial year 2027 earnings guidance," it stated.

The next announcement 10 days later stated trading in July was weaker than the first quarter. This primarily reflected reduced sales and average margins.

The third update on September 15 advised unaudited NPAT of about $330,000 for August. It added: "To release processing capacity, improve stock flow and increase sale-ready inventory, periodically the company disposes of aged or uneconomic-to-repair vehicles via wholesale channels.

"In August, the net impact of these efforts was a loss of about $70,000 while sale-ready inventory was boosted from about 640 to approximately 720 vehicles."

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Conflict impacts sales mix

The oil shock caused by the Iran-US war and subsequent supply disruption has changed what types of light vehicles are in demand.

Ash Waugh, chairman of the Colonial Motor Company, says this shift is likely to continue in the wake of conflict in the Middle East.

He explains demand for diesel models has slowed and new energy vehicles (NEVs) have dominated the market for a time, especially with Kiwis reacting to the hike in fuel prices and uncertainty surrounding oil supply.

"Understandably, the timing of this shock was unfavourable for the group's businesses, falling as it did in a window where supply, model changes and the inventory mix weren't positioned to take advantage of the demand shifts," says Waugh.

Shareholders have been told management across Colonial's divisions have acted decisively in response to the situation, revaluing inventory to meet the market and, by doing so, limiting potential impacts and maintaining sales momentum.

While margins were affected, Waugh notes finishing with an improved profit after-tax position in 2025/26 relative to the previous financial year was a satisfying outcome in what has been a disrupted trading environment.

Colonial's trading profit after tax came in at $18.7 million for the 12 months to the end of June 30. This was marginally ahead of 2024/25, but impacted by the Middle East conflict during much of the second half.

The total was up by 4.7 per cent from $17.8m, while revenue from ordinary activities climbed 6.8 per cent to $1.07 billion.

Waugh says the results show the company's balance sheet is strong, particularly relative to the previous two years, because of significantly lower inventory levels and reduced external borrowings.

The directors declared a fully imputed dividend of 25 cents per share to take the annual payout to 40c, up from 35c.

Colonial's Ash Waugh says some exciting models are due. The arrival of Mazda's all-new electric 6e is being followed by the CX-6e

The company indicated in its half-year report in February that positive growth in some vehicle segments and strong used-vehicle trading had delivered a solid result.

"The aim was to hold onto and build on those gains in the second half," says Waugh. "That wasn't to be as the geopolitical environment abruptly shifted two days later with the beginning of the Middle East conflict.

"The resulting oil shock and supply disruption significantly impacted the sales mix in the light-vehicle market and this shift continues."

That said, some new models are due with a focus on NEVs. The arrival of Mazda's all-new electric 6e is being followed by the CX-6e, while the current Ford range has remained resilient and is maintaining its market share.

Waugh says Ford will, as it has in the past, continue to adapt its portfolio to meet evolving trends as demonstrated by the launch of the Ranger Hybrid.

"New Zealand Automotive Ltd successfully previewed the JAC T9 plug-in hybrid ute at Fieldays and Mitsubishi has announced exciting new vehicles due this year."

Meanwhile, Southpac is focused on bringing the more fuel-efficient next-generation DAF to market with the first customer trucks already on the road, and the general strength of the agri-sector is steering "welcome" growth in Colonial's tractor and implements business.

Local and geopolitical disruption seem to be the new normal for a time to come
– Ash Waugh

The focus on used vehicles will continue across the group with dealerships having proved over the past two years that in a stable market this business has more potential.

The company has secured expanded representation of the BYD brand into Canterbury and the Wairarapa, joining Energy Motors' subsidiary operating a dealership for the brand in New Plymouth.

From a strategic perspective, Waugh says access to a range of competitively priced NEVs has been a priority.

On the property front, Colonial expects added BYD franchise opportunities to require a significant investment in facilities in Christchurch and other regions where the company will have representation.

Plans have been finalised for a more significant Ford dealership in Botany, south Auckland, and at the Rangiora branch with building work about to start.

Waugh notes the Middle East conflict has acted as a catalyst in lifting NEV adoption this year, particularly in the passenger segment.

"Business and consumers always seek to adapt, so life goes on," he says. "Local and geopolitical disruption seem to be the new normal for a time to come and the company has to respond by continuing to adapt. The team across the group has a busy year ahead."

AIMING TO BOOST REACH

Geneva Finance has entered the 2027 financial year with "strong momentum, underpinned by solid performance across all its core business units and a clear strategic focus".

Robin King, chairman, and managing director Malcolm Johnston say Quest Insurance continues to perform strongly and is benefiting from stable demand and effective distribution through its dealer network.

"The business remains focused on deepening relationships with partners while expanding its reach ▶

through direct channels, supported by agile product development and service delivery," they add in their annual report.

As for the company's New Zealand lending operations, the priority remains on growing a high-quality loan book that delivers sustainable returns.

This includes refining credit-assessment practices and enhancing customer engagement with a focus on retention and lifecycle management.

King and Johnston say: "A key initiative is the implementation and automation of core processes through technology.

"Investment in digital capability is expected to improve operational efficiency, reduce turnaround times and enhance customer experience.

"Geneva remains focused on strengthening its core finance and insurance operations while positioning for sustainable long-term growth."

The board declared an interim dividend of 1.5c per share and a final dividend of 2c for the year ending March 31.

The payments reflect a commitment to delivering value to shareholders "while maintaining a balanced approach to capital management and reinvestment in core business growth".

Geneva reported an audited pre-tax profit of $12m in 2025/26. That was up by $6m and 100.5 per cent from the previous year.

The improved result is attributable to enhanced performance from all business areas – insurance, and its New Zealand and Tonga lending operations.

Quest continued to perform well with net profit before tax (NPBT) of $10.2m and in the past financial year it maintained its "strong growth trajectory".

Gross written premiums grew by 26.5 per cent to $70.6m, driven by "robust" market demand and expanding distribution channels.

Claims and insurance service expenses grew broadly in line with the increased volume of business, up by 23.7 per cent to $53.4m, while the insurance service result improved to $8.7m from $5.2m reflecting underwriting discipline.

The 2027 financial year for Geneva Finance has started with "strong momentum"

Quest maintained a solid liquidity position with cash on hand climbing by 11.8 per cent to $47.1m. Net profit after tax jumped by 40.2 per cent to $7.4m.

Its solvency ratios remain strong, with a combined solvency-cover ratio of 144 per cent underscoring "sound financial position and commitment to long-term stability".

King and Johnston say: "This result demonstrates Quest's momentum underpinned by prudent financial management and a focus on strengthening our operational foundation to support growth."

The New Zealand lending operations reported a loss of about $800,000 in 2025/26.

But that was an improvement of $2.6m from the $3.4m loss posted for 2024/25. This was mainly driven by lower impairment charges of $1.6m, which fell by $2.8m year on year.

Full-year lending in Aotearoa fell by 33.5 per cent, totalling $37.6m with a focus on improved credit quality over volume. Net receivables after provision decreased from $108.7m to $92m for an annual drop of 15.4 per cent.

"The key focus for lending is growing the loan book sustainably while maintaining good credit quality," say Johnston and King.

"This is being driven through an enhanced relationship management approach, revised lending policy and improved product offering to introducers."

The Tonga lending operation, meanwhile, reported a $2.6m pre-tax profit, up by 24.1 per cent on last year.

MARKET PRICES DROP

The chief executive officer of Turners Automotive Group says the persistence of the Middle East conflict has slowed New Zealand's economic recovery and dented consumer confidence.

Todd Hunter has told shareholders that higher fuel prices have materially reduced demand for larger vehicles with petrol engines as well as diesel models.

In turn, this resulted in the first half of 2026/27 being a "far harder trading environment than the two prior first halves".

Outlining what has changed since a market update about five months ago, he says: "Although we repositioned inventory quickly, the effect on vehicle margins has been longer and larger than anticipated in May.

"On top of this, we've had lower sales volumes of ex-lease cars. The reduction in market prices for diesel utes and petrol SUVs has reduced sales as lease vendors take time to adjust to new prices."

Consignment units sold dropped by 14 per cent during the four months to July, which is seen as a timing issue. As lease vendors' pricing expectations adjust, the company predicts they will start selling through.

As for what hasn't changed since May, Hunter says diversification continues to deliver stability in earnings. Finance growth has offset the drop in automotive retail profit with group

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[continued from page 13]

NPBT for April to July coming in four per cent ahead of the same period in 2025.

Hunter says: "This is a great result given the conditions. We've seen strong loan-book growth continue, up a further 7.5 per cent since March 2026, and arrears at 2.1 per cent in July against an industry figure of 5.2 per cent. Insurance and credit management are broadly in line with last year.

"Most importantly, what hasn't changed is our long-term strategy. We continue to work at pace on our auto-retail branch expansion and finance-book growth opportunities."

As for the future, the group continues to target NPBT of $65m for 2026/27. "However, without a resolution to the Middle East situation and volatile swings in oil prices, and without a recovery in consumer confidence, sales of large-engined vehicles and diesel products are likely to remain challenging.

"This short-term uncertainty creates some risk in achieving that $65m target. Conversely, a faster recovery in confidence and margins in financial year 2027 would work the other way.

"We expect strong earnings growth to return in financial year 2028. Nothing has changed management's conviction in the medium-term plan. Turners is tracking well towards its $100m NPBT target by financial year 2031."

As for the vehicle market, Hunter describes it as having been "a bit bumpy". Overall used-car volumes from April to August tracked around three per cent behind the same period in 2025.

Turners Servicing & Repairs is gaining market traction

Consumer confidence has been hit and there has been demand for lower-value cars at the expense of higher-value models.

"We would expect this to revert as the economy improves," he adds. "Dealer numbers are flat and we've seen stronger demand for used imports with small hybrids in demand.

"It is interesting to look at the relative market shares of new-car sales by fuel type since the Middle East conflict kicked off. Diesel's share has dropped by almost one-third from around 30 per cent a year ago to 21 per cent in July.

"Battery and plug-in hybrids have gone from about 15 per cent of new sales to more than 30 per cent in 12 months. The other material change is the number of new-car brands available in New Zealand. Three years ago, this was around 50. Today it's around 80 and Chinese brands are the big change."

> **A material change is the number of new-car brands in the New Zealand market**
> – Todd Hunter

While the motor-vehicle market has been challenging, Oxford Finance was a "very strong performer" again in 2025/26 with a record profit posted.

It has maintained discipline around credit quality and seen improvements in lending-quality metrics. Consumer arrears were 2.1 per cent in July against an industry figure of 5.2 per cent.

Hunter says: "A focus on quality delivers us operating leverage. We are growing the loan book but are having to add very few people to help service this growth because our customers are reliable and easy to serve."

As for Autosure, it also had a record year for profit. Its distribution networks are strategically important and digital direct capability is being built out as an extra channel.

"We've had strong premium growth across all insurance portfolios, with our dealer and finance broker partnerships the primary driver."

Turners Servicing & Repairs is gaining traction. "Our partnership with VTNZ where we have integrated into the failed warrant of fitness process and comms is starting to deliver repair bookings," says Hunter.

"We've seen some good wins with small fleet owners and with one of Turners' major lease vendors, which has offered mobile servicing to its leasing customers. Bookings from both are coming through."

EC Credit's revenue declined by 17 per cent and its profit fell by 49 per cent. The past financial year was constrained because several large clients placed temporary holds on debt referrals while undertaking major system implementations.

The company wrote down goodwill by $7.5m with the new intangible valuation reflecting more conservative future earnings forecasts.

Hunter says: "So far in financial year 2027, we've seen all but one of the banks recommence their debt load and are seeing improvement in profit performance over last year."

Bound for Vietnam

Annaliese Atina, the managing director of Ford NZ, has been appointed to the same position with the marque in Vietnam.

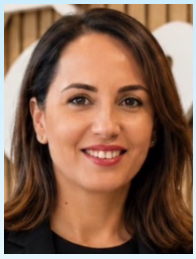
She will be based in Hanoi and will report directly to Andrew Birkic, vice-president of sales and service for Ford International Markets Group.

Atina has been in her current role and as executive director for two-and-a-half years, and starts her new job on December 1.

Birkic says: "Annaliese has been an outstanding leader. Her commercial leadership and focus on customers and dealers have strengthened our business. That same energy and capability will now benefit Ford Vietnam as it builds on its recent momentum."

Atina has more than 20 years' leadership experience across automotive, fast-moving consumer goods, telecommunications and technology.

She has a proven track record of leading businesses through growth and transformation.



Annaliese Atina

Prior to Ford, she held senior leadership roles with Vodafone NZ and Coca-Cola Amatil, leading large-scale customer, sales and commercial businesses.

"It has been a privilege to lead Ford NZ," says Atina.

"I'm proud of what the team has achieved together in strengthening our customer experience, supporting our dealers and driving commercial growth.

"While I'm excited for this opportunity with Ford Vietnam, I'll be taking some great memories and lessons from working alongside such a talented team."

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Stepping forward for awards

The Tranzit Group has been crowned training business of the year at MITO's inaugural annual awards.

The company, which registered its first learner in 1993 and has 20 staff completing MITO qualifications, has been recognised for its commitment to high quality on-the-job training.

Tranzit's team members have completed qualifications across heavy automotive engineering, road transport and electric-vehicle technology.

The business also provides strong mentoring, dedicated learner support and career pathways to help apprentices and trainees gain confidence, progress their skills and advance into leadership roles.

From left, Daryn Murphy, national fleet and workshop manager of the Tranzit Group, with Deputy Prime Minister David Seymour and MITO chairperson Sturrock Saunders

A host of other awards were presented at the Michael Fowler Centre in Wellington last month.

AMI MotorHub won inclusive training business of the year. It supports learners from a range of backgrounds into automotive apprenticeships and careers.

It adapts to each learner's needs through plain-language training materials, literacy and numeracy assistance, supervisor communication training, wellbeing check-ins and personalised mentoring.

The company has created pathways for those who may not have had a clear entry into the motor-vehicle industry.

This includes the Mana in Mahi partnership, which is a government programme that helps jobseekers receive secure permanent work while studying for an industry qualification, Māori learners, women in trades, neurodiverse students and migrants.

Ashburton College was voted secondary school of the year for vocational education and industry training via well-resourced pathways in automotive, mechanical engineering, building and trades. Its automotive students consistently achieve near 100 per cent pass rates in MITO's StartUp micro-credentials.

The Log Transport Safety Council's training company of the year was Whanganui-based McCarthy Transport for its commitment to safety, professionalism and workforce development.

As for individuals, six MITO learners of the year were also honoured.

The automotive award went to Reuben Halliday, of Terra Cat NZ, south Auckland. While completing his level three and four qualifications, he took on extraordinary opportunities including maintaining heavy equipment in Antarctica for the US Antarctic Programme.

Jet Te Aho, who works for Cavanagh Panel, Paint, Glass in Te Puke, western Bay of Plenty, took out the collision repair award.

After completing his apprenticeship, he further built his skills through extra training in level-two structural repair while applying his knowledge on his job.

The commercial road transport category was won by Daniel Ludlow. He has balanced the demands of his role at Booth's Logistics, Auckland, by completing the certificate in commercial road transport and strengthening his technical knowledge, and understanding of safety, compliance and industry standards.

Jakob Stassen won in extractives. As operations manager at Hatuma Lime Company in Waipukurau, central Hawke's Bay, ▶

Some of the MITO award winners

Speaker Mike Casey, of Rewiring Aotearoa

he has secured new skills in this highly regulated environment.

The drilling award went to Zane O'Gorman, who rapidly progressed from driller's assistant to running a rig at Griffiths Drilling, Matamata.

Gas distribution fitter Kristian Larsen, of Auckland-based Omexom, won the gas award after taking responsibility for crew leadership, day-to-day site operations and safety.

Tavita Fa'amausili, also of Omexon, was supervisor of the year. With around 26 years of experience, he was recognised for training and mentoring the company's employees.

The lifetime achievement award for industry training was won by Dave Pardoe. He has developed nationally recognised transport qualifications, and contributed to the Tairawhiti Road Transport Programme and Drive35. Pardoe has worked for more than five decades in the forestry, transport and vocational training sectors.

And finally, the chairperson's award went to Bob Boniface. His career has included business ownership and industry governance, including former roles on MITO's board and as president and chair of the Motor Trade Association.

Boniface has been recognised for more than 60 years of contribution to the automotive and collision-repair industries. As the owner of Auckland Panel and Paint Group, he has also supported apprenticeships, workplace training and the Inspiring Futures Foundation.

The awards ceremony, which followed MITO's summit, was opened by David Seymour, Deputy Prime Minister.

He said they honoured "outstanding individuals and organisations" making a difference through industry training, from building skills and capability to supporting learners, strengthening pathways and shaping the workforce.

Verna Niao, MITO's chief executive, added the winners showcased talent across the training organisation's industries, from successful leaders to those beginning their careers. "Their achievements are inspiring and I'm excited to see what the future holds for them."

Chairperson Sturrock Saunders said: "The awards celebrate

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Dave Pardoe

Jet Te Aho

Gary Geeves, of AMI MotorHub

Bob Boniface

Simon Coleman and Patrick Neal, of Ashburton College

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Lee Marshall, centre left, with the Inspiring Futures Foundation's cheque. Also pictured are, from left, MITO director Iain Haycock, chief executive Verna Niao and deputy chair Warren Flowerday

The MITO learners' panel

something bigger than individual success. They illustrate what becomes possible when industry invests in people, employers back learners and workforce development is genuinely led by industry, for industry."

TRAINING FOR FUTURE

More than 200 senior stakeholders from industry, government, education, and MITO's employer and learner communities attended the organisation's inaugural summit in the capital.

Saunders, who opened the event, said everyone involved in training needs to work together "to continue shaping the workforce our industries need to thrive".

He added: "The summit is about bringing industry together with ambition and purpose to exchange bold thinking, celebrate achievement, look ahead, and uplift and acknowledge the vital work our industries do for New Zealand."

The event offered a leadership experience across economics, future workforce trends, artificial intelligence and emerging technologies, and leadership and performance.

Presenters included Brad Olsen, of Infometrics, David Galbraith, who is a business and leadership coach, Mike Casey, of Rewiring Aotearoa, and engineer and technologist Dr Michelle Dickinson.

Comedian Te Radar hosted a panel of past and present MITO learners, and facilitated a discussion about their training and career pathways.

The learners involved were Harry Shaw, Fletcher Brown and Michelle Findlater from automotive, Zivana Smith of commercial road transport and Ashleigh Smith from extractives.

Lee Marshall, as trustee of the Inspiring Futures Foundation (IFF), announced the organisation's scholarship programme for 2027.

He said the IFF will fully fund the scheme with a $700,000 grant over the next two years. The amount represents a significant increase, and will enable its expansion when new funding and cost pressures are impacting employers and learners.

"The IFF is proud to be sponsoring a record number of MITO scholarships, especially when the youth unemployment rate is the highest it's been for some decades yet the shortage of skilled trades people is acute," added Marshall.

"Each scholarship removes or reduces a barrier to the next generation entering the workforce and that's what the IFF exists to do."

Emma Gilmour, MITO ambassador and rally driver, spoke about her role in inspiring young people to consider industry careers.

"I've seen throughout my own career what a difference it makes when someone believes in you and gives you an opportunity," she said. "Our industries need to keep doing that for the next generation by investing in training, developing skills and showing them the fantastic careers available."

Shane Jones, deputy leader of NZ First, gave a keynote address on the importance of MITO's industries for the economy and the value of training to future-proof the country's workforce.

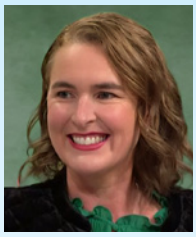
Tax boost for electric vehicles

An industry group has welcomed a government bill to give EVs a lower fringe-benefit tax (FBT) rate than fossil-fuel models.

Drive Electric says the Taxation (Annual Rates for 2026-27, FBT Simplification, Foreign Investment Funds and Remedial Measures) Bill could influence fleet-purchasing decisions and support the shift to cleaner cars.

Corporate and fleet customers purchase about 60 to 70 per cent of all new vehicles sold in New Zealand each year and they typically enter the second-hand market within three to five years.

As a result, Drive Electric says making low and zero-emissions models cheaper to run as company vehicles will lead to a larger and more affordable supply of used EVs for everyday Kiwis.


Kirsten Corson

Its calculations show a $60,000 EV made available to an employee for full private use, at the top rate of FBT, could attract savings of $1,385 a year under the bill.

Chair Kirsten Corson adds: "It's great to see the government implementing a demand-side policy. For the first time, our tax settings recognise EVs are cheaper to run and that will flow straight into fleet purchasing decisions.

"Every EV a business chooses today becomes an affordable second-hand EV on a Kiwi driveway in a few years' time. We congratulate the government on getting this right."

Drive Electric is also backing the bill's plan to raise the weight threshold for FBT vehicle rules from 3,500kg to 6,000kg, which Inland Revenue says reflects that EVs are often heavier. This will make more electric utes and vans eligible for FBT.

The taxation bill was introduced to parliament on September 10 with the changes proposed to take effect from April 1 next year.

It includes a new method to calculate FBT based on categories of how a vehicle is used and how much employees can use it privately, with people no longer needing to fill out detailed logbooks.

Simon Watts, Minister of Revenue, says the bill will help grow the economy by cutting compliance costs and simplifying rules. "For FBT, we're proposing a much simpler 'close enough is good enough' approach to employer-provided vehicles."

The bill also makes several changes to the Foreign Investment Fund to help attract and retain skilled workers and investment.

Using satellites to hail help

Motorists stranded in remote areas without cellular coverage may soon be able to get assistance via satellite.

BMW, Viasat and Cubic are claiming their system boasts the world's first in-car satellite voice-calling capability, and it could fill a critical gap on roads without cellphone coverage.

The technology, which has been demonstrated on an iX3 in Munich, allows drivers to speak directly to an emergency support centre from the battery-electric crossover SUV.

Andre Schlufter, director of automotive connectivity innovation at satellite operator Viasat, says the system builds on embedded SIM capabilities from Cubic, which provides software-defined vehicle solutions.

"Many satellite-based emergency concepts focus on basic alerting or short messages," he explains. "This goes further by showing how a car could support a live voice call with a response centre."

Schlufter says he's unaware of another system offering the same combination of in-vehicle satellite connectivity and live two-way voice calls for emergency support.

Viasat has yet to disclose which carmakers will adopt the technology first.

General Motors, Toyota and Ford Motor already offer e-call systems, but these rely on cellular networks rather than satellites.

BMW in collaboration with Viasat and Cubic has developed in-car phone calling via satellite

BOOM TIME FOR UPDATES

Fortune Business Insights has valued the global car market for over-the-air (OTA) updates at US$5.3 billion, or about NZ$9b, and predicts it will quadruple by 2034.

The consultancy forecasts the surge will be driven by software-defined revenue models, EV adoption and cost-saving fleet management.

The automotive industry historically evaluated OTA maturity by deployment frequency, domain coverage, installation times and update availability. Now updates extend to battery management, suspension calibration and cybersecurity systems.

In March, Volvo reached S&P Global Mobility's highest ranking for software-defined capabilities. The marque was recognised as having the ability to improve nearly every function in its new cars via OTA updates.

This includes adding safety features, unlocking faster charging speeds, increasing range and enhancing user experience. Volvo aims to provide substantial OTA updates every quarter.

According to an overview from Market Growth Reports, more than 450 million connected vehicles were on the road at the end of 2025 and 94 per cent had built-in wireless connectivity for remote updates.

These upgrades allow manufacturers to address 70 per cent of software-related recalls without requiring trips to service centres, which saves about 55 per cent in logistics and labour costs.

Sixty-five per cent of carmakers now view continuous software integration as a core competency. This reflects their struggle to monetise software while meeting consumer expectations shaped by smartphone update experiences.

BUTTONS REPLACE SCREEN

Jaguar says the interior of the Type 01, its first model after its makeover into a luxury EV brand, offers "unmistakable drama and theatre".

The marque adds its cabin focuses on the motorist with less emphasis on screens and more on concealed technology.

It boasts an enlarged information display in front of the driver but no central touchscreen. In its place is a panel of buttons that operate functions such as heating, while voice control gains more importance for changing settings and activating features.

One of the most unusual elements of the EV's interior is a central spine running the length of the cabin, splitting the passenger space into four separate zones and breaking from the traditional horizontal design norm.

And a digital rear-view mirror is positioned at the base of the windshield instead of its typical location at the top edge.

The reveal of the cabin was the latest in a series of limited information releases from Jaguar Land Rover about the Type 01 before its global launch in New York this month.

Thomas Holden, Jaguar's chief interior designer, says: "The Type 01 presents unmistakable drama and theatre that will define the modern automotive interior of the future."

The EV takes the marque back to its luxury-focused roots after a struggle to position it as a mainstream premium brand.

The car sits on a new electric platform dubbed JEA, which shares battery modules with new electric Range Rovers including the GT. The design of the battery pack has been split to allow rear passengers more foot room and to lower the roof.

PLACE NAMES IN MĀORI

Google and Te Taura Whiri, the Māori Language Commission, have launched an Aotearoa voice for Google Maps.

Users in New Zealand can now experience an AI-powered text-to-speech (TTS) model that speaks English with a Kiwi accent, and correctly pronounces cities and towns with te reo Māori names.

Caroline Rainsford, country director of Google NZ, says: "Two things have been critical to the success of this update.

"Advancements in AI have enabled our TTS model to pronounce te reo Māori place names in an English sentence and, importantly, this wouldn't have been possible without our years-long partnership and deep collaboration with Te Taura Whiri."

Jaguar's Type 01 has a panel of buttons, not a central screen, while a spine runs the length of its cabin

Salary plan to electrify fleet

A scheme allowing eligible employees to lease new or second-hand electric cars using their pre-tax salary is being proposed to help boost the number of low and zero-emitters in the fleet.

Inspired by a similar programme in Australia, advocacy groups say their EV Salary Boost plan can reduce financial barriers to adopting cleaner models.

Drive Electric and Rewiring Aotearoa want political parties to commit to formally assessing such a scheme within 100 days of a new government being established after November's general election.

They say EV Salary Boost would involve deducting lease costs from an employee's pre-tax income, effectively providing tax relief and improving access to cheaper-to-run vehicles.

The organisations want politicians to analyse the scheme's full cost and options for a fiscal cap, treatment under PAYE, FBT and GST, employee and employer eligibility, and whether new and used EVs should qualify.

Extra issues include vehicle price caps, lease terms and consumer protection, what happens when an employee changes jobs, and impacts on access, equity and the future second-hand EV market.

They state the proposal will also boost energy security by cutting reliance on imported fuels and tapping into New Zealand's renewable power generation.

EV Salary Boost aims to ease financial barriers to buying cleaner cars. Photo: Juice on Unsplash

Kirsten Corson, chair of Drive Electric, adds: "High fuel prices show how exposed households and businesses are to costs set offshore. The question we're asking parties to examine is whether our settings can give more workers access to lower-running-cost vehicles without creating an open-ended cost to the crown."

Financing a vehicle through pre-tax salary is known across the Tasman as novated leasing and has been used for nearly 40 years.

The National Automotive Leasing and Salary Packaging Association (NALSPA) says more than 500,000 Australians use the scheme for a range of vehicles.

The federal government there updated its model in July 2022 by exempting eligible electric cars from FBT when provided through a novated lease or by an employer.

A review of the policy, which was published in May, estimated the discount generated about 64,000 additional battery EV (BEV) sales in its first three years or up to 78,000 including plug-in hybrids (PHEVs) – about one-quarter of all EV sales over the period.

BEVs and PHEVs have risen from 1.8 per cent of new-car sales in May 2022 to 22.9 per cent in March this year. More than 100,000 Australians have used the exemption and NALSPA estimates about half of all EV sales go through a novated lease.

The number of EV models on sale grew from 56 in July 2022 to more than 160 by late 2025. Models priced below AU$40,000 – or about NZ$49,500 – have risen from two to 10.

Drive Electric and Rewiring Aotearoa say Australia's experience shows the potential advantages of EV Salary Boost and the importance of applying vehicle price caps.

Australia's Treasury originally forecast the EV FBT exemption would cost about AU$90m in 2025-26, but as 100,000 people have used it since that figure was tipped to reach AU$1.35 billion.

In May 2026, the federal government responded by recalibrating the scheme. From April 2027, EVs priced above AU$75,000 will move to 75 per cent of the standard FBT rate with this extending to all eligible electric models by April 2029.

The adjustment is expected to save AU$1.7b over five years while keeping the full exemption for EVs under AU$75,000 until April 2029.

Rewiring Aotearoa and Drive Electric say New Zealand should apply similar discipline and set fiscal caps and eligibility limits from the start. They also highlight how Australia's approach has led to a growing supply of affordable, late-model used EVs.

Mike Casey, Rewiring Aotearoa's chief executive, says the main purpose of EV Salary Boost is to help those who could most use the savings to access cars with plugs.

"Australia got a lot right by taking a tool it already had, salary packaging, and pointing it at EVs. But some settings added to the cost, including allowing novated-lease buyers to avoid GST and including very expensive vehicles.

"New Zealand has the chance to tailor a scheme to our own tax settings from the start."

Extra scrutiny on border mandates

Final decisions on making more systems compulsory for imported vehicles have been delayed as officials further analyse the proposals.

The coalition announced in June 2025 the possibility of mandating extra requirements. Consultation took place late last year and any new rules were expected to be signed off by May.

For new and used light vehicles, automatic emergency braking, lane-keep support, and acoustic vehicle alerts for "quiet" electric and hybrid models are on the table.

James Meager

Any new rules may be introduced in phases, although the consultation document suggested some that could apply from July next year.

A government spokesperson told Autofile further analysis of mandating features was expected to be provided to James Meager, Associate Minister of Transport, by the end of last month. "Once we have decisions from the minister, we will consider if the timeframe needs to be revisited."

The cabinet can make decisions on government business up until the November 7 general election, which means Meager may give the green light in coming weeks.

The Imported Motor Vehicle Industry Association warns delays mean the proposed start date for some rules of July 1, 2027, would "cause a severe contraction of supply". As a result, it has lobbied for a later implementation date.

Next customer may be invisible

New findings revealed at this year's Australian Automotive Dealer Association (AADA) convention in Sydney are changing the shape of New Zealand's customer landscape.

The research, presented by Nicholas Johnson, AdTorque's chief revenue officer, centred on a fairly unsettling idea.

And that's somewhere out there right now, someone may be shopping for a car at your dealership but you can't see them. The person doing the comparison and shortlisting may not be a human at all. It could be an AI.

It's tempting to assume this only matters for younger customers, but the numbers tell a different story.

Roy Morgan surveyed nearly 15,000 Australians this year. It found 72 per cent of 35 to 49-year-olds already use AI tools along with half of 50 to 64-year-olds.

Workplace tools such as Microsoft Copilot skew a bit older, which suggests the customers who dealers assume are unaffected are often those getting used to AI at work and then taking that habit home for the biggest purchase of their year.

For traders wondering if this is a year or two away, the numbers suggest otherwise. Fullpath, which tracks dealers' websites across its network, found traffic arriving directly from AI platforms such as ChatGPT, Gemini and Perplexity grew 15-fold over the past year.

Cox Automotive's research backs this up with roughly one-in-four buyers of new cars saying they used AI as part of their purchase process last year, the first time that's been measured. Encouragingly, those consumers weren't harder to please either. They trusted their dealer the most of any group surveyed.

JAMES HENDRY
Director, sales and operations
AdTorque Edge NZ

Every vendor at the AADA convention seemed to be selling some version of AI and a lot of it is genuinely useful.

But it's worth reframing where the real opportunity sits. Almost every tool a dealership already relies on – the CRM, DMS, website and media platform – is being enhanced by AI in some way. On its own, none of that's a competitive advantage. Everyone will eventually have access to similar capability.

The real gain comes from connecting AI-enhanced tools together so data flows between them instead of sitting in separate systems, which is where genuine efficiency and scalability come from.

> Comparing increasingly happens inside a chat window rather than across 20 open browser tabs

Some estimates suggest that by 2030 machines acting on behalf of buyers could be steering between $3 trillion and $5t of global spending. Nobody expects a chatbot to finalise a car purchase soon but the shortlist, and who gets filtered out early, is increasingly being decided by one.

Comparison shopping happens differently now.

Research by management consultancy Bain & Company found 64 per cent of consumers have used AI to complete a purchase already or say they're open to it.

Just as telling is where AI shows up in the buying journey. Fractl tracked more than one million searches this year.

It found comparison style searches, think Prado versus Everest, were down by 36 per cent.

That's not because people have stopped comparing, but because that increasingly happens inside a chat window rather than across 20 open browser tabs.

One of the more actionable findings comes from a Harvard Business Review study, which tested classic persuasion tactics such as countdown timers and strike-through pricing across thousands of simulated purchasing decisions and four AI models.

Only two things reliably moved the machine. These were price and authentic reviews. With the smartest models, hard-sell tactics didn't just fail to help, they actively backfired with the AI reading an aggressive pitch as a sign of lower quality.

The takeaway heading into the last quarter of 2026 is worth thinking about. Your vehicle page may no longer really be a sales pitch. It's more like a data file read by something that doesn't feel "fear of missing out".

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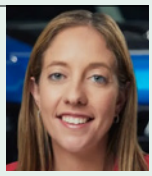
Industry movers

MURRAY NAISMITH has joined Ford Australia and NZ as chief financial officer.

He has nearly three decades of finance and operational experience including with OEMs, distributors, dealerships and remarketing.

Naismith spent nearly seven years at Cox Automotive Australia, five years with Borneo Motors Singapore and six years at Inchcape Australia. He was also finance manager for Ford Australia from 1998 to 2006.

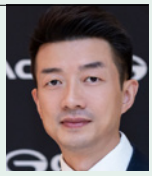
"Ford and the industry are at a pivotal point, transforming at the fastest pace in history," he says. "This is a full-circle moment for me, returning to Ford after 20 years."



JESS BALA has left General Motors, where she had been managing director for Australia and New Zealand since 2023, after nearly two decades.

She started her career with GM Holden Australia in 2007 and went on to work as a district sales manager and in product planning. She shifted to the marque's headquarters in Detroit in 2013 where her roles include chief of staff to chief executive Mary Barra.

Bala returned to Australia in September 2023 for her most recent position, which involved leading operations on both sides of the Tasman. This included GM Specialty Vehicles, Isuzu NZ customer care, Holden after-sales and Chevrolet Racing.



ARIES ZHAO has become chief executive officer of GAC Australia, and president of Oceania and the UK.

GAC International has aligned the three regions to reflect their cultural and technical aspects, and better support operations.

"Taking on the leadership of our Australian operations at such a pivotal moment is an honour," says Zhao. "During our first year, we have established an exceptional product line-up and the foundations of a strong dealer network.

"The joining of the Oceania and UK represents a natural fit for our global right-hand-drive strategy. Our new structure will allow us to embrace the alignments of these markets."

JAMES MILLER has joined the Financial Markets Authority (FMA) as its chairman. He sits on the boards of Channel Infrastructure NZ, Fletcher Building, Ryman Healthcare and Vista.

Miller, pictured, previously spent 13 years as a director of the NZX, including eight as chairman, and is a former director of Mercury NZ, ACC, Auckland Airport and Vector.

He has been appointed for five years and replaces Craig Stobo, who resigned in May after an independent review into his conduct. Board member Steven Bardy was acting chair in the interim.

Samantha Barrass, meanwhile, resigned from being the FMA's chief executive at the start of September and before her term expired in January. She advised she was returning to the UK because her elderly father was admitted to hospital.

Alastair Hercus will be acting CEO as the search for someone to replace Barrass continues over the coming months.

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

From left, Hastings Kia director Mel Chan, senior administrator Pip Cooper, Mark Cooper, former director and dealer principal, and managing director Rob Townshend

Retirement results in change of ownership

Bayswater Vehicle Group now owns Hastings Kia after acquiring the remaining 50 per cent of the company.

The business had been led by retiring dealer principal Mark Cooper, who played a major role in its success over the past two decades.

Under his leadership, it evolved from a small operation on Heretaunga Street into a flagship franchise in Karamu Road, earning numerous awards.

Founded in 1990 by managing director Rob Townshend, who was joined by business partner Mel Chan, Bayswater has grown from a single dealership into one of the region's biggest car groups.

Townshend says: "Mark has built a dealership with a reputation for customer service and performance. We would like to thank him for everything he has contributed to the brand and community.

"For us, this is about continuing to invest in Hawke's Bay, and creating a destination that gives customers more choice and the confidence of dealing with a locally owned business."

Co-director Chan adds: "We've always believed in investing locally and building businesses that serve our community for the long term.

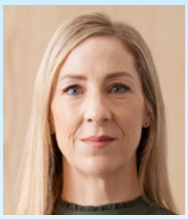
"Hastings Kia has an excellent team and loyal customer base."

Paul Brown, chief executive officer of Bayswater Vehicle Group, says the acquisition will strengthen the group's growing presence in Karamu Road.

"Hastings Kia complements our BMW and Mini dealerships," he adds. "Over the coming months we'll continue expanding the precinct with Nissan, BYD and Chery on adjacent sites."

Executive appointments

Tracy Pennell has become chief operating officer at Avanti Finance as it boosts its executive structure to create better alignment and clearer ownership across its operations, risk and business areas.



Tracy Pennell

The appointment expands on her previous role as general manager of strategic delivery and focuses on strengthening execution and improving delivery to for clients and partners.

Fred Ohlsson, chief executive officer, says: "As Avanti grows, we need the right structure, leadership and focus to keep improving how we operate. Tracy's appointment gives us dedicated leadership across key areas as we continue to scale."

Lee Robson, who previously led Avanti's auto business, has also taken on responsibility for personal lending as general manager of auto and personal to support growth and deliver faster service for dealers, brokers, advisers and clients.

Ohlsson says Robson's expanded remit will help the company build on its investment in systems, people and service capability including its partner portal. "Lee is well-placed to lead this expanded area."

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The month that was... October

October 13, 1997

Used prices remain stable

Prices of second-hand cars remained stable despite anecdotal evidence to the contrary.

While some dealers were reporting hikes of as much as 25 per cent, it seemed widespread increases of that magnitude had yet to eventuate.

What appeared more likely was a continued squeeze of margins as prices in Japan climbed, but buyers here had refused to pay more.

Peter Johnston, of Genuine Vehicle Imports in Auckland, said stock was still hard to get in Japan as Kiwis competed against Jamaica, Ireland, England, Chile, Malaysia and Cyprus. He added other countries were catching up with New Zealand's interest in imports and this country was fast becoming a minority player in the field.

Johnston noted the global downward trend in new-car sales meant trade-ins weren't coming through in the way they had previously, which was driving up prices. He used to sell between 50 and 60 cars a week and was now struggling to pick up 20.

Tony Andrew, dealer principal of Greenlane Toyota, believed the extra competition for used vehicles in Japan, which would inevitably increase prices here, might be positive for the new-car sector.

He said if the margin between used imports and new cars shrank, buyers would be more likely to opt for New Zealand-new.

October 20, 2009

Advice and warning for kit options

A customer entered your showroom, worried that from November 1 they had to ditch their cellphone while driving and opt for using a hands-free kit.

You gave them options. But before you sent them off, you warned them about who should and shouldn't install hands-free kits in their cars.

Installers were already experiencing a huge increase in demand and wait-lists. But more alarmingly, some companies were running out of hands-free sets. Another heads-up. You needed to give punters advice that if they had their kit installed by an uncertified company, they could void their vehicle's warranty.

Colin Curtis, of Automotive Security Systems, said his company had been installing car phone and hands-free kits since the cellphone market first emerged in New Zealand.

"There are many products popping up in the trade, but some have major problems such as the user being unable to hear incoming calls when driving. Also, the noise from the car can make it difficult to hear."

October 14, 2005

Scam warning

Motor-vehicle dealers needed to be wary of unsolicited inquiries from overseas that could be part of an international scam.

The scammers would begin by expressing interest in a car on behalf of a client. After requesting a price and possibly a photo, they would then offer to buy it and ask for the trader's bank details.

When making the deposit, the price would be exceeded by a significant amount. The criminal explained the surplus was for freight and the extra funds should be transferred to a freight forwarder.

After the dealer did that, the scammer cancelled the deposit leaving the trader out of pocket by the amount paid to the freight forwarder.

Mark Heywood, sales manager of Newmarket European in Auckland, said an inquiry for a Volkswagen Passat came from a person who identified himself as an agent located in London and Cyprus.

He added: "We all thought it was too suspect. We've had a few of these, so we perform online transactions only with trusted people. I'd recommend people be cautious about the whole thing. I don't think anyone should let their bank account details out."

October 21, 2014

Celebrating past and looking to future

A gala dinner held to celebrate the silver anniversary of importing used cars into New Zealand was hailed as a success.

David Vinsen, chief executive of the Imported Motor Vehicle Industry Association, described the black-tie function in Auckland on October 17 as a "glittering occasion".

He told Autofile: "It was a great night and exceeded our expectations. We are delighted everyone had a good time. The evening was an extremely appropriate way to mark 25 years and we're looking forward to the next 25."

The event was attended by about 420 members of the industry and guests. They included Maurice Williamson, former Minister of Trade.

"You need to know you have done more for the economic well-being of this nation than just about anybody else," said Williamson. "There are a lot of New Zealanders out there who are driving in good quality cars we would never have been able to dream about without your industry."

Rod Milner was presented with the supreme award in recognition of his work in the industry and his leading role in setting up the Licensed Motor Vehicle Dealers Association in 1988.

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Coherent action on fleet vital

What happens when a rule intended to improve our vehicle fleet makes a better car too expensive for the family that needs it?

That was the question I found myself asking when I read the Act Party's recent transport policy.

Its proposal to assess new-vehicle rules for their effects on supply, prices and fleet turnover caught my attention. I see that as an important part of judging whether a regulation will deliver the improvement intended.

But the question goes beyond the price of the next car. What people can afford to purchase also affects what they continue driving, repairing and eventually scrap.

Take an extreme example. Imagine New Zealand allowed just one car to be imported next year – an EV with the latest safety technology.

Our imports would be 100 per cent electric. Average tailpipe emissions would be zero. Every imported car could have outstanding safety features. On those measures, we could announce a remarkable success.

Meanwhile, none of the vehicles that would otherwise have arrived to replace existing cars would be available. People would still need transport. With replacement supply eliminated, existing vehicles would become more valuable.

Repairs that previously made little financial sense could become worthwhile. Cars that would otherwise have been scrapped would be kept running. Some vehicles already taken out of the fleet might even become worth returning to the road.

For many households, this would mean paying to maintain the vehicle they wanted to renew because they could no longer afford the replacement.

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

The import figures could look excellent while the fleet missed out on improvements that would otherwise have occurred.

That example is deliberately extreme, but it exposes the relationship. Restricting incoming supply changes the economics of keeping existing vehicles alive. Retirement is affected by the availability and cost of replacements.

Now consider a more familiar situation and that's a family with $12,000 to replace an ageing car. A suitable used import could offer better safety features and lower fuel bills. If a rule removes that option and the nearest suitable replacement costs $20,000, their budget doesn't increase to match.

They might keep repairing their current car. Across many households, those decisions could keep some of the fleet's least desirable vehicles in service longer.

This is why I see affordability as part of safety and emissions policy. It helps determine whether improvements actually happen.

None of this means every import restriction, or government intervention, is wrong. Rules can exclude undesirable models and encourage better choices.

However, those benefits must be assessed alongside their effects on supply, prices and retirement. Better importation statistics alone cannot establish that the whole fleet is better off, nor does my support for affordable used imports mean I favour weaker requirements for new vehicles.

> **Restricting incoming supply changes the economics of keeping existing vehicles alive**

The cars manufacturers build today will become the used vehicles people buy in 10 years. Their safety, efficiency, durability and repairability will affect successive owners. I want strong expectations at that stage because later buyers inherit decisions made before the car first reaches a showroom.

New Zealand may have limited influence over global design, but it can set requirements for new vehicles supplied here. I wouldn't leave the quality of our future fleet entirely at the mercy of what manufacturers choose to offer.

An existing used vehicle presents a different task. Its design decisions have already been made. The opportunity for this country is to make the best use of available cars, matching them to people's needs and budgets.

Used-car sales help do that. A vehicle that no longer suits one owner may be a substantial improvement for another. Independent imports extend those choices beyond those originally sold new here.

Sales of new vehicles also contribute, but the path from a new purchase to the retirement of an old model can involve several transactions over many years. Making a new car cheaper today doesn't establish when a particular old one will leave our roads.

If retirement is the objective, policy should examine what would actually enable it, including a suitable replacement the owner can afford.

For me, that's a coherent approach to the whole fleet – require better vehicles at the beginning of their lives, enable affordable improvements throughout their use and help the least desirable cars leave service.

These stages are connected. A restriction at the border can become a repair decision on someone's driveway.

Before introducing a rule, I want to know which vehicles it will enable to be brought in, which it will help retire and which it will keep on the road because their owners cannot afford to move on.

Those answers would tell us far more about success than treating one metric as a proxy for the quality of all cars imported.

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Marque aiming for top five

GWM's offensive to launch up to eight new models in New Zealand by year's end includes three mid-size SUVs and a plug-in hybrid (PHEV) ute.

The brand says expanding its line-up will lead to it competing with more vehicles, powertrains and in more segments.

The flurry of activity is also part of its ambition to break into the top five brands for new vehicles by the end of 2027 and the top three by 2030.

Andrew Gao, managing director of GWM Australia and New Zealand, says the region is one of the group's top three strategic markets.

"We will continue investing in products, technologies and resources. We're only at the beginning of our journey in New Zealand and we believe the best is yet to come."

Cameron Thomas, country manager for GWM NZ, adds the company aims to give consumers powertrain solutions that best fit their lives, whether that's petrol, diesel, hybrid, PHEV or fully electric.

"We're not building a strategy around the business we have today," he explains. "We're building it around the business we are becoming."

Among the new offerings for 2026 are extra models in the Ora portfolio. The all-new SUV EV has been launched here. More products, including a new Ora 5 mid-size SUV, aim to drive GWM's growth in the expanding EV market.

In September, the marque released the Cannon Hi4-T ute, which it says combines advanced PHEV technology, strong capability and compelling value.

An all-new three-litre turbo-diesel engine is on its way for the Cannon Alpha and Tank 500 in coming months, with Australia and New Zealand selected as lead global markets for launching the powertrain.

"Developed with customer feedback, local testing and local driving conditions at its core, the new engine delivers increased power and torque while improving fuel efficiency, providing greater towing confidence, touring capability and driveability," says GWM.

"The new powertrain will further strengthen GWM's ability to meet the evolving needs of Kiwis by offering a purpose-built diesel solution across the ute and large SUV line-up."

The turbo-diesel produces 170kW of power and 620Nm of torque. Maximum torque is available from 1,400-2,400rpm while the engine is mated with a nine-speed automatic transmission.

Also contributing to this year's strategy for expansion are three new mid-size SUVs, one of the categories the brand regards as essential to growth in New Zealand.

From the fourth quarter, GWM will field three nameplates across four powertrains with the all-new Haval H7 and Haval Jolion Max to accompany the H6/H6GT range.

The H7 will be first off the blocks in advanced hybrid electric and Hi4 PHEV guises. It has been engineered to deliver refinement and "genuine capability".

Flagship variants come with front and rear differential locks that provide off-road performance "rarely offered" in this segment.

Positioned to challenge established players, the H7 "brings premium capability, electrified performance and genuine off-road credentials to one of New Zealand's largest and most competitive vehicle categories".

The Haval Jolion Max, meanwhile, will come in Hi4 PHEV and BEV form later in the year, and provide an entry point into its mid-size SUV range positioned between the Jolion and the H6.

The aim is for it to strengthen the brand's commitment to providing Kiwis with greater choice across hybrids, PHEVs and fully electric models "while delivering an accessible, value-driven proposition".

Thomas says GWM NZ's plans to increase its portfolio of products will build on record sales in the first half of 2026 as it targets more than 5,000 registrations for the full year.

"This isn't about replacing one customer with another," he adds. "It's about giving more Kiwis a reason to choose GWM and ensuring they can continue to choose us as their needs evolve.

"By the end of 2026, we will have one of the market's most comprehensive portfolios. That puts us in an even stronger position heading into 2027 as we continue our 'drive to top five' journey and build towards becoming one of New Zealand's leading brands."

> **By the end of 2026, we will have one of the market's most comprehensive portfolios**
> – Cameron Thomas

The Cannon Hi4-T PHEV ute

The all-new Ora 5 SUV EV

The new Haval H7

The Haval Jolion Max

A new three-litre turbo-diesel engine is on its way for the Cannon Alpha and Tank 500

Electric range headlined by GSR

Mitsubishi's ASX VR-e

Mitsubishi Motors New Zealand (MMNZ) reports its all-new ASX VR-e battery electric vehicle (BEV) range will arrive on our shores during this year's fourth quarter.

It's the second in a wave of new models from the marque and follows hot on the heels of the Outlander Sport HEV.

The aim is for both to strengthen the company's established electrified range alongside the plug-in hybrid (PHEV) variants of the Eclipse Cross and Outlander.

The ASX VR-e range is headlined by a high-performance GSR with Exceed, XLS and LS options also available.

As for the nameplate, it builds on the heritage of the compact SUV, which has been one of New Zealand's most successful cars and will continue to be available alongside the VR-e range for the foreseeable future, says the marque.

The VR-e designation is derived from the Galant VR-4, the high-performance sedan, and "reflects the model's sporty driving character, electrified technology and advanced features".

Tony Johnston, chief operating officer, says: "We introduced the first mass-production EV to New Zealand in 2011 with the iMiEV before leading the growth of PHEV technology through the Outlander.

"With the arrival of Outlander Sport HEV and ASX VR-e, we're providing customers with more choices that align with their evolving lifestyles and development of local infrastructure."

The ASX VR-e has been developed in partnership with Italian design house Pininfarina and EV manufacturer Foxtron, and is backed by MMNZ's local expertise.

"For New Zealanders considering an EV, the ASX VR-e combines advanced technology with the confidence of a brand they know and trust," adds Johnston.

"In a rapidly evolving market, buyers can be confident it's backed by a company with deep roots here, and the experience, infrastructure and commitment to support them into the future."

The BEV's exterior emphasises aerodynamic performance.

Key features include an s-duct, which channels airflow from the centre of the front bumper over the hood surface. Active grille shutters help reduce drag.

Horizontal stripe motifs have been incorporated into the front and rear-lighting signatures, and the rear pillars and dedicated wheel design create a "unified and modern appearance".

From dunes to roads

Defender is building a road-legal version of its 2026 Dakar Rally-winning car. The limited-run 4x4 is an evolution of the D7X-R and takes racing capability into everyday driving.

Engineers have pushed the boundaries of what's possible for the Dakar with enhanced geometry and suspension, off-road body adaptations and a rally-inspired interior.

The Defender Rally made history on its debut at this year's Dakar. The three D7X-Rs finished in first, second and fourth in the new stock class, and achieved one-two-three on 10 of the 13 stages.

The road version will retain the D7X-R's architecture, transmission and driveline. The limited-run Dakar has the same 4.4-litre twin-turbo V8, which will unleash an unrestricted 467kW of power and 750Nm of torque.

It will feature 35-inch advanced all-terrains on forged 20-inch wheels, a coil suspension with Bilstein advanced dampers, dunes and gravel drive modes, and flight mode, which was originally developed for the rally car to ensure smooth landings on varied terrain.

Registrations of interest in the Defender Dakar open early next year.

The Defender Dakar

The 911 GT3 50 Years Porsche NZ

Marking 50 years in NZ

Porsche is celebrating its half-century in Aotearoa with a commemorative model from the marque's Sonderwunsch department in Germany.

Only five units of the 911 GT3 50 Years Porsche New Zealand have been built, "one for every decade", and they are priced from $584,000.

The car is based on the GT3 with touring package from the latest 992.2 iteration and comes in yachting blue metallic, a reference to this country's sailing heritage and the colour of the first Porsche imported here.

Another feature is the etched signature on the passenger-side dashboard inlay of the late Sir Colin Giltrap, whose passion for the brand laid its foundations here.

Further bespoke Sonderwunsch elements include woven blue pepita-cloth seat inserts, and "50 Years Porsche New Zealand" embossing on the headrests and throughout the cabin.

Greg Clarke, general manager of Porsche NZ, says: "Fifty years is a long time in any market, and it means even more in one as small and as far from Stuttgart as ours. We wanted to mark this milestone with something that could only have come from here – a car built for our roads and signed by the man who started it all."

The GRF-70 has been launched as Toyota expands its GR brand

Gazoo brand gets major boost

Toyota has ramped up its commitment to motorsport and performance driving in New Zealand by launching Gazoo Racing (GR).

The standalone brand was revealed at Hampton Downs racetrack south of Auckland, and it now assumes equal status alongside the Toyota vehicle family and luxury Lexus range.

Headlining the two-day event was the unveiling of the next-generation Castrol Toyota FR Oceania Trophy car, the GRF-70.

It's powered by an evolution of the two-litre turbocharged 8AR-FTS engine, which was developed here by series engineer David Gouk and has been used in the championship since 2020.

The vehicle is based on the FIA Formula Regional Gen 2 T326 Tatuus chassis, ensuring local and international drivers in the series are competing in globally relevant machinery. Tatuus has provided all generations of the Toyota-powered single-seaters since 2005.

"Following on from our close collaboration with FIA as an official FIA Formula Regional Championship since 2023, it was natural for us to follow the introduction of the Formula Regional Gen2 cars, which happened in 2026 globally," says Nicolas Caillol, Gazoo Racing NZ's manager of motorsport.

"The choice of the Tatuus chassis was obvious, continuing our relationship of more than 20 years. We believe this is the longest relationship Tatuus has had with any championship.

"We started with the FT-40, then the FT-50 and most recently the FT-60. All were high level, high performance and safe. That will continue with the GRF-70."

Initial testing of the vehicle with former NZ Grand Prix winner Liam Sceats has started, and the car driven at the launch event was in the hands of Toyota brand guardian Ryan Wood and experienced racer Andrew Waite.

As with all previous seasons of the New Zealand-based series, the new vehicle will be released to teams on the Monday before the first race weekend to ensure a level playing field.

Six teams will begin the next generation of the championship. They are M2 Competition, Mtec Motorsport, Kiwi Motorsport, Hitech GP, TJ Speed Motorsport and new entrant Rodin Motorsport.

Caillol says the new vehicle will be a significant step forward in several areas from previous global junior formulae designs.

"A lot of work has been done by FIA and Tatuus into the Formula Regional Gen2 car, which has involved a focus on improvement at every level," he explains.

"Work has been done by FIA with the support of engineers from Formula One to design a car that allows the racers to drive closer to each other and offer better opportunities for passing. That has meant a lot of work has been done on the aerodynamic side."

The GRF-70 package is aligned with FIA's Gen2 targets for performance, efficiency and sustainability. It will produce about 212kW. Pirelli, the tyre supplier for all Formula Regional Championship and Trophy series, will continue to fit out the Kiwi vehicles.

"The previous generation was criticised for driver comfort and this is another area where Gen2 machinery has made a step forward," says Caillol.

"The design has a better seating position and an ability to accommodate a wider range of heights. A redesign of the front suspension means less effort is required on the steering wheel.

"We have a successful powerplant in the 8AR-FTS engine, which we've been using since 2020 in the FT-60. But, as with everything, we have focused on continuous improvement.

"David Gouk, our engine developer and builder, has enhanced the package by redesigning some components to produce a lighter version of the engine we used in the FT-60.

"We also carry over the push-to-pass system. This was introduced last year and instantly improved the racing."

> We believe this is the longest relationship Tatuus has had with any championship
> – Nicolas Caillol

The switch to the Gen2 car underlines Toyota and Gazoo Racing's long-standing commitment to FIA's single-seater pyramid as a logical progression for drivers from FIA-certified Formula 4, through FIA Formula Regional and onto FIA F3.

STANDING ON ITS OWN

Beyond this country's premier racing series, Gazoo Racing (GR) becomes Toyota's dedicated performance brand. The move signals a new chapter for Kiwis competing in grassroots motorsport, tackling a weekend track day or enjoying a road drive.

Andrew Davis, Toyota NZ's chief strategic officer and motorsport manager, says New Zealand already has one of the world's strongest enthusiast car cultures.

"GR will offer the opportunity to become part of a community bringing together motorsport, experiences, track events, genuine performance parts and merchandise.

"When you own a GR, you're not just buying a car. You are joining people who love driving and enjoy learning, improving and sharing that passion. GR gives people another way to be part of it."

Rather than treating motorsport as marketing, Toyota uses competition to develop its vehicles. Every rally stage, circuit race and test session pushes engineers, drivers and cars beyond their limits with feedback flowing into production models.

"Every GR exists because it was tested, challenged and refined in competition," says Davis. "That's the philosophy behind it and the reason why every GR carries motorsport DNA."

Today, Gazoo Racing competes in some of the world's toughest events, including the FIA World ▶

The GR86, left, and GR Supra

The GR Yaris on track

Rally Championship, World Endurance Championship, Dakar Rally and Nürburgring 24 Hours.

Those experiences have shaped vehicles including the GR Yaris, GR Corolla and GR86 to deliver a driver's experience rather than simply more power.

The decision to establish GR as Toyota's standalone performance brand also reflects the evolution of the business globally.

Davis says: "Challenge creates learning. Learning creates better cars. That's been the philosophy behind GR from the beginning."

The philosophy behind GR goes back to 2007 when Toyota chairman Akio Toyoda entered the Nürburgring 24 Hours under the unofficial Team Gazoo banner.

Competing against Europe's best exposed how much Toyota had to learn about building true performance cars.

The company embraced motorsport as its proving ground. That commitment led to the development of today's GR family of vehicles and remains the foundation of Gazoo Racing today.

"Over the next 12 months, Toyota NZ will work with its store network and GR customers to bring the brand to life across the country," says Davis.

"This includes creating new opportunities to experience GR products, developing specialist expertise across the network, and giving owners greater confidence to personalise, maintain and get the most from their vehicles."

In addition, the company has announced a range of performance parts developed for its GR Yaris AWD turbocharged hatchback along with bespoke tuning parts for the RAV4 GR, which features a unique front suspension tailored for fast road driving.

In the case of the Yaris, accessory parts include stiffening bars for the chassis, after-market limited-slip differentials, motorsport-influenced suspension components, aerodynamic body parts and software upgrades to significantly enhance engine performance.

Currently on sale in New Zealand are GR versions of the Yaris, Corolla, Corolla Cross and RAV4. The Supra also has a GR variant, as does the 86 sport coupe used in the local one-make series.

Capping the range is the forthcoming GR GT supercar, with at least one of these models likely to come to New Zealand.

GR's Kiwi timeline

2019: The GR Supra launches to mark the return of one of Toyota's most iconic performance nameplates.

2020: The GR Yaris arrives, developed using WRC experience.

2022: The GR86 joins the line-up, delivering lightweight rear-wheel-drive performance.

2023: The GR Corolla launches, transferring circuit and rally engineering into a practical five-door performance car.

2026: Gazoo Racing launches as Toyota NZ's standalone performance brand.

Paddon extends winning streak

Hayden Paddon has secured a comfortable win at Rally Hawke's Bay, the fourth round of the New Zealand Rally Championship.

Although he isn't registered for the series, the 39-year-old won every competitive stage of the weather-disrupted event.

Paddon and co-driver Jared Hudson dominated the 41-strong field to finish one minute and 47 seconds ahead of their nearest rival.

The victory extended an active streak few Kiwis have ever approached as Paddon claimed his 31st rally in a row on home soil behind the wheel of a Hyundai.

Behind him, but taking maximum championship points, was Jack Hawkeswood in his Toyota Yaris Rally2. He is now level on points with Jack Stokes who finished the event third.

Hawkeswood laid down the championship challenge on the opening stage, taking almost 30 seconds off his title rival in the process. On that stage, Jack Stokes had to settle for third place behind his Stokes Motorsport team-mate and brother Robbie Stokes, who came home second.

Hayden Paddon dominated Rally Hawke's Bay. Photo: Tayler Burke

Hawke's Bay local Grant Blackberry in his Mitsubishi EVO 10 turned heads with a brilliant second-fastest time on last month's opening stage.

The truncated event, with two of the six planned special stages cancelled on the day, ended with the Toyota GR Yaris Rally Cup vehicles of Australian star Toby Price and Will Menzies, also from Hawke's Bay, sixth and seventh respectively.

Dave Strong claimed honours in the open two-wheel-drive class in his Honda Jazz to close the championship gap to the absent Ari Pettigrew.

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Customer required to first approach dealer for remedy before purchasing new set of tyres

The case: About 11 months after purchase, the buyer wanted the trader to refund her costs after she needed to replace all four tyres on her 2017 Mazda Demio. She claimed those supplied with the vehicle were of unacceptable quality.

The decision: The dealer contested there was no breach of the Consumer Guarantees Act (CGA) and the purchaser hadn't given the trader a chance to assess the tyres. The application was dismissed by the adjudicator.

At: The Motor Vehicle Disputes Tribunal via video link.

A model-year 2017 Mazda Demio

Background

Junqi Bai bought a 2017 Mazda Demio with an odometer reading of 16,959km from 2 Cheap Cars for $15,532 on April 19 last year.

The consumer wanted the trader to pay for half the cost of four new tyres and the tribunal's filing fee of $87. She claimed their poor condition meant the car failed the CGA's guarantee of acceptable quality.

The dealer said there was no breach of the law and it didn't get the opportunity to remedy the situation before Bai replaced the rubber on the wheels.

The evidence

Bai drove the Demio without incident until March 2026 when she took it for a warrant of fitness (WOF) inspection. The Mazda passed, but the inspector noted all its tyres were cracking. By that time, the car had travelled 22,117km and slightly more than 5,000km since purchase.

She learned the tyres were about eight years old based on a manufacturing code, and claimed their condition and age meant they required premature replacement.

She added the cracking and tread wear were most likely well-advanced when the car was sold to her.

On April 4, Bai replaced all four tyres, which cost her $777. She contacted the trader for the first time about the cost by submitting a claim online.

She added they should have been more durable and their poor condition would have been well-advanced when she bought the car.

The trader said the Demio was an eight-year-old used Japanese import at the time of purchase. It added there were no tyre defects, unsafe cracking, structural failure, bulging, tread separation, exposed cords or any WOF-failing condition at or prior to supply.

The dealer submitted tyres were consumables, and subject to wear and tear. It said their condition could change over time due to use, age, road conditions, ultraviolet exposure, storage history, heat cycles, inflation and other environmental reasons.

The trader added age alone didn't necessarily mean they weren't of acceptable quality when the car was sold and Bai replaced them before giving it a chance to inspect them or consider a remedy.

The dealer said it had a claims procedure that was physically handed to every customer at the time of sale. The booklet emphasised that in the event of any issues with a vehicle, the trader must be given the opportunity to inspect it.

It noted Bai was aware of its complaints procedure because she had made an earlier claim about replacing the wipers in May 2025.

Bai said 2 Cheap Cars didn't say it wanted to inspect the vehicle when she first made her claim. Instead, it declined liability. She added she did make a claim after she just bought it but didn't contact the dealer because she didn't realise it was liable.

The finding

Whether a vehicle is of acceptable quality is considered from the point of view of a reasonable person fully acquainted with its state and condition including any hidden defects. Such a consumer would have realistic expectations as to a car's quality and durability when taking into account its price, mileage and age.

They would also accept it would have wear and tear consistent with its age and mileage, and might be likely to require ongoing maintenance and repairs potentially of an expensive or unplanned nature.

The tribunal's assessor told the hearing that with an eight-year-old vehicle, which had only travelled 17,000km, the original tyres might have had plenty of tread depth and be free from too much cracking.

However, he added that rubber deteriorates over time due to a range of factors including oxidisation, ultraviolet exposure, temperature changes and exposure.

In addition, tyres that were already eight years old at purchase were approaching an age at which replacement would be commonly considered appropriate based on their age alone.

The assessor said that having reviewed the photographs of the tyres, they complied with the requirements of in-service certification and the vehicle inspection requirement manual.

He was of the opinion the Demio wouldn't fail a WOF with its tyres in that condition.

In this case, Bai had driven the Demio for 5,000km over 11 months post-purchase. The adjudicator considered tyres were generally a wear-and-tear item and, after that length of time and driving, a reasonable consumer wouldn't consider them to be the responsibility of the supplier.

The tribunal ruled the condition of the tyres hadn't meant the Demio failed the guarantee of acceptable quality at the time of purchase.

In addition, the adjudicator said there was a further important reason why Bai wouldn't have been entitled to any remedy under the CGA, which was explained to her at the hearing.

That was because she failed to first contact the trader before she arranged for repairs – in the form of replacement tyres – to be undertaken on the car.

It did not matter 2 Cheap Cars didn't immediately ask to inspect the tyres.

The point was the buyer was required to first approach the dealer for a remedy before she paid for new tyres herself.

Therefore, even if the condition of the tyres had been a failure of the guarantee of acceptable quality, Bai wouldn't have been entitled to a remedy according to the CGA.

Order

The application was dismissed.

Trader sold car without vehicle offer and sale agreement and consumer information notice

The case: Four months post-supply, the buyer wanted Prime Motors to pay for repairs to his 2014 Volkswagen Golf GTI after it developed an active oil leak. The dealer said the consumer had asked about the terms of the car's six-month warranty but didn't tell it about the problem and didn't give it an opportunity to remedy the issue.

The decision: The trader was ordered to pay the purchaser $1,030 under the Consumer Guarantees Act (CGA).

At: The Motor Vehicle Disputes Tribunal via video link.

Background

William Renes purchased a 2014 Golf GTI for $15,999 from Prime Motors NZ on November 28, 2025.

In March this year, it developed an oil leak and the buyer arranged for repairs. He asked the trader to reimburse him for the cost under the six-month warranty.

The dealer said it hadn't been told about the issue and would have had its own mechanics fix the car under the policy.

The evidence

Renes wasn't provided with a vehicle offer and sale agreement (VOSA) or consumer information notice (CIN).

The trader's salesman told him the business was being established and didn't have a licence to complete the paperwork.

The tribunal noted Prime Motors was a registered trader at the time, and it took the comment to mean it didn't have access to software to produce a VOSA or CIN. However, there was no reason the dealer couldn't provide manual versions.

Section 21 of the Motor Vehicle Sales Act (MVSA) requires traders to keep a record of all contracts for sale. Section 16 of the act also requires dealers to retain written acknowledgement of the CIN.

The Consumer Information Standards (Used Motor Vehicles) Regulations set out the information that must be provided when a dealer sells a used car.

They were developed under section 27 of the Fair Trading Act to establish consumer information standards for second-hand vehicles.

The CIN requirements are part of protections the MVSA seeks to promote.

However, the tribunal didn't have jurisdiction to address issues relating to the failure to provide mandatory documents.

Renes' mother, who attended the hearing, contributed to the purchase price. Again, that couldn't be verified because there was no VOSA. However, the tribunal accepted she might have had a financial interest in the car and was a joint applicant.

The claim stated that a dashboard warning light came on and fluid was observed under the Golf on March 3.

Ms Renes contacted Prime Motors on March 5 to establish the scope of its six-month warranty, which the trader had confirmed existed via text on January 10.

But because the dealer didn't provide a VOSA, the terms and conditions were unclear.

The trader noted any repairs under the policy would have to be completed by its Auckland mechanic, but the buyer lived in Dunedin.

Ms Renes, who dealt with Prime Motors on behalf of her son, accepted she hadn't informed the business of the issue requiring work when she asked about the warranty.

Neither party was forthright in their communications and Prime Motors didn't make any overt offers to review the matters or fix the car.

On March 6, work on the Golf was done by Sims Brothers Garage in Dunedin for $1,261, which included a new filter and oil.

The repairer noted the leak originated from the engine-sump assembly and oil-level sensor area, and its pricing was consistent with industry standards.

It added: "These components on Volkswagen and other European vehicles are commonly made of plastic and can fail over time and, in some cases, without warning. This type of failure isn't always associated with a lack of maintenance. We didn't observe evidence clearly indicating neglect or poor servicing as the direct cause.

"While the vehicle was still drivable, it had an active leak. Because of this, we didn't recommend driving a long distance as there is a risk of further oil loss and potential engine damage if the condition worsens. Repair was advised to ensure reliability and prevent the issue from escalating.

"The repair included replacing the sump assembly, oil-level sensor and associated seals. We also replaced the engine oil and filter as these are required steps when removing and refitting the sump.

"Additionally, replacing related plastic components at the same time is standard practice to reduce the likelihood of further leaks shortly after repair."

The trader submitted the repair costs were higher than expected. Prime Motors argued it hadn't been given a fair opportunity to inspect the Golf and arrange and pay for reasonable repairs.

The dealer procured two estimates from Auckland-based mechanics. One was $554, the other for $526.

The finding

Because the issue requiring repair occurred about three months after purchase, the tribunal considered it a durability failure and there had been a breach of the CGA's guarantee of acceptable quality.

The act is based on the principle of a supplier-led cure and the starting point for a breach under it is repair. However, if a supplier doesn't fix a vehicle in a reasonable period, the consumer can arrange for repairs and claim reasonable costs.

Prime Motors didn't take the initiative to have the Golf remedied at its own cost or assess its issues, so the tribunal ruled it failed to repair it and Renes was entitled to a refund of reasonable costs.

The dealer argued it could have had the job done for less while Sims Brothers said its charges were in line with industry rates. However, the tribunal's mechanical expert noted the oil and filter could have been recycled.

The adjudicator considered those positions and formed the view the appropriate amount to be ordered was $1,030, which was Sims Brothers' invoice less the cost of the oil and filter.

Order

Prime Motors was ordered to pay the buyer $1,030.

A 2014 Golf GTI

Funding system needs revamp

The AA has put forward five campaign calls for the government as it seeks "less politics, smarter spending and safer roads".

Its priority areas focus on transport funding and delivery challenges with proposals built on surveys of its members and the public, and the views of its district councillors.

Top of the list is putting "maintenance first, always". The AA says such spending should be the budgeting priority for transport.

It's also seeking an end to "stop-go" on big projects because long-term schemes need to be delivered no matter who is in power. This must cover roads and public transport, which should be parts of one connected system.

The AA's third call is "belts on, phones down". It wants safety cameras rolled out that detect drivers who aren't wearing seatbelts or are using their phones.

"Improving detection and enforcement, combined with awareness campaigns and appropriate penalties, are essential to changing driver behaviour," it says.

Then there's a "rewards for safety" programme that lowers the cost of registration and licence renewals for people who stick to the rules and improve their skills. Its final call is for the government to prioritise funding to improve access to major public-transport hubs and make them easier to use.

Simon Douglas, the AA's chief policy and advocacy officer, says: "These calls are practical changes shaped by members' views, and are aimed at making transport safer, more efficient and more affordable.

"Over the past decade, our election calls have helped deliver increases in road maintenance funding, more roadside drug and alcohol testing, speed-camera signage and devices to stop drunk drivers starting their cars.

"Our 2026 calls set out actions that can improve safety, protect the quality of our transport infrastructure and make the system work better for everyone no matter who forms the next government."

> Our 2026 calls set out actions that can improve safety and protect the quality of our infrastructure
> – Simon Douglas

In November 2025, the AA surveyed more than 3,000 people. The findings show strong support for long-term transport planning, practical road-safety improvements, affordable travel and resilient infrastructure. The surveys included 2,162 respondents to its member voices panel and 1,010 members of the public.

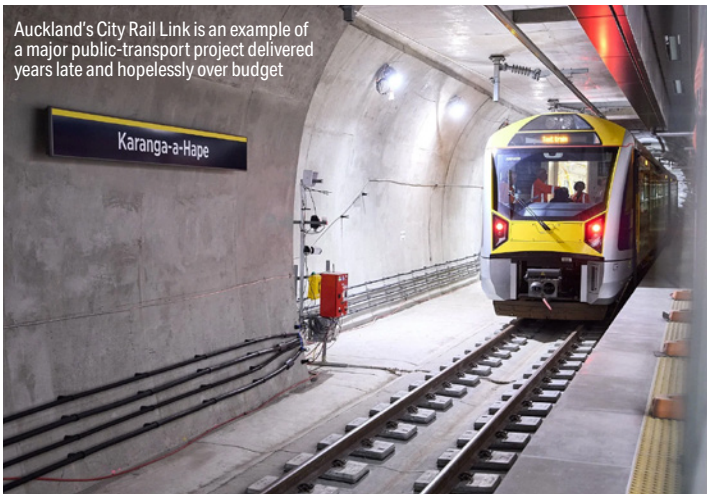
The AA's members reported higher usage of all transport modes compared to the public, especially for driving – 98 per cent versus 89 per cent. Travelling as a passenger was also more common among members at 83 per cent compared to 67 per cent.

There was good support for improving public transport – about half of both groups had used it in the past 12 months – but backing was more mixed for initiatives that involved changing how people travel or adopting alternatives, such as low or zero-emissions vehicles.

The highest levels of support were for a long-term, cross-party programme of major transport projects – 92 per cent of members and 84 per cent of the public – while similar proportions backed practical road-safety upgrades, and greater collaboration between local and central government.

When asked what the AA should prioritise for advocacy, most people chose long-term transport planning, keeping driving costs down, and road safety and improvements.

More than seven out of 10 AA members and the public support introducing safety cameras that can detect motorists using phones or not wearing a seatbelt.



Auckland's City Rail Link is an example of a major public-transport project delivered years late and hopelessly over budget

"The largest study carried out in New Zealand has shown that at any given moment around one-in-60 drivers is using a phone," it says.

"Research shows drivers are around four times more likely to crash when using a phone.

"Seatbelt use is generally high, but there's still a group of people failing to buckle up. In recent years, about one-in-three drivers who died in crashes wasn't wearing a seatbelt and it's estimated about 25 lives a year could be saved through everyone buckling up."

There was 71 per cent backing for rehabilitation programmes for dangerous driving, such as treatment and road-safety courses.

Seven out of 10 supported a nationwide plan to stop distracted and tired driving, such as more education and rest stops, while six out of 10 wanted more police on our roads.

Forward planning, affordability, and road safety and improvements are the AA's top priorities.

A long-term programme of major transport projects agreed across political parties topped what people want prioritised by the next government, particularly for AA members at 74 per cent. This was backed by 54 per cent of the public.

There was slightly less support for initiatives focused on reducing car use and broader sustainability. This was mostly driven by those in more rural areas who have limited ability to switch transport modes.

Dylan Thomsen, the AA's road-safety spokesperson, says the stop-start cycle of governments making u-turns on major projects has delayed progress, driven up costs and undermined safety, although parliament's recent backing of a 30-year infrastructure plan is a big step forward.

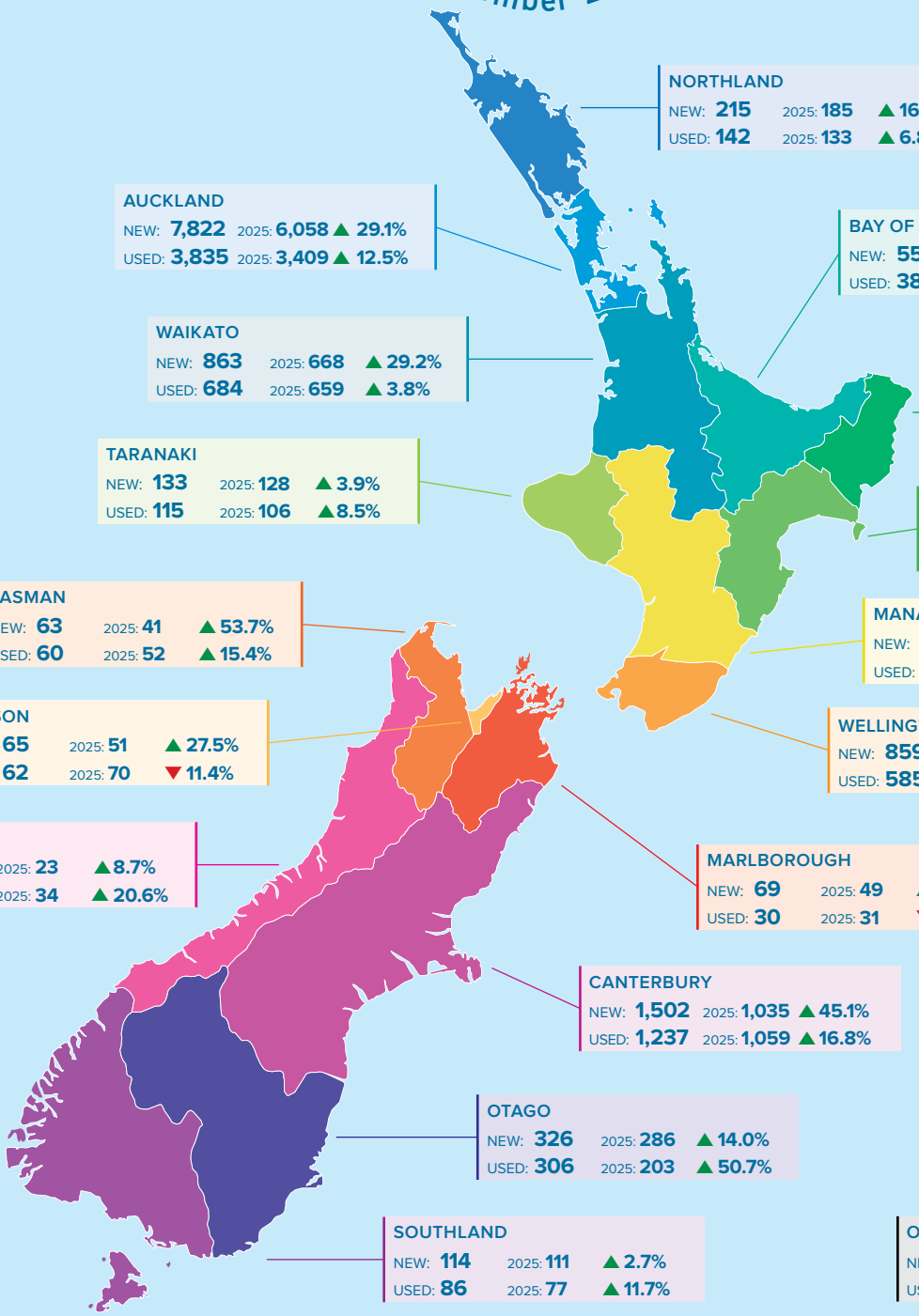
"New Zealanders are tired of hearing about new roads or public-transport projects that take years to get off the ground. They want a decisive plan supported by all parties."

AROUND THE COUNTRY

September 2026

Total new cars
13,244
2025: 10,351 ▲ 27.9%

Total imported used cars
8,005
2025: 7,061 ▲ 13.4%



NORTHLAND
NEW: 215 2025: 185 ▲ 16.2%
USED: 142 2025: 133 ▲ 6.8%

AUCKLAND
NEW: 7,822 2025: 6,058 ▲ 29.1%
USED: 3,835 2025: 3,409 ▲ 12.5%

BAY OF PLENTY
NEW: 559 2025: 495 ▲ 12.9%
USED: 385 2025: 327 ▲ 17.7%

WAIKATO
NEW: 863 2025: 668 ▲ 29.2%
USED: 684 2025: 659 ▲ 3.8%

GISBORNE
NEW: 28 2025: 49 ▼ 42.9%
USED: 65 2025: 50 ▲ 30.0%

TARANAKI
NEW: 133 2025: 128 ▲ 3.9%
USED: 115 2025: 106 ▲ 8.5%

HAWKE'S BAY
NEW: 260 2025: 209 ▲ 24.4%
USED: 139 2025: 103 ▲ 35.0%

TASMAN
NEW: 63 2025: 41 ▲ 53.7%
USED: 60 2025: 52 ▲ 15.4%

MANAWATU-WHANGANUI
NEW: 326 2025: 269 ▲ 21.2%
USED: 210 2025: 192 ▲ 9.4%

NELSON
NEW: 65 2025: 51 ▲ 27.5%
USED: 62 2025: 70 ▼ 11.4%

WELLINGTON
NEW: 859 2025: 684 ▲ 25.6%
USED: 585 2025: 538 ▲ 8.7%

WEST COAST
NEW: 25 2025: 23 ▲ 8.7%
USED: 41 2025: 34 ▲ 20.6%

MARLBOROUGH
NEW: 69 2025: 49 ▲ 40.8%
USED: 30 2025: 31 ▼ 3.2%

CANTERBURY
NEW: 1,502 2025: 1,035 ▲ 45.1%
USED: 1,237 2025: 1,059 ▲ 16.8%

OTAGO
NEW: 326 2025: 286 ▲ 14.0%
USED: 306 2025: 203 ▲ 50.7%

SOUTHLAND
NEW: 114 2025: 111 ▲ 2.7%
USED: 86 2025: 77 ▲ 11.7%

OTHERS (Chatham Islands, overseas, unknown)
NEW: 15 2025: 10 ▲ 50.0%
USED: 23 2025: 18 ▲ 27.8%

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Imported Passenger Vehicle Sales by Make - September 2026

MAKE	SEP '26	SEP '25	+/-%	SEP '26 MKT SHARE	2026 YEAR TO DATE	2026 MKT SHARE
Toyota	3,163	2,672	18.4%	39.5%	24,739	36.1%
Nissan	1,254	961	30.5%	15.7%	10,830	15.8%
Mazda	939	1,048	-10.4%	11.7%	8,531	12.5%
Subaru	730	540	35.2%	9.1%	6,332	9.2%
Honda	637	634	0.5%	8.0%	5,620	8.2%
BMW	204	231	-11.7%	2.5%	2,187	3.2%
Lexus	200	144	38.9%	2.5%	1,647	2.4%
Suzuki	163	175	-6.9%	2.0%	1,590	2.3%
Mitsubishi	138	116	19.0%	1.7%	1,206	1.8%
Mercedes-Benz	114	124	-8.1%	1.4%	1,271	1.9%
Audi	101	117	-13.7%	1.3%	1,127	1.6%
Tesla	67	12	458.3%	0.8%	470	0.7%
Land Rover	55	42	31.0%	0.7%	524	0.8%
Volkswagen	46	89	-48.3%	0.6%	537	0.8%
Ford	23	19	21.1%	0.3%	188	0.3%
Jeep	22	17	29.4%	0.3%	155	0.2%
Volvo	20	16	25.0%	0.2%	168	0.2%
Mini	20	22	-9.1%	0.2%	231	0.3%
Porsche	16	11	45.5%	0.2%	133	0.2%
Jaguar	14	21	-33.3%	0.2%	183	0.3%
Hyundai	7	5	40.0%	0.1%	86	0.1%
Peugeot	6	4	50.0%	0.1%	66	0.1%
Chevrolet	6	6	0.0%	0.1%	67	0.1%
Kia	5	3	66.7%	0.1%	39	0.1%
Holden	5	1	400.0%	0.1%	33	0.0%
Dodge	5	4	25.0%	0.1%	38	0.1%
BYD	5	1	400.0%	0.1%	109	0.2%
LDV	4	2	100.0%	0.0%	25	0.0%
Daihatsu	4	2	100.0%	0.0%	27	0.0%
Chrysler	4	2	100.0%	0.0%	43	0.1%
MG	3	0	300.0%	0.0%	26	0.0%
SsangYong	2	0	200.0%	0.0%	4	0.0%
Renault	2	1	100.0%	0.0%	25	0.0%
Maserati	2	0	200.0%	0.0%	14	0.0%
Citroen	2	0	200.0%	0.0%	12	0.0%
Others	17	19	-10.5%	0.2%	219	0.3%
Total	**8,005**	**7,061**	**13.4%**	**100.0%**	**68,502**	**100.0%**

Imported Passenger Vehicle Sales by Model - September 2026

MAKE	MODEL	SEP '26	SEP '25	+/-%	SEP '26 MKT SHARE	2026 YEAR TO DATE	2026 MKT SHARE
Toyota	Aqua	915	755	21.2%	11.4%	6,650	9.7%
Toyota	Prius	502	475	5.7%	6.3%	4,192	6.1%
Nissan	Note	446	335	33.1%	5.6%	3,445	5.0%
Toyota	Corolla	421	391	7.7%	5.3%	3,290	4.8%
Subaru	Impreza	242	203	19.2%	3.0%	2,131	3.1%
Nissan	Serena	239	159	50.3%	3.0%	1,788	2.6%
Mazda	Axela	221	280	-21.1%	2.8%	2,055	3.0%
Toyota	C-HR	216	242	-10.7%	2.7%	1,984	2.9%
Toyota	Yaris	202	90	124.4%	2.5%	1,223	1.8%
Subaru	XV	193	151	27.8%	2.4%	1,673	2.4%
Mazda	Demio	190	189	0.5%	2.4%	1,818	2.7%
Nissan	Leaf	188	110	70.9%	2.3%	1,962	2.9%
Honda	Fit	181	270	-33.0%	2.3%	1,908	2.8%
Mazda	CX-5	174	211	-17.5%	2.2%	1,569	2.3%
Honda	Vezel	166	132	25.8%	2.1%	1,308	1.9%
Nissan	X-Trail	155	174	-10.9%	1.9%	1,639	2.4%
Suzuki	Swift	105	127	-17.3%	1.3%	1,080	1.6%
Toyota	Vellfire	98	83	18.1%	1.2%	921	1.3%
Mitsubishi	Outlander	87	76	14.5%	1.1%	715	1.0%
Subaru	Levorg	81	34	138.2%	1.0%	655	1.0%
Toyota	RAV4	76	33	130.3%	0.9%	417	0.6%
Subaru	Legacy	76	48	58.3%	0.9%	548	0.8%
Mazda	Premacy	73	56	30.4%	0.9%	608	0.9%
Mazda	Atenza	72	78	-7.7%	0.9%	653	1.0%
Toyota	Alphard	71	64	10.9%	0.9%	661	1.0%
Toyota	Camry	67	69	-2.9%	0.8%	516	0.8%
Honda	Shuttle	56	37	51.4%	0.7%	414	0.6%
Toyota	Sienta	54	39	38.5%	0.7%	323	0.5%
Toyota	Vitz	52	54	-3.7%	0.6%	461	0.7%
Toyota	Yaris Cross	50	16	212.5%	0.6%	380	0.6%
Toyota	Spade	48	32	50.0%	0.6%	393	0.6%
Honda	Odyssey	48	39	23.1%	0.6%	425	0.6%
Lexus	CT 200h	48	42	14.3%	0.6%	371	0.5%
BMW	Mini	45	44	2.3%	0.6%	459	0.7%
Subaru	Outback	44	33	33.3%	0.5%	395	0.6%
Others		2,103	1,890	11.3%	26.3%	19,472	28.4%
Total		**8,005**	**7,061**	**13.4%**	**100.0%**	**68,502**	**100.0%**

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Market Development

Fresh guidance on used imports

The NZTA has issued advice for importers confirming that vehicles purchased through IAA Australia, a digital marketplace, can be supported by invoices downloaded from its buyer portal as proof of legal entitlement.

This applies so long as the documents are consistent with the vehicle and transaction being presented for entry certification.

News of the update has been shared with members of the Imported Motor Vehicle Industry Association (VIA) via an email alert, which explains the clarification follows an NZTA review of IAA Australia's online auction and document processes.

This was needed because it operates differently from many traditional auction houses. All its sales are conducted online and buyers must be verified before they can bid, with verification including identity, address, tax and company information where applicable.

Invoices are accessed through a secure online buyer portal and aren't routinely emailed or posted to buyers, while downloaded invoices contain no watermarks or other visible security features.

"Because the invoices lack traditional authentication features, questions had arisen around their acceptability as proof of ownership," says VIA.

"The NZTA has confirmed an invoice downloaded from a purchaser's verified IAA Australia account may be accepted as evidence of legal entitlement.

"It should be assessed in the same way as any other ownership document."

If an entry certifier wants further assurance, the guidance states they may ask the purchaser to log into their IAA Australia buyer account on the certification site and display the relevant invoice or purchase record directly from the portal.

Hike of 13%

Some 8,005 used-imported cars were registered in September for a year-on-year rise of 13.4 per cent from 7,061.

The Toyota Aqua topped the ladder with a jump of 21.2 per cent and 915 units. Next up was the Prius with 502. Nissan's Note came third with 446.

The Corolla was fourth with 421 and Subaru's Impreza was fifth on 242. Nissan's Leaf notched up 188 sales, up by 70.9 per cent.

If there are concerns about an invoice's authenticity or validity, the NZTA or inspection organisation may contact IAA Australia directly.

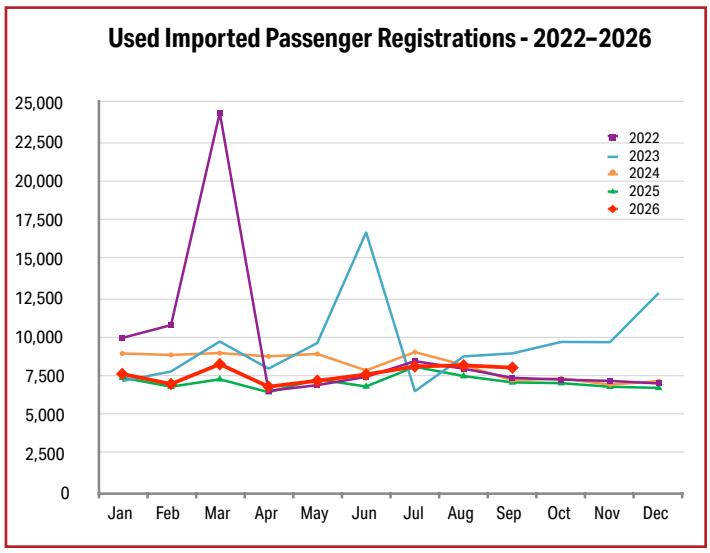
IAA Australia can verify invoice details against its records when provided with a copy of the invoice, but will not release purchaser or transaction information unless an invoice is supplied for verification.

VIA adds there's no need to obtain a separately authenticated invoice simply because the invoice was generated through IAA's portal and portal-generated invoices can be used for entry certification.

Members should retain access to the buyer portal and purchase records in case certification staff request extra information. As with any vehicle purchase, documents must still be internally consistent and support the ownership chain being presented.

"The main outcome of this guidance is the NZTA has recognised IAA Australia's digital sales process and confirmed that invoices downloaded from a buyer's verified IAA account are generally acceptable as evidence of legal entitlement," advises VIA.

"These invoices can be relied on for entry certification subject to normal ownership checks and verification processes when required."



Used Imported Passenger Vehicle Sales by Motive Power - September 2026

MAKE	SEP '26	SEP '25	+/- %	SEP '26 MKT SHARE	2026 YEAR TO DATE	2026 MKT SHARE
Full battery electric	305	129	136.4%	3.8%	2,922	4.3%
Plug-in hybrid electric	99	57	73.7%	1.2%	750	1.1%
Non plug-in petrol hybrid	4,235	3,607	17.4%	52.9%	33,796	49.3%
Petrol	3,239	3,166	2.3%	40.5%	29,904	43.7%
Diesel	127	102	24.5%	1.6%	1,129	1.6%
Others (includes non plug-in diesel hybrid, fuel cell)	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	1	0.0%
Total	**8,005**	**7,061**	**13.4%**		**68,502**	

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DOLPHIN SHIPPING

Price gap with Japan going up

Japan remains Kenya's leading source of second-hand vehicles, accounting for about 80 per cent of imports.

The African nation's other major sources include the United Arab Emirates and South Africa, while China is now emerging as an important supplier, particularly for EVs.

Thousands of used vehicles enter Kenya from Japan every year.

Popular models include the Toyota Probox, Subaru Forester, Mazda Demio, Nissan Note and Dayz, and Suzukis.

While such Japanese cars remain relatively affordable in their source market, Kenyans are struggling with import costs.

A Probox, for example, can cost the equivalent of between $5,000 and $11,750 depending on its age and mileage. In Kenya, the same model can retail from $15,500 to $32,400 after taxes, duties, shipping and other costs are factored in.

The widening price gap has become a concern for dealers and consumers, with the industry blaming high tax burdens and uncertainty around customs valuations.

Under the current framework, import duty is charged at 35 per cent of the customs value, while excise duty ranges between 20 and 35 per cent depending on engine capacity and fuel type.

Value-added tax at 16 per cent is also imposed, as well as an import declaration fee and railway development levy.

Dealers report declining sales as buyers struggle to raise extra funds when cars arrive at the Port of Mombasa and customs assessments are higher than expected.

Kenya's vehicle imports fell from a peak of 126,415 units in 2021 to 70,275 in 2023, although there was some recovery in 2024, reports Nairobi-based newspaper The Star.

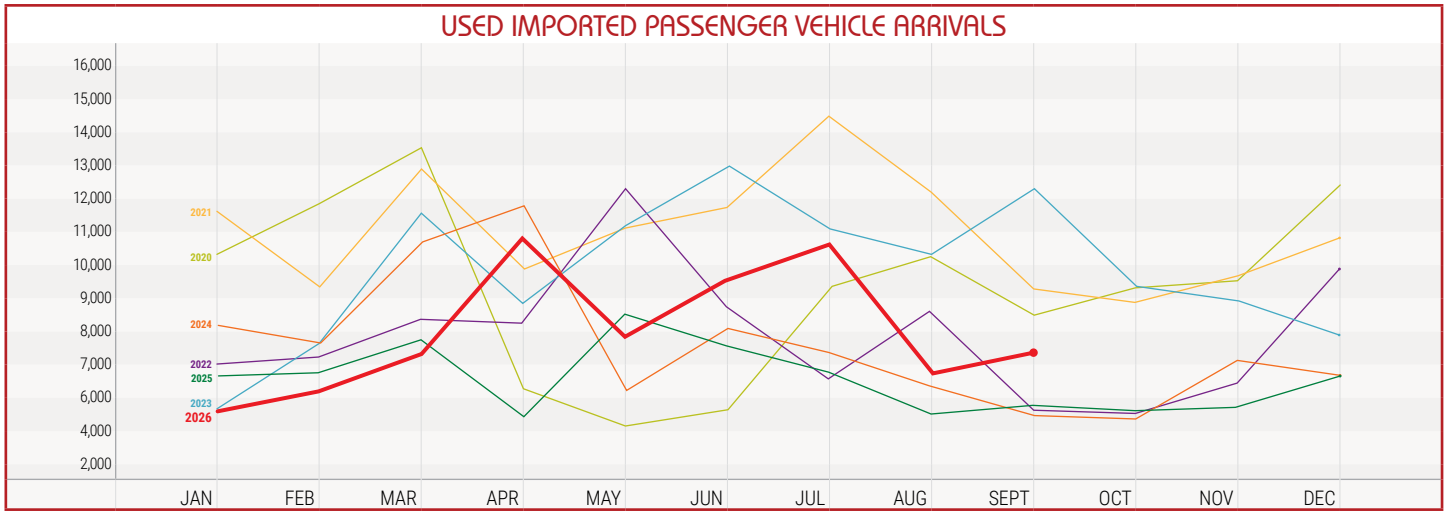
Kenya has set an eight-years rule on used imports based on first registration.

The government plans to progressively tighten the age requirement to encourage local vehicle assembly and manufacturing.

USED IMPORTS UPTURN

There were 7,357 used cars imported last month, up from 6,746 in August, to take the year-to-date total to 70,721.

Japan accounted for 7,176. There were also 117 from Australia, 22 from Singapore, 15 from the US and 13 from the UK.



Used Imported Passenger Vehicles By Country Of Export

COUNTRY OF EXPORT	2026											2025		2024	
	JAN '26	FEB '26	MAR '26	APR '26	MAY '26	JUN '26	JUL '26	AUG '26	SEP '26	SEP MRKT %	2026 TOTAL	2025 TOTAL	MARKET %	2024 TOTAL	MARKET %
Australia	89	156	193	367	131	148	149	135	117	1.6%	**1,485**	1,599	2.1%	1,285	1.5%
Great Britain	17	14	13	8	13	12	8	8	13	0.2%	**106**	334	0.4%	255	0.3%
Japan	4,966	5,860	7,108	10,078	7,608	8,983	10,375	6,560	7,176	97.5%	**68,714**	74,956	96.8%	86,040	97.5%
Singapore	27	8	9	18	29	23	23	12	22	0.3%	**171**	173	0.2%	256	0.3%
USA	28	13	19	8	12	9	15	19	15	0.2%	**138**	204	0.3%	249	0.3%
Other countries	9	8	11	8	8	25	12	12	14	0.2%	**107**	143	0.2%	170	0.2%
Total	**5,136**	**6,059**	**7,353**	**10,487**	**7,801**	**9,200**	**10,582**	**6,746**	**7,357**	**100.0%**	**70,721**	**77,409**	**100%**	**88,255**	**100.0%**

Firm expands in key markets

NZ Cheap Cars is continuing its expansion with its newest dealership opening on September 26.

The branch in Stoddard Road, Mount Roskill, boosts the company's presence across Auckland and forms part of its wider national growth strategy. The opening comes less than a month after it launched its new North Shore destination in Wairau Road on August 29.

Chief executive Michael Yang says: "The North Shore was an important milestone and opening Mount Roskill less than a month later shows the momentum we have built.

"Mount Roskill gives us a strong presence in another important part of Auckland. It makes it easier for customers across central and west Auckland to access our vehicles, finance and team."

The company is progressing plans for extra branches to open as it expands its national footprint.

"We see significant opportunities to grow," says Yang.

"Mount Roskill is another step forwards, but it's certainly not the last. We have more locations in the pipeline and expect to announce further new branches as those plans are finalised.

"Our long-term goal is to build a genuinely strong nationwide dealership network and make NZ Cheap Cars more accessible to customers throughout New Zealand."

The expansion follows a strong 2026 financial year for the company, and continued investment in new locations, stock, people and operational capability.

The Mount Roskill dealership boasts a wide selection of affordable used vehicles including hybrids, hatchbacks, SUVs and family vehicles, while offering the same finance and customer service options available across NZ Cheap Cars' network.

Yang says: "Every new location needs to strengthen the business. We want better coverage, more vehicle choice and greater convenience for our customers while building a sustainable national operation."

DECLINE IN TRADING

There were 16,229 second-hand cars sold by traders to the public during September for a 4.1 per cent drop from 16,915 in the same month of last year.

Trade-ins came in at 13,357 vehicles for a 3.8 per cent decrease from 13,878. There were 38,653 private transactions.

SECONDHAND CAR SALES - September 2026

	DEALER TO PUBLIC				PUBLIC TO PUBLIC			PUBLIC TO DEALER		
REGION	SEP '26	SEP '25	+/- %	MARKET SHARE	SEP '26	SEP '25	+/- %	SEP '26	SEP '25	+/- %
Northland	539	540	-0.2%	3.3%	1,770	1,968	-10.1%	220	225	-2.2%
Auckland	5,425	5,711	-5.0%	33.4%	12,907	13,882	-7.0%	5,881	6,226	-5.5%
Waikato	1,659	1,772	-6.4%	10.2%	3,895	4,104	-5.1%	1,146	1,201	-4.6%
Bay of Plenty	1,110	1,109	0.1%	6.8%	2,629	2,797	-6.0%	662	608	8.9%
Gisborne	145	128	13.3%	0.9%	322	348	-7.5%	36	52	-30.8%
Hawke's Bay	599	572	4.7%	3.7%	1,324	1,449	-8.6%	440	440	0.0%
Taranaki	367	430	-14.7%	2.3%	1,070	1,108	-3.4%	135	202	-33.2%
Manawatu-Whanganui	843	842	0.1%	5.2%	1,960	2,133	-8.1%	650	767	-15.3%
Wellington	1,374	1,596	-13.9%	8.5%	2,819	3,236	-12.9%	1,071	1,158	-7.5%
Tasman	150	152	-1.3%	0.9%	430	524	-17.9%	26	16	62.5%
Nelson	132	156	-15.4%	0.8%	438	451	-2.9%	157	178	-11.8%
Marlborough	131	150	-12.7%	0.8%	313	364	-14.0%	66	62	6.5%
West Coast	107	130	-17.7%	0.7%	307	332	-7.5%	38	26	46.2%
Canterbury	2,420	2,466	-1.9%	14.9%	5,426	5,755	-5.7%	2,200	2,086	5.5%
Otago	813	775	4.9%	5.0%	1,972	2,064	-4.5%	474	462	2.6%
Southland	363	333	9.0%	2.2%	932	1,003	-7.1%	148	169	-12.4%
Other	52	53	-1.9%	0.3%	139	141	-1.4%	7	0	0.0%
NZ Total	**16,229**	**16,915**	**-4.1%**	**100.0%**	**38,653**	**41,659**	**-7.2%**	**13,357**	**13,878**	**-3.8%**

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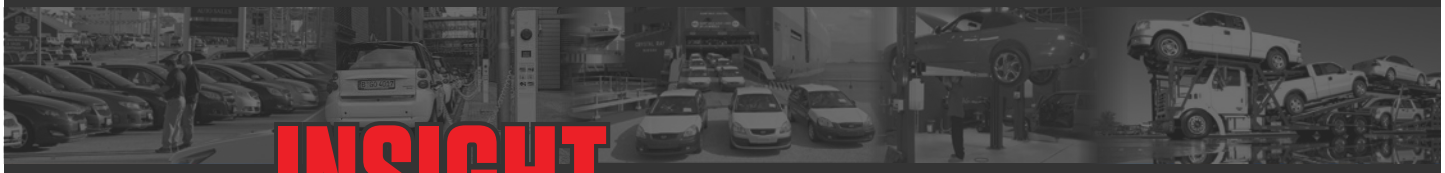

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New Passenger Vehicle Sales by Make - September 2026

MAKE	SEP '26	SEP '25	+/-%	SEP '26 MKT SHARE	2026 YEAR TO DATE	2026 MKT SHARE
Toyota	3,003	2,567	17.0%	22.7%	15,799	19.2%
Mitsubishi	1,758	1,753	0.3%	13.3%	7,363	8.9%
Kia	1,386	942	47.1%	10.5%	7,490	9.1%
BYD	871	106	721.7%	6.6%	4,421	5.4%
Tesla	650	228	185.1%	4.9%	3,254	3.9%
MG	612	374	63.6%	4.6%	3,952	4.8%
GWM	508	295	72.2%	3.8%	3,525	4.3%
Mazda	426	523	-18.5%	3.2%	3,137	3.8%
Suzuki	377	414	-8.9%	2.8%	3,342	4.1%
Ford	333	415	-19.8%	2.5%	2,920	3.5%
Honda	332	253	31.2%	2.5%	2,549	3.1%
Chery	285	223	27.8%	2.2%	2,054	2.5%
Geely	238	21	1,033.3%	1.8%	827	1.0%
Hyundai	208	395	-47.3%	1.6%	2,588	3.1%
Nissan	206	134	53.7%	1.6%	1,327	1.6%
Subaru	195	174	12.1%	1.5%	1,572	1.9%
Jaecoo	175	74	136.5%	1.3%	1,386	1.7%
BMW	138	184	-25.0%	1.0%	1,353	1.6%
Volkswagen	124	167	-25.7%	0.9%	1,098	1.3%
Audi	122	167	-26.9%	0.9%	1,121	1.4%
Lexus	115	134	-14.2%	0.9%	1,099	1.3%
Land Rover	110	85	29.4%	0.8%	936	1.1%
Zeekr	105	0	10,500.0%	0.8%	568	0.7%
Mercedes-Benz	82	107	-23.4%	0.6%	998	1.2%
Leapmotor	82	36	127.8%	0.6%	494	0.6%
Skoda	79	80	-1.3%	0.6%	605	0.7%
GAC	74	0	7,400.0%	0.6%	446	0.5%
Mini	71	87	-18.4%	0.5%	735	0.9%
BAIC	63	0	6,300.0%	0.5%	575	0.7%
Omoda	61	69	-11.6%	0.5%	567	0.7%
Volvo	56	55	1.8%	0.4%	467	0.6%
Porsche	50	43	16.3%	0.4%	403	0.5%
Dongfeng	50	0	5,000.0%	0.4%	970	1.2%
Denza	38	0	3,800.0%	0.3%	322	0.4%
KGM	34	15	126.7%	0.3%	103	0.1%
Others	227	231	-1.7%	1.7%	2,085	2.5%
Total	**13,244**	**10,351**	**27.9%**	**100.0%**	**82,451**	**100.0%**

New Passenger Vehicle Sales by Model - September 2026

MAKE	MODEL	SEP '26	SEP '25	+/-%	SEP '26 MKT SHARE	2026 YEAR TO DATE	2026 MKT SHARE
Toyota	Corolla Cross	1,053	129	716.3%	8.0%	3,446	4.2%
Mitsubishi	Outlander	964	809	19.2%	7.3%	3,073	3.7%
Toyota	RAV4	803	1,279	-37.2%	6.1%	5,602	6.8%
Mitsubishi	ASX	680	804	-15.4%	5.1%	3,140	3.8%
Tesla	Model Y	588	190	209.5%	4.4%	2,979	3.6%
Toyota	Corolla	450	433	3.9%	3.4%	1,571	1.9%
Kia	Sportage	317	171	85.4%	2.4%	2,102	2.5%
Kia	Stonic	273	155	76.1%	2.1%	1,400	1.7%
Ford	Everest	259	363	-28.7%	2.0%	2,128	2.6%
Toyota	Highlander	251	57	340.4%	1.9%	720	0.9%
BYD	Atto 2	240	0	24,000.0%	1.8%	801	1.0%
MG	ZS	233	206	13.1%	1.8%	1,679	2.0%
GWM	Haval H6	224	168	33.3%	1.7%	1,929	2.3%
Kia	Carnival	211	146	44.5%	1.6%	663	0.8%
Suzuki	Swift	174	132	31.8%	1.3%	1,260	1.5%
MG	MG 4	171	2	8,450.0%	1.3%	689	0.8%
Kia	Seltos	166	258	-35.7%	1.3%	1,537	1.9%
Nissan	X-Trail	164	62	164.5%	1.2%	1,041	1.3%
Chery	Tiggo 4 Pro	161	157	2.5%	1.2%	1,041	1.3%
Mazda	CX-5	155	115	34.8%	1.2%	1,120	1.4%
BYD	Atto 1	151	0	15,100.0%	1.1%	717	0.9%
Toyota	Yaris Cross	146	211	-30.8%	1.1%	1,320	1.6%
Mazda	CX-30	131	117	12.0%	1.0%	621	0.8%
GWM	Haval Jolion	127	89	42.7%	1.0%	758	0.9%
BYD	Sealion 7	125	42	197.6%	0.9%	533	0.6%
Suzuki	Jimny	115	73	57.5%	0.9%	868	1.1%
BYD	Atto 3	115	31	271.0%	0.9%	831	1.0%
Hyundai	Tucson	110	218	-49.5%	0.8%	1,569	1.9%
Kia	EV3	110	33	233.3%	0.8%	580	0.7%
Toyota	Land Cruiser Prado	109	146	-25.3%	0.8%	1,025	1.2%
Kia	EV5	107	19	463.2%	0.8%	410	0.5%
Jaecoo	J5	106	0	10,600.0%	0.8%	622	0.8%
Honda	ZR-V	104	39	166.7%	0.8%	578	0.7%
Geely	EX2	100	0	10,000.0%	0.8%	110	0.1%
Kia	Sorento	93	105	-11.4%	0.7%	455	0.6%
Others		3,958	3,592	10.2%	29.9%	33,533	40.7%
Total		**13,244**	**10,351**	**27.9%**	**100.0%**	**82,451**	**100.0%**

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School subjects get shake-up

Thousands of young Kiwis will have easier pathways into automotive and transport jobs under government plans to roll out nine new trades-related senior secondary-school subjects.

The motor-vehicle industry will be covered as part of the engineering technology subject being developed by the Transport Industry Skills Board, of which Motor Trade Association (MTA) director Grant Woolford is a member.

From 2029, students in years 12-13 will be able to take industry-led subjects designed to help them develop practical skills, explore emerging career opportunities and make confident choices about their next steps.

Lee Marshall, chief executive of the MTA, says the announcement and other government commitments to learners recognise the importance of trades.

He adds: "When many young people concerned for their future are considering or taking up opportunities overseas and others worry about the impact of AI, this shows there are pathways into essential trades for those who want to earn while they learn.

"With the growing dependence of vehicles on complex technologies, the automotive and transport trades represent no less of a challenge than many academic courses."

Marshall notes the MTA has long argued for automotive, transport and other trades to be given more recognition because they are skilled jobs and keep the country moving.

"While 'engineering technology' isn't as specific as we would like, we appreciate the concept of allowing the system to be broad enough that learners can try different elements of the broad spectrum of engineering and technology-related industries."

The aim of the new subject is to teach students about systems, materials and technologies, and develop their ability to test and improve solutions and apply engineering thinking to real-world contexts and problems.

It cites the benefits as introducing young people to how systems, machines, tools and infrastructure are designed, operated, maintained and improved across automotive, aviation, freight and logistics, rail, ports, maritime and public transport.

Other subjects being introduced include next-gen manufacturing, applied intelligent systems, construction and built environment, energy and infrastructure, food and fibre systems, health services and care, hospitality food and beverage, and tourism.

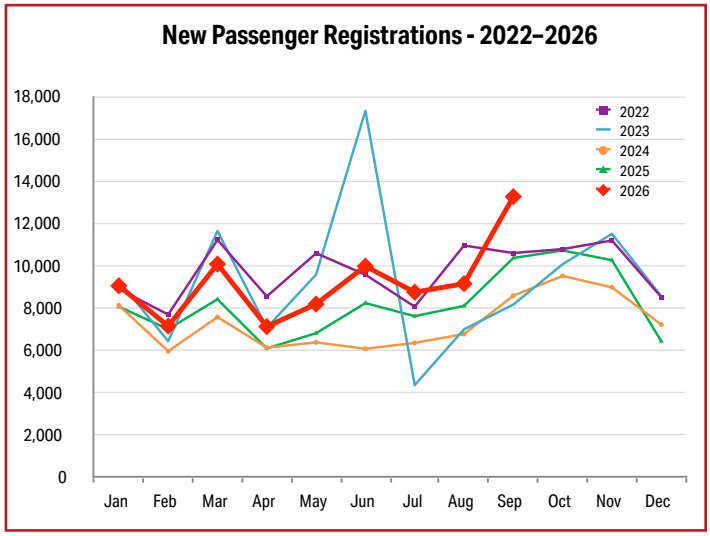
Erica Stanford, Minister of Education, says: "These subjects are being developed with industry to give students options so businesses know young people are building the skills sectors need.

"The subjects will have parity of esteem with traditional subjects such as English and maths.

"They will count towards students' secondary-school qualifications, and support pathways into university, trades, training or the workforce."

Hybrid top

There were 13,244 new cars sold last month, which was up by 27.9 per cent from 10,351 in September 2025
The Toyota Corolla Cross headed up the models' ladder on 1,053 units, which was up by 716.3 per cent. Second was claimed by Mitsubishi's Outlander on 964.
It was followed by Toyota's RAV4 with 803 and Mitsubishi's ASX on 680. Tesla's Model Y completed the top five with 588 registrations. There were 240 sales of BYD's Atto 2, a new market entrant.



New Passenger Vehicle Sales by Motive Power - September 2026

MAKE	SEP'26	SEP'25	+/-%	SEP'26 MKT SHARE	2026 YEAR TO DATE	2026 MKT SHARE
Full battery electric	2,593	606	327.9%	19.6%	14,357	17.4%
Plug-in hybrid electric	1,236	407	203.7%	9.3%	8,951	10.9%
Non plug-in petrol hybrid	4,867	4,089	19.0%	36.7%	29,124	35.3%
Petrol	3,950	4,342	-9.0%	29.8%	24,994	30.3%
Diesel	598	907	-34.1%	4.5%	5,025	6.1%
Others (includes non plug-in diesel hybrid, fuel cell)	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	**13,244**	**10,351**	**27.9%**		**82,451**	

Motive Power Development
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Ute tested for use down under

Leading engineering company Premcar has been carrying out in-market testing and validation of the all-new Chery Stockman.

The work aims to ensure the ute is comprehensively assessed against the demands of roads, conditions and customer expectations down under.

Premcar is conducting extensive testing and validation on its ride and handling.

Lucas Harris, chief operating officer of Chery Motor Australia, says partnering with Premcar shows a commitment to delivering a ute designed to meet local expectations.

He adds: "Our customers expect a vehicle that performs confidently across everything from urban streets to highways, construction sites and remote off-road tracks.

"Premcar has an outstanding reputation for engineering and vehicle validation, making it the ideal partner to help ensure the Stockman is thoroughly tested for conditions before it reaches our customers."

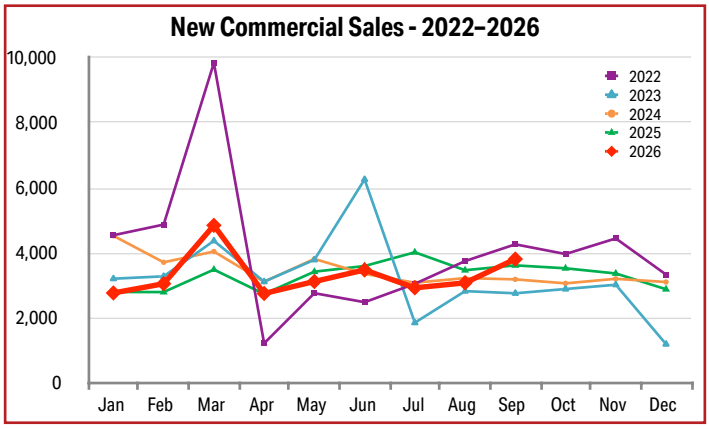
The company, which is based north of Melbourne, has 30 years of experience in engineering, testing and developing new vehicles having delivered programmes for global automotive manufacturers.

"Chery has gone the extra mile with its first-ever ute," says Bernie Quinn, Premcar's chief executive.

"It has created specific attributes for the Stockman's ride and handling, and we are pleased to help test and validate their work in a variety of conditions."

The Stockman represents a significant expansion of Chery's Australasian product portfolio, joining its expanding SUV range.

Further details will be announced closer to the vehicle's arrival later this year.



New Commercial Sales by Make - September 2026

MAKE	SEP '26	SEP '25	+/-%	SEP '26 MKT SHARE	2026 YEAR TO DATE	2026 MKT SHARE
Toyota	1,026	1,026	0.0%	26.9%	8,264	27.8%
Ford	960	952	0.8%	25.2%	7,930	26.6%
Mitsubishi	392	340	15.3%	10.3%	2,994	10.1%
BYD	219	81	170.4%	5.7%	1,336	4.5%
Mercedes-Benz	164	114	43.9%	4.3%	585	2.0%
Iveco	139	53	162.3%	3.6%	309	1.0%
LDV	128	138	-7.2%	3.4%	710	2.4%
Isuzu	118	198	-40.4%	3.1%	1,280	4.3%
Nissan	61	86	-29.1%	1.6%	1,480	5.0%
Kia	57	56	1.8%	1.5%	446	1.5%
Fuso	51	44	15.9%	1.3%	353	1.2%
GWM	45	74	-39.2%	1.2%	478	1.6%
Fiat	40	57	-29.8%	1.0%	274	0.9%
JAC	38	9	322.2%	1.0%	169	0.6%
Farizon	37	0	3,700.0%	1.0%	154	0.5%
Volkswagen	35	79	-55.7%	0.9%	291	1.0%
Scania	34	21	61.9%	0.9%	305	1.0%
Foton	31	11	181.8%	0.8%	138	0.5%
Hino	27	48	-43.8%	0.7%	332	1.1%
Hyundai	26	26	0.0%	0.7%	182	0.6%
Others	183	204	-10.3%	4.8%	1,768	5.9%
Total	**3,811**	**3,617**	**5.4%**	**100.0%**	**29,778**	**100.0%**

New Commercial Sales by Model - September 2026

MAKE	MODEL	SEP '26	SEP '25	+/-%	SEP '26 MKT SHARE	2026 YEAR TO DATE	2026 MKT SHARE
Ford	Ranger	843	823	2.4%	22.1%	7,063	23.7%
Toyota	Hilux	823	766	7.4%	21.6%	5,983	20.1%
Mitsubishi	Triton	392	340	15.3%	10.3%	2,994	10.1%
BYD	Shark 6	219	81	170.4%	5.7%	1,336	4.5%
Toyota	Hiace	177	225	-21.3%	4.6%	2,055	6.9%
Mercedes-Benz	Sprinter	159	91	74.7%	4.2%	500	1.7%
Iveco	Daily	131	43	204.7%	3.4%	241	0.8%
Ford	Transit	110	129	-14.7%	2.9%	807	2.7%
Isuzu	D-Max	68	126	-46.0%	1.8%	831	2.8%
Nissan	Navara	61	86	-29.1%	1.6%	1,480	5.0%
LDV	Deliver 9	55	59	-6.8%	1.4%	390	1.3%
GWM	Cannon	45	74	-39.2%	1.2%	478	1.6%
LDV	T60	39	21	85.7%	1.0%	93	0.3%
Fiat	Ducato	38	57	-33.3%	1.0%	253	0.8%
JAC	T9	37	8	362.5%	1.0%	159	0.5%
Kia	Tasman	34	56	-39.3%	0.9%	393	1.3%
Farizon	V7E	31	0	3,100.0%	0.8%	128	0.4%
Toyota	Land Cruiser	26	35	-25.7%	0.7%	226	0.8%
Isuzu	F Series	26	34	-23.5%	0.7%	201	0.7%
Kia	PV5	23	0	2,300.0%	0.6%	53	0.2%
Others		474	563	-15.8%	12.4%	4,114	13.8%
Total		**3,811**	**3,617**	**5.4%**	**100.0%**	**29,778**	**100.0%**

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COMMERCIAL LICENCES

The NZTA has been contacting more than 300 drivers of commercial vehicles who hold class two to five licences to ask them to resit their practical tests.

The action is part of an investigation into how around 650 tests were carried out.

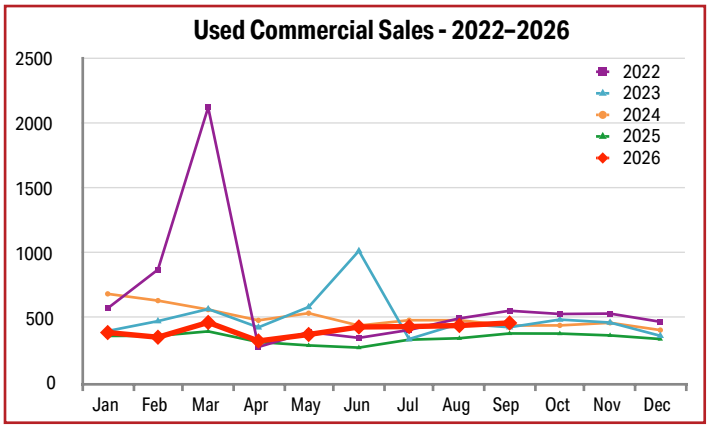
The agency's probe started after it identified some results outside the expected range. Further enquiries uncovered concerns that some practicals might not have been fully completed, might not have included all assessment tasks, and might not have been assessed and recorded accurately.

As a result, Mike Hargreaves, director of land transport, suspended 16 VTNZ testing officers and stood down a further seven as investigations continue.

"When we can't rely on a test result, we need to confirm the driver meets the required standard for their licence class," says an NZTA spokesperson. "Retesting is the most effective way to do that, and we understand this will be inconvenient for affected drivers and businesses they work for."

The agency began contacting affected drivers in July and will continue to do so in stages over coming months. When a driver is linked to the transport organisation register online or driver check account, the NZTA will also notify employers so they are aware of the retesting requirement.

"For most operators, we expect minimal impact. However, there may be some localised disruption in areas where specialist testing capacity is limited. We appreciate your support in encouraging affected drivers to read and respond to any correspondence from us and, when required, complete their retest in the timeframe provided."



SHARK 6 IN TOP FIVE

There were 3,811 new commercials registered during September for a year-on-year rise of 5.4 per cent from 3,617.

The Ford Ranger was the top model with 843 sales and a 22.1 per cent share of the market.

Toyota's Hilux was second on 823 and Mitsubishi's Triton was third with 392. Their market shares were 21.6 and 10.3 per cent.

The top five was completed by BYD's Shark 6 with 219 units and Toyota's Hiace on 177.

Used Commercial Sales by Make - September 2026

MAKE	SEP '26	SEP '25	+/-%	SEP '26 MKT SHARE	2026 YEAR TO DATE	2026 MKT SHARE
Toyota	256	145	76.6%	55.3%	1,864	50.7%
Nissan	67	84	-20.2%	14.5%	590	16.0%
Isuzu	27	19	42.1%	5.8%	164	4.5%
LDV	17	12	41.7%	3.7%	163	4.4%
Ford	15	17	-11.8%	3.2%	179	4.9%
Mitsubishi	14	25	-44.0%	3.0%	97	2.6%
Hino	12	25	-52.0%	2.6%	155	4.2%
Daihatsu	12	5	140.0%	2.6%	96	2.6%
Volkswagen	7	3	133.3%	1.5%	56	1.5%
Suzuki	7	9	-22.2%	1.5%	75	2.0%
Ram	3	1	200.0%	0.6%	8	0.2%
Mazda	3	4	-25.0%	0.6%	45	1.2%
Fuso	3	3	0.0%	0.6%	6	0.2%
UD Trucks	2	5	-60.0%	0.4%	14	0.4%
Renault	2	2	0.0%	0.4%	5	0.1%
Holden	2	2	0.0%	0.4%	15	0.4%
GMC	2	0	200.0%	0.4%	6	0.2%
Fiat	2	3	-33.3%	0.4%	21	0.6%
Dodge	2	2	0.0%	0.4%	14	0.4%
Chevrolet	2	4	-50.0%	0.4%	33	0.9%
Others	6	12	-50.0%	1.3%	72	2.0%
Total	**463**	**382**	**21.2%**	**100.0%**	**3,678**	**100.0%**

Used Commercial Sales by Model - September 2026

MAKE	MODEL	SEP '26	SEP '25	+/-%	SEP '26 MKT SHARE	2026 YEAR TO DATE	2026 MKT SHARE
Toyota	Hiace	228	109	109.2%	49.2%	1,573	42.8%
Nissan	NV200	26	25	4.0%	5.6%	200	5.4%
Nissan	Caravan	18	16	12.5%	3.9%	128	3.5%
Isuzu	Elf	15	8	87.5%	3.2%	88	2.4%
LDV	T60	13	5	160.0%	2.8%	119	3.2%
Daihatsu	Hijet	12	5	140.0%	2.6%	96	2.6%
Ford	Ranger	11	12	-8.3%	2.4%	113	3.1%
Nissan	Vanette	10	15	-33.3%	2.2%	69	1.9%
Toyota	Dyna	10	17	-41.2%	2.2%	77	2.1%
Nissan	NV350	8	23	-65.2%	1.7%	126	3.4%
Hino	Dutro	8	22	-63.6%	1.7%	113	3.1%
Isuzu	D-Max	8	3	166.7%	1.7%	27	0.7%
Fuso	Canter	8	17	-52.9%	1.7%	63	1.7%
Toyota	Hilux	7	8	-12.5%	1.5%	78	2.1%
Suzuki	Carry	7	9	-22.2%	1.5%	73	2.0%
Volkswagen	Transporter	5	0	500.0%	1.1%	23	0.6%
Toyota	Regius	5	6	-16.7%	1.1%	72	2.0%
Fuso	Rosa	4	4	0.0%	0.9%	11	0.3%
Nissan	Navara	4	3	33.3%	0.9%	29	0.8%
Chevrolet	G10	4	6	-33.3%	0.9%	35	1.0%
Others		52	69	-24.6%	11.2%	565	15.4%
Total		**463**	**382**	**21.2%**	**100.0%**	**3,678**	**100.0%**

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Four brands across two sites

The Giltrap Group has taken over the retail representation of Skoda and Volkswagen on Auckland's North Shore.

The move brings the Volkswagen Group's brands together in the heart of the area.

VW is based at Giltrap's site at 150 Wairau Road, while Skoda joins Audi and Cupra across the street in Diana Drive.

The consolidation on the North Shore creates a business model that Giltrap has "refined over decades" in Great North Road, Grey Lynn, and describes as "an award-winning multi-brand arrangement long recognised for delivering world-class customer experience".

Steve Kenchington, the group's chief executive officer, says: "Bringing these four brands together on the North Shore is about delivering the best possible level of customer service. It's a great opportunity for Giltrap."

The Giltrap Group has worked with Tristram European to ensure a smooth transition. The latter, led by Mark Hayward and Wayne Leach, has "championed" Volkswagen and Skoda in that part of the city since Wairau Valley opened in 2007. It will continue to represent both marques in west Auckland and Whangarei.

The Giltrap Group acknowledges the significant contribution Hayward, Leach and the Tristram European team have made over the past 19 years, during which both brands have grown substantially.

The move reflects a broader consolidation of marques in automotive retail and confirms Giltrap's long-term commitment to the Volkswagen Group.

KIWI AUDIENCE GROWS

CarExpert NZ has become the country's largest automotive publisher less than six months after going live.

In July, some 357,794 Kiwis visited the website with almost 50,000 more taking in content from partner platforms Trade Me and Stuff to lift its combined monthly audience to more than 407,000.

The result puts the site at the top of the automotive publishing market after its launch in February as a joint venture with Trade Me and bringing the model behind Australia's biggest new-car platform to this country.

Damon Rielly, chief executive officer of CarExpert, says: "People want a trustworthy source to help them make an informed decision about their next vehicle. That's as true in Auckland as it is in Adelaide."

The platform's proposition is focused on helping buyers make sense of the "increasingly complex" new-car market with independent reviews, news, advice and tools to help them narrow their options and build a shortlist.

Country manager of CarExpert NZ, Mat McNay, says the rapid arrival of new brands and technologies makes independent information important for Kiwis.

"The new-car market is changing quickly," he adds. "People are looking for credible, information-rich sources that help them cut through complexity."

While the platform's first six months focused on establishing the brand and building a strong audience, the next phase is building out across content, video, and CarExpert NZ's partnerships with Stuff and Trade Me.

Imports vs sales – new passenger vehicles

	CAR SALES		VARIANCE	AVG SALES PER DAY	DAILY SALES - 12-MONTH AVERAGE
	IMPORTED	REGISTERED			
Sep '25	9,729	10,351	-622	345	263
Oct '25	9,351	10,704	-1,353	345	267
Nov '25	8,226	10,220	-1,994	341	270
Dec '25	8,889	6,377	2,512	206	268
Jan '26	6,427	9,001	-2,574	290	271
Feb '26	6,781	7,138	-357	255	271
Mar '26	8,525	10,033	-1,508	324	276
Apr '26	6,857	7,102	-245	237	278
May '26	8,113	8,158	-45	263	282
Jun '26	8,565	9,938	-1,373	331	287
Jul '26	13,136	8,712	4,424	281	290
Aug '26	8,692	9,125	-433	294	293
Sep '26	**7,430**	**13,244**	**-5,814**	**441**	**301**
Year to date	74,526	82,451			
Change on last month	-14.5%	45.1%			
Change on Sep 2025	**-23.6%**	**27.9%**			
	LESS IMPORTED	MORE SOLD			

Imports vs sales – used passenger vehicles

	CAR SALES		VARIANCE	AVG SALES PER DAY	DAILY SALES - 12-MONTH AVERAGE
	IMPORTED	REGISTERED			
Sep '25	5,666	7,061	-1,395	235	235
Oct '25	5,422	6,999	-1,577	226	234
Nov '25	5,657	6,777	-1,120	226	234
Dec '25	6,727	6,693	34	216	233
Jan '26	5,136	7,593	-2,457	245	233
Feb '26	6,059	6,948	-889	248	234
Mar '26	7,353	8,221	-868	265	236
Apr '26	10,487	6,780	3,707	226	237
May '26	7,801	7,161	640	231	237
Jun '26	9,200	7,563	1,637	252	239
Jul '26	10,582	8,080	2,502	261	239
Aug '26	6,746	8,151	-1,405	263	241
Sep '26	**7,357**	**8,005**	**-648**	**267**	**244**
Year to date	70,721	68,502			
Change on last month	9.1%	-1.8%			
Change on Sep 2025	**29.8%**	**13.4%**			
	MORE IMPORTED	MORE SOLD			

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HELPING OUT SUPERGRANS

A community organisation that helped to provide more than 96,000 meals last year can now reach more families thanks to new vehicles supplied by Eastland Toyota and the Greenlea Foundation.

From delivering kai to supporting families in remote coastal communities, the team at SuperGrans Tairāwhiti spends much of its time on the road. Staff and volunteers regularly travel around Gisborne and the East Coast making reliable transport essential to its work.

During 2025, SuperGrans distributed 3,887 food parcels, delivered 78 workshops and supported 365 people through its services, which include financial mentoring and social work. It also upcycled or distributed more than 30 tonnes of rescued kai.

Eastland Toyota has provided the organisation with a bZ4X, while the Greenlea Foundation has paid for a new Hilux ute.

The bZ4X Toyota Eastland supplied to SuperGrans Tairāwhiti

The dealership will also work with SuperGrans to deliver workshops covering topics such as basic vehicle maintenance, EV technology, safe driving and career pathways in the car industry.

"Our team spends a lot of time on the road," says Sarah Elliott, strategic adviser at SuperGrans Tairāwhiti. "Reliable vehicles allow us to support isolated whanau, deliver life skills, workshops and programmes in rural communities, move rescued kai or essentials to where they are needed and respond fast during emergencies.

"These vehicles will make a real difference to what we're able to do, while the electric bZ4X also helps us reduce our running costs and environmental footprint."

Aaron Baylis, branch manager of Eastland Toyota, says support for organisations making a difference locally is an important part of the business' role in the region.

"SuperGrans is always there when people need a hand," he adds. "We see the difference it makes in our community. When the opportunity came up to help them get around more easily, it just made sense."

Daily sales climb

There were 7,430 new cars imported in September, the lowest monthly tally in the past five months and 23.6 per cent fewer than the 9,729 units recorded in the same month of 2025.

The year-to-date total is now 74,526 while 82,451 new cars have been sold in the same period.

Daily sales, averaged over the past year, have increased to a new high for that period of 301 units.

As for used-imported cars, there were 8,005 registrations last month and 7,357 units came into New Zealand. Average sales per day were 267 in September and the 12-monthly average was 244 per day, both the best figures for the past year.

The 1,658 new commercial vehicles imported last month were down 34.3 per cent on the previous September and 3,052 sales were completed. Registrations per day, as averaged over the past year, are 110.

As for used commercials, 353 were registered for the first time last month compared to 364 being imported. Year to date, 2,699 have crossed the border.

Imports vs sales – new commercials

	CAR SALES		VARIANCE	AVG SALES PER DAY	DAILY SALES - 12-MONTH AVERAGE
	IMPORTED	REGISTERED			
Sep '25	2,523	2,792	-269	93	106
Oct '25	2,403	3,487	-1,084	112	105
Nov '25	1,292	2,738	-1,446	91	104
Dec '25	2,338	3,426	-1,088	111	103
Jan '26	2,360	3,600	-1,240	116	103
Feb '26	2,074	4,020	-1,946	144	106
Mar '26	3,135	3,627	-492	117	107
Apr '26	1,901	3,621	-1,720	121	108
May '26	1,860	3,498	-1,638	113	109
Jun '26	2,016	3,346	-1,330	112	110
Jul '26	3,755	2,875	880	93	109
Aug '26	1,956	2,762	-806	89	109
Sep '26	**1,658**	**3,052**	**-1,394**	**102**	**110**
Year to date	20,715	30,401			
Change on last month	-15.2%	10.5%			
Change on Sep 2025	**-34.3%**	**9.3%**			
	LESS IMPORTED	MORE SOLD			

Imports vs sales – used commercials

	CAR SALES		VARIANCE	AVG SALES PER DAY	DAILY SALES - 12-MONTH AVERAGE
	IMPORTED	REGISTERED			
Sep '25	270	365	-95	12	15
Oct '25	325	399	-74	13	15
Nov '25	262	315	-53	11	14
Dec '25	330	290	40	9	13
Jan '26	189	274	-85	9	13
Feb '26	252	333	-81	12	13
Mar '26	365	345	20	11	12
Apr '26	380	383	-3	13	12
May '26	175	380	-205	12	12
Jun '26	248	366	-118	12	12
Jul '26	437	339	98	11	11
Aug '26	289	389	-100	13	11
Sep '26	**364**	**353**	**11**	**12**	**11**
Year to date	2,699	3,162			
Change on last month	26.0%	-9.3%			
Change on Sep 2025	**34.8%**	**-3.3%**			
	MORE IMPORTED	LESS SOLD			

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