

# UPDATE: Choice Of Repairer



By Maurice Donovan

The Choice of a repairer campaign was launched in 2009 by the AAAA, and many are asking what have we accomplished? Why is this campaign taking so long? Are we ever going to see Australia receive the OEM level of data sharing that is seen overseas? Do we really need to have the same level of OEM Data that other countries have? What can I do to help?

## “What have we accomplished?”

- A signed agreement that the OEM's will volunteer their shared data
- We have wide spread awareness of our situation within government and motoring associations
- We are in the process of an ACCC investigation over our situation as a direct outcome of the AAAA campaign.
- We now have a newly formed AAAA council Aftermarket Repair Council of Australia (ARCA)

## “Why is this campaign taking so long?”

- I even ask the same question, I have a close friend who predicted this to take 10 years, and I think he is correct, but we are closing in and we are nearly there.
- We are dealing with a powerful multinational, the car manufacturers and they have so much influence within our governments, that it has been a bit like David and Goliath
- Anything to do with politics takes time and when you are dealing with replacement ministers and a change of political parties it can be like starting all over again.

## “Are we ever going to see Australia receive the OEM level of data sharing that is seen overseas?”

- Short answer is ‘Yes’, but there is a condition to this ‘Yes’.
- We as an industry have to do all we can otherwise the moment we get slack the answer to this question will change from a Yes to a No.

## Do we really need to have the same level of OEM Data that other countries have?

- There are far too many in the repair industry that just cannot see what all the fuss is about. Well you might not think it will affect us but I am sorry it will, and maybe not today, but wait another 5 years’ time it will be too late.
- Good business practice is to look at what threatens our business and make appropriate plans. If I told you that there is a threat that could cause your business to lose money and that had the potential to force you to close up, would you do all you can to protect your business from this treat? Well trust that this will surely happen if we are not proactive to future-proof our business.
- Some people have said I have all the data I need, but you contract your harder diagnostic problems to your auto electrical technician or the likes. How long into the future do you think they can maintain their diagnostic repairs if they cannot access data/ repair information?
- There is still an element of diagnosing a problem by changing a part without proper diagnosis of the fault. This type of diagnostic is not acceptable and is fast becoming impossible with the growing technology that we are now seeing in our cars. We need correct OEM vehicle specific data and information if we want to fix the newer cars that are now coming to our workshops.



- How often are we seeing newer cars that do not have a log books or a manufacturer’s service schedule?
- How many times do we look up oils for a late model vehicle and only see the words: ‘refer to dealer’?
- So you may think data sharing will not affect you but what I have mentioned here affects all of us and it is only going to get worse.

## What can I do to help?

- We need any MTA members to voice their concerns to their associations who are telling the ACCC, that we have all (or most of) the data we need and that the AAAA are overreacting. If this is not your view and I hope it isn't, then you must write to them and complain and ask why are they not representing their member's views and values?
- Write a letter to Richard Dudley the CEO of the MTAA (RichardD@mtaa.com.au) who is suggesting we need to be accredited before being allowed access to OEM info and data sharing. This would mean we would have to be OEM accredited for every different make of car and we would have strict requirements such as only using OEM parts etc. before getting data access. We need to write to him and voice our disapproval.
- Some MTAA affiliated state groups implying that the aftermarket repairer is not competent to service or repair new cars therefore we cannot be trusted and should not have access to OEM data sharing.
- If you are not a member of ARCA (the newly formed AAAA repair council) then please join, there are many benefits but more so you are strengthening the voice behind the ARCA, the more members the more influence the ARCA has when dealing with political issues and government policy.

For more info go to [www.choiceofrepairer.com.au](http://www.choiceofrepairer.com.au)

Maurice Donovan (the MD) is a regular technical contributor to our trade journals. He is passionate about the industry and operates an independent workshop and is a member of many trade Associations. Maurice can be contacted via email [mdonovan@allautos.com.au](mailto:mdonovan@allautos.com.au)