

AADA ANNUAL REPORT

2025-26



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FOREWORD

The past 12 months have seen significant change across the automotive industry. The AADA has worked hard to ensure its members are protected and supported through what is truly a once-in-a-generation period of transformation. We have continued to lead industry research, releasing analysis on the rapid emergence of Chinese automotive brands in Australia and the extent to which they are expected to shape our market in the years ahead.



Much of the AADA's work over the past year has focused on mitigating the impact of both the proliferation of new vehicle brands and the compliance burden associated with the New Vehicle Efficiency Standard (NVES).

We have achieved meaningful progress in the franchising space. This was underscored by Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's attendance at our State of the Industry event, where he reaffirmed the Government's commitment to introducing unfair contract terms and unfair trading practices protections for all franchisees, including new car dealers.

The past year also saw significant activity in relation to the Australian Consumer Law (ACL). The AADA commissioned Emeritus Professor Jenny Buchan to undertake a comprehensive review of the operation of the ACL as it applies to the automotive sector. The review found that the current framework is failing both consumers and dealers. We will use these findings to advocate for stronger manufacturer involvement when ACL claims arise within dealerships.

The Association has also been actively engaged with the ACCC and Treasury regarding the new mergers and acquisitions regime, which is expected to affect a large proportion of buy-and-sell transactions across our industry.

This year, we launched a new member service providing access to initial advice from our newly appointed General Counsel on franchising, consumer protection and other legal matters.

As we enter the new financial year, the AADA will focus on ensuring franchising protections are implemented, advocating for dealer interests during the review of the NVES, pursuing reform of the ACL, and working with regulators and government to ensure the mergers and acquisitions framework meets the needs of Australia's retail automotive sector.

James Voortman
Chief Executive Officer

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

2026

- › Commissioned a root-and-branch review of the Australian Consumer Law, identifying key reforms needed to improve outcomes for dealers and consumers.
- › Added legal support services for members, providing practical initial legal advice on key dealership issues.
- › Successfully lobbied Government for changes to the DRIVEN Fund to improve support for automotive businesses.

2025

- › Secured funding of \$7.1 million over 2 years to strengthen the ACCC enforcement of the Franchising Code of Conduct.
- › Successfully secured the extension of unfair contract term protections to all motor vehicle dealers.
- › Gained Government commitment to address and extend protections against unfair trading practices.
- › Succeeded in getting Government commitment to fast track review of the point of compliance under NVES to 2026.

2024

- › Advocated and successfully gained meaningful changes to the NVES including halving the penalty, revision of the LCV headline targets & the re-categorisation of large SUVs into the LCV category.
 - › Completed the inaugural Dealer Satisfaction Survey with high response rate.
 - › Won a \$60 million commitment to boost EV charging at Australian dealerships.
 - › Got clarification from the ACCC on primary ACL responsibility being with OEM under the agency model.
-
- › Successfully reversed a proposal in Queensland to only allow registered electricians to work on electric vehicles.
 - › Convinced Government to ensure service and repair work by dealers is covered by the Franchising Code.

2023

- › Developed and delivered the first used vehicle sales reporting tool with AutoGrab, the Automotive Insights Report.
- › Supported Mitsubishi in its fuel labelling court action - which eventually found in favour of the dealer/OEM and avoided a dangerous precedent.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

2022

- › Conducted successive consumer EV sentiment surveys quantifying consumer attitudes to EVs.
- › Worked with government and other industry bodies to ensure dealer interests are represented in the Motor Vehicle Information Sharing Scheme.
- › Established a franchising MOU with the FCAI and MTAA which includes a possible arbitration process.
- › Successfully argued for no changes to the trading arrangements for Queensland motor vehicle dealers.
- › Successfully convinced the NSW state government to abandon plans to prohibit the online selling of used cars and force dealers to pick up stricken vehicles.

2021

- › Successfully lobbied for landmark franchising protections with dealer specific changes added to the Franchising Code of Conduct.
- › Successfully advocated for a collective bargaining class exemption, allowing dealers & their councils to collectively negotiate with franchisors without requiring costly & time consuming ACCC authorisation.
- › Convinced ASIC to not use its product intervention power in extended warranty market. The relaxation of credit laws.
- › Assisted in simplifying electric vehicle incentives in Victoria, NSW & SA.

2020

- › Successful in representation to the ACCC to approve Mitsubishi 10-year warranty.
- › Advocated for apprentice subsidies, instant asset write off extension, and JobKeeper and negotiated temporary variations to employment awards during the pandemic.
- › Convinced Government to improve indemnification of dealers.

2019

2018

- › Convinced the Labor Party to reverse an election commitment on dealer's responsibility for CO2 standards.
- › Successfully advocated for the Government to reverse its proposal to allow new cars to be parallel imported.
- › Advocated for new car sales numbers in VFACTs to report only cars registered.

THE YEAR IN NUMBERS



21,702
SOCIAL MEDIA
INTERACTIONS



70
DEALER
BULLETINS



50
MEDIA REPORTS



20
SUBMISSIONS



31,000
WEBSITE VIEWS



20
NEWSLETTERS



3,240
MEDIA
MENTIONS



1,131,256
TOTAL CONTENT
VIEWS

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

In addition to formal policy work and public submissions, the AADA undertakes a wide range of engagement activities that support and strengthen our advocacy efforts. From direct meetings with national and state/territory Members of Parliament to regular catch-ups with our dealer members, these interactions help inform our advocacy, strengthen industry relationships, and ensures the interests of dealers are well represented across all levels of the industry.



236 NATION WIDE
DEALER VISITS



90
MEETINGS
WITH MPs



235
INDUSTRY
COLLABORATION
MEETINGS

118



GOVERNMENT
CONSULTATION
MEETINGS

168



AUTO INDUSTRY
ENGAGEMENTS

4

MEMBER
SURVEYS



80

POLITICAL
EVENTS



LEGAL ASSISTANCE SERVICE

At the commencement of 2026, AADA expanded its member support offering through the appointment of a dedicated General Counsel, establishing a formal member assistance service to provide timely legal and commercial guidance to dealers.

Since its introduction, the service has become a valued member benefit, providing timely legal and commercial guidance across a broad range of dealership issues. Matters addressed included franchise and dealer agreement disputes, consumer law and warranty claims, tribunal proceedings, regulatory compliance, dealership transactions, debt recovery, data ownership concerns, and dealer-manufacturer disputes. The service also supported members in navigating OEM network changes, business restructures, warranty processes and dispute resolution matters.

Legal and commercial matters supported

21 MATTERS

The service has strengthened AADA’s ability to respond directly to member needs, enabling earlier intervention on emerging issues, reducing the need for members to source external advice in the first instance, and improving member access to informed, industry-specific guidance. The reach of this assistance extended beyond the individual matter count, with several issues involving multiple dealers or matters of broader network-wide significance. AADA also engaged directly with OEMs and distributors on dealer concerns, supported members considering formal dispute resolution and helped identify emerging systemic issues that can inform AADA’s broader policy and advocacy work.

Support related to ACL or franchising issues

62% OF MATTERS

AUTOMOTIVE INSIGHTS REPORT

In partnership with AutoGrab, AADA has continued to deliver valuable insights into Australia’s used-car market following the launch of the collaboration in October 2023. The Automotive Insights Report provides comprehensive analysis of dealer and private listings, including pricing trends, stock movement and buyer behaviour.

During 2026, the reporting model evolved, with AADA continuing to provide dealers with monthly used-car market insights while AutoGrab expanded the public offering through its AIR Pro product. AADA also continued to share key market trends and developments publicly through monthly used-car market snapshots, ensuring important industry data remained accessible to the broader automotive sector.



DEALER ACADEMY

Launched on 20 October 2025, the AADA Dealer Academy is an online training academy built exclusively for dealers and created to support the ongoing success of the country’s dealership network. All AADA members receive complimentary access to the platform, which provides a centralised resource for onboarding, ongoing staff development and strengthening skills across dealership teams.

Through its training marketplace, the Academy offers dealerships a wide range of courses covering sales, service, management, and administration, so every role within a dealership can find relevant development options. The Induction Training helps staff who are new to the industry build essential knowledge of the automotive sector and their dealership. Compliance Training ensures staff understand their obligations under Australian Consumer Law, supporting better, more legally sound customer interactions. Department Training builds the specific skills and competencies needed to excel in particular roles and departments. Personal Development and Professional Development courses help staff and emerging leaders strengthen skills like communication, problem-solving,

and confidence. A Business Development offering introduces the fundamentals of high performance across a dealership’s financial and operational functions.

Content has been developed and curated in partnership with experienced training providers, automotive professionals, trainers and dealers. This collaborative approach ensures the training reflects the practical requirements, responsibilities and challenges faced by dealership teams.

Dealer Principals and managers who’ve used the platform have praised it as engaging, practical, and valuable for both onboarding and ongoing staff development. The Academy is powered by Blue Flag and is accessible via the AADA Academy platform for members and interested dealerships alike. The Academy plans to continue expanding its course offerings throughout 2026.



**11 COURSES
AVAILABLE**

**47 ELEARNING
MODULES**

**605
REGISTERED USERS**

**2,546
MODULES ATTEMPTED**

**5 TRAINING
CATEGORIES**

ACL REVIEW

In December 2025, AADA commissioned Emeritus Professor Jenny Buchan to undertake an independent root and branch review of the Australian Consumer Law (ACL) as it applies to franchised new car dealers and consumers.

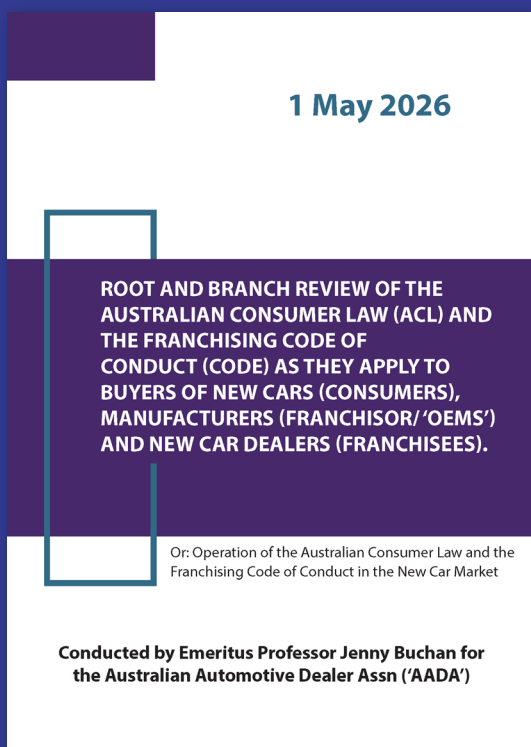
The Review examined whether the current consumer protection framework continues to deliver fair and workable outcomes across Australia's automotive retail sector, where responsibility for manufacturing, retailing and post-sale obligations is shared between manufacturers and dealers.

Over the following months, Professor Buchan undertook extensive consultation with industry participants, government, First Nations groups, legal experts, civil tribunals and consumer stakeholders, including face-to-face engagement with dealers across almost every Australian state. The process provided an opportunity to examine how the ACL operates in practice and consider the challenges

arising from the unique structure of the new vehicle retail market.

The completed Review identified a number of longstanding issues and opportunities for reform in pursuit of better consumer and dealer outcomes. AADA subsequently published Professor Buchan's findings alongside its formal response, outlining a practical pathway towards a more balanced and effective regulatory framework.

The Review provides an important foundation for AADA's ongoing advocacy and engagement with government. As a next step, the AADA will commission an economic assessment for consideration by the Australian Government. This assessment will include a cost-benefit analysis quantifying the impact of maintaining the status quo.



POLICY IMPACTS

Unfair Contract Terms and Unfair Trading Practices - The AADA continued to advocate for stronger protections for franchised new car dealers against unfair contract terms and unfair trading practices. The AADA made a submission to Treasury’s consultation on the proposed unfair trading practices regime, supporting a broad prohibition and arguing that protections should apply to all franchisees regardless of turnover. The submission highlighted the imbalance in bargaining power that can exist in franchise relationships and the limitations of existing protections in addressing harmful commercial conduct. The AADA also engaged directly with Government and industry stakeholders to ensure the reforms recognise the particular circumstances and vulnerabilities of franchisees.



Research - During the year, the AADA commissioned a number of research initiatives examining the increasingly competitive yet unique structure of Australia’s automotive market and the regulatory environment facing franchised new car dealers. This includes a study by Blue Flag, projecting the number of automotive brands in Australia to increase from 67 in 2026 to 75 by 2031, highlighting potential challenges around market consolidation and brand departures. A separate study by BDO examined the impact of Australia’s new merger regime on franchised dealerships, finding that the regime’s turnover-based thresholds disproportionately capture dealership transactions despite limited competition risks.



Supplier Indemnification and Civil Penalties - The AADA continued to advocate for improvements to the Australian Consumer Law, with a particular focus on supplier indemnification and proposed civil penalties. In its response to the Government’s consultation, the AADA highlighted the disconnect that can arise where dealers are responsible for providing consumer remedies while manufacturers control key decisions around diagnosis, repair approvals and reimbursement. The AADA supported stronger consequences where manufacturers fail to meet their obligations to indemnify dealers, alongside protections against retaliatory conduct. The reforms would strengthen manufacturer accountability and help ensure dealers can provide consumers with timely remedies without carrying costs that properly sit with manufacturers.



POLICY IMPACTS

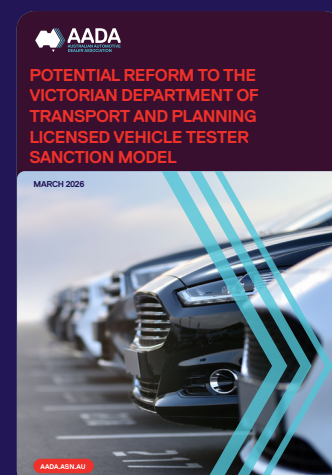
Surveys and NVES - The AADA conducted several surveys throughout the year to inform policy positions and offer insights into market trends. The 2025 Dealer Satisfaction Survey recorded a decline in average dealer satisfaction from 56 per cent to 50 per cent, influenced by a drop in sustained profitability. The fourth EV Sentiment Survey found willingness to pay a premium for EVs had fallen to 2 per cent, reflecting the growing range of affordable EVs, while a June 2026 special edition found cheaper running costs had overtaken environmental benefits as the leading reason to consider an EV. A PPSR survey highlighted delays in removing security interests, with 35 per cent of dealers reporting financial losses. The AADA also continues to monitor brand performance against emissions targets following the release of the first NVES performance results, noting that while the initial period was relatively manageable, compliance is expected to become more challenging in later years.



Pre-Budget Submission and DRIVEN - The AADA's 2026-27 Pre-Budget Submission outlined measures to support franchised new car dealers through significant regulatory and market change. Priorities included reforms to the New Vehicle Efficiency Standard, stronger protections for franchisees, improved regulatory transparency and targeted support for dealerships transitioning to lower-emission vehicles. Following this, the AADA continued its engagement with Government on the DRIVEN program, advocating for funding to better reflect the evolving needs of dealerships. This included support for charging infrastructure and EV-specific equipment, alongside education, training and industry capability initiatives to help dealers make informed investments, develop their workforce and successfully adapt their businesses to the EV transition.



State Affairs - AADA strategically increased its presence in NSW, while extending dedicated resources into Queensland and reinforcing its advocacy in Victoria. Key priorities in state-based submissions include a call for mandatory OEM participation in QCAT dealer-consumer applications. AADA was also invited to present to an NSW Parliamentary Inquiry regarding plans to introduce a Road User Charge (RUC) in NSW. In Victoria, AADA has led advocacy for reforms to the Licensed Vehicle Tester sanction model, which can disproportionately impact multi-site dealerships, and has pursued reforms to the Motor Car Traders Act to reduce the risks faced by dealers defending VCAT claims. In the ACT, AADA is seeking enhancements to the Dealer-on-Line platform to improve used vehicle registration processes. In NSW, the newly established AADA Dealer Advisory Group is working with Transport for NSW to improve the Dealer Vehicle Registration Scheme and Dealer-on-Line system through greater efficiency and process improvements.





\$21.5 billion

TOTAL ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION



3,943

NUMBER OF DEALERSHIPS

\$8.2

billion

TAX & DUTY CONTRIBUTION



64,045

DEALER EMPLOYEES

\$8.2 billion

DEALER WAGES



7,508

APPRENTICES

\$50.6 million

TRAINING INVESTMENT



486,768

CUSTOMER FINANCE CONTRACTS

\$91.3 billion

SALES/ TURNOVER

30 million
WORKSHOP JOBS

2026 LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Each year at the AADA Chairman's Dinner, it is our pleasure to present Lifetime Achievement Awards to recognise individuals and businesses who have given more than 50 years of service to the automotive retail industry.

KERRY AMBROSE-PEARCE OAM

Kerry Ambrose-Pearce's automotive career began in South Australia before a move north in 1980 saw him take the helm of Sutton Motors Darwin. Over the following years, Kerry transformed the business, consolidating sites, adding franchises and building success across Holden, Nissan, Isuzu and Daihatsu before purchasing the business in 1988. A passionate advocate for dealers, he led the Holdback Tax case that delivered a \$500 million outcome for Australian dealers and served as President of AADA, MTAA and the MTAA Superannuation Fund. Awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in 2026, Kerry's legacy is defined by visionary leadership, advocacy, mentorship and service to the Northern Territory community.



LANHAMS MOTOR GROUP

Lanhams Motor Group began in 1937 when Stan Lanhams purchased a modest spare parts and motor repair shop in Leeton, NSW. Across nearly nine decades, the family business grew from a country garage into a respected Riverina dealer group, with Ford, Hyundai, LDV and MG across locations in Leeton and Griffith. Three generations of the Lanham family have helped shape the business, with Stuart returning in 2011 to become Dealer Principal and Mark joining as Financial Controller in 2024. Deeply connected to its community, Lanhams has supported local sport, charity, youth mental health initiatives and rural assistance, while continuing to provide opportunities for the next generation of automotive workers.



WOODLEYS MOTORS

Woodley's Motors began in 1919 when Henry "Harry" Woodley and his wife opened an upholstery business in Tamworth with little more than a sewing machine, hand tools and determination. What started by repairing carriage hoods and early motor vehicles evolved through generations into a major regional automotive business, with Woodley's becoming a Volvo dealer in 1971 and later expanding its brands, facilities and team. Today, the family legacy continues through a business representing multiple brands and serving the Tamworth community across new and used vehicles and automotive services. From pioneering road safety initiatives to supporting the local community, Woodley's has remained true to its founding commitment to helping people travel well and get home safely.



LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD WINNERS

Each year at the AADA Chairman's Dinner, it is our pleasure to present Lifetime Achievement Awards to recognise individuals and businesses who have given more than 50 years of service to the automotive retail industry.

Ken Morgan OAM

Michael Claridge

Warren Smith

Max Kirwan OAM

Reg Hunt

George Altomonte

Laurie Sutton AM

Michael Tynan OAM

Peter Warren

Don Russell

F.R. Ireland OAM

Joe Camilleri

John Woelders

CMV Group

John Hughes

Peter Roberts

Shacks Motor Group

Baker Motors

Callaghan Motors

Dwyers Motors

Wagga Motors

Col Crawford Lifestyle Cars

Melton Toyota

Tait Auto Group

Kerry Ambrose-Pearce OAM

Lanhams Motor Group

Woodleys Motors

LEADING THE WAY

The 2026 AADA Convention & Expo, one of Australia's premier automotive industry events, returned to Sydney from 29-30 July, bringing more than 900 dealers and automotive stakeholders together at ICC Sydney.

This year's program featured a diverse line-up of industry experts across main stage sessions, Expo Live presentations, and practical workshops, equipping delegates with the insights and strategies needed to navigate a rapidly changing automotive retail landscape. Key topics included the evolving new car market, the growing opportunity in used vehicles, artificial intelligence and technology, customer experience, marketing, and dealership performance.

The main stage program explored the forces reshaping automotive retail, including changing consumer preferences, the growth of new and electrified vehicle brands, tightening margins and evolving business models. Sessions also provided practical insights into building stronger used car operations and creating sustainable dealership performance in an increasingly competitive market.

AADA CEO James Voortman also led discussions on the key policy and industry issues affecting dealers, providing delegates with an update on the changing regulatory and commercial environment and AADA's advocacy priorities.

Delegates took part in practical workshop sessions running alongside the main program, covering topics including marketing performance, technology, artificial intelligence, leadership and dealership operations, with a focus on translating new ideas into practical improvements at the dealership level.

Meanwhile, the Expo floor brought together leading automotive suppliers, technology providers and service businesses showcasing the latest products and solutions for dealerships. The Expo Live stage added another layer of practical insight, with presentations covering areas such as AI-powered damage assessment, customer service and modern dealership operations, creating a dynamic hub for networking, discovery and connection across the Australian automotive retail industry.

Registered Delegates

ALMOST 1,000

Exhibitors and Sponsors

76 ORGANISATIONS

Presentations

67 SPEAKERS



AADA CORPORATE MEMBERS

Our corporate members are important to the work of the AADA and to the ongoing strength of Australia's franchised automotive industry. These valued partnerships help ensure that the businesses who support our dealers through services, products, and innovation, are actively engaged in shaping the future of the sector.

Corporate membership is a mutually beneficial relationship built on shared outcomes. When dealers are doing well, so too are the businesses that support them.

Throughout the year, corporate members gain direct access to decision-makers and are provided with valuable opportunities to connect and contribute to industry dialogue. Get in touch to become a part of the program.



STRATEGIC PLAN

MISSION

To be universally recognised as the peak industry association representing the interests of Australian franchised new car and truck dealers, and those businesses contracted to supply, repair and service new cars and trucks, delivering world class advocacy, policy and stakeholder engagement.

MANDATE

The AADA will structure itself such that it is able to advocate exclusively on behalf of franchised new car and truck dealers and suppliers. It will establish and maintain channels of communication with members across all states and territories through which it will communicate on matters of strategy and policy pertaining to dealer welfare. The AADA will principally take direction from the AADA Board and the Australian Motor Dealer Council, both bodies that it is responsible for convening at regular intervals. The AADA will work with members and the AADA Board to ensure that it remains financially secure and appropriately resourced to fulfil its mandate. Externally, the AADA will develop and maintain working relationships with key stakeholders across Government, the industry and the media. The AADA will ensure that it is armed with credible and thorough research to inform its advocacy and communications activities both to members and externally.



PROJECTS

PURSUE AN OPTIMAL REGULATORY REGIME

- › Continuously advocate on the key policy priorities - franchising, emissions policy, consumer affairs, taxation and F&I.
- › Work with relevant MTAs to ensure state and territory policies take the dealers voice into account.

STRIVING FOR FAIRER AND MORE EQUITABLE INDUSTRY RELATIONS

- › Franchise Code Reform
- › Unfair Contract Terms Implementation
- › Unfair Trading Practices Reform
- › Development of Dealer Satisfaction Survey
- › Strengthen Indemnification
- › Support and Empower Dealer Councils

ELEVATING THE DEALERS VOICE IN DECARBONISATION

- › Work with government on NVES implementation
- › Lead work on ensuring transition to point of sale compliance
- › Monitor and report on consumer intent and purchasing behaviour
- › Assist in development of dealer charging fund
- › Educate Governments on issues and cost associated with the transition

STRENGTHENING AADA RESEARCH CREDENTIALS

- › Solidify the Automotive Insights Report as the authoritative source of used car data
- › Build on our annual consumer EV attitude survey
- › Develop the Dealer Satisfaction Survey
- › Expand the Dealernomics offering
- › Routinely commission research on strategic issues

FACILITATING DEBATE AND EDUCATION ON CURRENT AND EMERGING INDUSTRY TRENDS

- › Collect and disseminate information to members on emerging issues such as new distribution models, data, AI, decarbonisation, cyber security
- › Use our annual Convention to enlist experts to lead discussion on industry trends
- › Make use of webinars to allow for wider education on strategic issues
- › Ensure AADA Study Tours are focussed on industry issues



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