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Edition 244

March-April 2026

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### TRAINING UPDATE



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Cover and contents:  
Chery Tiggo 8 Super Hybrid



## EDITORIAL

## DÉJÀ VU WITH A SIDE ORDER OF CHAOS



Claire Macfie  
claire@autoref.co.za

I find myself wondering these days if living in constant chaos is the new way of life? No sooner do you get a handle on things, then it's obsolete or upgraded. It seems that even as I write this editorial, topics of discussion are changing by the minute.

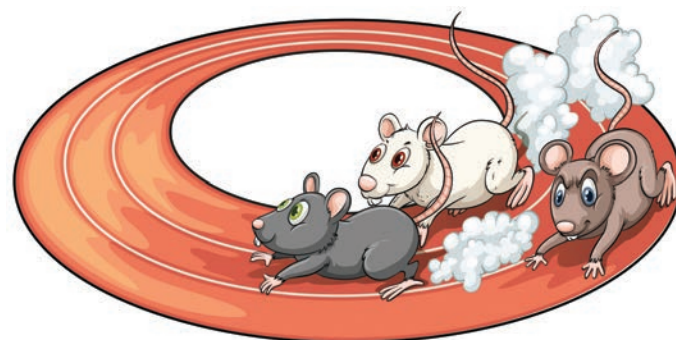
Never before have mergers and acquisitions in the automotive refinish industry happened so fast. To name a few that have taken place in the last six months: The Carlyle Group and Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) purchased a major share of BASF's automotive division, Axalta and Akzo Nobel joined forces as equals and PPG finished acquiring EMM International. What's next we ask ourselves as we barely have time to catch our breath.

And let's not even speak about politics or endless warmongering – or actual war. A great word for the past six months would be tumultuous – and that would be putting it politely.

Closer to home there have also been a lot of shifts in the marketplace, which makes staying on top of things very interesting. The industry is small and often you meet the same faces, but the business cards details have changed. The insane onslaught of Chinese vehicles keeps on coming with the introduction of yet another vehicle brand to our shores. Still no mention of parts and repairability for the majority of these brands. There's always a very quiet moment when any questions are asked of the management team about repair and parts. It's normally followed by the obligatory "We'll get back to you." And then just radio silence.

So how do you rise above the turmoil? Keeping in touch with your circle of suppliers, OEMs, insurers and your business team has become even more essential. This year alone, there will be several industry conferences locally which will present opportunities to do just this. The first of these – the AutoMX conference – has already taken place. Others that are scheduled later in the year are the VDQSA and CRA conferences, as well as Automechanika SA in late October. These events can offer significant educational, skill-building and networking opportunities.

Abroad there is the UK Garage Body Shop gathering at the beginning of June, followed by IBIS Global event in mid-June.



Automechanika Frankfurt is set to take place in September this year and is always an unbelievable place to get ideas, source products and find out what is on the horizon in the near future for vehicle repair and much more.

Catching up with various teams and individuals is key in restoring and bringing these relationships back into prominence. Yes, we have social media and other ways of staying in touch, but there's something very powerful about gathering together. The saying is that two heads are better than one – and problem solving is exactly what these sessions are about. The understanding that you're not alone is equally as important.

Now is as good a time as any to take a step back and consider what is within your control. Take a good look at what is adding value in your business and what is not. Continuing to run on the treadmill faster will not present a successful outcome. Every individual is bewildered by all the information and uncertainty that's coming their way, so drown out the noise as much as possible and simplify a way forward that is tailor-made to suit you.

My question to you is, what are you doing to get out of the rat race? Or have you resigned to keep running in circles forever?

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## AXALTA ANNOUNCES PARTNERSHIP WITH aspaara



**A**xalta, a leading global coatings company, has announced a new partnership with aspaara, an AI optimisation solution designed for body shop planning and operations. Now part of the expanding Axalta Drivus portfolio, aspaara enables customers to streamline scheduling, eliminate bottlenecks, and increase throughput – without adding staff or complexity. The solution integrates seamlessly with existing body shop management systems and adapts in real time to changing workloads.

Specifically developed for the automotive refinish industry, aspaara creates a precise digital replica of a body shop. It runs more than 5 000 simulations per week, using predictive modelling to optimise workflow and improve efficiency. Acting as an AI co-pilot, the system supports every stage of the refinish process, helping reduce repair times, improve on-time delivery rates, and increase utilisation of paint booths and technicians. Customers can see throughput gains of up to 16%.

"This addition reinforces our commitment to being a true business partner," said Fabien Boschetti, Vice President of Sales for Axalta Refinish in EMEA. "Having led innovation in digital colour retrieval and automated mixing systems, leveraging AI is a natural next step as our industry evolves."

Following a successful launch in Switzerland, the partnership is expanding across Europe, the Middle East and Africa. Body shop managers benefit from reduced planning workloads – by up to 75% – and can achieve return on investment in as little as two months, while retaining full control to accept or adjust AI recommendations.

Boschetti added that the partnership redefines efficiency by combining intelligent planning with operational flexibility.

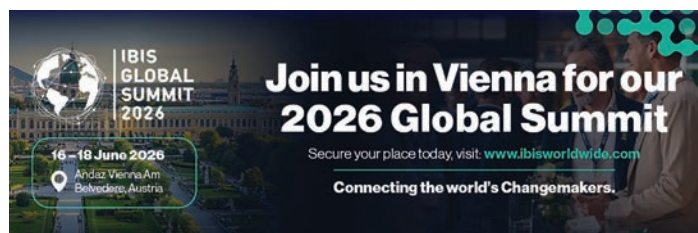
## TRUST AND VALUE REDEFINES SA CAR MARKET

**T**he South African automotive market is undergoing a shift as buyers increasingly consider new-era brands alongside traditional marques. According to Marinus Venter, Country General Manager for Jameel SA – which imports Changan vehicles – consumers are showing greater confidence in choosing wheels based on current performance, value, and features rather than long-standing brand heritage.

Globally, innovation-driven manufacturers are challenging established players. With shared supply chains and rigorous international testing standards, high quality is now achievable across a broader range of brands. This has helped reshape perceptions, with consumers recognising that strong engineering and thorough testing matter more than a badge.

Changan reflects this trend through its global R&D networks, supplier partnerships, and focus on innovation, helping position it as a credible alternative in South Africa. Today's buyers also expect more than competitive pricing – they want advanced technology, safety features, and reliability included as standard fare.

Ultimately, trust is built through transparency, real-world performance, and dependable after-sales support, rather than reputation alone.



## IBIS GLOBAL SUMMIT 2026

**I**BIS has announced that its flagship global event, the IBIS Global Summit 2026, will take place at the Andaz Vienna Am Belvedere in Vienna from 16-18 June 2026, with early bird registration now officially open.

Held under the global theme Connecting Changemakers, the 2026 edition will continue IBIS's evolving conference format, designed to enable more meaningful interaction, deeper collaboration and practical outcomes for decision-makers across the international market.

Early bird registration is now available for a limited time, offering delegates the opportunity to secure their place at a preferential rate.

Registration is now open: <https://ibisworldwide.com/ibis-global-summit-2026/ibis-global-summit-2026-registration/>

For delegate enquiries, contact Emily Miles at [emily@ibisworldwide.com](mailto:emily@ibisworldwide.com)

## BMW BRINGS HUMANOID ROBOTS TO GERMAN PRODUCTION



**T**he BMW Group is set to deploy humanoid robots in vehicle production in Germany for the first time, launching a new pilot project at its Leipzig plant. The initiative marks the European debut of "Physical AI" in BMW's production system – combining digital artificial intelligence with real-world robotics to create intelligent, learning machines capable of operating on the factory floor.

The Leipzig pilot will test how humanoid robots can be integrated into series vehicle production, as well as battery assembly and component manufacturing. BMW says the goal is to complement existing automation, particularly in monotonous, ergonomically demanding or safety-critical tasks, while improving working conditions for employees.

The move builds on a successful 2025 pilot at BMW's Spartanburg plant in the United States, where a humanoid robot supported production of more than 30 000 BMW X3 models. The robot handled precise, repetitive tasks in the body shop, providing key insights into integrating AI-driven robotics into live production environments.

BMW's broader strategy is anchored in a unified IT and data platform that connects its global production network, enabling AI systems to learn, adapt and scale. A new "Centre of Competence for Physical AI in Production" will consolidate expertise as the company expands humanoid robotics across its manufacturing operations.





## TRAINING

# GETTING BACK TO BASICS

Thirty teachers from the basic education department recently attended tailor-made training at MAGALS Training Academy.

**W**hy would the department of basic education be interested in obtaining training on vehicle repair and spray painting? It would seem that finally, the education system is awakening to the opportunity that skills development can offer in employment, as well as tackle the scarce skills these have become locally, as well as globally.

Thirty teachers recently attended tailor-made training across three days at MAGALS Training Academy. Those teachers were exposed to various skills for five days, of which, a day was dedicated to vehicle repair alone.

They were eager and enthusiastic to participate in the training and expressed excitement at being able to be hands-on. Working on the workshop floor let them experience sensitive on-the-job practises.

The programme was designed to expose the teachers to most aspects of the autobody repair centre. Irvine Mukombe and Gift Ndaba were the seasoned instructors that took the teachers under their wings as they proudly showcased the body shop business at the frontline.

After being greeted with coffee during a welcome and introduction session in the morning, the teachers were split into small groups and spread out through the executive workshop, focusing on the key production exercises, namely:

- Disassembly of damaged vehicle parts
- Panelbeating
- Preparation of painting – applying primer and flattening
- Assembly of vehicles from the paint shop.

### Concluding with polishing

The parties involved expressed their appreciation and satisfaction with the team's commitment and enthusiasm throughout the training period. The teachers enquired about the possibility of developing a workshop programme that would fit around their busy weekly schedules, suggesting that future training be held during school holidays. This proposal was well received, and further updates will be shared as plans progress.



From left to right: Irvine Mukombe, Elijah Matlaku and Gift Ndaba, who took the teachers under their wings during training.



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- The cup is made of POM materials; and all gaskets are solvent-resistant PTFE materials.
- Balanced and lightweight body offers high performance and easy spraying.

#### TECHNICAL DATA

|                            |            |
|----------------------------|------------|
| Model                      | RS8809GR   |
| Atomization technology     | LVMP       |
| Recommended spray pressure | 0.5-2.5bar |
| Optimum spray pressure     | 2.0-2.5bar |
| Standard nozzle size       | 1.3mm      |
| Spraying distance          | 17-21CM    |
| Air consumption            | 285L/min   |
| Pattern length             | 280-290mm  |
| Paint cup size             | 600ml      |
| Transfer rate              | ≥65%       |
| Atomized particle          | 20-40um    |



LVMP



For more information on the Refine range of products contact Luxor Paints on +27 11 397 6622







## PRODUCT PROFILE

# FIREFLY POLISH COMBINES STATE-OF-THE-ART FORMULATIONS WITH FAST SURFACE FINISHING

Luxor Paints has released a number of polishing system options with developments on its Firefly range that combines state-of-the-art formulations with fast surfacing finishing.

The most popular of the Firefly options is the M3 system which uses fast acting self-diminishing abrasive technology and works with express results to deliver a high gloss wet-look finish. It is used with ultra fine abrasive water paper or dry abrasive discs of 1500 and above grit sizes.

Firefly also recommend and stock a range of new hand sanding blocks to reduce the problems of finger furrows in the sanding operation, using very small amounts of regular grade Firefly. The first step can be accomplished either with a wet sanding or dry sanding process.

It is recommended to be used with special white or yellow foam polishing heads for fast gloss recovery with a two-step compound polish. For a flawless paint job complete with a stage 3 liquid protection premium polish. It is ideal for all types of body shop paintwork and rectification work.

Firefly's attention to detail is topped off with a range of back-up pads from soft to ultra-soft pads used in different process recommendations.

Entry level pricing advantages are emphasised by the various systems on offer. The one stage M1 brand is available with a low-speed Firefly polisher along with a double sided lambswool mop and two soft polishing foam mops. Supercut delivers a quick return to high gloss levels and is available in four popular pack sizes from Luxor Paint distributors.

Further to these gloss polishing systems a new M5 Liquid Wax and special foam application pad enables the premium wax - which contains no silicone - to deliver a top wax liquid protection to freshly polished paintwork. This must be used with a soft microfibre cloth to clean the panel.

In terms of process preferences, the complete Firefly range of systems will enable body shops to develop the exact polishing process that delivers perfect results every time.

The new Firefly polishing system stand shows the entire range of premium systems for professional and DIY use.







# FIREFLY

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For more information about the Firefly Range of products, contact Luxor Paints at 011 397 6622 or visit [www.luxorpaints.co.za](http://www.luxorpaints.co.za).



## REFINISHING TIPS

## NAVIGATING COMPLEX OEM COLOURS

**P**roper repair planning on the paint side in the fast-evolving world of automotive repair; meeting OEM requirements for paint has become increasingly critical, particularly with the rise of advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS) and radar technologies.

Film thickness requirements are at the forefront of these considerations, especially in areas close to sensors or across entire panels. As technology advances, the precision of paint application becomes crucial, not only for aesthetic purposes but also for functional integrity.

### Understanding film thickness

Film thickness refers to the thickness of the paint layers applied to a vehicle. OEMs have established specific requirements for film thickness, which are crucial for ensuring that sensors and radar systems function correctly.

These requirements are often detailed in position statements and technical bulletins, specifying maximum film thickness and indicating which colours are permissible with specific paint lines. These documents are typically provided separately: one detailing the required thicknesses and another listing colours that affect radar sensitivity.

After reassembling ADAS-equipped vehicles, they typically undergo calibration. If a vehicle fails to calibrate, it may be due to not meeting these OEM paint requirements, which could result in liability issues for the shop and compromise customer safety.

Therefore, adhering to these guidelines is not just a matter of compliance but also a critical safety measure.

### Navigating radar sensitive paint formulas

The toners used in some paint lines can block or affect long-range radar. Fortunately, the mixing software from some paint companies is designed to alert technicians if these toners are present in a colour formula.

When a colour code is keyed in, the system may prompt the user to confirm if they are working on a radar-sensitive vehicle. If so, it will provide a radar safe formula, which typically means the colour cannot be tinted. In such cases, performing a spray-out card for a visual sample is recommended to determine if blending into surrounding panels is required.

However, challenges arise when a radar-safe formula is not available in a particular paint line. This situation necessitates subletting the job

to another shop or ordering paint from a different line that meets OEM requirements, potentially incurring additional costs and delays.

### Adhering to manufacturer position statements

Position statements from manufacturers also outline non-repairable areas, specifying parts of the vehicle that cannot be repaired or repainted. For example, certain areas of the bumper may be deemed non-repairable, or in some cases, the entire bumper cannot be repaired at all.

Ignoring these guidelines could lead to significant liability issues. Additionally, some vehicles have specific callouts regarding how many times a particular part can be painted.

If a bumper is painted and the colour does not match adjacent panels, it cannot be simply sanded and repainted. Instead, a brand-new part must be used, incurring additional costs for the body shop, which likely will not be compensated for the time, parts, and materials used in the rework.

### The importance of proper repair planning

Proper repair planning is essential for meeting OEM requirements, even on the paint side. It is crucial to check these requirements for every single paint job, as guidelines can change on a weekly or monthly basis.

Film thickness must be meticulously checked on every vehicle both before and after painting to ensure compliance. Every shop should be equipped with both ferrous and non-ferrous film thickness gauges to accurately measure these specifications.

Standard operating procedures are also key because there is often only one opportunity to get it right, and any deviation or error could result in failing to meet OEM requirements in some cases, repainting may not be an option, which could result in purchasing a new part at the shop's expense. Adhering to these practices can help ensure quality, compliance, and cost-efficiency in the long run.

As technology in the automotive industry continues to advance, the demands on painting techniques and equipment become more stringent. Achieving compliance with OEM paint requirements is not just about meeting standards, it is about ensuring the safety and functionality of modern vehicles.

By understanding and adhering to these complex requirements, shops can protect themselves from liability, ensure customer safety, and maintain their reputation for quality and precision.



## DID YOU KNOW?

## FIRST CAR BUILT WAS...

**M**ost people associate Henry Ford with the invention of the car, but the first automobile was actually built by Karl Benz in 1885. His Benz Patent-Motorwagen was the world's first gasoline-powered vehicle, paving the way for the automotive revolution.







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## WHAT'S HOT?

## SANTAM FORGING A FUTURE-FIT PATH BEYOND TRADITIONAL INSURANCE SOLUTIONS

**A** renewed philosophy is taking place at Santam, one focused on restoring balance in our business relationships with our insured policyholders. Six months into its implementation, this renewed approach has already begun to yield meaningful insights into overcoming the friction points that so often arise in post-accident repair scenarios. The objective is clear: to deliver fair outcomes in stressful situations while strengthening customer retention through improved process integrity.

The automotive manufacturing landscape is evolving at a pace few within Santam's approved network of body shops could ever have envisioned. With an increasing number of global brands operating in the South African market, the industry faces a technological tsunami. Keeping up with this wave of innovation presents daily practical challenges in collision repair.

This reality has required a shift in thinking, particularly in how Santam manages its value-chain relationships. Developing a process-driven partnership within the collision repair trade is no longer optional; it is essential. Santam's increased involvement in this space forms part of a deliberate effort to reduce friction that too often clouds the customer journey in crash repair.

Two areas of concern currently require particular attention. The first example relates to unclear material paint costs reflected in damage repair quotations. Mandated quotation systems sometimes generate unachievable repair times and variable paint material volumes, leading to inconsistencies in input costs. Santam is actively investigating this area of post-accident repair methodology to improve transparency and cost accuracy for all parties concerned.

The second example relates to automotive glass replacement. It is not uncommon for a body shop, in pursuit of securing replacement work, to quote on the lowest-cost factory screen. They may later discover that a model such as a BMW 3 Series can have up to four different windscreen derivatives. This can result to roundtripping, incorrect orders, refitment delays and associated costs. These challenges can create reputational damage, and the hidden expenses can further frustrate policyholders at an already stressful time.

Santam's closer co-operation with body repair stakeholders has already highlighted the need for specialised training among frontline damage assessment staff. A deeper understanding of the repair process – quote by quote, cycle by cycle – is becoming imperative. People skills at every level will also be critical in addressing repair delays and

fostering a "no-reject" philosophy in the policyholder's repair journey.

By focusing on these systemic inefficiencies, Santam's objective is to restore brand balance through critical and innovative business decisions. Responding to operational complexities our policyholders face requires alignment with the realities of an ever-evolving vehicle technology landscape.

While assessment-phase costing methodologies have evolved over the past five decades, elements of the system remain, in certain respects, unfit for purpose. A redesign is required to address the technical innovation that lies ahead such as electrification and advanced driver systems. At the same time, a repair-expertise crisis is quietly unfolding. Damaged vehicles entering body shop doors today demand levels of skill and technical competence that the industry is still working to fully align with pre-accident restoration standards.

This journey will not be for the faint-hearted. Every accident is unique, and no algorithmic smoothing or computerised control system can standardise the human and technical variables involved. Santam is therefore embarking on a new path that reinforces professional service obligations and fiduciary responsibilities. The goal remains constant: to honour policyholders' aspirations against financial loss while upholding the core principle of treating customers fairly. These are, after all, the fundamental obligations of short-term insurance.

Changes across the industry are already visible, even if the full impact remains unknown. As South Africa's leading short-term insurer, Santam is positioning itself to meet the challenges of this diversified collision repair market. We remain committed to delivering increased practical value under a new philosophy, while steadfastly upholding a dual commitment to protect our policyholders against loss and always treating them fairly.





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Founded in 1979, INDASA is one of Europe's leading manufacturers of high-performance coated abrasives, sold in over 100 countries. The range includes sheets, rolls, discs, strips and sponges, along with ancillaries such as sealants, polishes and tapes - available in multiple sizes and grits.



For more information on the range of INDASA products contact Luxor Paints on: (011) 397-6622



PROFILE

# AYANDA MTETWA, A SELF-MOTIVATED TOUR DE FORCE

story by Claire Macfie  
pics by Jay Groat







Ayanda Mtetwa (front centre) is seen with her students at MAGALS Training Academy.



Ayanda encourages her students to put their own stamp on their projects to test the skills they are busy learning.

story by Claire Macfie  
pics by Jay Groat

**T**hey say that dynamite comes in small packages, and this would probably best describe Ayanda Mtetwa, as she's definitely a focused and driven woman in the industry! *Automotive Refinisher* took time out to get to know her journey a little better.

**Q** How long have you been in the industry?

**A** I have been in the automotive and auto body repair industry for 23 years. It has been more than a career – it has shaped my resilience, leadership, and long-term commitment to transforming the industry. Over the years, I have worked across operational roles, business ownership, and training environments, growing alongside the industry as it evolved.

**Q** How did you come into the industry?

**A** Entering the automotive industry at a time when women were rarely seen in workshop environments meant there were very few clear pathways and very few visible examples of women thriving in technical spaces.

The person who changed my trajectory was Val Renkal, who at the time owned one of the BMW franchises. She saw potential in me before I fully recognised it in myself. She gave me an opportunity that could easily have gone to someone else. It was more than employment – it was affirmation. It was someone in a position of authority saying: 'You belong in this industry.'

That belief carried me through the early years when credibility had to be earned repeatedly. From that moment I made a commitment that when I have capacity and influence, I will open doors for other women just as she opened one for me.

**Q** Have you done any studying towards what you know now or is it all hands-on learning?

**A** My knowledge comes from a combination of hands-on experience and continuous learning. Auto body repair is highly practical, but long-term success requires understanding business management, insurer compliance, operational systems, and financial discipline. Over 23 years, I have continuously developed myself both technically and strategically.

**Q** What was the highlight of having your own body shop?

**A** Owning Inevitable Auto and Electric was one of the proudest chapters of my journey. The highlight was building something from the ground up – creating employment, establishing systems, and earning trust from clients and insurers. It proved that women are capable of leading, operating, and sustaining technical businesses in this industry.

**Q** What were the challenges of having your own body shop?

**A** The industry is capital-intensive and operationally demanding. Cash flow pressures, insurer compliance standards, and maintaining productivity while delivering quality workmanship were constant challenges. Additionally, as a woman in a male-dominated space, credibility often had to be earned repeatedly, which required resilience and excellence. Unfortunately, the economic impact of the pandemic, combined with significant personal challenges at the time, including going through a divorce, created pressures that became unsustainable. Although closing the business was difficult, that period strengthened my resilience and deepened my understanding of sustainability and risk management.

**Q** How did you come into training at MAGALS Training Academy?

**A** My transition into training was intentional. After years in operations, I recognised that access into the industry – especially for women – was not structured. Training allows me to institutionalise opportunity and create clear pathways for women to enter, grow, and lead within automotive parameters.

**Q** What is your highlight of your current position?

**A** My greatest highlight is witnessing transformation. Seeing women grow from uncertainty to confidence in technical workshop environments is incredibly rewarding. It is not just skills development – it is confidence development.

**Q** What are the challenges about training?

**A** The industry is evolving rapidly with electric vehicles, hybrid systems, and advanced technologies. Training must continuously adapt. Beyond technology, one of the key challenges is shifting perceptions and dismantling the idea that technical competence has a gender.

**Q** Do you mentor another specific person or a few?

**A** Yes, I mentor several individuals, particularly women entering the automotive sector. Mentorship is about shortening the struggle curve, providing visibility, and offering guidance in spaces where representation has historically been limited.

**Q** How do you wish to leave your mark on this industry?

**A** I want to leave a structural legacy. I do not want to be remembered simply as a woman who succeeded in automotive matters – I want to be remembered as someone who made it easier for other women to enter, lead, and thrive. If it becomes ordinary to see women running body shops and leading technical teams, then meaningful progress has been achieved.

Ayanda concluded: "Opportunity changes lives. Someone once opened a door for me. My mission is to ensure that door remains open – and wider – for as many women as possible."



## COATINGS UPDATE

## 20 YEARS OF baslac® - A MILESTONE OF RELIABILITY

From its launch to today's 20-year milestone, baslac® has stayed true to its mission: providing high-quality, easy-to-use, and cost-effective refinishing solutions for body shops worldwide.

Its continued growth shows how much body shops trust the brand's balance of performance, simplicity, and value. With the 30 Line and 35 Line at the core of its portfolio, baslac® continues to deliver professional results that painters can rely on – now and into the future.

### baslac® 30 Line & 35 Line: Delivering 20 years of smart efficiency

As baslac® celebrates its 20th anniversary, the brand continues to stand out as one of the most reliable and accessible refinish coating solutions in the global automotive aftermarket. Designed by BASF to offer high-quality results at an affordable price point, baslac has grown into a trusted partner for body shops seeking speed, consistency, and value. Two of its most popular systems, the baslac 30 Line and 35 Line, highlight exactly why the brand continues to thrive after two decades.

#### baslac® 30 Line – Basecoat system

The 30 Line is baslac's versatile basecoat solution, engineered for efficiency in everyday repair jobs. Known for excellent hiding power and accurate colour matching, it provides a smooth and dependable finish for solid, metallic, and pearl colours.

#### Pros

- Fast application – quick flash-off times help increase productivity.
- Strong colour accuracy – reliable matching using BASF's global colour database.
- Good coverage efficiency – less material needed to achieve full hiding.
- Easy to blend – ideal for partial repairs or spot work.

#### baslac® 35 Line – 2K Topcoat System

The 35 Line is a high-performance 2K topcoat that delivers durability and gloss retention for long-lasting refinishing jobs. It is designed for workshops looking for a robust, cost-efficient topcoat with excellent flow properties.

#### Pros

- Strong durability – resistant to weathering and mechanical wear.
- High-gloss finish – produces a premium look with minimal effort.
- Smooth application – easy to spray with consistent flow and levelling.
- Excellent drying times – helps reduce booth occupancy and improve throughput.

## WHAT'S HOT?

## MOST REPAIRED CAR PART; WIRING LOOMS

by Alan Feldberg



Accident Assist has reported that wiring looms are the most commonly repaired car part following a collision, featuring in 99% of over 14 500 repairs last year. These wires are crucial for powering and connecting advanced systems such as parking sensors, cameras, and adaptive cruise control, and often

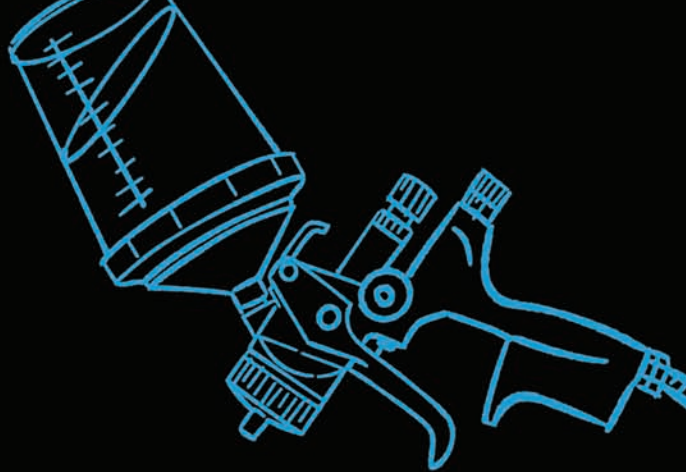
require recalibration as well as repair. Bumper units were the second most frequently fixed parts (58%), followed closely by rear bumper crash beams and fixings (57%). Other frequently repaired components include front bumper crash beams (32%), door locks and trims (12%), roofs (12%), hinges (7%), front doors (7%), rear doors (5%), and lighting

units (3%). Managing Director Tim Rankin highlighted that modern car repairs go beyond simple part replacement, as today's vehicles rely on complex, safety-critical technologies. The rise in semi-autonomous driving systems has increased the need for skilled repairs and precise recalibration, making vehicle recovery more technical and time intensive.





**20  
years**



For 20 years, baslac has supported body shops with practical, dependable refinishing solutions. The baslac 30 and 35 Lines build on this heritage, offering strong colour accuracy, easy application, and consistent performance. Rooted in long-term expertise, these lines help painters achieve efficient, high-quality results every day.



baslac Refinity streamlines refinishing with easy digital colour tools, product guidance, and workflow support, helping body shops improve accuracy, reduce waste, and maintain consistent quality.

Learn more.  
[baslac.com/emea](https://baslac.com/emea)







Gary Gueli spoke about the evolution of body shop approvals. He and his team worked tirelessly to deliver an amazing event.



From left to right: Busi Maile; C3 Training Academy, Michael Mogashoa; NF Apprentices and Claire Macfie; Automotive Refinisher - celebrating training legacy for 15 years and counting!



The PPG team showcased their digital products that help make your business run more efficiently.



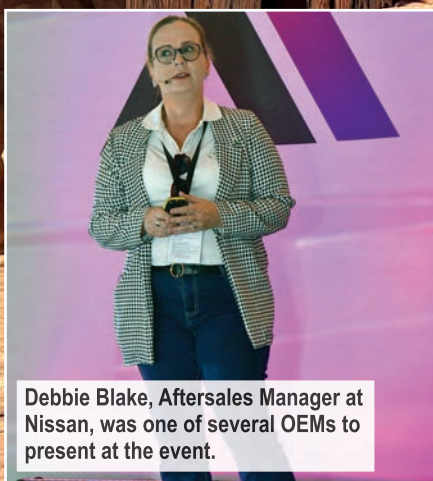
CMC Auto Panel won first prize in the Ford National Certified Collision Repairers Loyalty Programme which is aimed at awarding Collision Repairers for excellence in Brand, Compliance and Customer Experience.



Shaun Finney (left) global technical and sales development manager and Kevin Schwartz of Concept 23, enjoyed engaging with the attendees, highlighting their wares for the body shops.



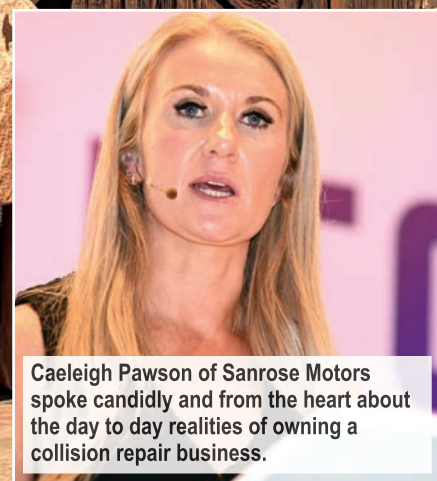
Tammy Robberts (left) and Dustin Williams were on hand to introduce the newly formed company PACE Distributors.



Debbie Blake, Aftersales Manager at Nissan, was one of several OEMs to present at the event.



There were many spot prizes given away at the AutoMX Conference.



Caeleigh Pawson of Sanrose Motors spoke candidly and from the heart about the day to day realities of owning a collision repair business.



**T**he AutoMX Conference at Sun City brought together the collision repair industry for two full days of focused conversation, practical insight, and, just as importantly, connection. From the outset, it was clear this was a well-run event. Attendance was strong across the board, with OEMs, body shops, insurers, and suppliers all showing up in numbers that reflected the industry's appetite for alignment.

The presence of major OEMs, including Ford, BYD, Mahindra, Nissan, and Stellantis, gave the conference real weight. Ford added a celebratory note with its awards ceremony, while across the sessions, OEMs used the platform to talk less about the present and more about what's coming next. Upcoming model launches and evolving approval programmes were recurring themes, signalling an industry that is actively reshaping itself.

The exhibition area mirrored that energy. It remained consistently busy, not just with foot traffic but with genuine engagement and purposeful conversation. They were there to solve problems, build relationships, and understand where the industry is heading.

Proceedings were steered by host Al Prodders, who also took to the stage as a

keynote speaker. His presence helped set a tone that balanced professionalism with accessibility as well as humour thrown in.

One of the standout contributions came from Caeleigh Pawson, who spoke candidly about the day-to-day realities of running a collision repair business. She touched on both the pressures and the pride that defines the industry, highlighting operational challenges while reminding the audience of the skill and resilience that underpin the sector.

Gary Gueli from AutoMX unpacked the evolution of approval programmes following the findings of the Competition Commission. His session provided clarity on where things stand and where they may be heading, an area of ongoing concern for many in attendance.

Technology and efficiency were also in focus. The upcoming VIN and warranty validation feature on the AutoMX platform drew interest, while enhancements to Save-A-Car are already making an impact. The promise of a 24-hour turnaround time from OEMs suggests a shift toward faster, more responsive processes, something the industry has long needed.

Skills development emerged as a critical theme. Michael Mogashoa from NF Apprentices did not soften the message.

The need for training is urgent, and the gap is real. He didn't skirt around the sticking point of merSETA and we look forward to the way around this. The NF Apprenticeship programme's strength lies in identifying and supporting talent before the student gets to the workshop floor, and then working the entire journey with the learner and business. The challenge, as he framed it, is scale and consistency.

There was also a strong sense of inclusion in initiatives like the township hub programme presented by AIDC, which is already showing encouraging results as it rolls out.

Away from the conference floor, the event made space for people to connect on a more personal level. A team-building session in the heat of the day proved surprisingly effective, breaking down barriers across different parts of the industry. By the time the gala dinner came around, those connections were evident. With Dr Victor and the Rasta Rebels providing the soundtrack, the evening felt like a genuine celebration.

Behind it all, the AutoMX team delivered. The event ran smoothly and the industry showed up. It's a simple formula, but not an easy one to execute, and they got it right.

## CONNECTING AUTOMX INDUSTRY CONFERENCE

The all ladies team, MX Mavericks, had a blast during the ISUZU sponsored treasure hunt, while getting to know others from within the

**AUTOMOTIVE**  
REFINISHER



## TECHNIQUE

## HOW TO CLEAN YOUR SPRAY GUN

**C**leaning a spray gun promptly after use is the difference between a tool that lasts years and one that ruins your next project. Whether using HVLP or conventional spray guns, the process revolves around flushing, disassembling, and soaking key components to prevent hardened paint residue.

Here are a few tips on cleaning your spray gun.

- Safety first - use gloves and respirator and work in a well-ventilated place.

- Remove all residual paint.
- Do an initial flush.
- Do a spray through.
- Clean the cups.

The steps will be disassembly, detailed cleaning and soaking, final rinse and dry,

reassembly and lubrication.

**Extra Tips**

- Between coats you don't need to fully clean the gun. Just rinse and keep everything clean.
- Always strain paint into the pot to prevent clogs before they happen.
- Replace worn parts regularly.
- Check for damaged, bent, or worn parts that could cause leaks.

**Final tips**

- Always soak parts, scrub using small brushes or toothpicks to clean small holes in the air cap and inside of the nozzle.
- Clean air passages.
- Rinse parts with clean solvent.
- Dry completely using compressed air to dry all parts, especially the small holes and

internal channels. This prevents corrosion.

- Wipe the gun body down.
- Reassemble everything and lubricate.
- Do a test run.

Spray gun cleaning kits are available from Vermont Sales.

**AirCRAFT brand**

The AirCRAFT brand offers a comprehensive solution for all your pneumatic requirements. The range offers a wide selection of pneumatic tools, spray painting equipment, couplers, hoses, and pneumatic tool accessories. Visit the AirCRAFT website for a comprehensive overview of the brand: <https://www.vermontsales.co.za/Brand-AIRCRAFT>

You can view any product before you buy it at their exhibition centre located next to the Vermont Sales head office in Midrand.

Unscrew the front air cap assembly, soak the parts, rinse and dry properly.

Remove the nozzle. Do not soak the entire gun body in solvent, as this can destroy internal seals and lubricants. Use a toothpick to avoid damage. Clean the air passage holes on the internal nozzle. Blow dry components with clean compressed air then lubricate needle with non-silicone gun lube oil to ensure smooth action.

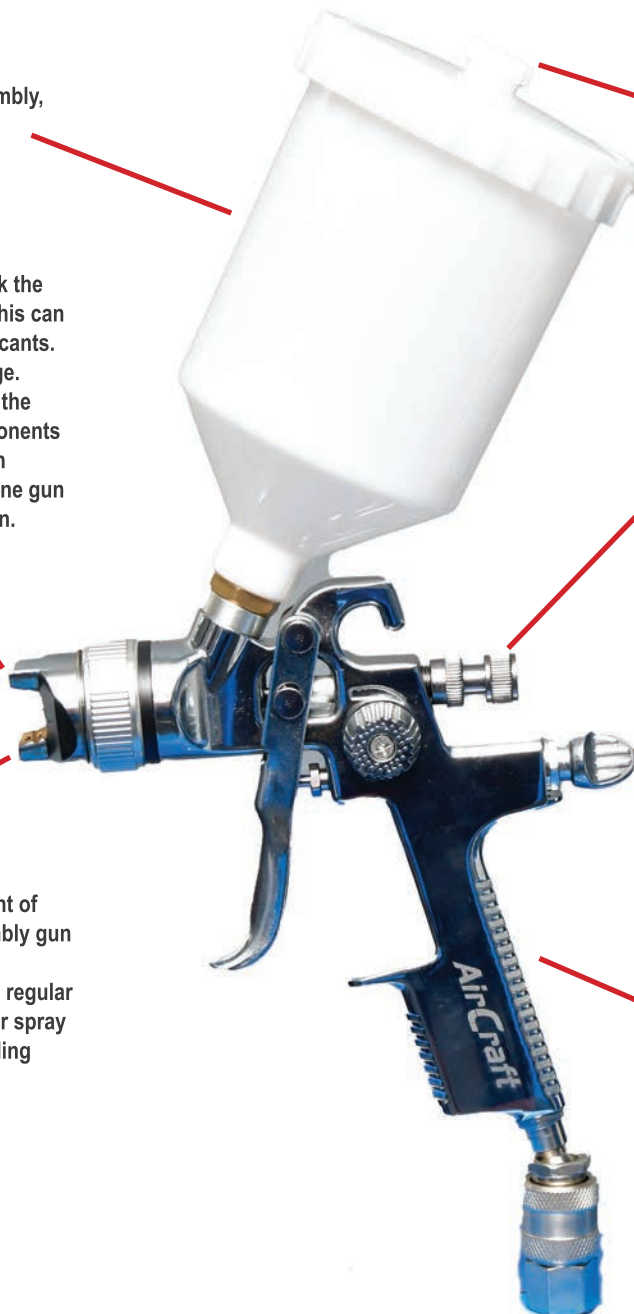
Always ensure that the air vent on the lid is clean to avoid slow delivery of fluid material. Clean with lacquer thinners or base solvent.

Unscrew the fluid knob from the gun, remove the spring and carefully pull the needle out. Carefully soak in solvent, then rinse with clean fresh solvent. Dry completely to prevent corrosion.

Lastly, rinse with a small amount of thinners/water to ensure assembly gun is working correctly.

Always replace worn parts on a regular basis to overcome leaks or poor spray pattern layouts, like spray banding uneven delivery.

Clean the gun body. Use a rag dipped in solvent and remove all dried paint.







[www.aircraftair.com](http://www.aircraftair.com)



# STRIKE WITH PRECISION, FINISH WITH PERFECTION! WITH THE SG AC2000 SERIES

## HVLP GRAVITY FEED SPRAY GUNS

| TECHNICAL DATA                                     |                         |           |                  |                  |                 |               |                                                                                     |                |              |
|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| MODELS                                             | STD. NOZZLE             | FEED TYPE | OPTIMAL PRESSURE | MAXIMUM PRESSURE | AIR CONSUMPTION | PATTERN WIDTH | SPRAY PATTERN                                                                       | SPRAY DISTANCE | CUP CAPACITY |
| SG AC2000-01VP<br>SG AC2000-02VP<br>SG AC2000-03VP | 1.3mm<br>1.4mm<br>1.7mm | GRAVITY   | 3.5BAR/50PSI     | 4.0BAR/57PSI     | 11-12 CFM       | 260~290mm     |  | 200mm          | 600ml        |





## ADAS

# STATIC AND DYNAMIC VEHICLE CALIBRATIONS - WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

There are two primary methods of advanced driver-assistance systems (ADAS) calibration: static and dynamic. If you're in the automotive industry, you already know that proper sensor calibration is non-negotiable. The challenge is understanding which method to use and when. OEMs have different requirements; some vehicles demand dual calibration, and external factors like road conditions and workshop setups add complexity. In this guide, we'll dive into the technical differences, procedural requirements, and real-world considerations for static and dynamic calibration.

### What is static ADAS calibration?

Static ADAS calibration is a process where a vehicle's Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS) sensors are calibrated while the vehicle remains stationary. Static calibration is performed in a controlled indoor environment using specialized tools and targets. This method is best for precision and consistency, which is key for the accuracy of systems like lane departure warnings, adaptive cruise control and collision avoidance.

### How static calibration works

The process begins with a pre-calibration inspection of the vehicle's ADAS sensors and related components, such as cameras and radar units. Any obstructions, misalignments or damages must be addressed before calibration begins.

Next, the vehicle is positioned in a calibration bay, where OEM-specific calibration targets are placed at precise distances and angles relative to the vehicle.

Once the targets are in place, a diagnostic scan tool is used to initiate the calibration process. This tool communicates with the vehicle's onboard computer, guiding the sensors to align correctly with the reference targets. The process can take anywhere from 30 minutes to several hours, depending on the complexity of the system and the number of sensors being calibrated.

### When is static calibration required?

Manufacturers specify static calibration for certain ADAS features where real-world driving conditions cannot guarantee accurate sensor alignment. Some common scenarios where static calibration is mandatory include:

- Windshield Replacement – Cameras mounted on the windshield must be recalibrated after glass replacement for lane-keeping and pedestrian detection systems to function correctly.
- Front and Rear Bumper Repairs – Radar sensors behind bumpers control adaptive cruise control and automatic emergency braking. If misaligned, they can cause false alerts or system malfunctions.

- Suspension Adjustments or Alignments – Changes to a vehicle's ride height, such as replacing shocks, springs or tires, can alter sensor positioning, requiring recalibration.
- Certain OEM Requirements – Manufacturers like Honda, Toyota, and Volkswagen mandate static calibration for specific models before any dynamic calibration can be performed.

Static calibration requires a well-equipped calibration shop and trained technicians to meet manufacturer standards and maintain vehicle safety. Failure to perform static calibration when necessary can result in inaccurate sensor readings and potentially dangerous driving conditions. Therefore, it is important to always follow the manufacturer's guidelines and recommendations for ADAS calibration.

### What is dynamic ADAS calibration?

Unlike static calibration, dynamic calibration requires the vehicle to be driven on the road while the ADAS system self-calibrates. During this process, a technician uses a diagnostic scan tool to initiate calibration while driving at specific speeds and under precise conditions.

### When is dynamic calibration used?

Dynamic calibration is preferred when a vehicle's ADAS sensors can adjust automatically based on real-world driving conditions. It is commonly required for:

- Lane Departure Warning and Lane-Keeping Assist – Cameras use lane markings and environmental data to self-align.
- Adaptive Cruise Control and Automatic Braking Systems – On-road calibration helps these systems detect objects on the side of the road, such as guardrails and trees, to properly align the radar sensors to the driving direction of the vehicle.
- Certain Windshield or Sensor Replacements – While some vehicles require static calibration first, others allow direct dynamic calibration after windshield replacement.

One of the biggest advantages of dynamic calibration is its efficiency. Because it does not require a specialized indoor setup, it can be performed with minimal equipment. However, its accuracy depends on external conditions such as weather, road quality and traffic patterns.

### What tools and equipment are used in ADAS calibration?

Technicians must use specialised equipment to perform ADAS calibration. This equipment includes:

#### Static calibration equipment

Calibration Targets.



Calibration targets are essential for static calibration because they provide a fixed visual or radar reference that allows cameras and sensors to align correctly. The type of target used depends on the ADAS feature being calibrated and the vehicle manufacturer's requirements:

- **Checkerboard Targets:** High-contrast black and white checkerboard patterns are used for camera-based systems such as lane departure warning, forward collision warning, and traffic sign recognition.
- **Radar Reflectors:** Designed for front-facing radar sensors in systems like adaptive cruise control. These reflectors help ensure the radar detects obstacles at the correct distance and angle.
- **Infrared Panels:** Required for LiDAR-based ADAS features that rely on infrared signals for detection and ranging.
- **OEM-Specific Targets:** All vehicle manufacturers, such as Toyota, Volkswagen and Honda, require proprietary targets designed for their specific ADAS systems.

Every target in a static calibration setup must be positioned at the exact height, distance, and angle specified by the OEM. Even a few millimeters off can result in misalignment, causing inaccurate system performance.

### Digital measurement and positioning tools

Accuracy in static calibration starts with precise measuring and positioning. Technicians rely on advanced tools to ensure every target is aligned perfectly with the vehicle's geometry:

- **Laser Alignment Tools:** Used to align targets at the correct height and angle relative to the vehicle.
- **Wheel Alignment Tools:** Ensure the vehicle's thrust angle is correct before calibration begins. Even a slight misalignment can affect ADAS accuracy.
- **ADAS Calibration Stands & Frames:** Adjustable metal frames used to hold and position targets at the correct height and distance. These are needed for multi-sensor systems requiring simultaneous calibration.

### Diagnostic scan tools

After the physical targets are positioned, static calibration requires a diagnostic scan tool to communicate with the vehicle's ECU (Electronic Control Unit) and guide the calibration process. These

- **Activate calibration mode** – This tells the vehicle to begin sensor alignment.
- **Display sensor status** – Technicians can monitor real-time adjustments and confirm alignment.
- **Check error codes** – Any sensor-related faults can be diagnosed before finalizing the calibration.

Leading scan tool brands include Bosch, Autel, Snap-On and OEM-specific tools from manufacturers like Toyota GTS Plus or Ford IDS.

### Dynamic calibration equipment

OEM-Approved Diagnostic Tools

Dynamic calibration always begins with an OEM-approved scan tool. These tools:

- **Initiate on-road calibration sequences.**
- **Monitor sensor feedback in real time.**
- **Validate all sensors to recognize lane markings, road signs and objects correctly.**

### Clear, open road with lane markings

For cameras and radar to self-calibrate, the vehicle must be driven under specific conditions:

- **Consistent Speed (Usually 35-70 mph):** Required to allow sensors to detect lane markings and stationary objects on the side of the road.
- **Straight Roads with Clear Lane Markings:** Crucial for lane departure warning and lane departure warning calibration.
- **Minimal Traffic:** External vehicles can interfere with sensor recognition during calibration, so vehicles in front must be at a minimum distance of 70 feet ahead.

### GPS and IMU calibration tools

Some modern ADAS systems integrate GPS (Global Positioning System) and IMU (Inertial Measurement Unit) for precision. Calibration tools for these systems include:

- **GPS Antenna Calibration Devices:** Calibrates location-based ADAS functions (like geofencing and navigation-assisted cruise control) to operate accurately.
- **IMU Calibration Tools:** These tools align the vehicle's accelerometer and gyroscope sensors, which help determine motion, tilt, and orientation.

Investing in these tools is necessary to guarantee precise real-time tracking of a vehicle's position and movements.

### Static vs. Dynamic calibration: which is better?

There's no universal answer to whether static or dynamic calibration is "better"—it depends on the vehicle, the repair and the manufacturer's guidelines. Look at the graph below.

In many cases, dual calibration—a combination of both methods—is necessary for proper alignment. For example, some vehicles require static calibration first, followed by dynamic calibration to fine-tune sensor positioning.

Whether a vehicle requires static, dynamic or dual calibration, the accuracy of the process directly impacts the effectiveness of ADAS. With the industry shifting toward more advanced sensor fusion and multi-modal calibration, demand for specialized ADAS calibration services is at an all-time high.

### Dynamic vs. Static ADAS calibration FAQs

*Do all vehicles require both static and dynamic calibration?*

Not always. Some vehicles only require static or dynamic calibration depending on the manufacturer's specifications and the ADAS features involved. However, many newer vehicles require both (dual calibration) to ensure precise alignment of cameras, radar, and other sensors.

*How long does ADAS calibration take?*

Static calibration can take anywhere from 1 to 3 hours depending on the vehicle and number of sensors involved. Dynamic calibration is typically quicker (often completed in under an hour) but depends on road conditions, traffic, and the vehicle's ability to self-align during the drive.

*What happens if ADAS calibration is skipped after repairs?*

Skipping calibration can lead to incorrect sensor readings, resulting in malfunctioning safety features like lane departure warnings or emergency braking. This not only compromises driver safety but can also expose repair shops to liability in the event of an accident.

*Can I perform ADAS calibration without OEM tools?*

While aftermarket scan tools may support some calibration functions, using OEM-approved tools is always recommended. Many OEMs have proprietary calibration procedures, targets, and software requirements that generic tools may not support accurately.

| Factor             | Static Calibration                                      | Dynamic Calibration                                    |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Environment        | Indoor, controlled                                      | On-road, real-world conditions                         |
| Equipment Required | Targets, stands, scan tools                             | Scan tools, open road                                  |
| Time Required      | Longer setup, precise adjustments                       | Quicker, dependent on driving conditions               |
| OEM Requirements   | Required for certain manufacturers (e.g. Toyota, Honda) | Common for lane-keeping and cruise control calibration |



The new hub centre national stock holding is based in Pomona and offers express delivery for whole product refinish brands and consumer products.

### WHAT'S HOT?

## EAZY PAINT ARE READY, WILLING AND ABLE

There has recently been a new development in the Autoboy's Group with the sale of the paint division to Eazy Paint (Pty) Ltd. Based in Pomona they have their own standalone warehouse operation filled with stock, as well as 25 staff. Eazy Paint offer world class auto refinish brands from Axalta. Their focus is on the whole market, with Spies Hecker covering the top echelon shops and Duxone stepping into the ever-increasing value market. Both products have great colouristics, colour tools and back-up for a professional body shop.

Company spokesman Rob Ryan, is capitalising on years of experience in the motor trade with expert knowledge on motor insurance, automotive glass replacement and national refinish distribution in South Africa.

It has taken some time to put together a full one-stop-shop product range, but with key top brands they are in good shape to meet market demands for excellent technical sales back-up and process innovations

that seem to be hitting the trade on a non-stop basis.

Eazy Paint operate a full twice daily delivery service in Gauteng and have a national overnight supply service in place to cover the entire local market. Delia Jackson, who is the marketing guru for Eazy Paint, says they have added to their range on offer with tried and tested products.

These excellent ranges of consumable products will deliver great value to their customers. The industrial business will ultimately enjoy the value pricing on offer on specially imported abrasives and sanding discs along with system body fillers and special putty filling polyester materials.

Under the wing of technical guru Pieter Goosen, Eazy Paint have already obtained the help of five specialist expert spray painting technical representatives. They are on a mission to supply absolutely the latest line of top-class technology, cost savings and to take good care of their customers.

Pieter says that with partners like Sagola, application set ups, great final finishes and low material utilisation are guaranteed quality results every time.



Eazy Paint boosts new prospects with a major Spies Hecker refinish stock investment, complemented by top-line consumables. Left to right: Pieter, Rob and Delia.

Product availability has been enlarged with a massive investment in refinish paint availability in the new Eazy Paint hub centre.





# ALL-ROUND REFINISHING, WITH CONSISTENT VALUE FOR MONEY.

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**DUXONE®**  
AUTOMOTIVE PAINT SYSTEMS

Duxone is the all-round paint system from Axalta available at Eazy Paint. Efficient and easy to use, you can rely on it to deliver good quality at a competitive price. For over twenty years now, it has been the all-rounder body shops count on for colour accuracy and effortless application. Isn't it time you tried it too?

Body shops interested in installing a Duxone paint mixing system or for more information contact Eazy Paint on +27 (0)12880 3771, or email: [delia@eazypaint.co.za](mailto:delia@eazypaint.co.za)

36 Maple Rd, Unit 4 Maple Business Park, Pomona

**DUXONE.COM**

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One of Hyundai's biggest success stories in recent years has been the Hyundai STARIA. When it launched in South Africa in 2021, it made an immediate impact. In its very first year on sale, more than 1 133 units were sold — an impressive achievement for a completely new model. The STARIA is not just another people carrier; it represents how far Hyundai has come in design, comfort and technology.

At first glance, the STARIA looks very different from the traditional vans many people are used to seeing. Its shape is smooth and modern, almost like something out of a science fiction movie. A thin strip of LED lights stretches across the front, giving it a clean and futuristic look. The large front grille and neatly fitted headlights add to its bold appearance. It's clear that this vehicle was designed to stand out.

In South Africa, the STARIA is available in three main versions: Luxury, Elite and Executive. Buyers can choose different seating options, from two seats all the way up to 11 seats. This makes it suitable for big families, businesses transporting clients, shuttle services or even companies needing a mobile office. Hyundai has designed it to be flexible enough to suit many different lifestyles.

One of the smartest ideas behind the STARIA is what Hyundai calls its "inside-out" design. In simple terms, this means the interior space was designed first, and then the outside was shaped around it. The result is a cabin that feels incredibly spacious. Large side windows and a low window line allow plenty of natural light inside, making the vehicle feel open and airy.

Inside, the STARIA feels more like a comfortable lounge than a van. The dashboard is neat and uncluttered, with an 8-inch touchscreen for music, navigation and smartphone connectivity. Higher models use push-button gear controls instead of a traditional gear lever, which adds to the modern feel.

Comfort is where the STARIA really shines. The Luxury model offers special second-row seats that recline electronically at the push of a button. In some models, the second-row seats can even swivel around to face the passengers at the back — perfect for business meetings or family conversations on long trips. High-quality materials, including leather seats and a premium sound system, add to the upmarket experience.

Under the bonnet, the STARIA is powered by a 2.2-litre turbodiesel engine paired with an eight-speed automatic gearbox. It provides strong performance while remaining smooth and quiet on the road. Hyundai has also improved the suspension and body strength, which means the ride feels stable and comfortable, even on longer journeys.

Safety has not been overlooked. The STARIA comes with six airbags and advanced safety features in higher models, such as blind-spot monitoring and systems that can help prevent collisions.

In simple terms, the Hyundai STARIA shows how much the company has grown. It combines bold design, generous space, comfort and safety into one modern package — proving that Hyundai is truly moving with the times and shaping the future of travel.



DRIVEN

## THE HYUNDAI STARIA



# CRA'S CALL TO ESCALATE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING



Steve Kessell  
CRA, Operations Director

It has been more than 10 years since the body shop trade met in Pretoria with all role players to discuss the ongoing dominance of insurers in the collision repair process, along with other key issues relating to transparency in transactional repair matters.

That event, and countless other engagements since then, have yielded absolutely no meaningful progress. It remains the same old story of business as usual in South Africa's body shop industry. Repairers are being squeezed from both sides: with rising technical requirements (ADAS, EVs, complex alloys) and stagnant or declining margins. Collectively we are experiencing an ever increasing negative outcome on sustainable services rendered with a need for skills update on new technology which in turn requires investment for qualified competence.

Unsustainable procurement practises are a direct threat to road safety. If repairers can't afford to calibrate sensors or hire certified techs, the consumer is the one at risk. This moves the argument from "we want more money" to "we need to protect the public."

The apathy within the independent repair sector has, in many ways, become legendary. No one seems to care that sustainable procurement is never at the fore, while insurers continue to pursue shareholder enrichment at all costs. Dividends increase, yet little attention is paid to the long-term failure of repair centres that are steadily going out of business.

Shops are closing, while the industry quietly declines due to excessive vehicle write-offs, worsening parts availability, and a growing shortage of skilled technicians who leave the trade for better-paying opportunities elsewhere. Poor remuneration continues to drive talent away from the sector.

## Give us your mandate

It is long overdue for us, as a trade body representing South Africa's premier repair operators, to take decisive action. We now call for a clear show of support from the industry to escalate these matters to the Competition Commission.

What we need:

- A formal pledge of unity from a minimum of CRA members.
- A mandate to pursue an exemption to address fair procurement distribution, acknowledging change under current



regulations that involve compliance standards requirements have become financial barriers to entry.

- The ability to collectively negotiate a proven fair and transparent agreement on consumer rights.
- The current offer being imposed on the repair trade by dominant vehicle policy holders and insurers in South Africa is commercially unsustainable.

We ask you to review our proposal and pledge your support for an application for the necessary waiver under existing policy. It is time for the trade to speak with one clear and united voice to address this ongoing commercial inequality and secure a sustainable future for repair operators.

## Stand with the CRA for industry reform

Forms have been forwarded to CRA members. Thank you to those who have already completed and returned the pledge. If you haven't ever seen this form, please check your inbox or spam folders. If you haven't seen this form, please get in touch with us to share the same for your commitment.

This allows for collective price/term negotiations that would otherwise be restricted, giving the trade a "seat at the table" against the giants.

## CRA drives awareness

Consumer awareness on social media

is getting a boost from the CRA with new short-term insurance policy advice. This content is being shared on platforms like LinkedIn and other prominent channels, along with a number of helpful consumer blogs recently posted by the CRA.

There are many pitfalls to watch for when insuring your vehicle. Most vehicle owners don't think about these issues when they insure their vehicle, only to get a rude awakening when they need to submit a claim.

Many high-value vehicle owners assume their insurance policy guarantees freedom of repair choice, genuine parts, and manufacturer-approved repair standards.

This is not always the case. Across the collision repair industry, we are seeing an increasing number of insurance agreements that direct vehicles into repair networks operating under heavily restricted cost structures.

These agreements can influence how repairs are performed, where vehicles are repaired, and how parts are sourced — sometimes without policyholders fully understanding these conditions when purchasing cover.

For owners, but not limited to only luxury, performance, and specialist vehicles, this matters.



## ICE CARS

# WHAT DOES 'ELECTRIFIED ICE' MEAN?



The European Commission is facing the dramatic implosion of vehicle manufacturing across the 27 member states. This was due to the stubbornly high cost of major assemblies required for electric powertrains for European manufacturers, the underlying profitability of internal combustion-powered vehicles with auxiliary electric drive systems and inherently smaller batteries, and this:

- The EU have worked towards phasing out sales of new cars and LCVs with pure internal combustion engine (ICE) powertrains from 2030.

- The EU27 planned to follow this with a complete ban on all internal ICE with auxiliary electric drive systems for new cars as well as LCVs from 2035.

- From 2019 most of the major parts and systems manufacturers in the EU27 either got out of the ICE component business or moved their operations, mainly towards China where a growing mixed BEV/ICE market still exists.

The shock finally reached the EU27 Commission during 2025, when Germany reported annual tooling investments made during the third quarter were down by more than 30% and an overall loss of a full 20% of manufacturing activity by the end of the year. Several hundred thousand workers in the German automotive sector have lost their jobs since 2020, with the prospect of about the same losses again by 2029 – if nothing changes.

## Announcement of the death of ICE in 2025 was premature

China holds a lot of cars, and the European automotive sector with inherently higher overheads such as energy, along with using materials as well as finished sub-assemblies made in China, are well and truly caught. Until the supply of processed rare earth metals and finished components for electrification arrive in quantity from other parts of the world, line stoppages, plant closures and loss of manufacturing will continue.

Here's a guide to the main powertrain systems that will be sold in new cars and LCVs until around at least until 2035.

### Mild Hybrid Electric Vehicle (MHEV)

- Internal combustion engine: Yes.
- Capable of electric only drive: No.
- Typical battery size and location: Lithium-ion around 0.5kWh, 48V, usually inside the passenger compartment under one of the front seats, but some manufacturers have placed the module in a sealed box on the underside (Land Rover/Range Rover).

- Cooling: Usually air; but some liquid/refrigerant cooled units now appearing

- Function: Capable of turning engine braking energy into stored energy via a smart alternator: StopStart, and to allow electric power to assist the engine during lower speed acceleration, where most of the emissions occur: No external charging is possible.

- Repairability: Usually not possible to strip for repair.

- Main applications: "B" (Peugeot 208) and "C" (Volkswagen Gold) segment vehicles as emissions laws tighten. Likely to be effectually banned for new car and LCV sales from 2030 onwards.

### Hybrid Electric Vehicles (HEV)

- Internal combustion engine: Yes.

- Capable of electric only drive: Yes, for relatively short distances. The motor is usually built into the transmission.

- Typical battery size and location: Lithium-ion, from 1.2 to 4kWh, 100 to 20+V, usually either inside the passenger compartment under the rear seat/boot floor, or on the underside not far from the rear suspension.

- Cooling: Air, but as the battery duty-cycle is increased more commonly with liquid or refrigerant cooling.

- Function: Capable of turning engine braking energy into stored energy via a smart alternator; engine restart (StopStart) direct pure electric drive and electric power to assist the engine during lower speed acceleration, where most of the emissions occur: No external charging is possible.

- Repairability: Possible to strip for repair.

- Main applications: All segment vehicles, but likely to regress to 'B' (Peugeot 208) and 'C' (Volkswagen Golf) segments as emission laws tighten. Not seen by manufacturers as viable for new car and LCV sales much beyond 2035.

### Plug-in-Hybrid Electric Vehicles (PHEV)

- Internal combustion engine: Yes.

- Capable of electric only drive: Yes, for anywhere up to 96 kilometres. The motor is usually built into the transmission.

- Typical battery size and location: Li-ion, around 4 to 30kWh, 100 to 400-V, located on the underside – under the boot floor or under the rear seat or even under the front seats.

- Cooling: Usually liquid/refrigerant.

- Function: Capable of turning engine braking energy into stored energy via a smart alternator; engine restart (StopStart), direct pure electric drive and electric power to assist the engine during lower speed acceleration, where most of the emissions occur: The battery



can be recharged via an external charge port – but few systems record this which means users can buy a new vehicle with tax breaks as a PHEV but use them in effect like an HEV.

- Repairability: Possible to strip for repair.
- Main applications: 'C' segment vehicles (Volkswagen Golf) and upwards, but given legislator dislike for PHEVs, new car and LCV sales are likely to be banned by 2025.

#### **Range Extended Electric Vehicles (REEV)**

- Internal combustion engine: Yes.
- Capable of electric only drive: Yes. The engine is usually not connected to the mechanical drive system but generates electricity on demand.
- Typical battery size and location: Li-ion 40 to 200 kWh, 400 to 800V, usually under the passenger compartment floor.
- Cooling: liquid, refrigerant or even oil.
- Function: An electric drive system with the capability for external charging via a charge port and on-board power generation. The engine is cheaper as a system than a hydrogen fuel cell, takes up less space and uses a fuel already widely available at lower cost than pure hydrogen. The engine works under steady state speed/load, which allows for much tighter exhaust emission management by eliminating most transient load conditions.
- Repairability: Possible to strip for repair.
- Main applications: Now seen as the future for all ICE powertrains

by many vehicle manufacturers, although the prospect of banning after 2035 remains a risk. Seen this before? Yes, the Vauxhall Ampera/Chevrolet Volt.

#### **Battery Electric Vehicles (BEV)**

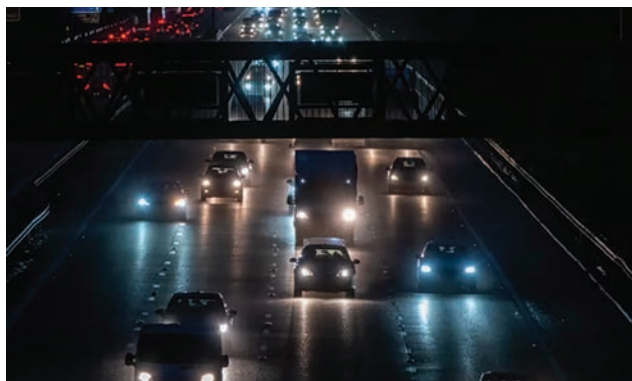
- Internal combustion engine: No, just an electric motor.
- Capable of electric only drive: Yes.
- Typical battery size and location: Li-ion, 20 to 200 kWh, 100 to 800V, usually under the passenger compartment floor.
- Cooling liquid: refrigerant or even oil.
- Function: An electric drive system with the capability for external charging via a charge port.
- Repairability: Possible to strip for repair.
- Main applications: 'A' segment vehicles (Dacia Spring) and upwards but crucially limited by the cost of the processed materials found in the traction motor, inverter and battery—especially the battery. Oddly, China is the dominant source of all this material, and the main competitor when it comes to cut price BEVs.

Note: Any electricity from the mains does not count as exhaust emissions. Further, no account is taken of how much energy is consumed to build the vehicle. These two aspects could become subject to vehicle specific taxation sales of petrol and diesel fuel for transport fall.

## **SAFETY**

# **FOUR OUT OF FIVE DRIVERS CONCERNED ABOUT DAZZLING HEADLIGHTS AS DARKER EVENINGS ARRIVE**

by Tim Kelly



**F**our out of five drivers (82%) are concerned about getting dazzled by vehicle headlights with the arrival of darker evenings, new RAC research has found.

With the the imminent publication of a UK government-commissioned report into headlight glare, the findings also show the brightness of some headlights is the top reason for feeling nervous when driving in the dark.

Of the four-in-10 respondents (38%) who said they are nervous about driving in the dark, three-quarters (75%) said it was because of bright headlights, compared to 63% who said spotting hazards is harder in the dark and 41% who said they can't judge the speed of other vehicles as easily. A third (33%) reported they are nervous about driving in the dark as they find judging the distance of other vehicles harder; while around a quarter (23%) say they just feel less confident driving at night.

Following a rise in complaints from drivers about getting dazzled the RAC began campaigning several years ago, along with The College of Optometrists, IAM RoadSmart and Baroness Hayter, for the causes of headlight glare to be investigated. This joint work led to the Government commissioning independent research, conducted by TRL,

which is due to be published soon.

Comprehensive RAC research earlier this year found as many as one-in-four (25%) drivers who find vehicle headlights too bright are driving less as a result, with a further 22% saying they wish they could but that they have no choice other than to drive at night.

RAC senior policy officer Rod Dennis said: "Unfortunately, for a lot of drivers the annual onset of darker evenings coincides with another unwelcome arrival – that of overly-bright headlights that they believe make driving more difficult due to dazzle and discomfort.

"While most of us have no choice other than to adapt to driving at night, the fact headlight glare is the leading cause of nervousness underlines it's a problem that needs tackling. At the same time, it's important to remember that brighter headlights can give drivers a better view of the road ahead – so there's a balance to be struck.

"We look forward to the publication of the Government's report and hope that it helps explain why so many drivers report struggling to cope with dazzling headlights – whether that's due to changes in technology, the fact more of us than ever are driving vehicles that sit higher on the road, or for

some other reason. We also hope it comes with recommendations that lead to road users feeling safer behind the wheel at night," said IAM Nicholas Lyes, RoadSmart director of policy and standards.

"Sadly, the impact of headlight glare is now also a worry for motorists, so much so the evidence suggests many are reducing their driving in the evenings. It's a timely reminder to check headlight aim, ensure lenses are clean, and replace any faulty bulbs promptly and carefully. Drivers should also consider adjusting their speed and increasing stopping distances during darker hours to account for any limited visibility."

Denise Voon, clinical advisor at The College of Optometrists, said, "Patients are telling us more frequently that headlight glare from oncoming vehicles is affecting their ability to see clearly while driving, particularly at a time when brighter LED headlamps and larger SUV-type vehicles have become more common on the roads. We look forward to the findings from the government's headlight glare research project and hope this evidence enables the industry to find a solution that will reduce headlight glare and make driving at night safer for everyone."



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## PROBLEM SOLVING

## COATING DEFECT KNOW-HOW WITH DEBEER REFINISH

Coating defects are an inevitable challenge in the car refinish industry. DeBeer Refinish is here to help you tackle them with confidence.

Defects have many different causes – accidents, exposure to caustic substances, improper application techniques or incorrect composition of the paint. By helping you identify and reduce these issues, they empower you to consistently deliver high-quality results. Fewer defects mean greater efficiency, less rework and most importantly customer satisfaction.

Below are three defects with their cause, prevention and remedy.

**Lifting/Frying/Pickling**

Swelling or lifting of previous layer(s) can occur during spraying, caused by partly dissolving previous layers.

**Cause**

- Incompatibility: the paint applied is unsuitable for the substrate.
- Degreaser too aggressive for substrate (primer, filler and/or topcoat).
- Possibly poor adhesion of the previous painted layer:
- Substrate not hardened thoroughly/not completely dry.
- Application of the paint system too heavy.
- Extraordinarily long flash-off time between coats. First coat with extra-long flash-off time is dissolved by next coat.

**Prevention**

- Always do a solvent test on/around the area to be repaired.
- Select suitable products for each substrate.
- Mix the products according to Technical Data Sheets and use correct spraying technique; do not overload.
- Use the correct drying times/temperatures.
- Apply the next coats directly after recommended flash-off time.

**Remedy**

- In case of minor lifting, sand down to a sound layer after drying. After sanding, apply the refinish system carefully again.
- Always spray sensitive substrates carefully:
- – In thin coats and with sufficient flash-off time between each coat.
- In event of severe lifting, remove the layers completely before applying the new paint system.

**Orange peel**

Freshly applied paint shows poor flow and looks like a skin of an orange (peel).

**Cause**

- Paint is too thick, spraying viscosity too high.
- Incorrect hardener; too fast.
- Incorrect thinner; too fast.
- Spraying pressure too high/too low.
- Spray gun set-up: nozzle size too big.
- Extremely high temperatures.
- Paint materials too cold.

**Prevention**

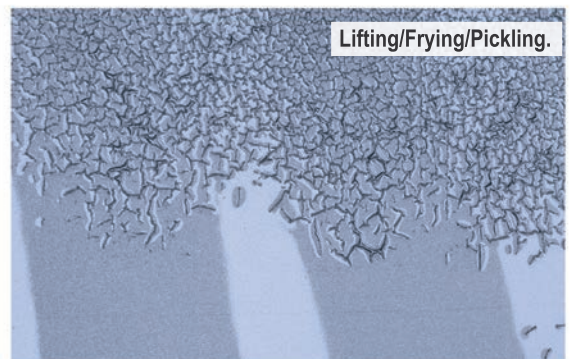
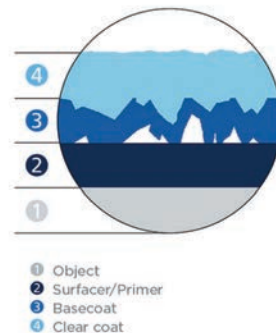
- Use the correct mixing ratio (use measuring stick or mix over scale).
- Check viscosity.
- Use recommended hardener and thinner for job size, temperature, and air flow.
- Apply products according to the TDS.
- Use correct spray gun set-up for products.
- Ideal spraying temperature is approximately 20°C.
- Avoid spraying at extremely high temperatures.
- Ideal storage temperature is approximately 20°C.
- Remedy
- Polishing will rectify minor orange peel effect.
- In case of severe orange peel effect, sand and re-spray the object.

**Sanding marks**

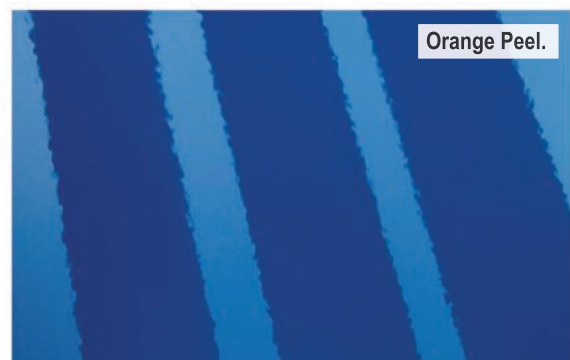
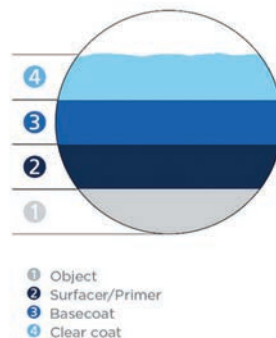
Fine/coarse scratches in different patterns, circular or random, can appear in the topcoat system, either immediately or after a while.

**Cause**

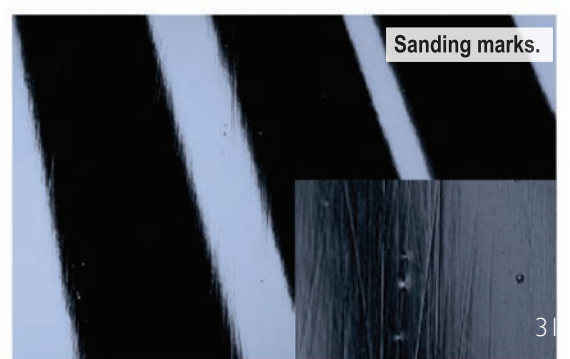
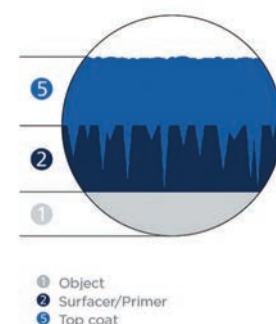
- Wrong sanding grade used, too coarse for the products applied subsequently.



Lifting/Frying/Pickling.

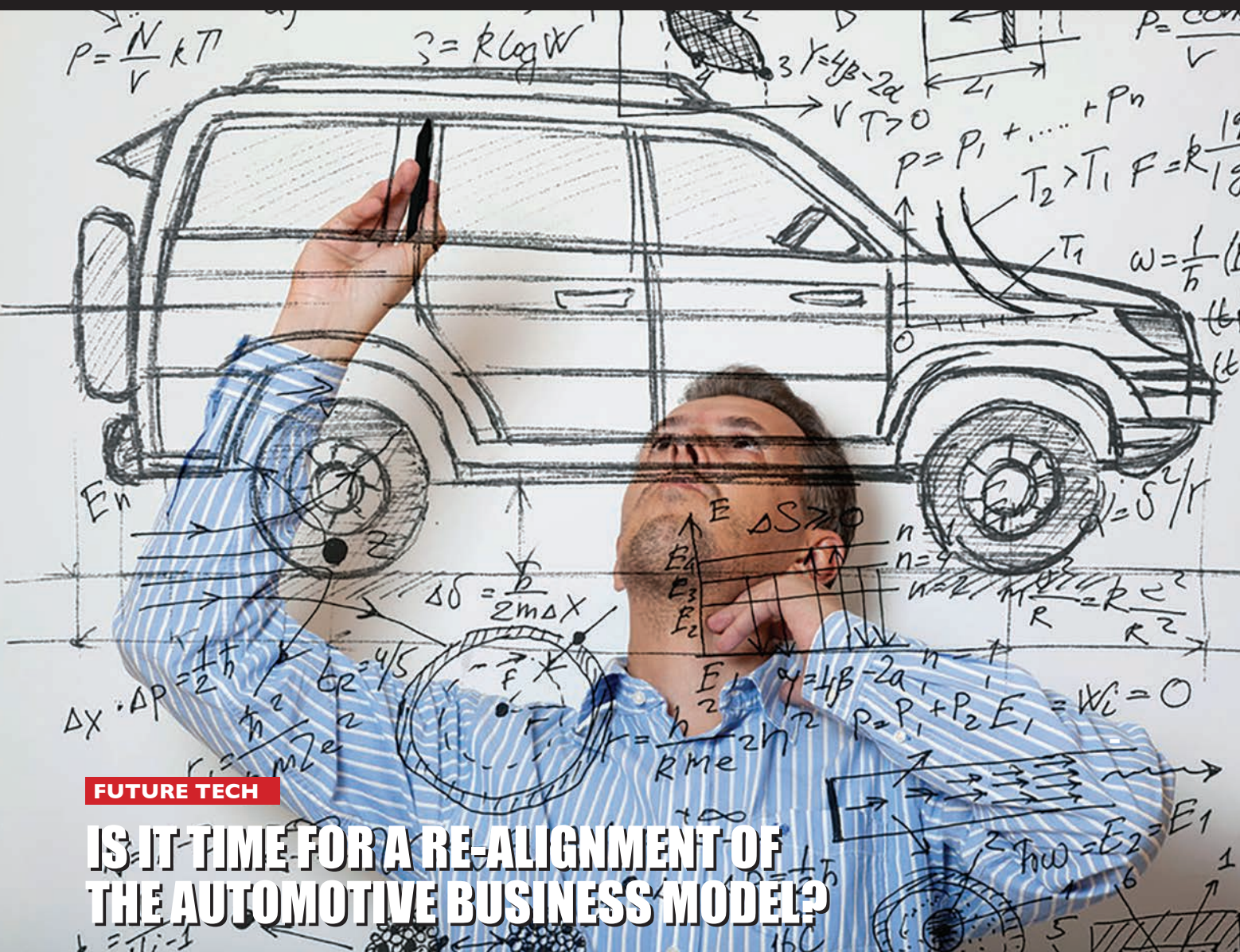


Orange Peel.



Sanding marks.





## FUTURE TECH

## IS IT TIME FOR A RE-ALIGNMENT OF THE AUTOMOTIVE BUSINESS MODEL?

From the very earliest days of motoring vehicle build and distribution has been the main cause of business success, as well as the main cause of business friction. The very first vehicles were sent to customers or their 'people' for assembly, bearing in mind a vehicle from the early 1900s cost about as much as a twin jet-engine powered private aircraft does today.

It was a big deal. Distribution of everything from oil to petrol was a pain, until the number of consumers gradually increased.

The automotive business model has changed very little since then. A vehicle manufacturer raises an immense pile of debt to invest in massive quantities of very specialist tooling, paying for an entire project to run without income for anywhere from 18 months to 7 years. Once released the vehicles are built and sold in the largest possible quantity from the investment.

The new vehicle distribution system for a long time has been hollowed out as everyone from Government to transport providers take their cut, leaving the rather fine distributor at the end of the process with very little direct profit from each sale. Instead, they rely on vehicles returning for repair/service or retailing younger used vehicles. The latter is now the main source of profit.

For the vehicle manufacturer the main source of profit from each new vehicle sale is from replacement parts.

### Several trends make the situation worse:

1. Consumers of new vehicles like the idea of renting it, with a badge of honour not to spend R1 during their tenure on servicing. Between customers skipping routine servicing and stretched service intervals to flatter cost of ownership, the vehicles suffer.

2. The blizzard of new technologies and models since 2010 has

left a big slice of the new car customer 'cold' – they'll literally buy a vehicle because of the shape or colour. There is a much-reduced loyalty to any vehicle manufacturer.

3. The growth of used vehicle leasing, where some customers may be tempted to treat it the same way as the first lease period, which in the main most vehicles with more than 100 000 km covered will not tolerate.

4. One market where the traditional visits to dealers and specialists exists is for older 'classic' vehicles.

### Political ideas

The mantra of 'zero emission' specifically means 'zero tailpipe emissions. No account is made of the material processing or energy investment required to deliver electrified powertrains. Many, many BEV fans refer to the 2025 success of cars and light vans powered by battery electric powertrains sold in Norway. That sound impressive until one realises...

1. Norway had roughly the same access to oil and gas wealth from the North Sea as the UK did, but only ever had a total population of 5.53 million people. Less than half of London.

2. The policy around BEV sales was driven by significant subsidies funded by the sovereign fund, which is the host for tax income from the North Sea oil and gas.

3. The '97.6%' of new cars were registered (35 188) was the total for December 2025, ahead of significant subsidy reductions in 2026.

4. The overall 179 550 new cars were registered in Norway for the whole of 2025, of which BEVs accounted for 95.5%.

Apart from Norway having the wealth to indulge in BEVs, having



built up sales via incentives over more than 10 years only now in 2025 does peak rate-of-change occur. As of December 2024:

- There were 2 889 023 cars (out of 5 431 513 vehicles, which includes trailers).

- There were 788 753 BEV cars (27.3%).

For comparison, here are the UK stats as of December 2024:

- The UK had 36 165 401 cars.

- 1 334 108 were BEVs (3.7 per cent).

In 2025 the UK sold 2 020 520 new cars, of which 473 378 cars were BEVs, 280 185 cars were HEV and 225 143 cars were PHEV. We can see to change 36 million vehicles of which by 2025, 1.8 million were BEVs, would take 17 years to complete the change if only new BEVs were sold.

Let's forget where the electricity will come from.

Let's forget the stability of BEV system design.

### New arrivals

We can see selling new vehicles is tough, selling spare parts is tough and there are policy pressures in some parts of the world that have made products much more complex.

Now consider an entire nation geared up to build vehicles. China built 34.531 million vehicles in 2025, of 34.35 million were sold, including 8.32 million vehicles for export. One in three vehicles built during 2025 came from China. Of the export vehicles, 3.43 million units were BEVs.

However, there is a ruinous internal market price war which has raged for more than three years, leading manufacturers to recover costs by increased exports, since each export vehicle earns much more profit than on the domestic market. The whole system is geared to build vehicles, and the notion of product support – service, parts – is for many China OEMs a new concept.

### Where are the parts?

Rather the position is to make sales and if anything goes wrong, replace the whole vehicle or strip parts from unsold vehicles. A few years ago, one China manufacturer failed to provide any meaningful support for UK customers, leading motor insurers to refuse underwriting. More recently another importer to the UK ended up with back orders for 18 door mirrors after just two months of sales, clogging up body shops.

One new entrant to the UK talked of 250 000 items in the warehouse (anyone from a paint retailer to a parts retailer knows that is not a very big number to serve an entire country) and parcel delivery companies would take care of delivery. For those who listened to this, it was deeply unimpressive.

The lack of parts is repeated in South America, where many nations are now trying to establish rules for vehicle importer behaviour. Europe and the UK have done very little about this, so

far. In Mexico, one of the main export markets for China built vehicles, as well as Brazil, there are cases of vehicles disabled by missing parts loaded into shipping containers back to China.

### How can collision repairers make any sense of this?

Not all China-based vehicle manufacturers are doing a bad job, since the importer – especially if not owned by the company – is a critical part of the way customers are treated.

There is also a worsening situation with reliability of vehicles even from established Japan, South Korea and European manufacturers due to rapid changes in global legislation combined with changing patterns of attitude towards vehicle repair. Some things that could change would be:

- Like a bank or an insurer, a vehicle importer would undertake to provide certain stock levels of parts within days, maximum months, of starting operations.

- Selection of repair partners – body shops, for example, would follow an objective and open process rather than passing by the outside of the business via a street view of a map.

- The above would be a condition of underwriting – evidence of consumer support.

- For the user, there would need to be evidence if the vehicle is on some sort of finance that they have looked after what is, in effect, an asset owned by somebody else. This would include evidence of motor insurance cover continuity, especially if it was a condition of the finance. For the motor insurer, there would need to be evidence that the vehicle subject to a claim for damage has been repaired – or a clearly stated calculation to justify why it was written off. This is commercially sensitive information, but then again, the person paying for the cover should expect transparency.

The objective would be to create a stronger automotive aftermarket which is more able to resist external economic pressures and retain road registered vehicles for longer.

The big message: How do all vehicle manufacturers migrate from only building new vehicles to whole life cycle care? It will not be easy, and many manufacturers are trying to do their own thing in terms of refurbishing or even rebuilding used vehicles. One idea could be to add some teeth to the end-of-life directive – a financial bond on every vehicle built or imported, payable to the Government if it is exported whole to another country.

Maybe that could help keep vehicles alive for longer, to produce more repair opportunities for all vehicles?

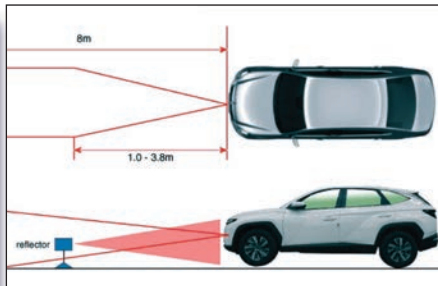
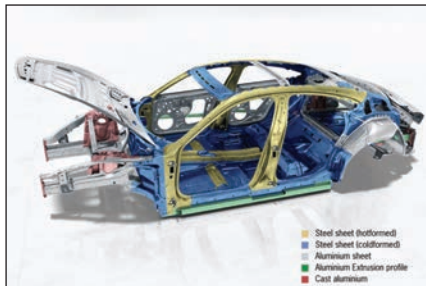


**Andrew Marsh**  
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The recently installed Octoral refinishing system has showed immediate results in faster drying and reduced material wastage.

## TOP SHOP

# PREPARATION DETERMINES PERFORMANCE

story by Claire Macfie  
pics by Ian Groat

**B**ig Five Accident Repair Centre are based in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, and have been enjoying successful growth and expansion for over a decade. "Growth didn't happen overnight. It was built job by job, relationship by relationship. From the beginning, the focus was never just on fixing vehicles – it was about raising the standard of what an accident repair centre should be. Every year we've reinvested into better equipment, stronger systems, and more training. That discipline is what has kept us competitive and respected." Says Mano Nayager, "Captain" of Big Five Accident Repair Centre.

Jayshree Nayager handles the finances, while Mano is hands-on in operations quality control, customer relationships and leadership within the team.

They have a team of over 50 skilled professionals – panel beaters, spray painters, strip-and-fit technicians, polishers, and administrative support. The company handle the full spectrum – from minor SMART repairs to major structural collision rebuilds.

They recently installed the Octoral refinishing system to enhance their colour accuracy, workflow efficiency and environmental performance. "Modern vehicle finishes – pearls, metallics, tri-coats – require extremely precise colour matching. Octoral gives us advanced mixing technology and consistency that supports both quality and productivity. It's about staying ahead," says Mano.

The company have experienced an immediate reduction in material waste and better spraybooth efficiency. Faster drying cycles and improved colour matching is allowing the team at Big Five Accident Repair Centre to reduce any reworks. Efficiency without compromising quality is the goal for the team.

Continual training is what gives them that extra edge. They have an internal mentorship programme where senior artisans train younger technicians. Supplier-led and product specific training

session are attended regularly so as to stay ahead of any new systems, advanced coatings or materials that may be on the horizon.

"Our work comes from a combination of insurance partnerships, broker relationships, fleet accounts, and strong word of mouth. Word of mouth is the most powerful endorsement. When someone who has experienced our service recommends us during a stressful time after an accident, that trust is invaluable. You can't market integrity. You earn it.

"At Big Five, we're not just repairing vehicles – we're restoring safety, confidence, and trust. The industry will keep evolving. Technology will keep advancing. But principles remain the same – honesty, discipline, and excellence. That's what built this business. And that's what will carry it forward," concluded Mano.



Mano Nayager is passionate about relationships - with customers, suppliers as well as his team.





With 5000 square metres under roof, the clean, structured workshop produces consistent quality results.



Glen Draai (left), Sherwin-Williams, is seen with a very happy colour team.



The team at Big Five Accident Repair Centre are highly skilled.



Every vehicle that is repaired carries the Big Five reputation with it. This is how success is measured differently.



Reinvesting in better equipment, like the three Hurricane benches, and systems is how Big Five stays ahead of the curve.





## CEO BREAKFAST: COLLABORATION, SKILLS & TECH TAKE CENTRE STAGE

The Automechanika CEO Breakfast was held once again at the German Chamber of Commerce in Forest Town, Johannesburg, drawing a full house of CEOs and senior decision-makers from South Africa's automotive value chain.

Michael Dehn, Managing Director of Automechanika South Africa, opened the event by welcoming guests and outlining a positive year ahead for the brand which included localised CEO breakfasts in major metropolises around South Africa and an African roadshow to emerging economies to strengthen trade links across the continent.

Maximilian Butek, the new CEO of the Southern African-German Chamber of Commerce, opened by praising the automotive industry's robust ecosystem. He emphasised the trust built over years among suppliers and manufacturers and welcomed the event as a platform for collaboration to shape the future.

Ipeleng Mabusela, CEO of the Retail Motor Industry Organisation (RMI), delivered a compelling overview of the aftermarket's vital role. Often underappreciated, this sector handles the "entire life" of vehicles after manufacturing – repairs, parts, tyres and testing. With 13 million vehicles on South African roads averaging 10.8 years old, the aftermarket supports over 300 000 jobs across more than 22 000 businesses, mostly small to medium enterprises (SMEs). It contributes around 2-3% to national GDP, with the broader automotive value chain seeing the aftermarket account for over 54% of value-add (more than R200 billion).

The sector proves resilient, even during economic downturns or global shocks – people still need vehicle fixes, accident repairs, and maintenance. Jobs in the aftermarket have grown at 1.2% compounded annually, outpacing manufacturing. Yet challenges persist: a 31% drop in qualified artisans over the past decade, despite more apprentices starting, due to high dropout rates and skilled

workers emigrating to places like Australia and the UK. This skills shortage lengthens repair times, raises costs, reduces roadworthy vehicles, and hinders transformation and youth employment.

Mabusela stressed low barriers to entry in the aftermarket, offering pathways from apprentice to artisan to business owner, ideal for addressing youth unemployment. Key priorities for 2026 include collaboration on:

Building EV skills through new qualifications, short courses on EV safety, decommissioning, and diagnostics.

Centralising vehicle data for better history tracking (accidents, servicing, parts).

Implementing periodic vehicle testing to cut road fatalities (over 11 000 annually) and crash costs (R205 billion+).

### Easing compliance for SMEs and promoting end-of-life vehicle recycling

Paul from Lightstone shared data insights showing shifting new vehicle sales dynamics. Interest rate drops boosted sales, but the real driver was a surge in affordable models, especially from new brands (15 launched in recent years). Chinese and Japanese brands now outsell German manufacturers in SA, with more vehicles assembled in India than locally. This pressures local manufacturing, prompting calls for better infrastructure, reduced regulations, and incentives to attract investment.

Greg Cress from Accenture South Africa outlined some global disruptive forces which could create opportunities for SA:

Imminent 1 500 km-range EVs via breakthroughs like solid-state batteries (e.g. new battery advancements offer triple the standard range at 1 500km, can charge 600km in five minutes, and offer longer life span – 100 000 cycles).

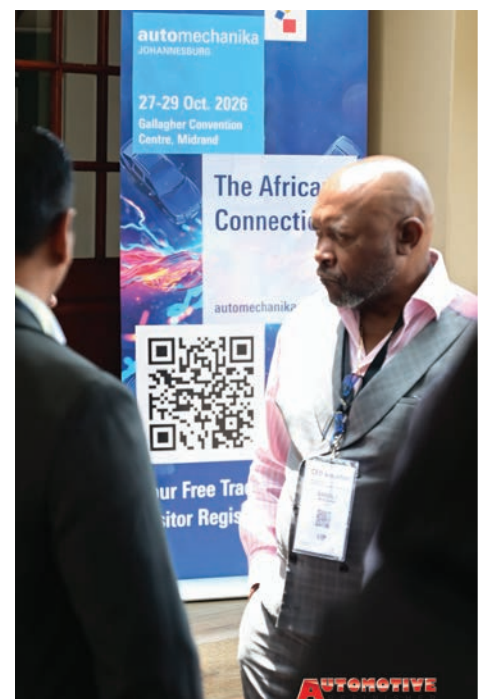
Enhanced safety and productivity through autonomous driving (Waymo's commercial operations, China's Level 4 robotaxis expanding to Europe).

Vehicle-to-everything connectivity via advanced 5G networks for real-time road awareness.

Shift to "experience spaces" in vehicles and software defining the industry.

Takatso Sello from Nedbank reflected on local challenges such as unreliable energy supply impacting competitiveness, especially against cheaper Chinese imports. He highlighted the EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), now fully binding in 2026, affecting exporters with carbon costs – urging proactive decarbonisation and partnerships, as seen in successful sustainability transitions.

The breakfast ended with a call for intentional public-private collaboration to navigate these shifts. Attendees were reminded to be sure to save dates for Automechanika Johannesburg 27-29 October 2026 at Gallagher estates.







# OCTORAL

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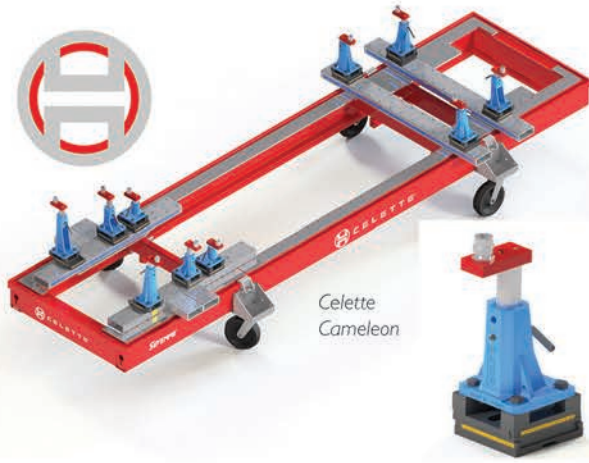


The complete Octobase Eco Plus System enhances efficiency all the way. The products and unique packaging help to reduce environmental impact by reducing waste and lowering consumption. Technical solutions and training work together to reduce environmental footprint while helping you create sustainable profits.

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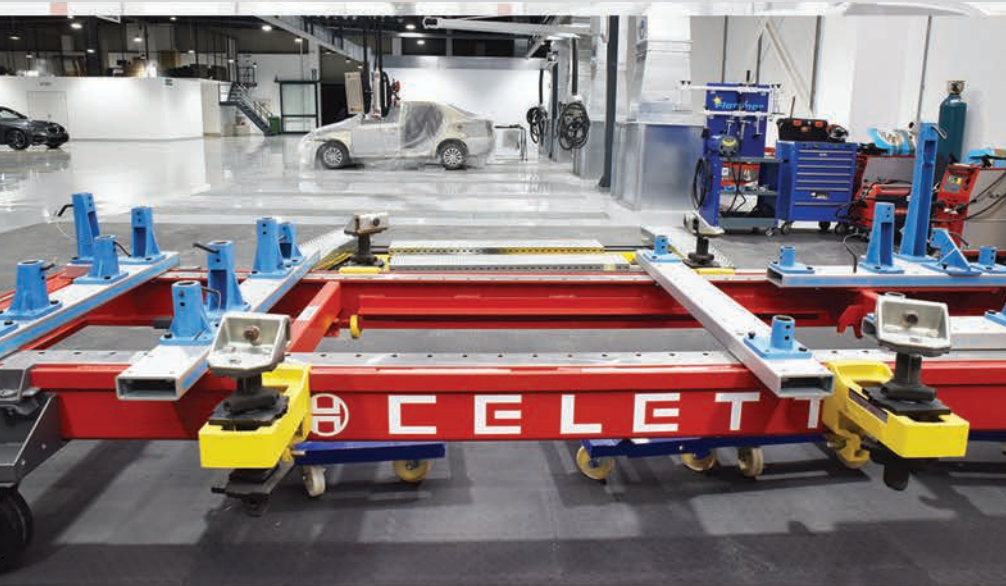
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Kamatec  
Fast Drill



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Bumper  
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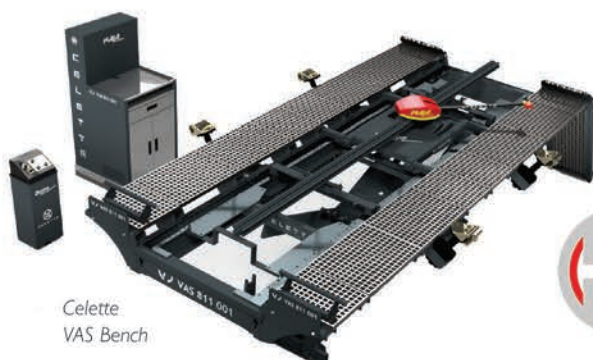
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## LOCAL UPDATE

# LATE CHRIS REA WAS A TRUE MOTORSPORT ENTHUSIAST

Chris Rea, the well-known English singer and songwriter, who passed away on 22 December 2025, at the age of 74, was a keen motoring and motor sport enthusiast. I had the pleasure of meeting him at the Goodwood Revival in 2009 where he was racing a 1955 Lotus 6 Ford – the forerunner of the more famous Lotus 7 – in the Madgwick Cup for classic pre-1966 sports cars with engines under two-litres.

That visit to Goodwood was particularly memorable as I found the Revival, where cars and motorcycles race on the old track, much more enjoyable than the Festival of Speed where cars race up a hill against a clock and which I have attended twice.

What made the Goodwood Festival particularly special was the fact that my companion for each of the three action-filled days was Ian Groat, the publisher of *Automotive Refinisher* and a motoring enthusiast who had attended the Goodwood Festival previously.

Chris Rea finished 11th out of a field of 30 cars in the 13-lap race around the famous Goodwood circuit on the day we watched him racing on the historic circuit.

The reason I approached Rea in the pits was that I had just had a Millennium 7 – similar in appearance to a Lotus 7 – built for me in South Africa by Chris Carstens and his team in Kempton Park, hence my interest in Rea's Lotus 6. (A similar Lotus 6 Ford had been owned by Toby van Reenen, a fellow member of the Pretoria Motor Club who raced it in the early days of the new Kyalami circuit in the 1960's).

What shocked me during the short time I spent with the singer at Goodwood was the way he was surreptitiously smoking Marlboro cigarettes in the paddock, which was a non-smoking area. He held the cigarette backwards in his cupped hand and kept swinging it to and fro to disperse the telltale smoke. I certainly had not expected a man whose voice was his fortune to be an inveterate smoker. I have subsequently learned he quit smoking after suffering a stroke in 2016. He was also battling cancer at that time.

Born of Italian immigrant parents in Middlesbrough in 1951, Chris always had a soft spot for Ferraris and Italian racing drivers. His father owned an icecream shop and he passed his driving test in a Commer icecream van.

He nearly died in his 30s and quietly battled dreadful health problems for the rest of his life.

Early in his career Rea had considered journalism as a career, seeing himself writing about racing cars! The whim soon passed, and he concentrated his talents on music but retained his interest in motor racing. He was also an accomplished painter and painted throughout his life.

He raced many different cars during his career, including a Lotus 23B, 1964 Lotus Elan 26R, Lola Mk I, and a 1987 Caterham 7, of which a picture featured on the cover of one of his albums, (Auberge). He also owned the Ferrari 330 which was used as a donor car for the replica Ferrari 250 Le Mans used in the 1996 movie *La Passione*.

In the latter stages of his racing career, he settled for competing in a 1957 Morris Minor

1000 in British Police Constabulary livery!

However, his real racing passion was the restored replica Ferrari Dino 156 Shark Nose Formula 1 car he had built using some salvaged components such as the engines and transmission with frame and bodywork made from sketches and photographs. The car had the choice of the 65 degree- and 120 degree V6 engines. The task took 22 years and the car, which was a tribute to American world champion Phil Hill, first appeared at the 2017 Goodwill Festival of Speed where it was driven up the Hill by Phil Hill's son, Derek.

Rea's motor racing interests included attending Formula 1 races when his schedule allowed. His involvement in F1 included being a member of the Jordan team's pit crew at the 1995 Monaco Grand Prix. Team owner Eddie Jordan, himself a musician, even gave Chris a drive in one of his Formula 1 cars! The popular song *Saudade* was a tribute to one of his heroes, three-time world champion Ayrton Senna.

The British rock legend was a significant supporter of various charities including Refuge, which cares for people suffering from domestic violence, and the NSPCC (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children) as well as several organisations supporting cancer research as he was a personal sufferer of this disease.

His support included donating the proceeds from auctioning two of his personal cars to charities. These were the 1987 Caterham 7, which raised £11 500 for the NSPCC and a 1989 Rover Mini which had been electrified by Recharge. The latter raised £25 000 for Refuge.



Roger Houghton  
News from the Zoo





# DISPOSABLE PAINT CUPS SETS FOR SPRAYGUNS

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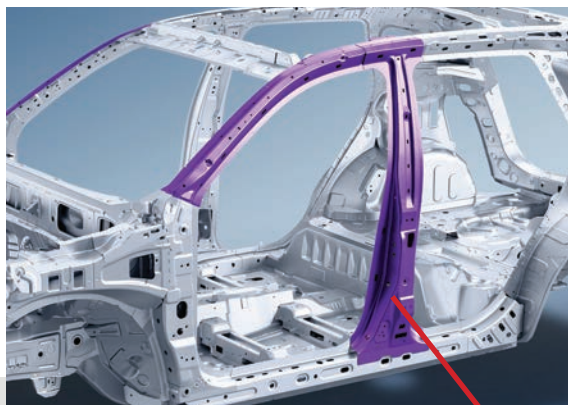
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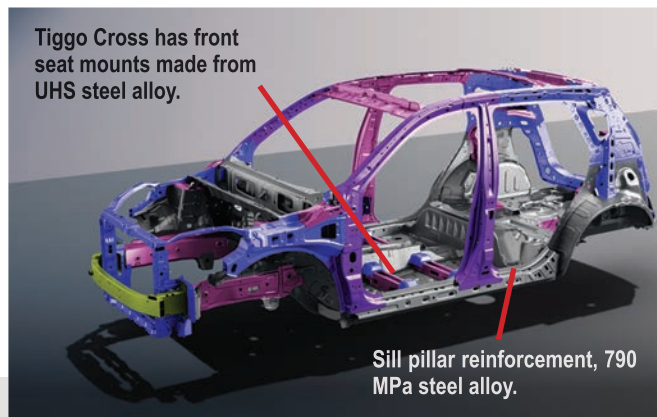


# CHERY TIGGO 4 PRO AND TIGGO 4 CROSS

- 2007 Chery started a 50/50 joint venture with an Israeli company Quantum LLC who invested US\$ 225 million.
- The company employed engineers from all over Europe including those who had previously served at Saab.
- 2010 the venture gained Magna and Better Place, the Israeli battery swap start-up company partnering with Renault.
- 2013 the first car - Qoros 3 - was revealed at the Geneva motor show. Sales started in China, just above the Chery sub-brand called 'Riich'.
- Qoros 3 was tested to the Euro NCAP protocol and gained a 5-star test result in 2013.
- Qoros used, by China standards, a lot of UHS and HHS steel alloy for the body, but this was not unusual for the engineering team.
- Multiple European parts suppliers set up operations in China to supply Qoros, but manufacturing costs remained higher than China competitors.
- 2015 the Qoros 5, a small SUV using all the engineering that was established with Qoros 3, went on sale. This is what became the first Tiggo 7.
- 2017 Sales remained poor, Baoneng Group invested heavily, then by 2021 ran out of money – Chery bought the assets.
- In 2017 the second generation Tiggo 4 (also called Tiggo 5x) was launched.
- Chery re-entered South Africa with the facelifted Tiggo 4 in 2021, which today is called 'Tiggo 4 Pro'.
- In 2022 Tiggo 4 was facelifted again, and gained a hybrid powertrain option too – which arrived in South Africa by 2024 as the 'Tiggo 4 Cross'.

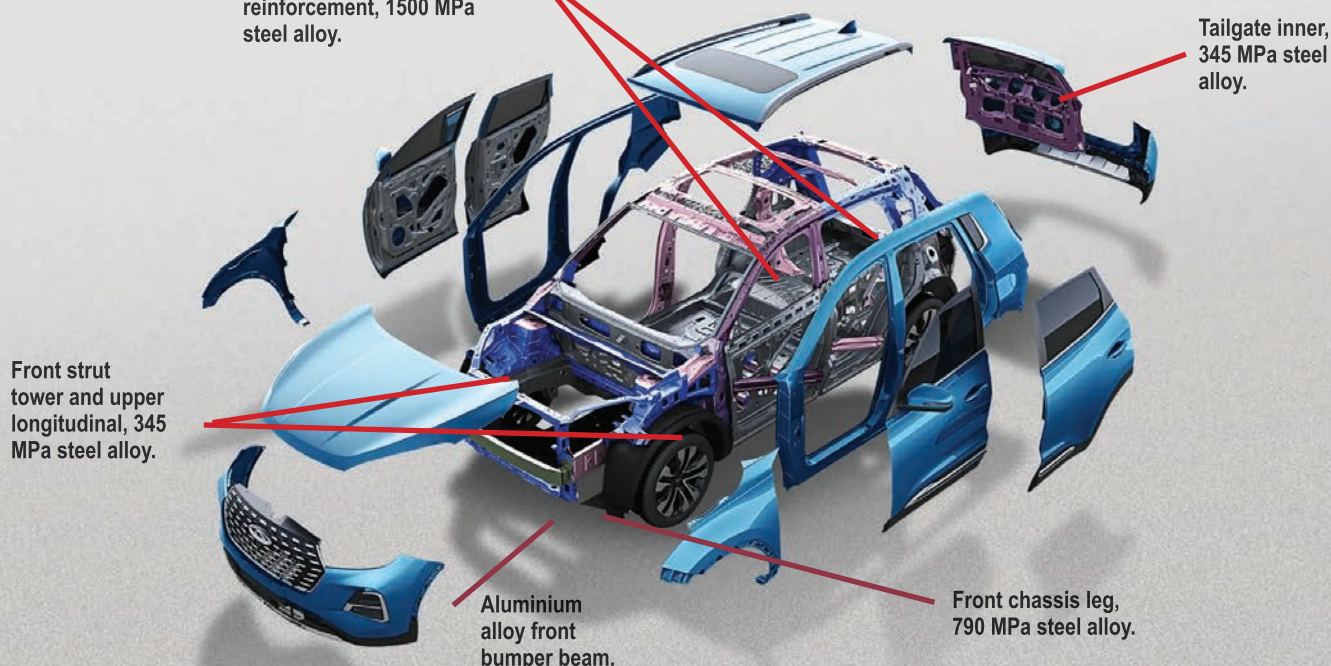


A pillar, B pillar and cant rail reinforcement, 1500 MPa steel alloy.



Tiggo Cross has front seat mounts made from UHS steel alloy.

Sill pillar reinforcement, 790 MPa steel alloy.



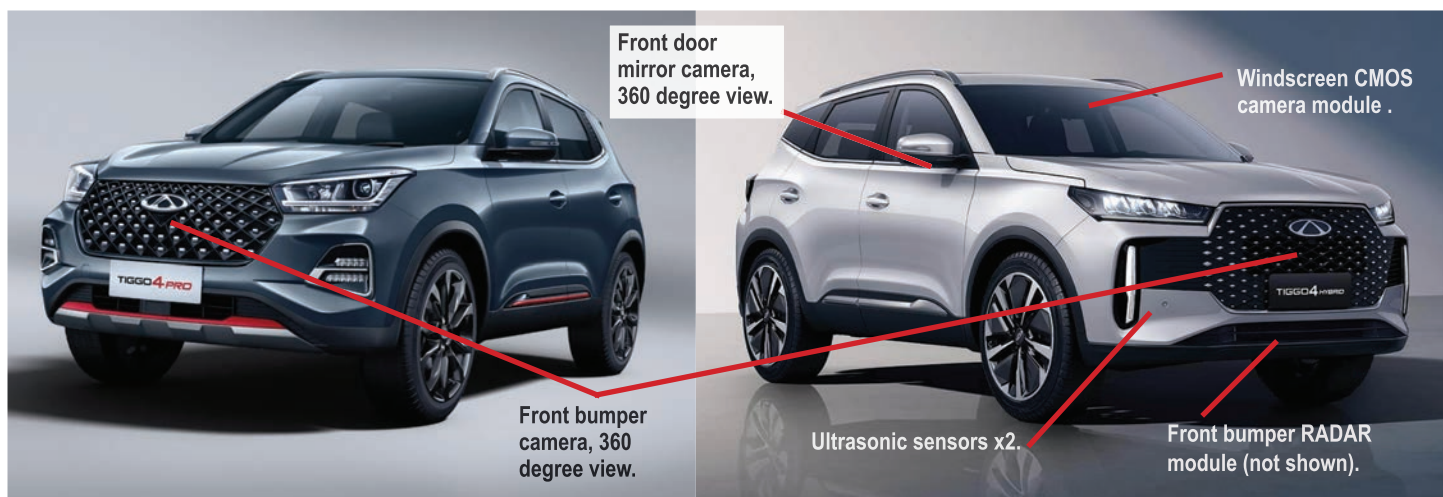
Front strut tower and upper longitudinal, 345 MPa steel alloy.

Tailgate inner, 345 MPa steel alloy.

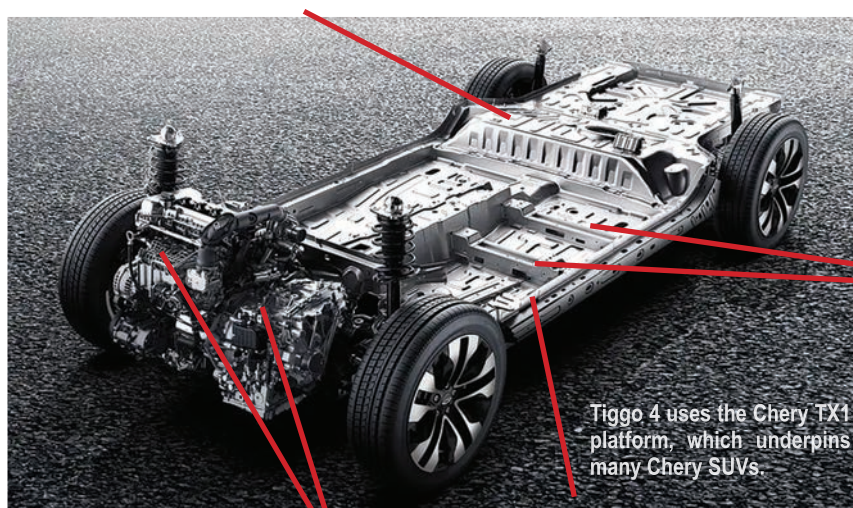
Aluminium alloy front bumper beam.

Front chassis leg, 790 MPa steel alloy.





Tiggo 4 has torsion beam rear suspension, as originally used on the Omada C5 / C5X.



All powertrains drive the front wheels only.

Tiggo 4 Pro:

1.5l naturally aspirated petrol engine, 83kW, 5sp manual, 6 speed DSG or CVT (shown).

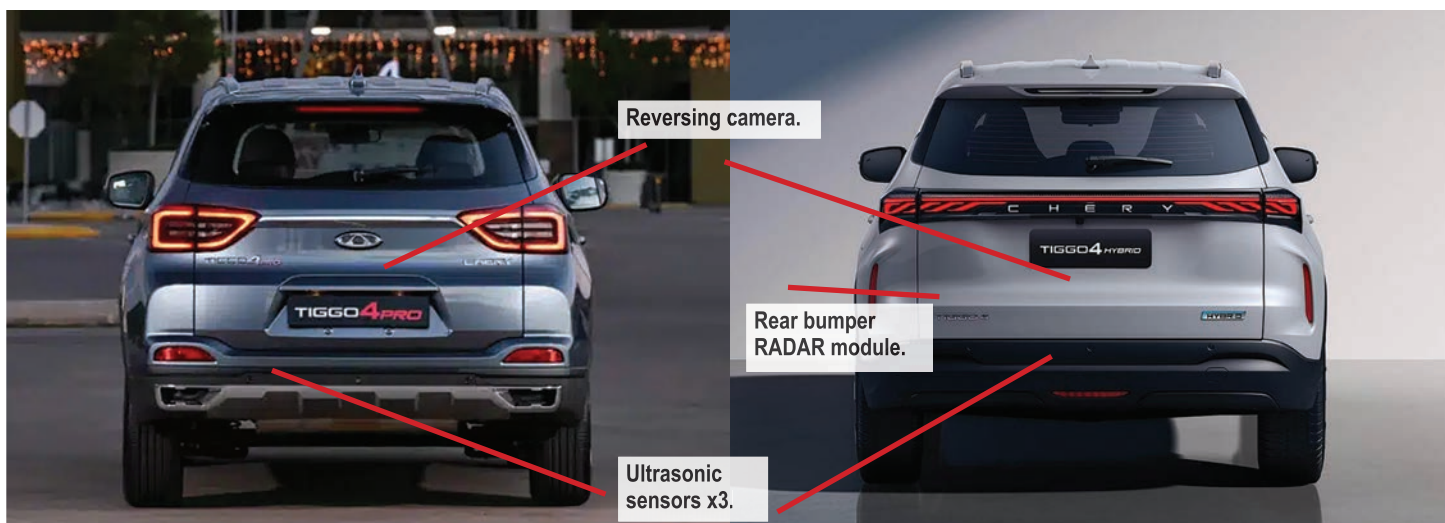
1.5l turbo petrol engine, 108 kW, 6 speed DSG or CVT

Tiggo 4 Cross:

1.5l turbo petrol engine, 108 kW, 6 speed DSG

Tiggo 4 Cross CSH hybrid:

1.5l naturally aspirated petrol engine, 71kW, hybrid transmission including electric drive motor – total combined power, 150 kW.



Note: ESC is standard on all models.

2 front airbags standard, all models except base gain 4 more airbags.

Note: ESC is standard on all models.

ADAS suite is standard only on 'Elite' trim.

Base non HEV model has 6 airbags, all others have 7 airbags.



## TALKING INSURANCE

INDEPENDENT REPAIR  
SECTOR 'ON ITS DEATH BED'

**Tim Kelly**  
Motor Claim Guru

**T**he year is 2032 and I am sad to announce the passing of the independent vehicle body repair industry. As with any death, it always comes as a shock. There were last minute attempts to resuscitate the patient, but the air had already been taken from its lungs.

I personally have been trying to make the patient aware of its declining health since 2020 and made numerous attempts to educate it on how to restore its health. But a terminal mix of ignorance, naivety, lack of education and absolute apathy proved lethal.

If only more people had offered support the patients aid: if only the government had taken more action to prevent the parasitic insurance industry from sucking the life and profit from us: if only the Financial Ombudsman Service (the South African Insurance Association SAIA) had listened to consumers who complained that insurers were applying an increased excess to steer them away from their choice of repair.

These repairers were family businesses rather than faceless entities, they cared more about their customers than corporate consolidation, cold numbers, stats, cost, average repair cost, and total loss ratios.

"I just wanted my car repaired with a business I could trust and have always used," these customers bleated.

But insurers did not want that. They only wanted to keep their shareholders happy with higher and higher profits and dividends, at the expense and death of an industry 'partner'.

The Financial Sector Conduct Authority South Africa didn't care either. It was not concerned about the ramifications of giving insurers free reign to kill our beloved friend.

But in truth it was our friend, the independent repairer, who must share some of the blame. It allowed itself to be put in this situation. It did not stand up for itself. It did not consolidate into an industry with a unified voice loud enough to apply political pressure or to make Competition Commission sit up and listen. It allowed insurers to divide and conquer with take-it-or-leave-it rates of approximately R400 per hour.

Meanwhile, our patient's brother, the consolidator, is in a much healthier condition due to market saturation and the illusion of choice. You can go to any repairer you want as long as I own it; you can insure your vehicle with whoever you want as long as I own it.

But this is a dangerous situation for both parties.

The insurer needs to be careful because the balance of power now rests with consolidators, or large repair bodies, when

it comes to contract negotiations and the consolidator needs to be careful because all of its eggs are in one basket and if claims costs get too high the insurer could decide not to repair vehicles and simply pay policy holders in cash. It could conclude that the frictional costs of running a repair network – vehicle assessment, consumer satisfaction, underwriting issues – are not worth the rewards.

If only we could go back in time to 2026, when there was still time to avoid this scenario, when there was still time for an apathetic industry to take its head out of the sand and fight for its future.

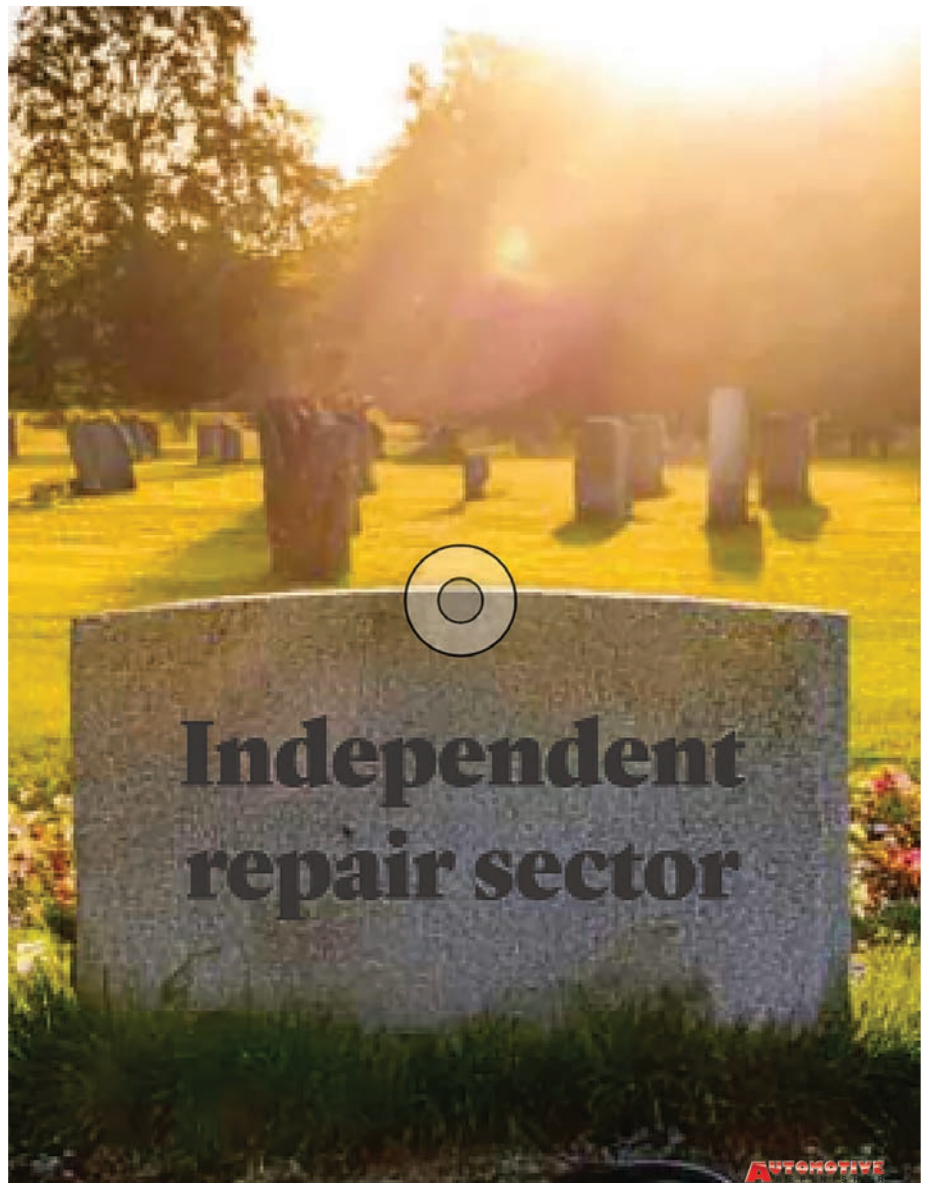
I recently attended a stakeholder meeting with the insurance trade to discuss 'increased

excesses for using your own repairer' but even after presenting the law, the regulations, and the potential harm to the repair industry, we found ourselves going around in circles.

I urged them to take action against insurers on contractual wording, but their bias towards the insurance industry was abundantly clear.

Now, only political pressure can save our patient. The independent repair industry needs to get organised and unite behind a single voice. Each and every person must understand that their very livelihood depends on it.

Doing nothing is simply not an option.





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INDUSTRY NEWS

Industry Insider

### WHAT'S HOT?

## DÜRR TO SUPPLY PAINT SOLUTION FOR FIRST BYD PLANT IN EUROPE

**T**he Chinese electric vehicle manufacturer BYD Auto Company Limited is building its first European passenger car plant. To equip it with painting technology, BYD selected Dürr: Over the coming months, the German mechanical and plant engineering company will send more than 120 robots to Hungary for various painting lines. These robots, fitted with EcoBell3 atomisers, deliver outstanding quality and support sustainable painting.

BYD Auto Company Limited, is one of China's largest vehicle manufacturers, while ranking among the market leaders in electric vehicle sales. Now, the company is building a European car factory in Szeged, Hungary, becoming one of the first Chinese car manufacturers to do so. For painting its "New Energy Vehicles" (NEV), BYD has partnered with Dürr. For this project, Dürr will supply and install more than 120 painting and handling robots. "As a world market leader in automotive painting, Dürr is the right partner to implement projects of this size successfully and on schedule. It was not just our outstanding technology that won over BYD, but also our experience in Hungary, where we have already completed a number of projects," explains Dr. Lars Friedrich, CEO Automotive at Dürr. This is the first order the company has received from the Chinese carmaker in the passenger car segment. Dürr Systems AG was successfully audited extensively by BYD before being considered as a supplier.

### Latest robot generation for painting process

The painting lines will use Dürr's latest EcoRP series painting robot, available in both six- and seven-axis variants for interior and exterior painting. The seven-axis robot offers high precision and flexibility for interior painting, reaching even the most difficult to access areas. Six-axis robots will handle the exterior painting. The scope of supply also includes the corresponding doors, lid, and flap openers as additional aids for the painting process.

### Sustainable paint application

EcoBell3 high-speed rotary atomisers ensure flawless painting quality with uniform shade, flow, and layer thickness. When combined with the associated cleaning equipment and colour change technology, the atomiser family minimises paint and solvent consumption and enables fast colour changes within the cycle time. In future, BYD will also be able to sustainably implement customers' special colour requests using Dürr's standardised, modular EcoSupply P paint supply system with pigging technology. The "pigs" – which are what the fitting bodies matched exactly to the internal diameter of the hoses are called – push paint to the colour changer and return any leftover paint back into the paint container, leaving absolutely no trace of residue and eliminating the need for cleaning. This process reduces both paint and the rinsing agent consumption, benefiting both budget and the environment.

### Automated body cleaning

The supply scope also includes cleaning robots that remove dust and dirt particles from the bodies before painting. Flexible-action feather rollers clean different body shapes efficiently and independently of each other in nearly any combination and order – ideal for BYD's various NEV types.



# HURRICANE *EQUIPMENT*



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## THATCHAM RESEARCH

# COLLECTIVE COMMITMENT NEEDED FOR SKILLS ADVANCEMENT

**A** new study, conducted in partnership with Thatcham Research by the Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR), has highlighted fresh concerns about the repair skill's shortage. However, it's not all doom and gloom.

The threats to smooth and safe repair, reparability of vehicles and lack of a workforce to fully handle growing complexity, loom large in a new study unveiled by Thatcham Research.

In the past Dean Lander has warned about the repair industry's ongoing skills deficit for some time. He also stated that stakeholders across the value chain must collaborate more closely to ensure vehicle reparability is considered as early in the design process as possible, nipping problems in the bud before they grow.

The study, conducted in partnership with Thatcham Research by the Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR), surveyed automotive businesses and motorists. It offers new evidence that these issues aren't just a point of view. They are challenges experienced in the day-to-day management of body shops and repair workflows.

Complex repairs drive higher costs and longer key-to-key times which in turn present insurers with a dilemma. Can they underwrite every new vehicle entering the car parc? And, if they're able to do that, will motor insurance premiums be kept as low as possible to help today's cash-strapped consumer?

It is therefore unsurprising that while reparability and repair skills are front of mind, they are eclipsed in the survey results by overall vehicle insurability as respondents' number one concern.

### Repair teams dealing with multiple problems

While I don't focus too closely on the views of the consumers surveyed, it is useful to note that 89% of drivers reported moderate to high concern about the cost of insurance when purchasing a new vehicle.

When asking insurers about the challenges to the provision of affordable coverage, rising repair costs was the most frequent response option, selected by 68%. This was followed by greater vehicle complexity, at 60% and growth in EV adoption, at 54%.

In tandem, 73% of repair and salvage experts agreed that the industry is experiencing a skills gap, with respondents highlighting the need for greater visibility and promotion of apprenticeships within the education sector as the most effective long-term solution.

This acknowledgement of the skills deficit reflects wider industry data. The Institute of Motor Industry has highlighted as much, predicting a shortfall of more than 35 000 technicians by 2030. Furthermore, the institute claims the number of employees holding its Electric Vehicle (EV) TechSafe qualification will be 22 500 less than necessary 2035, if we stay on the same trajectory.

Analysis of the latest apprentice data shows sharp declines as well. With automotive apprenticeships falling by 3%, but with occupations within the body repair sector falling even more sharply, MET (-36%), Accident Repair Technician (-23%), Paint Technician (-9%).

As the sector continues to raise concerns about skills more than half (-56%) of business-based respondents in our survey observed that vehicle repair has become more difficult in the past 12 months – making it their primary challenge in returning cars to the road in pre-accident condition. This, they reveal, is driven in large part by complexity of materials, High Voltage and ADAS systems appearing on new vehicles.

The second most prominent challenge (54%) noted during the past year was a lack of technical repair capabilities in handling EVs and ADAS components.

### Responding positively and calmly to these challenges

Taken together, the factors outlined previously go some way to explaining why insurability as a whole is seen as the biggest challenge by respondents. Rising repair costs (63%), growing technological complexity (60%) and the slow but steady takeover of the car parc by EVs (55%) is a potent mix compounding the pressure on the insurance system.

But it needn't all be doom and gloom. Separating each of the component problems to make them easier to assess and respond to is a good starting point. Many body shop businesses are already doing just that.

As I've previously noted, now is actually a good time to make a reasonable dent in the skills deficit. Thatcham Research data shows claim frequency is slowing. With this in mind workflows may be less frantic. Of course, this may simply be a temporary relief. But it still gives managers the breathing space to take a step back, audit required skills and arrange suitable training and recruitment to plug any gaps.

When it comes to issues such as repair method availability and integrating 'insurability by design' – into vehicle production – preventing repair problems at source – body shops are somewhat at the mercy of VMs' involvement in the process.

That's why Thatcham Research is intensifying discussions with incumbent and new VMs, helping them to identify potential vehicle risks and proposing data-led repair solutions. This Automotive Risk Intelligence driven data can then be shared with repair and insurance businesses.

The new research is a stark reminder that automotive professionals across the spectrum – from VM-based engineers to repair technicians working on vehicles, and insurers inspecting and underwriting the cars we drive – feel vulnerable to the rapid changes going on around us.

Ultimately, the future resilience of the repair sector will depend on our collective commitment to bridging the skills gap through investment in training and supporting new talent. This, alongside forging closer collaboration with manufacturers, insurers, and repairers, can ensure that the workforce is equipped to meet the demands of increasingly complex vehicles.



# HURRICANE

## *EQUIPMENT*

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## BODY FILLER TIPS

## THE TOP FIVE BODY FILLER MISTAKES



Despite significant advancements in repair materials, tooling and vehicle design, improper application of body filler continues to undermine repair integrity. These failures are rarely attributable to the filler itself; instead, they stem from practises that disregard fundamental principles of material science and manufacturer specifications.

Modern body fillers are engineered cosmetic surfacing products with defined performance limits established through rigorous testing. Manufacturer documentation specifies acceptable substrates, mixing ratios, application thickness and cure behaviour. Misuse occurs when these limitations are ignored or misunderstood. Today's collision repair industry offers many filler options — lightweight polyester fillers, glazing putties, fibreglass-reinforced fillers, metal-filled products, sprayable fillers and specialty formulations. Each is designed for specific applications, such as skim coating, weld seam reinforcement or large-area levelling. Selecting the correct filler is the first step toward a durable repair, but even the right product will fail if applied incorrectly.

The following are five common mistakes associated with body filler use, examined through the lens of material behaviour and product requirements.

#### Using body filler to correct panel shape

One of the most frequent misapplications involves using body filler to compensate for unresolved substrate deformation. Excessive filler is often applied to mask incomplete straightening or structural distortion.

Polyester body filler has limited tensile strength, low elongation and no structural capacity. When applied beyond recommended thickness, the material becomes vulnerable to cracking, shrink-back and adhesion loss caused by thermal cycling, vibration and environmental exposure. These failures result from internal stress and differential expansion between filler and substrate.

Manufacturers typically limit application thickness to approximately 1/8 inch (3 mm) in localized areas. Damage exceeding this threshold must be corrected through proper metal repair or panel replacement before cosmetic surfacing begins. Body filler is intended to refine surface contour — not replace substrate restoration.

#### Applying filler over improper or contaminated substrates

Body filler adhesion relies entirely on mechanical bonding. Unlike coatings that form chemical bonds, polyester fillers depend on physical keying into a properly prepared surface. Failures occur when filler is applied over incompatible or contaminated substrates such as unsanded E-coat, glossy primer, acid-etched metal, corrosion or panels contaminated with silicone, oil or solvent residue.

Surface condition directly affects bond integrity. If the substrate has poor surface energy or trapped contaminants, adhesion is

compromised, leading to delamination and moisture intrusion. Application over acid-etched metal is especially problematic because residual acid can interfere with peroxide-initiated polymerization at the filler-to-metal interface.

Proper substrate preparation requires surfaces to be clean, dry, corrosion-free and abraded to the scratch profile specified by the filler manufacturer. Feathered edge surrounding paint films with progressive grit steps (e.g., 220 – 320 – 400) to create a smooth transition and mechanical key. Some filler manufacturers permit application over properly prepared epoxy primers, but this approval is product-specific and dependent on primer cure state and surface preparation.

Adhesion failures almost always originate at the substrate — not in the filler itself.

#### Incorrect hardener ratios and improper mixing technique

Altering hardener ratios to adjust working or cure time remains a common practice, despite clear warnings from manufacturers. Polyester fillers depend on controlled exothermic polymerisation, a chemical reaction that releases heat as the filler cures. This heat drives crosslink formation, which determines the filler's strength and dimensional stability.

Deviating from specified catalyst ratios disrupts reaction kinetics and introduces long-term performance risks:

- Excess hardener accelerates the reaction, increasing peak cure temperature and producing brittle filler with reduced flexibility and increased solvent sensitivity.

- Insufficient hardener slows or prevents complete polymerisation, resulting in incomplete cure, long-term softness and delayed shrinkage.

Improper mixing compounds these issues. Swirling introduces air, creating internal voids that later appear as pinholes. Incomplete folding leads to uneven catalyst distribution and inconsistent cure. Uniform colour throughout the mixture indicates readiness for even polymerization.

Best practises include checking expiration dates, using the same brand of filler and hardener, and mixing according to the manufacturer's technical data sheet (TDS).

#### Improper application technique and layer control

Applying filler in thick, single applications creates internal stress that remains locked into the repair after hardening. This stress is a primary contributor to future shrink-back and surface distortion.

Overworking filler beyond its open time further damages the internal structure. Once polymer chains begin to form, additional manipulation disrupts cohesion and weakens adhesion at the substrate interface.

Manufacturers specify layering strategies, open time limits and cure windows to ensure dimensional stability. Controlled, incremental



application allows heat to dissipate and polymer chains to form uniformly. Apply multiple thin layers rather than one thick coat.

Attempting to shape filler during the gel phase compromises internal strength and long-term durability.

#### **Sanding errors that compromise repair durability**

Sanding-related failures often occur when filler is shaped or refined before it has fully cured, when grit progressions are skipped or when edges are over-sanded.

Sanding before complete polymerisation disrupts crosslink formation beneath the surface. While the outer layer may feel hard, the underlying material remains unstable, leading to delayed shrinkage, edge mapping and visible repair outlines after refinishing.

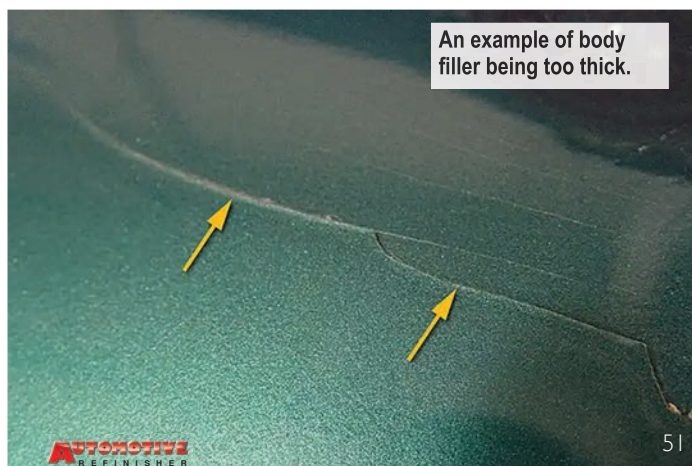
Filler manufacturers establish sanding sequences to balance shape control with surface refinement. Coarse grits are intended for shaping, followed by progressive refinement to remove scratches and stabilize the surface. Skipping steps sacrifices long-term repair integrity for short-term speed.

#### **Final considerations and training resources**

Body filler failures are rarely random. They are the predictable result of exceeding material limitations, misunderstanding substrate requirements or disregarding product-specific technical data.

When used strictly within its intended purpose and applied according to the manufacturer's instructions, body filler performs reliably as a cosmetic refinement material. When misused, it becomes a consistent source of long-term failure.

Understanding the material – not just the process – is the key to durable, repeatable repairs.



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CRAFTING CHAMPIONS

# WORLD SKILLS SOUTH AFRICA NATIONAL COMPETITION 2026

As the automotive landscape undergoes a rapid transformation – shifting toward advanced materials and digital integration – the demand for elite technical talent has never been higher. The spotlight fell on the Chief Albert Luthuli Durban International Convention Centre (DICC), where South Africa's finest young artisans converge for the WorldSkills South Africa (WSZA) National Competition 2026.

This event is more than a contest; it is a high-stakes arena where the future of the South African workshop is forged.

Under the theme "Building a skilled and competitive workforce for the future," over 200 competitors from TVET colleges, universities of technology, and private training providers will battle for the gold. For these young professionals, the stakes are international: winners will earn the prestigious honour of representing Team South Africa at the WorldSkills International Competition in Shanghai, China, in September 2026.

## Spotlight on automotive excellence

For the automotive refinishing sector, three categories stand out as the "Formula 1" of vocational skills: Auto Body Repair and Car Painting.

Modern vehicle repair is no longer just about "beating out dents." Today's technicians must navigate complex structural blueprints, 3D measuring tools for diagnostics and sophisticated electronic sensors.

Competitors must demonstrate mastery in panel replacement, structural alignment, and welding techniques that meet strict Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) standards. Precision is Key: The ability to restore a crash-damaged vehicle to its exact factory specifications is a blend of mechanical engineering and manual dexterity.

## Car painting: the art of the finish

Often described as a blend of science and artistry, the Car Painting category requires an incredible eye for detail. In an era of tri-coat pearls and matte finishes, matching a colour is a digital and visual challenge. Competitors are also judged on their ability to prepare surfaces invisibly, ensuring that the final clear coat is mirror-smooth and free of any defects.

Sustainability: Modern standards emphasise the use of greener material and the reduction of waste, reflecting the industry's shift toward "greener" workshops. While the roar of the automotive refinishing section is a major draw itself, the WSZA Nationals is a massive multidisciplinary event featuring 27 different skills. The DICC will be a hive of activity across various sectors:

Manufacturing and Engineering: Skills like Welding, Mechatronics, and Mechanical Engineering CAD showcase the backbone of South African production. Information Technology: Categories such as Cloud Computing and Cyber Security highlight the digital infrastructure that now powers every dealership and OEM. Service and Construction: From Plumbing and Heating to Bricklaying, the competition covers the full spectrum of the South African economy

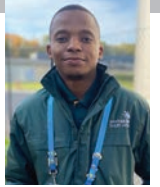
## Why this matters for South Africa

The National Competition serves as a vital bridge between education and industry. With organisations like the Collisions Repair Association (CRA) and the South African Motor Body Repairers' Association (SAMBRA) championing these standards, the event highlights the "Decade of the Artisan" initiative.

By having experts like Neo Motshabela (ABR – C3 Autobody Repair Academy), Wayne Branden (Car Painting – BASF), as well as all other experts from industry and training involved - such as Garth Henson (Auto Mobile Technology), the industry can benchmark South African training against the best in the world. If our students can win in Shanghai, it will be a great showing that our workshops can compete with any global repair centre.

For the automotive magazine reader, this event is a glimpse into the next generation of employees. These are the technicians who will be handling your high-tech EVs and complex luxury finishes in the years to come.

Training hubs and academies across the country – from the Western



Neo Moshabela

www.c3academy.co.za

WorldSkills SA ABR National Expert

Cape to the Free State, all the way to Limpopo – are currently fine-tuning their candidates' skills. The level of preparation seen this year suggests that South Africa is ready to make a significant impact on the global stage in Shanghai. The 48th WorldSkills Competition will be held in Shanghai, China from September 22nd to September 27th, 2026.

## WorldSkills SA Results

Mesuli Nande Gxalaba from Technicolour Autobody Repair in Bloemfontein won gold, Setlhare Onthatile – also an apprentice from Technicolour took silver, and Sizwe Motaung from B&H in Bloemfontein placed third receiving a bronze medal.

The gold and silver medalists will receive training in preparation for Shanghai, but only the gold medalist will compete. If Mesuli is unable to attend, then Setlhare will take his place.



Garth Henson (left), Auto Mobile Technology Expert, and Wayne Branden, Car Painting Expert.



Dries Bester (far right), occupational programmes manager from Motheo TVET College is seen with the candidates and ABR team that work tirelessly behind the scenes to make it all happen.



Mesuli Nande Gxalaba is 21 and an apprentice at Technicolour Autobody Repair in Bloemfontein. He got gold and cannot wait to represent his country at the WorldSkills Competition in Shanghai later this year.

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**DRIVEN**

## THE NEW GOLF GTI

**F**rom kasi streets to coastal highways, few hot hatches have captured the heart of South Africa quite like the Golf GTI. With a global fanbase and more than 2.3 million units sold, it remains the original icon of its class – a benchmark that others still measure themselves against. Now, the legend moves into its next chapter, arriving with more power, sharper design and smarter technology to reinforce its status as the people's performance car.

The new Golf GTI is powered by a 2.0 TSI engine producing 195kW, up from the previous 180kW, with 370Nm of torque delivered between 1 600 and 4 500 rpm. Mated exclusively to a seven-speed DSG transmission, it sprints from 0 to 100 km/h in just 5.9 seconds and reaches a top speed of 250km/h. As always, the GTI strikes a balance between everyday usability and thrilling performance, offering drivers a car that feels equally at home in city traffic or on an open stretch of highway.

A core strength of the GTI lies in its running gear, which has been further refined for even greater precision and agility. Progressive steering, a front-axle differential lock, the Vehicle Dynamics Manager and Dynamic Chassis Control (DCC) all work together to deliver sharp turn-in, improved traction and enhanced stability.

Visually, the new GTI has been sharpened without losing its unmistakable identity. Newly developed LED Plus headlights give the front end a cleaner, more assertive look, seamlessly integrated into the grille. A horizontal LED strip comes standard, complemented by the signature red line that has defined the GTI since 1976. For the first time, the Volkswagen logo at the front is illuminated, adding to the distinctive light signature.

At the rear, redesigned LED taillight clusters create a fresh and

modern appearance, while in profile the GTI remains instantly recognisable thanks to red-on-chrome GTI lettering near the A-pillars and newly developed 19-inch Queenstown alloy wheels designed exclusively for GTI models.

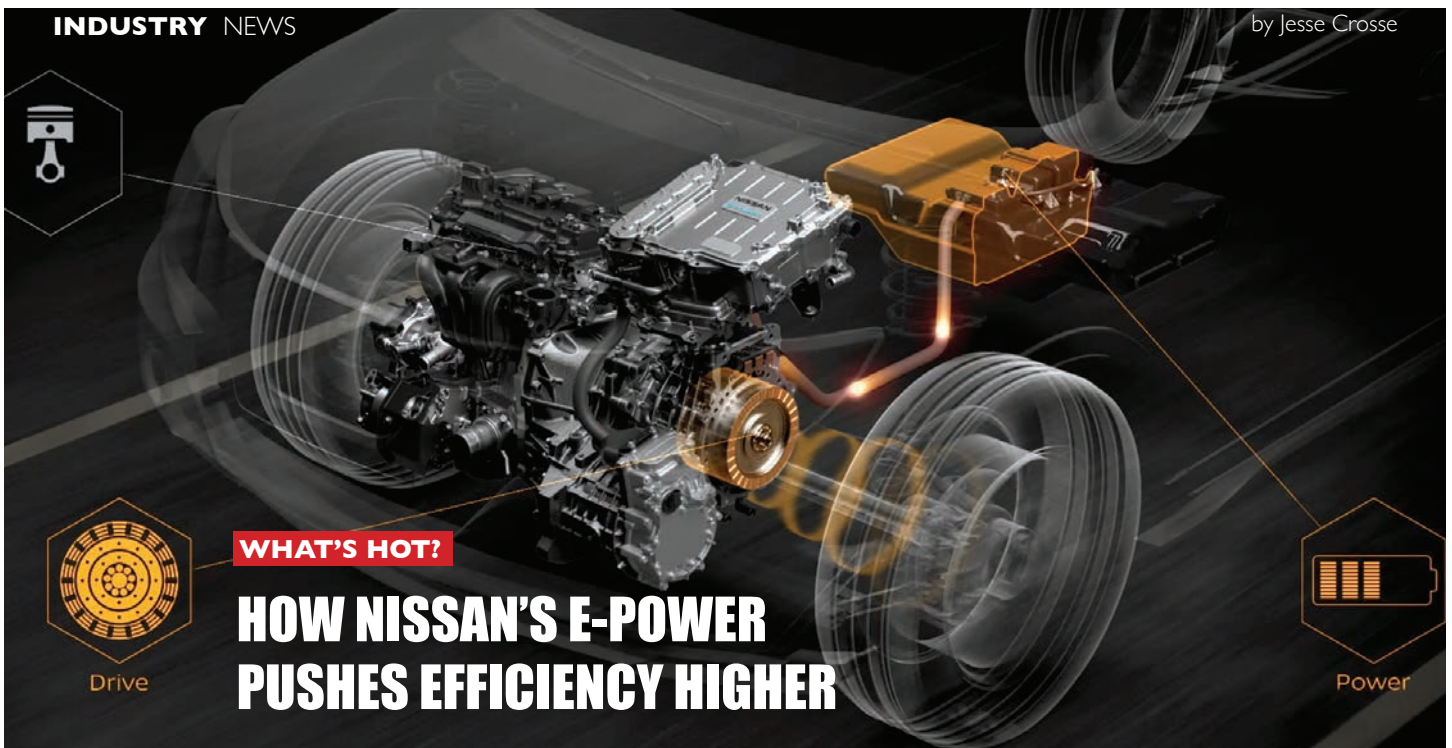
Inside, the cabin blends heritage with cutting-edge technology. The infotainment system has been completely redesigned, now based on Volkswagen's fourth-generation modular platform (MIB4). The Discover Pro system with navigation is standard, operated through a large 12.9-inch (32.8 cm) free-standing touchscreen featuring new graphics and a simplified structure for more intuitive use. The tablet-style display enhances both functionality and visual appeal.

Traditional GTI elements remain central to the interior experience. Premium sport seats with integrated head restraints are upholstered in Vienna leather, accented by red decorative stitching on the seats, centre armrest, floor mats and multifunction sports steering wheel. The perforated leather steering wheel features GTI lettering and red detailing, while the Engine/Start/Stop button pulses red before ignition – a subtle but distinctive reminder of the car's performance DNA. Brushed stainless steel pedal caps and a black headliner round off the sporty ambience.

Priced at R908 000 (VAT and emissions tax included), the new Golf GTI comes standard with a 3-year/120 000km warranty, a five-year/90 000km EasyDrive Service Plan, a 12-year anti-corrosion warranty and 15 000km service intervals – ensuring that this next chapter of the GTI story in Mzansi is as reassuring as it is exhilarating.







Combustion engine development (ICE) is still important and the drive for efficiency will continue for as long as engines remain in use – and the new Nissan e-Power system is a case in point. The first vehicle to use the latest, third-generation e-Power system, initially introduced in 2016, is the Qashqai, which began production in the UK in July last year.

Nissan's e-Power powertrain is a series hybrid system, so the 1.5 litre petrol engine works as a generator to charge the battery rather than driving the wheels.

Because of that, the engine doesn't need to produce transient bursts of power and torque for acceleration.

It drives an integral generator to charge the battery, but when driving at high speeds, it can also feed power via the inverter (power electronics) directly to the main drive motor while charging the battery at the same time.

An advantage of this approach is that it overcomes one of the combustion engine's main drawbacks: relatively poor thermal efficiency. Combustion engines produce power by burning fuel, which releases expanding gases to drive pistons and produce mechanical power. But only some of the energy in the fuel is converted into mechanical energy and the rest is wasted as heat. In older engines, thermal efficiency could be as low as 20-30% although today some are exceeding 30% and heading towards 40%.

Nissan says the new e-Power engine can achieve 42% partly because the engine is designed specifically as a generator and not

hampered by the need to cope with transient demands such as a conventional drivetrain, and thanks to a complex combustion strategy called STARC (Strong Tumble and Appropriately Robust ignition Channel concept).

As the name suggests, it's all about creating a strong tumble effect when air rushes into the cylinders plus ignition strategies to burn the fuel – air mixture as efficiently as possible.

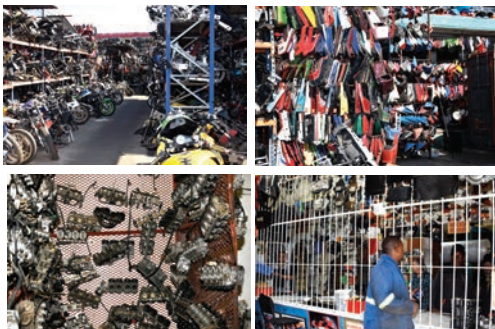
A new process called cold spray technology has helped achieve that by doing away with traditional valve seat inserts in the cylinder head, and rings of hardened metal pressed into the alloy cylinder head on which the valves sit as they close. Their presence leads to a compromise in the aerodynamics of the inlet tract, but the new method literally sprays hardened material onto the cylinder head valve seat areas instead, allowing more flexibility in designing the shape of valve opening.

This innovation – along with an unusually large turbo to reduce pumping losses plus timing strategies to allow a high compression ratio of 13:1 – is said to balance high thermal efficiency with high power.

It's hoped future versions of e-Power will achieve 50% thermal efficiency through battery improvements, which allow 'fixed point operation' of the engine (constant rpm), enabling it to remain exactly in its most efficient operating area all the time, something that isn't quite achievable yet.

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CLASSIC CORNER

# IN SEARCH OF NUGGETS AT THE GEORGE OLD CAR SHOW

Story and pics by Stuart Johnston



Porsche 356  
Cabriolet, Tammy  
Hargreaves

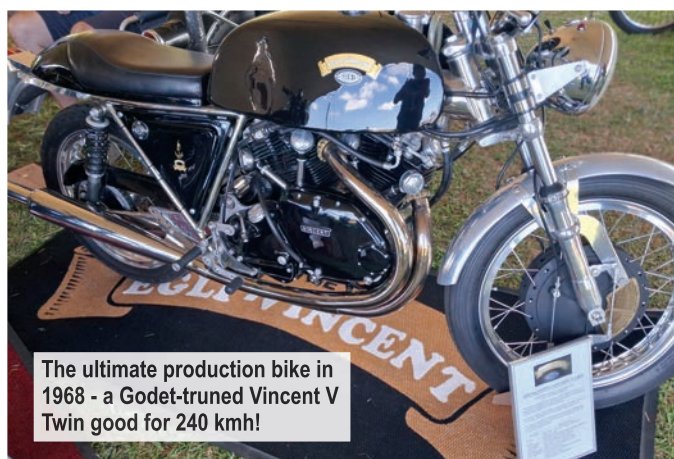




Magnificent Dino 246 from the late 1960s, owned by Knysna's Mark Barendse.



Vincent Black Shadow.



The ultimate production bike in 1968 - a Godet-truned Vincent V Twin good for 240 km/h!

One of the best parts of the George Old Car Show – or any car show for that matter – is the nuggets you find tucked away in the more obscure sectors. For me, the highlights of the show ranged from iconic motorcycles to unusual versions of common-or-garden classics that you would expect to see in great numbers, and exotics that turned up unexpectedly.

Let's take a look at a few of these that graced the 2026 event, held as usual at the technical college in York Street, the main drag of the city that is often referred to as South Africa's Garden of Eden.

#### 1968 Vincent Godet Sport GT 1300 Motorcycle

This bike punched so far above its weight in the late 1960s that it is quite amazing to realise it came from the same era as the defining motorcycle of its time, the Honda CB750 four-cylinder. The stock Vincent Sport GT had a top speed of 222 km/h in "normal" form, while the Godet version of the V-Twin shown in George was rated at 240! This was in the era when the Honda was feted world-wide for its top speed of just on 200 km/h.

#### 1954 Vincent Black Shadow

Again, the world's quickest production bike of its time. A similar V-Twin model, a suitably stripped down Black Lightning, was ridden by a certain Vic Proctor, lying completely prone on the saddle with his legs and feet extended out behind, at Verneuk Pan in the Northern Cape. The fearless Capetonian set an overall South African land speed record of 149 mph (around 240 km/h) in the very early 1950s, which stood for nearly two decades before another South African hero, Bobby Olthoff raised the bar in late 1967 to 179 mph in his McLaren Elva

Ford sports racer. Proctor's Black Shadow record, it should be noted, stood for 45 years in the SA two-wheeled land speed record category.

#### Dino 246

Everyone knows it's a little Ferrari, but for some obscure reason the exterior and interior of this V6 Maranello marvel bears no evidence of the name "Ferrari" or the iconic prancing horse badge. More and more, the wieldy Dino 246 with its marvelous-sounding small-capacity V6, is becoming one of the classic Ferraris to own, not quite up there with the likes of the Daytona or the Boxer yet, but getting there!

#### Porsche 356B Cabriolet

Any Porsche is a great car – with the possible exceptions of some of the SUV models and the 914 Volks-Porsche of the '70s (although the 914 and 916 are finally being accorded the proper respect they deserve). But you'd have to go a long way to match the likes of a 356B in cabriolet form for sheer elegance and beauty. Tammy Hargreaves from Port Elizabeth who has owned notable classics like the Bertone styled Alfa Romeo GTV2000, is definitely on the same page as us!

#### Ford Anglia Van

Anglias are a dime a dozen (although they remain one of my personal all-time favourites) but vans are as rare as an uncomfortable Lazy Boy recliner (that's a chair, dude!) The one in George this year (the car, okay, van) was weirdly customized, but it was cool nevertheless.

#### Ford Model T

The major theme of this year's show was cars through the ages from 1886 to right now. The car that put America on wheels was the Model T Ford built from 1908 to 1927, and Henry Ford's amazing invention



sold across the planet too, to the tune of over 15-million examples. A couple still enjoying their Model Ts immensely today (they have three of them) are Phillip and Amanda Rosser.

#### **1930s DKW F-Series**

Anyone who reads my stuff regularly will know I have a soft spot for DKW two strokes. But very few people realise that these two-stroke cars were built well before World War Two, and one of these is this little twin-cylinder two stroke sporty model, known as the F series in various iterations. Like all Deeks, it has front-wheel-drive too.

#### **Volvo 144, 1968-1972**

A Volvo 144 as a nugget? One of the most boring Volvos ever? Well, Howard Bates' sea-green example not only has a brace of Weber 42 mm DCOE side-draught carbs (the hot performance ticket of the 1960s and 1970s) but it has lapped the Nurburgring Nordschleife, and driven to untold places on the European continent too. Check out the automotive CV on the passenger door!

#### **MG TC, 1945 to 1950**

After World War Two, American servicemen stationed in the UK were exposed to an amazingly affordable, fun and exciting sports car that was tiny by American standards, and hence more fun than anything available on the American

market at the time. That car was the MG TC, with a diminutive but characterful four-cylinder engine displacing under 1300 cc that was perfectly suited to this machine with its spindly wire-spoke wheels and its guarantee of wind-in-the-face motoring – a four-wheel motorcycle, in other words.

The American demand for the TC established the MG brand as a global icon, and hundreds of TCs were sold here in South Africa too. This was the template for a whole series of MGs that followed through the next two and half decades, making it the archetypal British sports car until well into the 1980s!

#### **Sunbeam Rapier 1958 to 1963**

In the late 1950s until the early 1960s, one of the cars to own was a Sunbeam Rapier. This was particularly true if you had any aspirations as a rally driver, thanks to its sturdy construction, strong performance from its twin-carb four-cylinder Rootes engine and a dashboard that had all the right gauges. These just included a rev counter, in an era when most British cars had a speedometer and a couple of warning lights for vital signs such as water temperature and oil pressure. This example at the 2026 George Old Car Show was appropriately decked out with spot lamps, headlight stone guards, aftermarket rally-spec wheels and an array of rally orientated decals, stripes and competition numbers.



Model T Ford.



Model T mover and shaker Philip Rosser and his wife Amanda.



Anglia van, circa mid-'60s, custom road-race treatment.





Howard Bates and his Volvo 144 that has lapped the Nurburging Nordschleife!



Volvo 144 map



Healthy lungs! Pair of rare 42 mm Weber sidedraughts on a Volvo mill.



A Pre War MG TC, immaculate presentation.



Sunbeam Rapier rally weapon



DKW F8 1930s.



## COATINGS UPDATE

# GLOBAL AUTO COATINGS CELEBRATE 20 YEARS OF SUCCESS WITH PPG



**T**he team at Global Auto Coatings, based in Benoni, Johannesburg, recently celebrated a significant milestone — 20 years of successful partnership with global coatings leader PPG.

Company spokesman Rivenn Pillay reflected proudly on the company's journey since its founding by himself, his father Peggie Pillay, and Wayne Nortje. What began as a small operation has grown into a thriving business, now expanded with a second branch in Bloemfontein.

From the outset, the company's philosophy has centred on delivering advanced coating technologies backed by exceptional technical support and reliable supply of high-quality consumables. This commitment has enabled Global Auto Coatings to build lasting relationships with autobody repairers and industry professionals across the region.

In an industry where market conditions continue to evolve and profitability margins face increasing pressure, innovation and efficiency remain critical. Through its partnership with PPG, Global Auto Coatings offers customers access to a comprehensive portfolio of advanced refinishing solutions and digital tools designed to improve accuracy, productivity, and consistency.

Among these technologies are the PPG MoonWalk®, PPG VisualizID™, and PPG LINQ™ Color systems, which enable industry-leading colour matching and precise formula retrieval. These solutions ensure exceptional accuracy, even when working with complex two- and three-stage Xirallic finishes.

The highly regarded Envirobase® High Performance waterborne basecoat system continues to be a cornerstone of the offering. Known for its ease of use and robust performance, the system delivers consistent results regardless of body shop climate conditions.

To meet the needs of a diverse customer base, Global Auto Coatings also supplies Selemix®, another PPG brand, offering high-quality coatings, innovative solutions, and expert guidance. The aqua and solvent ranges are available, both of which offer extensive mixing toner ranges suited for commercial and light industrial applications. These products are supported by ISO-compliant certification standards, ensuring long-term durability under South Africa's demanding sunlight and environmental conditions.

Additional refinishing brands available include QUICKLINE® and NEXA® AUTOCOLOR 2K® systems, further strengthening the company's comprehensive product portfolio.

According to Rivenn Pillay, the industry has also seen significant growth in the informal sector, where price sensitivity is a key factor.

"The informal sector has shown a dramatic increase, which is extremely price sensitive. Our strong focus on customer service has built significant loyalty, which keeps our colour matching department exceptionally busy. On average, we mix between 80 and 100 accurate colours per day for our clients."

A testament to the company's approach is the loyalty of many long-standing clients who have remained with Global Auto Coatings since its early days. "Many of our original customers still support us daily. That makes us incredibly proud and reassures us that we must be doing something right. While the market is highly competitive, we remain committed to delivering continued colour innovation and experienced technical support to our autobody shop partners."

Looking ahead, the company remains focused on strengthening its presence within the automotive refinishing sector while maintaining its reputation for service excellence. As Rivenn concludes: "At Global Auto Coatings, we are more than just a paint supplier; we support success — and we stand by adding colour to your life."





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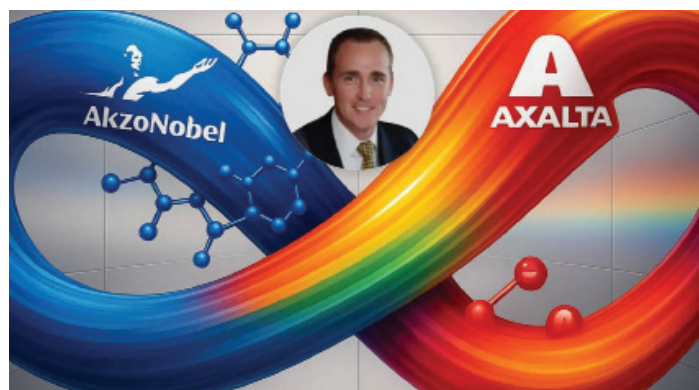


LINQ™



## MERGERS

## AXALTA DETAILS STRATEGIC RATIONALE AND OUTLOOK FOR AKZONOBEL MERGER



**A**xalta Coating Systems used its fourth-quarter and full-year 2025 earnings call to further outline the strategic rationale behind its planned merger with AkzoNobel, emphasising scale, complementary portfolios and long-term growth potential.

Announced in November, the all-stock merger of equals would create a \$25 billion global coatings leader. Executives said the combined company would become the largest global performance coatings company and the second-largest paints and coatings company overall, with roughly three times Axalta's standalone revenue, EBITDA and free cash flow.

President and CEO Chris Villavarayan said investor sentiment continues to trend positively as the companies move toward a shareholder vote.

"We've spent a lot of time working with our investors," he said. "Overall, conversations are moving in the right direction, and I'm very pleased with where we're going."

Chief Financial Officer Carl Anderson said the scale of the combined business and its cash-generating potential are resonating most with investors. The merged company is expected to deliver EBITDA margins approaching 20%, strong free cash flow and an investment-grade balance sheet. Leadership has identified \$600 million in synergy potential, including both cost and revenue opportunities.

A key theme of the call was the complementary nature of the two businesses. In Refinish, Axalta has particular strength in premium offerings, while AkzoNobel is stronger in economy products, creating broader coverage with limited overlap. Executives said customers will benefit from a more complete portfolio and the convenience of a single point of sale across product lines.

Villavarayan stressed that the complementary footprint reduces disruption risk and enhances cross-selling opportunities in core markets such as Europe and North America. The combined organisation will hold more than 3 500 patents and employ nearly 3 000 engineers, strengthening its innovation capabilities.

Until the transaction closes – expected in late 2026 or early 2027 – both companies will operate independently, with no immediate changes to pricing, distribution or supplier relationships.

Axalta reported fourth-quarter net income of \$60 million, down from \$137 million a year earlier; primarily due to higher tax expenses and \$21 million in merger-related transaction costs. Adjusted EBITDA was \$272 million, slightly below prior-year levels as December volumes in Refinish and Industrial came in softer than expected. However, adjusted EBITDA margin improved 50 basis points year over year.

Within Refinish, net sales declined 7% to \$509 million in the fourth quarter, reflecting lower claims activity and distributor inventory adjustments in North America. Global refinish activity is running mid-single digits below expectations, and distributor consolidation has created near-term volume pressure.

Despite those headwinds, executives expect conditions to improve later in 2026. Potential catalysts include moderating insurance rate increases, improving claims trends, higher used vehicle prices and stronger Class 8 truck production. Claims frequency is currently down 1-2%, while miles driven are up 1-2%, trends leadership believes are stabilising.

Axalta added more than 2 800 body shops in 2025 – above its typical annual range – underscoring continued share gains even in a softer market.

Framing the merger as a transformational move, Villavarayan said the combined company will benefit from enhanced scale, diversified end markets and significant free cash flow generation.

"This merger is more than a strategic milestone," he said. "It's a catalyst for unlocking powerful new growth opportunities."

While short-term pressures remain, Axalta leadership expressed confidence that the merger with AkzoNobel positions the company for sustained long-term value creation.

## EU NEWS

## EU SHIFT ON EMISSIONS RULES

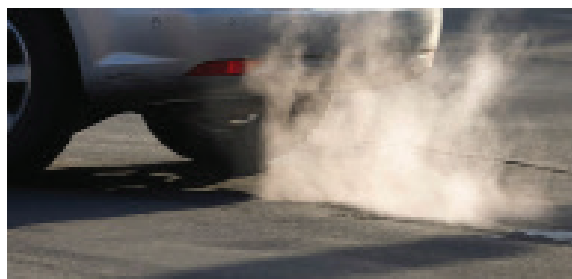
**E**lectric vehicles (EVs) could make up as much as 85% of new car sales in the European Union by 2035, according to Transport & Environment (T&E), despite a recent softening of the bloc's emissions targets.

The projection follows the European Commission's decision to replace a de facto ban on new combustion-engine cars with a requirement for a 90% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from new cars and vans by 2035,

compared with 2021 levels. The original proposal had mandated zero emissions for all newly registered vehicles.

T&E has criticised the move as a significant rollback of EU green policy, warning that under weaker rules EVs could account for only around half of new sales by 2035. The group argues the change risks prolonging the life of higher-emitting models, even as Chinese manufacturers strengthen their position in the battery-electric market.

The Commission says the revised target will still drive EV uptake while saving carmakers €2.1 billion over three years, funds it suggests could support innovation. T&E estimates that 5% to 50% of sales in 2035 could still be non-battery-electric, most likely around 15%, and warns emissions could rise 10% between 2025 and 2050 under the revised plan.





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## RACING

## PASSION FOR SPEED 2026



The tribute to motorsport greats from South Africa's all-important rock and roll era of the sixties once again delivered a great day out with legendary cars and legendary people. The celebration was 25 years of superb classic racing at Zwartkops Pretoria racetrack.

As usual the one-day bonanza started at the crack of dawn to accommodate a record field of entrants to do battle for the chequered flag.

There were some key drivers from overseas present like champion Kenneth Persson from Sweden. In the 45-minute legends of the Nine Hour race he joined local racing glitterati on track.

The race was won by Warren Lombard in a super-fast pep boys Cobra. The thundering favourite among a packed race card delivered close and exciting races in the Pre-68 Little

Giants and Pre – 2006 legend classic GT classes.

Not to be outdone, the newly created BMW Performance Parts featuring turbo power, was quickly red flagged as Ethan Coetzee caught fire along with over exuberant racers spinning off. It was all action with the winner Kashen Naicker taking the eventual number one position in that event.

To say motor racing is dangerous is an understatement. Colin Eccison delivered his class race, a red flag incident after his car touched another competitor on the back straight before careering across the track centre into the fire marshal's and catching fire; while upside down. He reduced his racer to scrap value in the process in spectacular fashion of getting it wrong. The irony that it caught fire at the fire marshal was not lost but considered a miracle.

Another great feature of the day was that the Chequered Flag Museum from Benoni held a special lunch to honour many of the great racers from years long forgotten.

It was a privilege to see the likes of Arnold Chatz, Geoff Mortimer, Sarel van der Merwe, Keith Zeeman, Dave Peterson, Roger McCleery, Johan Coetzee, Peter Lindenberg, Peter Labuschagne, and so many race bred stars at the Passion for Speed. They have been part of this festival for a few decades, delivering track side enjoyment for the packed grandstands and overnight campers which are always a feature at Zwartkops.

These were unforgettable season openers that celebrate a rich tapestry of motor sport history.



Motor racing is dangerous and was amplified as Colin Eccison destroyed his race car at the fire marshal's point. Fortunately he was unharmed.





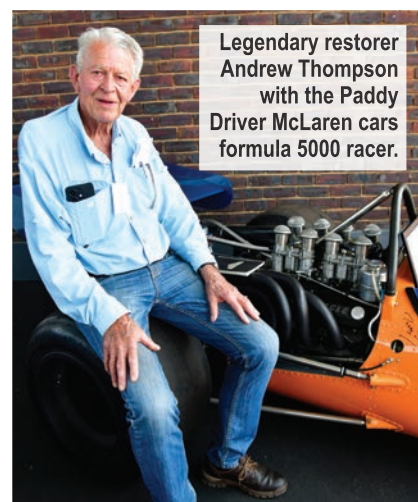
Rally ace Sarel van der Merwe (left) and Roger McCleery, "The Voice" of motorsport.



Track supremo Peter du Toit has showed great commitment at Zwartkops in the past decades.



Retired panelbeater Oz Biagiomi still pedals pretty fast in the BMW parts event.

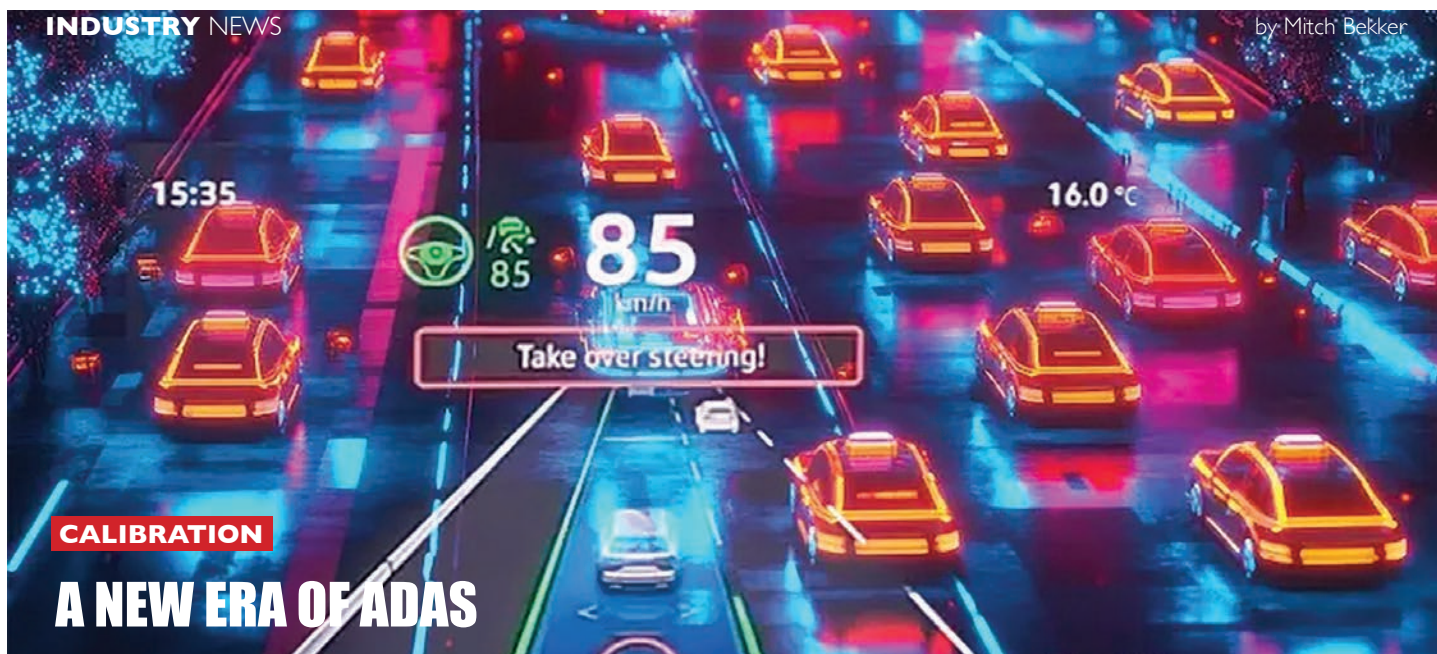


Legendary restorer Andrew Thompson with the Paddy Driver McLaren cars formula 5000 racer.



The gathering to honour greats from the past was sponsored by the Chequered Flag Museum in Benoni.





## CALIBRATION

# A NEW ERA OF ADAS

**A**lcohol detection and driver emergency assist are just a few new systems coming out that will emphasise proper repairs and calibration.

Vehicle electronics have changed our everyday world. While we are driving these newer vehicles, we begin to realise how much we rely on the vehicle's advanced driver assistance system (ADAS), with features like lane departure warning and lane keep assist. Every time we wander off course on the road we get a lane departure warning via a vibration through the steering wheel. Not to mention blind spot warnings alerting us of vehicles in the adjacent lane while we are driving. So essentially, this helps us all especially when we visit new cities, and our attention wanders to the surroundings and less attention to the road. These systems are effective and very accurate.

So, as technology improves, we as drivers become increasingly more dependent on all these safety features and how well they work with the improvements in ADAS systems, it is understandable that safety advocates will push for more to be required.

This is not new information, as all the studies that the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration and other organisations show that these ADAS features have proven to reduce or prevent the number of collisions and/or injuries caused in collisions.

Many thought these systems were unnecessary and an expense that was not warranted. But just like when airbags were introduced to vehicles and thrust the repair industry into a state of confusion, we all adjusted and learned that these vehicle safety systems were necessary to protect us from ourselves when we were on the road.

Can you say that you have never been distracted while driving? I bet there are many people reading this that have had a warning from their vehicle or vehicle reaction that either cause you as a driver to react or the vehicle to steer itself to prevent a collision.

But it is not just distracted driving that concerns safety experts. While driving down Interstate 5, I saw a pickup towing a trailer. The load was obviously not correct, as the

trailer was swaying from side to side. The effect this driver was having on the drivers of the surrounding vehicles – was making them even more nervous that he was about to lose control – was obvious, as people were changing lanes and doing everything they could to avoid being near this vehicle. This chaos was making it difficult for many drivers to navigate, and you could see that the more time passed with this dangerous situation, the odds of something happening were increasing. Luckily, I was in the far lane and was able to get around the pickup quickly. This really taught me the value of the engineer who designed the trailer sway control and the fact that what we may see as a not-so-important feature can have a very big effect on our roadways.

My point is that while you may feel some of these features unnecessary, they really are necessary when it comes to the drivers around you. Completing all repairs and verifying correct operation does make a difference on every system and every vehicle that we as an industry repair.

Many are still learning the importance of repairing vehicles correctly and verifying that proper repairs are completed with calibrations done to OEM specifications – and why it must be done. With AI and improvements in sensor designs as well as better algorithms, the repair processes and need for calibrations will increase. New technology and the ways to prevent even more collisions and/or tragedies are being developed every day. You can spend hours today on YouTube watching dashcam videos from drivers causing or being in crashes to the point where it becomes painfully true that not all drivers are careful 100% of the time. New technologies will help to reduce or prevent some of these incidents we all hear about or see in the media.

### New alcohol sensors

Drinking and driving still plagues all countries. According to the Driver Alcohol Detection System for Safety, drunk is still the No 1 cause of fatalities in the US claiming 10 000 lives annually and costing approximately \$194 billion in related costs. There has been technology recently released and tested in many states that may prevent drivers from

operating a vehicle. There are two principles of operation:

### Passive system

Sampling the air inside the vehicle during normal breathing through an infrared sensor on the steering column. If the presence of alcohol is detected and level of alcohol contents determined, the system will react accordingly, depending on set parameters, by warning the driver or disabling vehicle start.

### Touch base

The vehicle driver pushes the vehicle start button, and a laser inside of the button samples the skin. If alcohol is detected and a certain level determined, the vehicle will react accordingly by warning or not starting.

According to Joe Biden's Investment and Infrastructure and Jobs Act by 2025, all new cars will have advanced alcohol monitoring technology. With the integration of this cutting-edge technology, vehicles made in 2026 and after won't just be about speed or luxury; they will prioritise safety at an unprecedented level. (There is a video on [dadss.org](http://dadss.org) where you can see how the system operates.)

### Driver Emergency Assist

We've all made the mistake of getting behind the wheel despite knowing we are tired and have fallen victim to drowsy driving. However, there are now new ADAS features that detect drowsy drivers or those who have suffered a medical emergency and will take control of the vehicle, starting a series of events to safely pull the vehicle over.

Through the steering wheel, the vehicle detects that the driver is not steering. This will initiate some pulsating braking to "wake the driver up". If no response is sensed in the steering wheel, the vehicle will initiate emergency lights and use LKA and the blind spot system to begin slowing the vehicle down, navigating to a safe location on the side of the road and notifying emergency services. Volkswagen has some great videos on its website demonstrating these IQ Drive Emergency Assist features.

### Summary

These are only a few of the existing features out there or new features that will be coming out soon. As we are all seeing



and reading about, vehicle manufacturers are increasing the number of safety systems and building them on top of existing electronic blueprints. Shops will need to be constantly learning and training to keep up with technology.

All these new safety features have presented an interesting situation for the repair industry, as we've all been learning that one's safety systems depend on many others to operate correctly. A single component that is not functioning correctly or is not

calibrated correctly may affect multiple systems. This also stresses the need to be sure all repairs of the vehicle and calibrations are done to OEM specifications. You may not realise through the repair process how much impact even minor details may have on how a vehicle system operates. Skipping what you may deem an insignificant step in a process could lead to hours of headaches.

The integration of the sensors from all the systems and the need for correct data flow from these sensors into the vehicle's

algorithm is critical to how a vehicle will react to hazards (and now driver situations) to prevent the vehicle from being driven – and protect other vehicles on the road. Keeping up and keeping informed will be the norm for everyone in the automotive repair industry. Reading and following the service information for each year, make and model will also be standard for all repairs as repair information is constantly updating.

## NEXT-GEN ADAS

# THERE ARE FIVE NEW TECHNOLOGIES COMING FOR ADAS IN 2026 - BE READY!



by Frank Ierlep

Welcome to 2026! Here are five new advanced driver-assistance-systems (ADAS) technologies expected to be introduced or scale in production in 2026.

### Next-Generation surround ADAS with hands-free highway driving

Next-gen systems (e.g. Mobileye's EyeQH6H based Surround ADAS) are entering mass-market vehicles in 2026, enabling extended hands-free highway operation in more conditions. These systems consolidate multiple ADAS functions (lane centering, adaptive cruise, traffic jam assist) into a unified platform. They rely on sensor fusion from cameras, radar and maps to manage longitudinal and lateral control.

Over-the-air (OTA) updates will grow this capability over time, meaning repairs must handle more frequent software-related calibrations. Insurers will need to adjust claims models as these systems change collision frequency and severity patterns.

Why it matters – More complex ADAS increases calibration events, diagnostic depth, and demands for documented proof of functionality and compliance.

### “Eyes-Off” Driver assist at level 2+ / Near Level 3 for highway ODD

Rivian and other OEMs are planning ‘eyes-off’ hands-free driving in 2026 for certain highways and conditions. These systems allow drivers to remove visual attention temporarily while the vehicle manages the drive in certain operational design domains (ODDs).

Advanced processing (custom autonomy chips plus deep learning models) supports real-time decision making. Such features require multi-level sensor redundancy (radar plus lidar plus cameras) to validate a safe “eyes-off” mode.

Regulatory acceptance continues to evolve but scaled 2026 rollout is expected in select regions/models.

Why it matters – Repair and calibration services must adapt to validate correct sensor synergy and functionality for higher ADAS capabilities.

### AI-enhanced predictive hazard detection and response

New ADAS stacks increasingly embed artificial intelligence (AI)/machine learning (ML) to anticipate hazards before traditional thresholds are crossed (eg. pedestrian intent, rapid cut-ins).

Machine learning models enhance interpretation of sensor data (camera plus radar) beyond preset rules. This goes beyond reactive braking/lane keeping to predictive situational awareness (e.g. anticipating sudden stops ahead). The technology supports collision

avoidance in more dynamic urban contexts.

Deployment in 2026 OEMs signals ADAS moving closer to autonomous style perception.

Why it matters – These systems will generate more event logs and require deeper diagnostic interpretation for insurers and repairers alike.

### Integrated LiDAR plus radar plus vision sensor fusion

More vehicles in 2026 begin integrating LiDAR with radar and camera suites for improved 3-D perception and longer detection range. This combo enhances obstacle detection, especially in low-visibility and complex environments. Sensor fusion reduces individual sensor limitations (e.g. glare, occlusion) to improve overall ADAS reliability.

As costs drop, these sensor suits expand beyond luxury to mainstream EVs and crossovers. Repair/insurance ecosystems must calibrate multiple overlapping systems and verify integrated performance post-repair.

Why it matters – More sensor modalities mean more calibration points, more complex alignments and more verification data.

### Build-in dashcams with event recording and safety analytics

OEMs are introducing built-in dashcams and event recorders as part of ADAS stacks, enabling continuous recording and automated capture of sudden events. These can automatically store clips of collisions, near misses or sudden braking. This data supports crash reconstruction and claims validation.

Some systems may feed into insurer telematics or OEM safety monitoring platforms. These features also support driver coaching and risk scoring.

Why it matters – Event data becomes essential for claims validation and post-repair verification of ADAS conditions.

### Summary

These five technologies illustrate how ADAS is evolving beyond basic safety features into highly integrated AI-driven and sensor-rich systems that have direct implications for:

- Repair complexity and calibration work (more sensors plus fusion equals more calibrations)
- Diagnostic depth and documentation needs
- New event data sources valuable to insurers
- Severity modeling changes due to hazard anticipation and hands-free driving capabilities.





## WHAT'S HOT?

## VOLKSWAGEN OPENS ITS GREENEST-EVER PAINT SHOP IN MEXICO

One of the Volkswagen Group's largest plants is home to a state-of-the-art paint shop built by Dürr. This modern facility significantly reduces CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and sets new industry standards. Opened in Puebla, Mexico in January 2025, this turnkey project includes two advanced paint lines and innovative solutions such as an electric drying system, an automated high-bay warehouse, and unmanned transport systems.

Since January 2025, the Puebla factory has been able to paint up to 90 car bodies of various models per hour. The contract for the construction of the facility was signed in 2022. The modern paint shop has been designed to adapt flexibly to new models and future technologies. Its high adaptability is due to a central high-bay warehouse and the EcoProFleet autonomous transport system. Intelligent DXQ software controls the AGVs, which have been specifically designed for the paint shop. They sort car bodies predictively and deliver them precisely to the appropriate workstations. The flexible division of production lines replaces the previous rigid systems and forms the basis of Dürr's 'Paint Shop of the Future' concept. This solution shortens process times and significantly reduces CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

The facility has two identical painting lines, each equipped with 170 robots responsible for sealing and painting processes, as well as the appropriate application technology for sealing and coating various Volkswagen models. A key element is the EcoRS Clean F cleaning robot, which is an innovative Dürr solution that enables production to be effectively adapted to the growing variety of models. This device combines the cleaning accuracy of roller brush systems with the flexibility of robotic solutions, making it ideal for complex body contours. The investment also covers comprehensive paint and PVC delivery systems, as well as DXQ software with artificial intelligence algorithms to automate and streamline processes in the paint shop.

The car body drying stage is the biggest challenge for reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the painting process as it consumes the most

energy. However, by powering the ovens with green electricity, the paint shop in Puebla has reduced emissions by around 40% compared to installations using natural gas. "This was one of the reasons why Volkswagen opted for the EcolnCure electric drying system," explains Bruno Welsch, Dürr's Chief Operating Officer for Automotive. "Another distinctive feature of this solution is a special ventilation duct system that heats the car bodies from the inside. This technology ensures more uniform heating and cooling and enables car body components such as sill profiles to be heated more directly than with conventional systems, reducing heating time by 30 per cent," Welsch adds.

The next step in reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions is to combine an electric oven with an electric air purification system. Dürr is currently the only manufacturer on the market to offer such a comprehensive, integrated solution. This technology combines the EcolnCure body curing system with the Oxi.X.RV electric system, which purifies the exhaust air using a regenerative thermal oxidation (RTO) process without an open flame. Consequently, the process does not generate additional CO<sub>2</sub>, and thanks to its high energy efficiency, the system can operate auto-thermally, maintaining the correct temperature even at low solvent concentrations. The energy generated during oxidation is recovered and used to sustain the process.

Dürr has also implemented the energy-efficient, environmentally friendly EcoDryScrubber system, which uses lime powder as a natural binding agent to separate excess paint. High-performance HEPA 12 filters effectively remove particles from the process air, and the saturated powder is automatically discharged through a pipe system without interrupting operation. Due to dry separation, the demand for fresh air in the paint booth is reduced to just 5%, maximising recirculation and reducing energy consumption by over 60% compared to traditional wet cleaning methods.

## DID YOU KNOW?

## FASTEST CAR EVER!

If speed excites you, the Koenigsegg Jesko Absolut is claimed to be the fastest production car, with a theoretical top speed exceeding 310 mph (ca. 499 km/h), though it has yet to be officially tested. Meanwhile, the Bugatti Chiron Super Sport 300+ holds the verified speed record, reaching 304 mph (490 km/h).





## NETWORKING

# IBIS GLOBAL SUMMIT 2026 ANNOUNCES VIENNA DEBUT WITH EARLY BIRD OFFER



IBIS has announced that its flagship global event, the IBIS Global Summit 2026, will take place at the Andaz Vienna Am Belvedere in Vienna from 16–18 June 2026, with early bird registration now officially open.

The annual Summit will once again bring together senior leaders from across the collision repair and wider automotive ecosystem, providing a unique platform for insight, connection and high-level discussion focused on the future direction of the industry.

Held under the global theme Connecting Changemakers, the 2026 edition will continue IBIS's evolving conference format, designed to enable more meaningful interaction, deeper collaboration and practical outcomes for decision-makers across the international market.

The Summit attracts influential stakeholders from across the sector, including:

- Multi-site operators and independent body shop leaders
- Insurance companies and vehicle manufacturers
- Technology and solution providers
- Paint, materials and coatings specialists.

The IBIS Global Summit has long been recognised as a key meeting point for the industry's most senior figures – a forum where strategy is debated, partnerships are formed, and the future of collision repair is shaped.

Early bird registration is now available for a limited time, offering delegates the opportunity to secure their place at a preferential rate.

## Registration is now open:

<https://ibisworldwide.com/ibis-global-summit-2026/ibis-global-summit-2026-registration/>

For delegate enquiries, contact:

Emily Miles at [emily@ibisworldwide.com](mailto:emily@ibisworldwide.com)

## Partnership opportunities available

Organisations looking to position themselves at the centre of the global collision repair conversation can benefit from a range of IBIS partnership opportunities, designed to maximise brand visibility, industry access and commercial impact.

For partnership enquiries, contact

Suzie Scott at [suzie@ibisworldwide.com](mailto:suzie@ibisworldwide.com)

The IBIS Global Summit 2026 will welcome changemakers from around the world to Vienna this June, continuing its mission to connect the leaders shaping the future of the automotive collision repair industry.

## Stay Connected

For the latest updates, visit [www.ibisworldwide.com](http://www.ibisworldwide.com) or follow IBIS Worldwide on LinkedIn.

Contact Emily Miles at [emily@ibisworldwide.com](mailto:emily@ibisworldwide.com) for all registration bookings and queries.

Contact Louise Cooke at [louise@ibisworldwide.com](mailto:louise@ibisworldwide.com) for all event-related enquiries.

For partnership enquiries, contact Suzie Scott, IBIS Worldwide Head of Sales, at [suzie@ibisworldwide.com](mailto:suzie@ibisworldwide.com) or call +44 7545 068455

## Connecting the world's Changemakers.

**16 – 18 June 2026**  
 Andaz Vienna Am Belvedere, Austria

Join us for the IBIS Global Summit 2026, taking place from **16 – 18 June in Vienna**. This year's summit provides a structured, multi-day conference for senior professionals across the collision repair industry to exchange **evidence-based insight, benchmark best practice, and build meaningful professional relationships**.

From **data-led sessions** to **structured networking** and **round-table discussion**, delegates gain practical insight and strategic perspective to support informed business decisions.

Experience three days of insightful content, collaborative discussion and high-quality engagement, set within the dynamic and historic surroundings of Vienna.

Secure your place today, visit:  
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## WHAT'S HOT?

## PAINTWIZZ EXPANDS THEIR VIRTUAL REACH

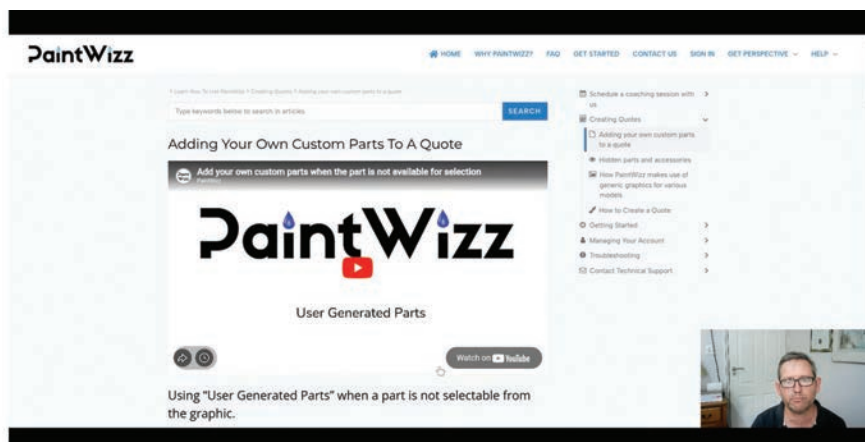
PaintWizz recently held a webinar for industry leaders and body shop owners. The event was well attended both locally and internationally, with a vibrant questions and answers session at the end of the presentation.

PaintWizz is a powerful paint quote calculator that delivers fast, fair, and fully transparent vehicle paint repair estimates your customers and insurers can trust.

Developed by industry experts with over 60 years of real-world body shop and paint shop experience, PaintWizz is built around how repairs actually happen – not generic formulas.

Their advanced paint quote calculator calculates exact paint volumes, material costs, and part-level pricing for every vehicle model, giving you accurate, professional quotes every time.

Skip the spreadsheets and manual calculations. For as little as R25 per quote, PaintWizz helps you produce data-driven paint repair quotes that save time, increase approvals, and protect your profit margins.



When it comes to paint, nothing else comes close.

With PaintWizz you can...

- Gain instant access to over 450 popular vehicle models, continuously updated to include the latest introductions to the market.
- Unlock valuable insights into labour,

materials, and base coat mix volumes for every panel included in a quote, enabling more effective cost management.

- Streamline your quoting process and maximize profitability. Spend less time on manual calculations and more time delivering exceptional service to your customers.

## COATINGS

## SOLAR COATING TECHNOLOGY TRANSFORMS EV RANGE

Mercedes-Benz has developed an invisibly thin solar film that could fundamentally change how electric vehicles capture and store energy. Featured on the automaker's recently unveiled Vision Iconic concept, this microscopic coating represents a significant leap forward from traditional automotive solar integration.

The innovation centres on an extraordinarily slim photovoltaic layer – just five micrometres in thickness – that adheres directly to vehicle body panels beneath the exterior paint. This transparent coating essentially converts the car's entire outer shell into a continuous power-generating surface while remaining completely hidden from view.

The technology's environmental credentials are equally impressive. Mercedes has eliminated the need for silicon and rare-earth elements typically required in conventional solar panels. Instead, the coating employs nanoparticle-based materials specifically engineered for recyclability. The accompanying jet black topcoat allows an exceptional 94 percent of sunlight to reach the energy-capturing layer underneath.

This flexible film adapts to different surface materials and geometries, functioning continuously whether the vehicle is driving, parked, or completely shut down – potentially delivering meaningful range extensions based on geographic location and weather patterns.

Performance projections suggest considerable potential. Mercedes calculates that covering approximately 11 square metres – the typical surface area of a midsize crossover – could yield enough solar energy to power 12 000 kilometres of driving annually in Stuttgart's moderate climate. California's abundant sunshine could push that figure to 20 000 kilometres in Los Angeles.

The development addresses long-standing challenges in automotive solar integration. "While solar technology on vehicles has been explored before, we're expanding the boundaries of practical application," said Jochen Schmid, Mercedes-Benz senior manager for future electric drive, speaking with *Automotive News* Europe.



The critical advancement involves the material's adaptability. "We've created a coating that stretches and bends to accommodate complex three-dimensional vehicle surfaces," Schmid explained. "This flexibility represented our major technical achievement."

Manufacturing scalability remains a priority. Schmid's engineering team is refining application techniques that maintain cost-effectiveness without compromising quality. "Considerable research continues because adding €10 000 to vehicle pricing would eliminate the total ownership benefits for consumers," he cautioned.

Future iterations may offer expanded aesthetic options. The technology can potentially accommodate coloured finishes – including blue, red, and green – through light-filtering techniques while preserving most power-generation capacity. However, efficiency varies with colour intensity.

"Transitioning from black to blue typically reduces performance to around five percent," Schmid indicates. "White finishes would sacrifice the most efficiency."

This development aligns with Mercedes-Benz's strategic initiative to maximise energy efficiency and environmental responsibility across its next-generation electric vehicle lineup, potentially establishing new benchmarks for sustainable automotive technology.

The Vision Iconic concept also incorporates Level 4 autonomous driving systems and steer-by-wire technology, though the solar coating innovation may prove most transformative for practical everyday electric vehicle operation.



## TECHNOLOGY

## REBOOT THE PAINTER



**R**obots are used in many industries to improve efficiency, from agriculture to surgery and from logistics to food manufacturing. And now robots have been designed specifically to paint vehicles in accident repair centres.

It might sound like the stuff of fantasy but a robot painter in the body shop is now a reality. The PaintGo PG-90E Intelligent Spray-Painting Robot can operate continuously over extended periods and achieves consistent, high-quality refinishing which match or surpass the most experienced refinisher's capability. It is already used by many body shops around the world including Australia, America, China, France, Germany, Spain and Italy. And now it is available in the UK, with the first one installed and in operation at Parkway Prestige, who won Fastest Growing Single Site in the ABP Bodyshop Excellence Awards.

The spray-painting PaintGo PG-90E Intelligent Robot has been specifically designed for body repair centres and replicates human paint spraying techniques with AI and machine vision bringing automation and precision into the body shop for the first time. It can scan and spray whole vehicles, tall vehicles, such as a Ford Transit, SUVs, vans and car roofs as well as disassembled parts. Workshop productivity is increased by around 50% because the robot can complete more jobs per day than a human and consumable waste is reduced. It saves 25-30% on primer and around 35% for clearcoat. Not only that but the finish is to OEM standard every time which eliminates customer complaints and costly re-works.

The robot is designed to work with any paint system so there is no need for a body shop owner to change paint brands, and the quick-change spraygun, either customised SATA, 3M PSG2 or Anest Iwata on the robot, enables the painter to easily switch to the next job or paint colour change. Installation requires minimal floor space, concrete or grid floor, in a standard-size UK spraybooth. The robot travels on rails around the vehicle powered by a 48V 60Ah Lithium Iron Phosphate ATEX certified battery pack, that can run for more than 15 hours and is then simply re-charged at the end of the working day. The painter controls the robot from a laptop connected to Wi-Fi outside the spraybooth. A schematic diagram shows the model selected and the painter will click on the panels or whole vehicle to be painted. The programme will also show the estimated weight of paint as it tells the painter precisely how much material will be required for the job. There are six stations within the guide rails to enable batch painting on individual vehicle body parts.

"A whole car in the spray and bake cycle can be finished in 1.3 hours, so the robot can easily manage a throughput of six vehicles per day," said Tom Chen, Director, PaintGo UK. "From bonnet to quarter panel, the results speak for themselves – flawless colour transition, reduced material waste, and unmatched repeatability.

"The maximum number of panels painters can paint is usually around 100 a month," added Tom. "With our machine working continuously it could achieve 500. Panels such as doors take just

two minutes to paint and the side of a car just four minutes and 30 seconds. It's not just the speed at which the robot can paint that makes it attractive, but the consistent quality it achieves. These figures are based on real time analysis in body shops. We store all the job history and that information is helpful to the body shop owner, to analyse which cars and panels they repair most, how much paint has been used for each job and predict how much paint they are going to use per month."

With skilled spray painters a scarce and expensive resource, the robot could help solve the skills shortage. It can work 24 hours, seven days a week, if need be, with no holidays or sick days to accommodate! It also brings health benefits to the painter as they are no longer holding a spraygun at the end of their arm which can be heavy and tiring, bending down or reaching up to difficult areas – and are not exposed to any fumes.

"We strive to support painters in maintaining better health and avoiding occupational illnesses, while helping body shops achieve more consistent, high-quality spray finishes," said Chen. "This approach enhances efficiency and reduces material waste – empowering painters rather than replacing them."

The robot was invented by Wuhan ONEW Technology in China. Established in 2012, the company employs 150 people and specialises in developing and manufacturing skill training simulators, such as welding and medical training simulators. Their products are sold to over 30 countries around the world including Europe. The first PaintGo PG-90E was launched in 2018. Now in its third generation, the PaintGo PG-90E can also do blends between panels on a vehicle.

The PaintGo PG-90E Intelligent Robot is certified to ATEX safety standards and has won several accolades this year for its innovation including Awards ZE in France and Equip Auto. Installation usually takes less than a day and staff can be trained to use it to optimum effect in just two to three days. Ideally, the spraybooth floor should be flat but installation on a sloping floor can be managed.

Body shops can buy the PaintGo PG-90E Intelligent Robot outright, lease or rent it. If renting, they have the option to buy it at a later date at a reduced price. Aftermarket sales back-up is on hand 24/7 with a guaranteed response within 20 minutes.

- PaintGo PG-90E highlights
- Flawless finish to OEM standard every time
- 25-30% paint savings
- Increases in productivity, reduces material usage
- Eliminates errors
- Improved worker health and safety, reduced chemical exposure
- Helps solve skills shortage as there is less reliance on experienced painters.

There is a video on LinkedIn where the PG-90E Robot demonstrates its blending technique on a Volkswagen Golf – delivering an OEM-grade finish that seamlessly merges repaired and original panels.



# NEW PRODUCTS



## THREE-STAGE SPRAYBOOTH FILTER

The three-stage filter system, composed of sinter, fine, and carbon filters, is designed to effectively remove impurities from air or liquid. The Sinter filter removes larger particles and debris as well as oil and water. The fine filter removes smaller particles and contaminants while the carbon filter absorbs gases, odours and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Call Vermont Sales for a specialist dealer near you on +27 (0)11 314 7711 or visit [www.vermontsales.co.za](http://www.vermontsales.co.za) for additional information.

## MASKING FILM FROM DAZE

Daze Masking Film clings to substrates to protect surfaces from overspray and other contaminants. It is statically charged for better adhesion and easier application. It is Corona treated so that it holds onto paint mist and dust while protecting the surface it's covering. Daze Masking Film saves on time as it accelerates the masking process. It is ideal for quick masking of larger and small areas during painting. It is very versatile and can also be used in the industrial or construction industry for quick and easy protection. Contact Neil Butterworth for price and availability via WhatsApp +44 793 617 9561. Alternatively email [neil@dazechina.com](mailto:neil@dazechina.com) or [sophie@dazechina.com](mailto:sophie@dazechina.com).



## ISOPON PLASTIC BUMPER FILLER

ISOPON Plastic Bumper Filler is a flexible easy to use filler that's been specially formulated to repair scratches and scuffs in most plastic and urethane bumpers and trim pieces. The pre-measured packets are easy to mix, and the filler dries fast and can be easily sanded and shaped to the exact bumper contour. Highly flexible with excellent adhesion, it gives a smooth, durable repair that's ready for priming and painting. ISOPON aluminium mesh bridges rust holes, gaps and other damage in most types of metal. Call Barkocel on +27(0)11 552 8596 for your closest retail distributor or visit [www.u-polsa.com](http://www.u-polsa.com) for information.



### REFINE GUN RS8809-LVMP FROM LUXOR PAINTS

The Refine RS8809-LVMP, is a professional high-efficient basecoat and clearcoat spray gun. It has unified fine atomisation and a wet core to ensure excellent coverage of paint and leveling, which increases spray efficiency. It has an ergonomic design and non-stick chromed finishing which creates a user-friendly grip. It has a high quality stainless steel nozzle tip, needle, air cap and springs. It is produced using state-of-the-art five-axis CC technology to ensure precision and longevity. The RS8809-LVMP offers easy spraying and high performance with its balanced and lightweight body. For more information on the Refine range of products, contact Luxor Paints on +27 (0)11 397 6622.



### AIRCRAFT SG HRI000 2-IN-1 COMPRESSOR AND HOSE REEL

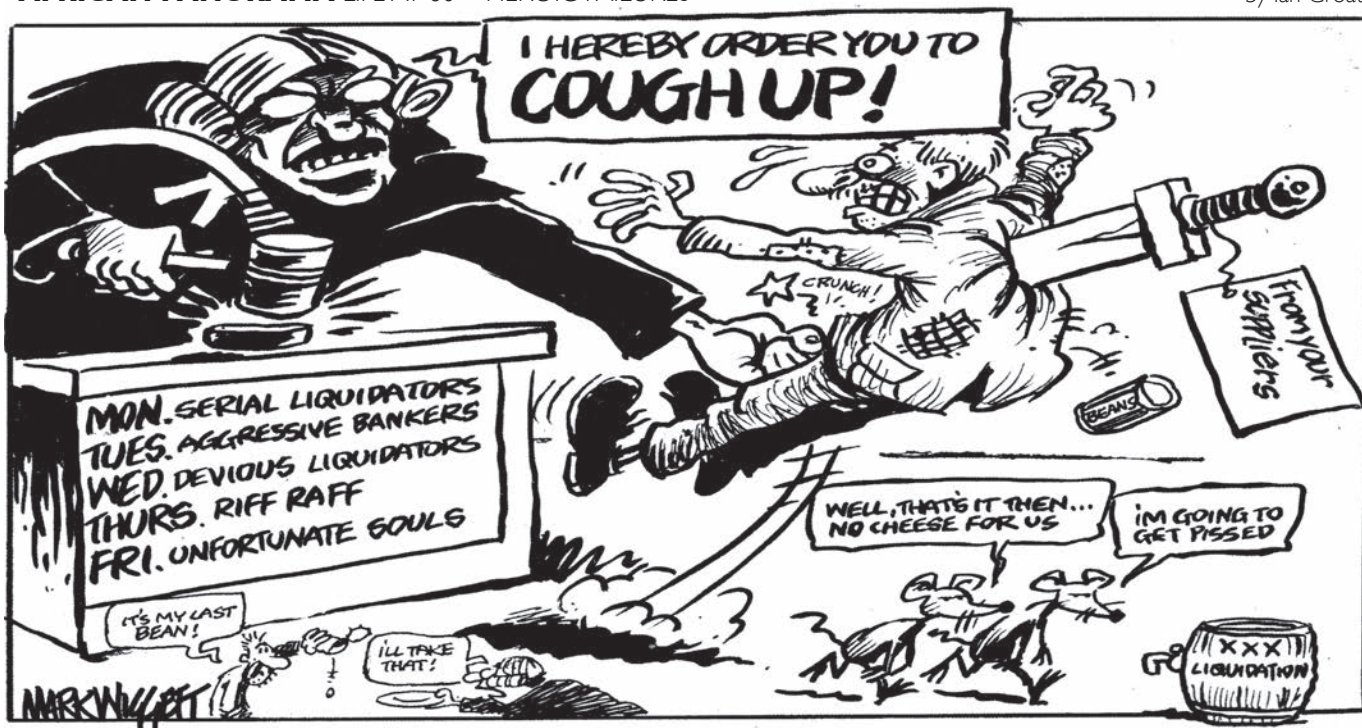
The two in one compressor and hose reel from AirCraft is great for driving pneumatic tools as well as for cleaning workspaces and tools. The mounting bracket included allows for easy access and can swivel 360 degrees for maximum ease of use. The polyurethane hose increases the durability, and the auto locking ratchet system allows the hose to be locked at any length. The hard durable plastic casing and retracting system make this a robust and hand addition to your workshop. Call Vermont Sales for a specialist dealer near you on +27 (0)11 314 7711 or visit [www.vermontsales.co.za](http://www.vermontsales.co.za) for additional information.

### HURRICANE EQUIPMENT INTRODUCE GS10 INFRA SPRAYBOOTH

The Hurricane GS10 Infra has downdraft through the floor and back extraction. It has eight cabinets with two Infrared lights in each booth. There is a control box that sets the temperature as well. The Hurricane GS10 is competitively priced at R170 000 plus VAT. Hurricane Equipment can be reached at [jhbsales@hurricaneauto.co.za](mailto:jhbsales@hurricaneauto.co.za) or call Stuart on 072 454 2523 for more information on their spraybooth range and other products.







The publisher now gives you part two of his personal summit rear view on accomplishing the ripe old age of three score years, plus another twenty ... In 1969 my life changed in a big way. I left my family all behind and stumbled out of a Boeing rear door onto the tarmac, at Jan Smuts airport in Johannesburg. Armed with a brand-new wife, changes came thick and fast.

We arrived early in September, and our digs was in Yeoville at the Peace Haven Hotel, which was more like a rest home for old horses. Within a week I was propositioned with two jobs, one as a technical service officer at Plascon and another at a company called Dulux. I started work for Dulux for the princely sum of R220 a month while feeling my way through a barrage of change in a brave new world. Commercial life started with waiting in bus queues and trundling back and forth to Alberton in said bus.

Many people say that South Africa holds few prospects for success. Well for me it was to become quite the opposite. Within a year I was promoted to a full-blown company representative. After learning what could go wrong in paint making – which is often just about everything – and dealing with both Iscor and other major institutions – it showed me that technical know-how could lead me to new heights never imagined in my paint career.

But the normal trials and tribulations were ever present; for in a moment of desperation my starting salary was way too low, as I was training other company personnel who knew absolutely nothing technically but were earning double my salary. The bleating and noise from myself got the attention of the Dulux management, who sent me off to do a two-year marketing diploma at Wits. It was then that a precious moment took place that further changed my existence. Seated amongst a bunch of students all about 10 years younger than myself, the teacher blurted out: "You are today what you have been thinking about for the last 10 years." Then he asked me in a class full of intense onlookers: "What are you up to Ian Groat?" To which I replied: "Nothing." His reply was: "When are you going to get off your arse and do something with your life?" This really started me off on a forward trail of blind ambition.

Within a year I had started, with a partner, Graham, a company called Calbrook Colours, and we were busy importing exotic pearl and candy apple paint from the U.S. It was in this venture, which was commercially quite successful, that I discovered two things: firstly, that a 49% shareholder in any company is the lowest form of human life, and secondly, that a partnership can often be the worst 'ship' that ever sailed.

Between all the business scraps and foundation laying the emerging of a new type of paint, 2K systems was unfolding, and a small company called Standox approached me to represent them in South Africa to which I strongly replied: "No," because Dulux had helped me gain a business education. Here was mistake number one...

After a further two years of time wasting I managed to convince

my supply management that we needed to respond to the changing market conditions. The Glasurit brand was born to SA in the mid-seventies. Leading from the front I went off to Europe to get training modules to train around 250 spray painters with my own facilities on how to handle the new technologies that lay ahead that included colour matching along with special production techniques.

Looking back, we became ridiculously obsessed with changing the repair process and standards of the company's 100 or so customers single handedly, or so customers thought. My innate belief was that the changes in upgrading repairs would see some useful collective advancement going forward.

Business being carried out in central downtown Johannesburg held many surprises. Some of the retail competitors, who had no accounts with my principal supplier, were key opposition for nearly a decade. Quite where they got their supplies from was unknown and in some cases may well have been "knocked off" stock. Trading on that type of uneven playing field was yet another curve in the road to rolling the dice forward. My key supplier decided to play a few devious tricks by awarding another dealer larger discounts and also showing no remorse for constant stock outs and an inability to supply orders on time.

Business was tough in the final days of apartheid in the grim and threadbare world of refinish supply. Things were looking bleak. Two huge court cases with my supplier for acting in bad faith were also having a negative effect on long term sustainability for our small business. So, the English expression of "He who tried his best goes down the road just like the rest" rang in my ears. This five-year experience of a big business slow death became a bit too much one particular day, so I went off to see the Automotive Refinish Coatings company to arrange a negotiated settlement to become a magazine publisher and exit the paint sales business once and for all.

After a brief but intense meeting I had to go off to settle the bank overdraft, take a loan on my house and finally stand in front of the Judge of the Court to be told the conditions of a liquidation sale. It's a sort of slow process of humiliation and shame – being financially ruined at 54 is not for sissies – and even worse: the prospect of living on beans on toast for the next six months does skew one's outlook on life!

That said, the flickering glow of yet another new venture with **Automotive Refinisher** continued to pull me through it all. There are, in my opinion, no winners or losers in life – there is only life. So, it was with downgraded ambition that my family and I moved forward to try and overcome those desperate times mentioned earlier. Back then it did feel like after selling R100 million worth of refinish paint that it was a major defeat – which had at times been rewarding – and in a way the thrill of being able to make a big difference remains even in my dotage... It almost engulfed me ... But it was just the beginning of a brand new chapter; thankfully!





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