

AUTOMOTIVE

REFINISHER

THE VOICE OF THE INDUSTRY

Edition 245

May-June 2026

UNDER THE SKIN GWM HAVAL 6 III



BORDER PAINTS SESSION



CELETTE VORTEX RG1



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Cover: GWM Haval 6 III PHEV.
Contents: Simola Hillclimb 2026.

EDITORIAL

VEHICLE COMPLEXITY CAUSING A STEP-CHANGE ACROSS THE INDUSTRY



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The trend is ever increasing driver assistance aids and all new powertrains being offered across vehicle packages. Added to this are vibrant specialty three-stage mica pearl colours that help differentiate models and sell quicker. Insurance costings need reconfiguring in a big way to take all of the above into consideration.

The customisation explosion has delivered a vast new choice option for consumers and automakers. It has also created growing challenges for collision repairers and insurance motor book underwriters, who are in a way, currently being left behind in the new wave of technology.

All of these factors influence used car replacement values and ever rising repair costs, while a visible and widening gap between insurance repair is being seen.

Vehicles that arrive without the 17-digit Vin are an identification nightmare all on their own. We need simplified vehicle identification. This will aid in the assessment and introduction of significant pricing with the insurance houses. It is also a common fact that used vehicle prices have increased by approximately 20% in the last five years alone, which muddies the waters further.

Insurance companies in South Africa have, in some cases, seen that even minor crashes need expensive sensor replacements along with other technology. Complex recalibration processes are then called for to restore a vehicle to its pre-accident condition – and most dealerships that this is outsourced to by OEMs have no clue what they're doing. This leads to extended repair time and reputational damage for the MBR operators.

Pricing on insurance cover has also accelerated vastly in the last five years which has seen close to 60% of insured drivers shopping around for cheaper cover. Local levels of insured drivers are at ultra-low levels of around 18% on our local roads, if you take out fleet and government numbers.

Consolidation in the Dutch body shop market changing at light speed

Irene Sommeling, Ombudsman for Damage Repair in the Netherlands, has brought to public knowledge, the fact that three simultaneous transactions have restructured the Dutch body shop industry. In parallel with the publication of the articles, Irene was in direct communication with the Dutch government. The EU27 Commission and the UK CMA have launched investigations into the paint company merger this month. The Dutch government will launch



an enquiry into the affair of the business insurance provider sell-off. This was confirmed in late April.

The first of this three-pronged action was to concentrate on the supplier side. The merger of AkzoNobel and Axalta Coating Systems was announced 18 November last year. Between these two paint giants, they cover eight paint brands in the Dutch market. The second prong was the vertical concentration of power: insurer to branch insurer. On the 8th January this year, ASR Nederland N.V. announced the acquisition of 100% of Bovermij's insurance activities for €185 million. Bovermij is historically the branch insurer of BOVAG, representing the interests of more than 8 000 entrepreneurs in the mobility industry, including thousands of damage repair companies.

The third part of the puzzle was networks and dealers. Accelerated consolidation is taking place within damage repair networks, dealer holdings and captive damage structures.

Some examples are:

- Century Schadeherstel switched from Schadenet to A.A.S. in early 2026.
- Louwman took over Van Alphen Autoschades Tilburg on 1 January 2025.
- Broekhuis took over Van Markus Autoschade in March 2025.
- The Swedish Werksta group took over Den Elzen Autoschade.

Shadenet have 120 branches, ABS Autoherstel 80 branches, AAS approximately 100 companies – just some numbers to show you the work direction that is taking place with these deals that are public knowledge. The average person in the Netherlands won't join the dots of these three initiatives and what is happening behind the scenes when they take their car in for repair, but thankfully with Irene's knowledge and position.

Just what happens to individual dealers in this process remains to be seen and we will keep you posted as more unfolds.

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LOCAL PRODUCTION OF JETOUR T-SERIES MODELS BEGINS IN '27

At Auto China 2026 recently, Jetour announced plans to begin local vehicle production in South Africa from 2027, marking a significant boost for the country's automotive sector and its role in global manufacturing.

Jetour International president Ke Chuandeng confirmed that production will include the popular T-Series models, which will be built at the former Nissan plant in Rosslyn recently acquired by Chery. The move follows Chery South Africa's transition from importer to local manufacturer, with plans to produce 50 000 vehicles annually by mid-2027 and create more than 3 000 jobs across manufacturing and the supply chain.

Although Jetour and Chery operate as separate brands locally, Jetour forms part of the broader Chery Group globally. The announcement comes after strong local demand for the Jetour T1 and T2, with more than 4 500 units sold since their launch in October 2025.

Auto China 2026 was the largest show to date, featuring over 1 450 vehicles and more than 180 global debuts. This year's exhibition highlighted the rapid shift toward electrification, hybridisation and intelligent mobility, trends already reflected in Jetour's South African lineup with the recent introduction of its T1 and T2 plug-in hybrid (PHEV) models.

Jetour South Africa vice president Nic Campbell said local production of the T-Series positions South Africa as a key part of the brand's global strategy, underscoring the growing influence of Chinese automakers in the domestic market.

ISUZU'S HIGHEST ANNUAL PRODUCTION EVER IN SA



As the production shift ended at the end of March 2026 at Isuzu Motors South Africa (IMSA) manufacturing plant, a defining milestone in the company's history was achieved. During this financial year, IMSA recorded a significant 21% year-on-year increase in production volumes for both the Isuzu D-MAX bakkie and Isuzu Trucks, with over 27 400 Isuzu D-MAX bakkies and more than 3 800 Isuzu Trucks produced at the plant to meet the growing needs of customers across the African continent.

VOLKSWAGEN CELEBRATES 500 000 TH POLO FOR EXPORT

The Volkswagen Group Africa (VWGA) has reached another major milestone with the production of the 500 000th unit of the current Polo for the export market. The current Polo has been in production at Plant Kariega since 2021.

Germany is now the biggest export market for the Polo, with 124 711 vehicles shipped between 2020 and 2026, followed closely by the United Kingdom at 113 171 units.

2026 is a special year for VWGA; not only does the company celebrate 75 years of building vehicles in South Africa, it also marks 30 years of Polo production in Kariega.



FESTIVAL OF MOTORING 2026



Experience Motoring at Full Throttle. South Africa's ultimate automotive and motorsport experience – live on track at Kyalami Grand Prix Circuit. The 9th Festival of Motoring Unleashes a "Purpose-Driven" Automotive Spectacle at Kyalami.

The roar returns to the Kyalami Grand Prix Circuit from 28-30 August 2026 as the 9th edition of the Festival of Motoring (FoM), powered by WesBank, prepares to set the definitive benchmark for the South African automotive experience. This year's event is anchored in a powerful new theme: "Driven by Purpose, Defined by Legacy."



SAREL VAN DER MERWE – GRAND MARSHALL 2026 SIMOLA HILLCLIMB

Legendary South African racing driver Sarel van der Merwe was the ceremonial Grand Marshall for the 16th Simola Hillclimb this year. As one of South Africa's most successful race and rally drivers, it was a privilege to have him waving off the King of the Hill competitors at this year's event.

Van der Merwe won the inaugural Simola Hillclimb in 2009, driving the V8 Masters Ashley Ford Mustang. His winning time was 43.040 seconds, setting the foundation for the Simola Hillclimb to become internationally renowned as South Africa's premier motoring and motorsport lifestyle event, and officially the world's fastest hillclimb.

He is pictured alongside Ian Shrosbree, a co-founder and the MD of the Knysna Speed Festival, which owns and runs the annual Simola Hillclimb.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

DOUBLE STANDARDS HURTING THE INDUSTRY



As a representative from a local equipment supplier, I'd like to highlight that the South African approval standards for equipment levels in the autobody repair industry reflects a double standard situation.

The criteria set by certain vehicle manufacturers place strong emphasis on the use of specific equipment, often sold at excessively high prices, within the repair sector. As a result, there is a clear need for a pricing correction mechanism in the market.

For over two decades, South African body shop professionals have faced strict demands on both their repair methods and paint refinishing systems. In many cases, these extreme requirements show little regard for the sustainability of autobody repair shops and appear to reflect a double standard between vehicle manufacturers.

South Africa is often subjected to constant oversight by manufacturers such as Volkswagen, BMW, and Mercedes-Benz, who require compliance with repair technology recommendations that exceed those in other global markets, including China, Russia, Australia, and many other African nations.

Meanwhile, few approved equipment programmes exist or are operational, even as the market evolves with the influx of new Chinese vehicle models on South African roads. How the industry will maintain these standards in the face of this rapid change remains, in my view, a mystery.

Resistance spot welders

Let's examine the outrageous pricing of some of the recommended VAS6755 resistance spot welders now prescribed by BMW, Volkswagen, and Mercedes-Benz, among others, to be an approved repair shop.

To handle the latest high-strength steels and boron metals, a 14 000-ampere capacity

is recommended for OEM-compliant repair spot welds, along with a 355-degree swivel head C-type welding gun.

In practice, given varying electrical supply levels, these welders typically operate at around 9 000 amps. However, my main concern is the cost to approved repair centres. Some of these high-end, approved welders cost nearly R500 000 – a steep price for most body shops.

By comparison, machines like the Telwin from Italy, which meet and even exceed the recommended welding parameters, are available at roughly half that price – around R262 000. This is less than half the cost of the approved machines, and that's before considering the availability of Chinese-made equivalent welders, which can be purchased to the same specification for approximately R220 000.

Although the specifications exceed expectations and these units are much more cost-effective, approved repair centres do not have any choice in the matter.

So, the question begs to be asked: Are predominantly German-approved repair programmes skimming excessive profits at the expense of everyday professional body shop repair centres? In my view, the answer is yes.

This is before we even consider the ambitions of new panel shop owners striving to become more professional in repairing today's technologically advanced vehicles.

They are simply priced out by this mandate of excessive equipment costs, driven by a rigid 'no deviation' policy. Meanwhile, other key equipment suppliers are stuck in a system of blatant inequality.

As usual, the situation worsens when specialised, hazardous equipment vacuum machines – such as magnesium and exotic

metals – comes under scrutiny for affordability. Magnesium's reactive metal powders pose a serious fire hazard in the workplace due to their instant ignition when exposed to sparks, making their handling a major daily challenge in workshops in automotive repair.

Those with the correct VAS-approved and European NPA 494 standards are priced at approximately R490 000. In contrast, other European vacuum cleaners with similar specifications are available for around R380 000 – once again representing a full rip-off for body shops aspiring to meet required safety equipment standards at an extra cost of R100 000.

These adamant market recommendations seem to be an operation in profit grabs by some vehicle manufacturers who have already been legislated against for anti-competitive behaviour in the EEC. The time is well overdue to take on these unnecessary levels of equipment steering by vehicle manufacturers who extort for extra profitability from the automotive body repair trade.

We buy at a rate of close to 30% of all the spare parts produced internationally, so why must the trade be dictated to in this manner when viable products that meet the outstanding performance criteria are available at well under the costs of approved repair recommended products?

A final question to these manufacturers from the autobody shop trade is this: Why must we be asked to pay a premium for repairing their make or brand of vehicles in South Africa when this costly double standard operates directly against one of their best customers – collision repairers? We need a fair stance on this inequality and questionable business practice.

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TECNOLOGIA NUOVA DI VERNICIATURA

As part of the strategic and exclusive partnership between Luxor Paints and Indasa Abrasives, a technical and commercial visit was made by the Luxor team to Indasa's headquarters in Portugal.

With a view to strengthening Luxor's new sales teams in the non-paint product sector as well, this visit involved a rigorous programme covering product training and an understanding of the company's industrial, commercial and technical operations.

The programme lasted five days and was divided into various parts. The extended product range training session sparked discussions about new products such as the HT Line, Mesh Line, IMS Mixing Cups, and the HT Line Ceramic.

There was a visit to the "A Grade" market, including the opportunity to visit a Toyota and Lexus body shop operating under the Indasa Process to Profit programme. This was very informative on how the local industry works in Portugal as well.

A visit to multi-brand and Indasa-branded distribution points that partner with Indasa implementing the Process to Profit in the marketplace also took place. A social and cultural programme covering the main points of interest in the city of Aveiro – where Indasa is headquartered – and Porto was thoroughly enjoyed by all in attendance.

This visit follows on from a process of strengthening Luxor Paint's market position with a world-class range of abrasives, polishing products, masking materials and complementary tools for surface preparation.

Managers from Indasa and Luxor Paints are unanimous in their assessment of the visit's success, which now serves as a springboard for new initiatives involving Indasa products in the South African market in the coming months.



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If there's one thing the auto body repair industry does exceptionally well, it's keeping everyone humble. Just when a workshop finally gets comfortable with one process, along comes another OEM requirement, insurer system update, calibration procedure, or compliance standard to remind everyone that the industry has absolutely no intention of slowing down.

MBRs today are no longer simply fixing damaged vehicles. Today's panel shops are expected to navigate advanced electronics, digital systems, insurer KPIs, customer expectations, and increasingly sophisticated repair standards.

As insurers and OEMs continue refining their own operations for greater efficiency and profitability, repairers are expected to evolve alongside them. Which is exactly why the conversation around learning culture has become so important.

Not as another corporate buzzword reserved for strategy sessions and motivational slides, but as a genuine operational advantage for modern repair businesses.

Leadership must drive the shift

The reality is that learning cultures do not happen by accident. It starts with leadership.

Workshop owners and managers ultimately determine how learning is viewed inside a business. If development is treated as an interruption to production, the workshop will inevitably do the same. But when leadership prioritises learning, curiosity, mentorship, and growth, it shifts the mindset of the entire team.

Research consistently shows that organisations with strong learning cultures are led by leaders who act more like coaches than controllers – leaders who encourage problem-solving, mentorship, and continuous improvement rather than focusing only on output.

The repair centres adapting most successfully to industry change are usually the ones where leadership has made continuous learning part of the business strategy.

The smart shops are building learning into their culture operations manager, Caeleigh Pawson at Sanrose Auto Body recently explained that one of the reasons they intentionally maintain trainees and apprentices within the workshop is because it creates a continuous cycle of learning throughout the business. According to her, it encourages greater awareness around repair processes, systems, and techniques.

It is a simple but powerful insight. When technicians know, they may need to explain a process to someone else, standards tend to improve quickly. Teaching naturally reinforces accountability and consistency.

Similarly, Gysie Pienaar, CEO of OFS Smart Repair, emphasised the importance of remaining open to experimentation and emerging technologies. Not every process or innovation will deliver immediate success, but businesses willing to test, learn, and adapt are often the ones that stay ahead of the market. And in an industry evolving this rapidly, adaptability is becoming a serious competitive advantage.

Why a learning culture matters

A strong learning culture is not simply about sending technicians on courses every few months. It directly impacts workshop performance, repair quality, and long-term sustainability.

Key benefits include:

- Greater adaptability and innovation – Businesses with strong learning cultures respond more effectively to industry changes, new processes and new technologies.
- Improved productivity and repair quality – Continuous development reduces rework, improves repair accuracy, and strengthens operational efficiency.
- Higher employee engagement and retention – Employees are more likely to remain with businesses that invest in their growth and development.

- Stronger collaboration and knowledge sharing – Learning-focused environments create more consistency across the workshop floor.

- Development of future industry leaders – Ongoing development helps prepare estimators, workshop managers, and technicians for future leadership responsibilities.

In an industry facing increasing technical complexity and ongoing skills shortages, these advantages matter more than ever:

Learning needs to be practical

One of the biggest misconceptions about learning cultures is that they require expensive programmes and lengthy training sessions.

In reality the most effective learning often happens in small, practical ways integrated into daily workshop operations.

Simple approaches can make a significant difference, such as:

- Toolbox talks before production begins.
- Short OEM repair updates.
- On-the-job mentoring between senior and junior technicians.
- Quick post-repair discussions around challenges and lessons learned.

- Sharing technical insights across departments.

Research by Amy Edmondson, a Harvard Business School professor and leading authority on psychological safety and organisational learning, highlights the importance of creating workplace environments where employees feel safe to ask questions, admit mistakes, and engage in problem-solving without fear of humiliation or blame.

Because despite what some workshop veterans may believe, aggressively intimidating junior technicians is not actually a recognised training method.

Moving away from “knowledge hoarding”

Another important shift the industry needs to make is moving away from “knowledge hoarding” toward a culture of shared expertise and collaboration.

Many repair centres still rely heavily on a handful of experienced technicians who carry critical institutional knowledge. While experience is invaluable, over-dependence on individuals creates operational risk and limits broader team development.

Leading repairers are increasingly recognising that knowledge sharing strengthens the entire business.

Practical ways to encourage this include:

- Ensure star technicians share their best practises with fellow technicians.
- Short morning huddles to discuss complex repairs and potential risks.
- Smartphone videos demonstrating repair techniques or OEM procedures.
- Visual SOPs positioned near specialised equipment.
- Informal “lunch and learn” technical sessions.
- Identifying internal specialists in areas such as aluminium repair or ADAS calibration.

- Providing access to OEM repair procedures and technical platforms.

Because if only one person in the workshop knows how to perform a critical repair properly, that is not expertise – that is a future operational crisis waiting to happen.

The steps that keep learning will keep growing

The businesses most likely to thrive in the coming years will be the ones willing to remain adaptable, invest in continuous learning, and build teams that evolve together.

Because in this industry, standing still is no longer a strategy.

And increasingly, the shops embracing learning today are the ones everyone else will be trying to catch tomorrow.

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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

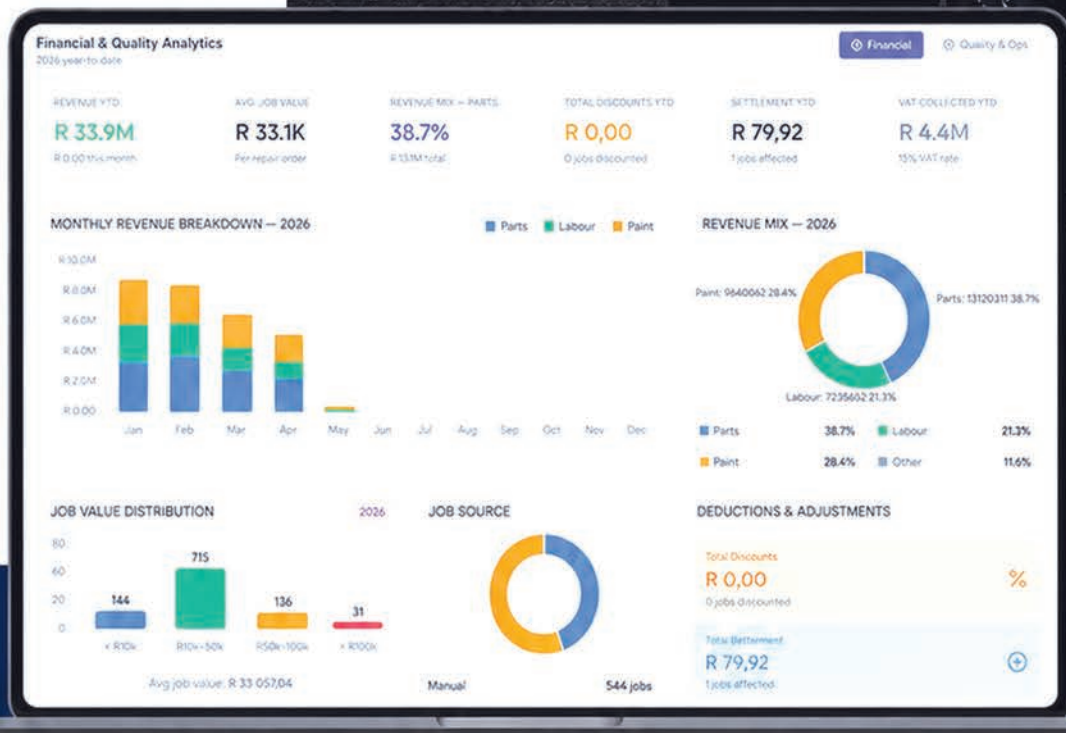
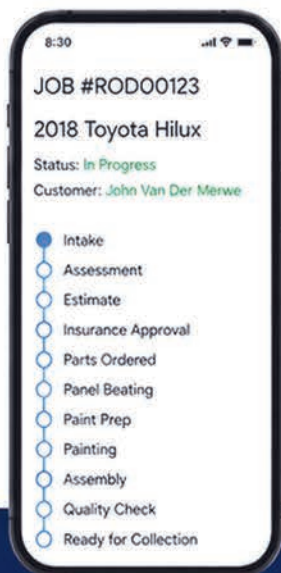


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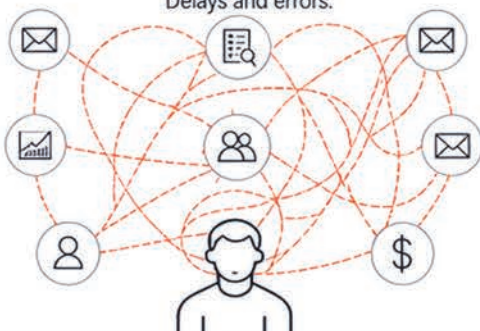
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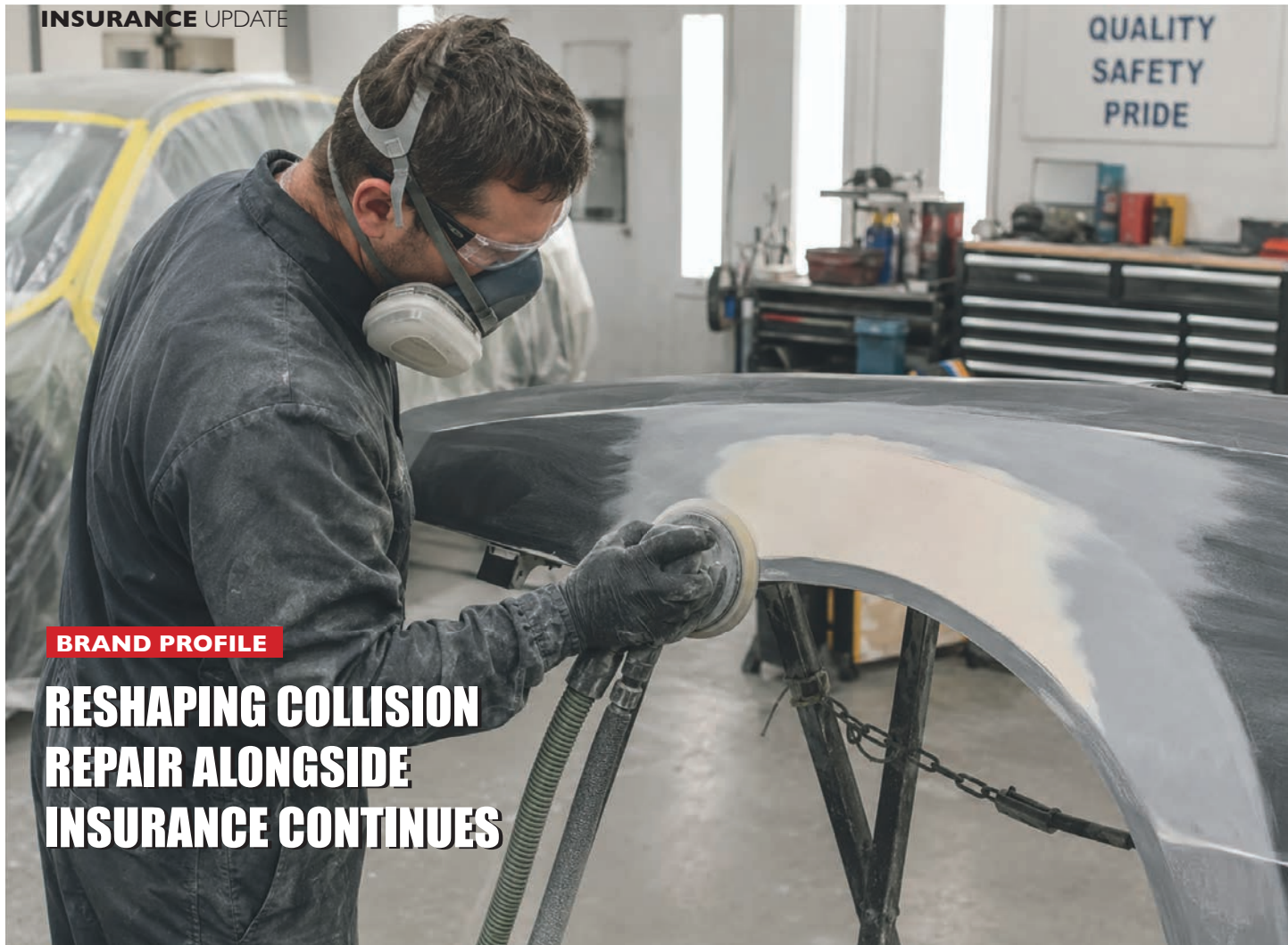


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BRAND PROFILE

RESHAPING COLLISION REPAIR ALONGSIDE INSURANCE CONTINUES

The development project initiated by Santam several months ago to introduce a new, saleable approved repairer blueprint is now beginning to reveal a range of core criteria aimed at reshaping the traditional motor insurance repair dynamic. In truth, the current model has evolved unevenly over the past three decades, often reacting to change rather than driving it.

Santam's best-in-class strategy, which forms part of the company's long-term vision, is intended to become one of the central pillars of insurance excellence within South Africa's automotive insurance sector.

The survey currently under way is being conducted against a backdrop of rapid acceleration in the collision repair industry, far beyond anything experienced during the previous decade. At the same time, competition within the short-term insurance market has intensified dramatically, with more than 100 insurers now operating within the vehicle repair environment.

We have observed that quite a few of the MBR's are falling short on compliance requirements. Basic things that may not be in order, are BEE certificates, MIBCO, Tax clearance, Occupational Health and Safety, COIDA and zoning certificates. Having your business in order is paramount in building a solid foundation and better future for the industry as a whole.

At the heart of Santam's review is a clear objective: to create a more customer-centric experience throughout the often stressful and unexpected vehicle damage and repair process. Central to this approach is maintaining the policyholder's indemnity against loss while simultaneously ensuring the principles of Treating Customers Fairly remain firmly in focus.

Delivering consistent, high-quality repairs requires multiple interconnected components to function effectively at all times. These include internal risk management, staff training and development, workshop compliance standards, business integrity, upliftment programmes, warranty fulfilment and supply-chain performance. Together, these elements form the backbone of Santam's commitment to repair excellence for its policyholders.

The challenge of maintaining robust repair standards remains

ongoing. The repair cycle itself is becoming increasingly complex, particularly with the rapid introduction of advanced vehicle technologies such as ADAS systems, evolving drivetrain platforms and the accelerating growth of hybrid electric and BEV vehicle sales in South Africa.

These developments demand significantly higher levels of repair expertise, specialised tooling and continuous technical training. Collision repair centres will need sustained investment in both people and infrastructure if they are to keep pace with the technological changes now emerging across the automotive landscape.

Another growing concern is parts availability and the ability of insurers and repairers to minimise vehicle downtime. Repair centres are increasingly facing delays in sourcing critical components, creating reputational risks at customer level.

Chinese vehicle manufacturers, in particular, are already experiencing growing criticism in several global markets regarding spare parts supply and delivery times. This has the potential to place additional strain on the South African repair environment, where supply chains are already under pressure from logistical disruptions and operational inefficiencies affecting collision repair businesses.

Despite these challenges, Santam remains confident that a closer and more collaborative working relationship between insurers, repairers, brokers, fleet operators and supply-chain partners will strengthen repair consistency across the sector. Through the introduction of more transparent systems and improved hybrid parts procurement strategies, approved repair centres will be better positioned to deliver efficient, high-quality repairs while ensuring improved outcomes for policyholders across the motor insurance sector.

BRAND PROFILE

WORKSHOP BOSS: REDEFINING THE NEXT ERA OF MOTOR BODY REPAIR



Motor body repairers are operating in one of the most complex environments the industry has ever seen. Every repair moves through a chain of people, platforms and decisions: customers, insurers, assessors, estimators, suppliers, workshop teams, accounts departments and management. Each person needs information. Each touch point affects speed and profitability.

Technology entered the industry with the promise of simplicity. But in reality many workshops are now surrounded by disconnected systems, duplicated steps, scattered communication channels and limited real-time visibility. The question is no longer whether a workshop has systems. Most do. The real question is whether those systems are connected enough to create control, intelligence and momentum.

The Workshop Boss redefining systems

Developed by Edge IPS, The Workshop Boss is not another traditional Bodyshop Management System (BMS). It represents a new category of workshop operating platform, built around the way modern repair businesses need to operate.

The future of panel beating will not be shaped by systems that only record jobs, store information or manage isolated processes. It will be moulded by platforms that connect the repair ecosystem: people, systems, suppliers, insurers, communication, parts, data and decisions, into one intelligent operating environment.

The Workshop Boss leads the shift

Cloud-based by design, The Workshop Boss gives users secure access from a phone, tablet or laptop, whether they are on the workshop floor, at reception, off-site or overseeing another branch. For multi-site businesses, its multi-tenant structure means one login can access multiple approved body shops, without remote log-ons or duplicated access points.

This creates immediate operational clarity. Management can view job progress, workflow movement, communication activity, supplier engagement, parts status and workshop performance from one connected environment. Dashboards, reporting tools and on-demand workshop insights turn daily activity into usable intelligence. This

helps repairers identify bottlenecks, monitor productivity, improve turnaround times and make faster decisions.

The Workshop Boss equals connection

The platform integrates with key industry systems including Audatex, SmartQuote, Lightstone, BAMS and Auto MX. To cater for repairers using other estimation systems, The Workshop Boss also includes PDF uploading capability, allowing estimate documents to be captured and managed within the workflow. Repeated capturing, disconnected handovers and manual chasing are replaced with a smoother flow between estimating, job management, supplier engagement, communication, reporting and execution.

Communication is brought into the same professional workflow. The Workshop Boss enables two-way WhatsApp communication through a central workshop number, giving repairers a controlled and accountable way to engage with customers and stakeholders. Important job updates no longer need to sit on personal phones or disappear into informal message threads. Communication becomes faster for the customer, cleaner for the team and more visible for management.

One of the strongest examples of this connected approach is the Parts Module, powered by the industry-leading Edge IQ parts sourcing platform.

Parts remain one of the biggest pressure points in any repair cycle. The right part, from the right supplier, at the right time, can determine whether a vehicle moves through production or stands waiting. The Workshop Boss simplifies parts sourcing by allowing repairers to digitally engage with multiple parts suppliers from one connected workflow.

Repairers can manage parts requests, orders, RFCs, deliveries and back-order items in a structured way. Parts documents can be captured digitally, keeping quotes, invoices, delivery

notes and related paperwork connected to the job. This reduces scattered emails, manual filing, lost documents and uncertainty around what has been requested, ordered, received or delayed.

The Workshop Boss also extends into internal parts control. Its workshop parts management and inventory platform tracks the movement of parts once they enter the business, from receiving and storage to allocation and use. This gives workshops accountability over parts on hand, parts in progress and parts still outstanding.

The Workshop Boss is also creating a pathway for repairers to unlock value from unused parts inventory by making selected stock available for sale directly to the public, insurers and other repairers. In an industry where margins, availability and speed matter, unused stock should not remain invisible.

Supported by a practical two-tier pricing structure, The Workshop Boss gives repairers flexibility to choose the level that fits their operation while still allowing room to scale.

The next era of motor body repair will not be defined by workshops that simply add more systems. It will be defined by those that build smarter, more connected operating environments. The Workshop Boss is the new way. Everything connected. Everything efficient.

To find out more or book a demo, contact The Workshop Boss team on:

WhatsApp: +27 69 363 2708

Website: www.edge-ips.co.za

Email: info@edge-ips.co.za



Smart parts sourcing, supplier engagement and real-time inventory—managed in one place.



COATINGS UPDATE

AXALTA'S 2025 GLOBAL AUTOMOTIVE COLOUR REPORT

Axalta, a leading global coatings company, has released its 73rd annual Global Automotive Colour Popularity Report. The report offers an updated look at the landscape of automotive colour in 2025, in which once again, white, grey, and black dominated. First published in 1953, Axalta's annual Colour Popularity Report is the automotive industry's longest running and most comprehensive colour account.

Axalta's 2025 Global Automotive Colour Popularity Report revealed steady movement rather than dramatic shifts, with neutrals continuing to dominate the market. White remains the leading colour at 29% followed by black at 23% and grey at 22%, illustrating ongoing preferences for clean, timeless design.

Silver lost momentum at 7%, while blue maintained 6%, affirming its position as the strongest chromatic colour and signalling continued interest in subtle, chromatic tones.

Red, brown/beige, green, and yellow/gold remain smaller but steady contributors to the global palette.

"This year's report reveals how enduring neutrals continue to anchor the global palette, even as interest rises in finishes that bring greater depth, movement, and individuality to vehicle styling," said Dr. Lei Qiao, Vice President - Technology, Mobility Coatings at Axalta. "Overall, the 2025 landscape reflects a market anchored in simplicity yet increasingly open to refined colour expression and contemporary finishes."

The report also captures slight changes in colour popularity based on geography:

North America: White leads at 31% a slight decrease from 2024 as chromatic colours rise in popularity. Drivers in North America increasingly choose bolder colours, with blue at 10% and red at 7%

reflecting a broader cultural shift toward customisation and standout styling.

South America: White leads at 35% valued for practicality and performance in warmer climates. Silver increased to 14% and blue to 7%, signalling continued growing interest in modern, refined tones. Grey at 23% and red at 4% round out a palette trending toward lighter, fresher expressions.

Europe: Grey dominates at 26%, increasing slightly from 2024 as the region continues to favour refined, understated design. White at 25% and black at 22% maintain their strong presence, creating a palette rooted in sophistication and harmonising with Europe's sleek, modern vehicle styling.

Asia: Asia continues shifting toward expressive colour, with yellow/gold rising to 4%, green growing to 3%, and standout shades like orange and purple increasing to 2%. In a rapidly expanding EV market, bold, saturated hues help brands build identity and stand out, even as black increases to 26% across the region.

"Our proprietary resin chemistry enables Axalta to develop and deliver an expansive palette that meets the wide variety of colours demanded by different customers, cultures and climates, while at the same time ensuring the durability, performance and sustainability of the coating," said Dr. Robert Roop, SVP and Chief Technology Officer at Axalta.

Each year, Axalta analyses automotive build data from leading vehicle production regions and major markets around the world to deliver global colour popularity rankings, regional trends, and an indicator of current market preferences. The report highlights the top 10 most popular automotive colour spaces and provides insight into how colour preferences continue to evolve across global markets.



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Kia South Africa Africa has officially entered the country's fiercely contested bakkie segment with the arrival of the Tasman – a vehicle that represents one of the most significant product expansions in the brand's local history.

Long known for its passenger cars and SUVs, Kia now turns its attention to a segment that lies at the heart of the South African market.

But rather than adapting an existing platform, the Tasman has been developed from the ground up as a purpose-built double cab, engineered to meet the demands of both work and lifestyle users in some of the toughest conditions in the world.

The result is a bakkie that blends traditional durability with a more modern, design-led and technology-rich approach – while remaining firmly focused on real-world capability.

Power is delivered through an eight-speed automatic transmission, contributing to both efficiency and refinement, while allowing the engine to remain within its optimal operating range across a variety of driving conditions.

Kia has placed a strong emphasis on ensuring that the Tasman delivers genuine off-road capability, rather than simply adopting the aesthetic of an adventure vehicle.

Selectable drive modes – including Eco, Sport, Normal, and Tow – are complemented by dedicated terrain settings for low-grip conditions, allowing the vehicle to adapt to surfaces such as sand, mud, and loose gravel.

In more demanding conditions, systems such as X-TREK mode allow for controlled, low-speed progress over rough terrain, reducing driver workload and improving confidence when the going gets tough.

A rear electronic differential lock further enhances traction by intelligently distributing torque to where it is needed most, helping the vehicle to maintain momentum in challenging off-road scenarios.

Downhill Brake Control (DBC) adds an extra layer of assurance, automatically managing vehicle speed on steep or technical descents without requiring constant driver input.

With a gross vehicle mass of 3 250 kg and a gross combined mass of 6 200 kg, the Tasman is capable of handling substantial loads. Payload capacity exceeds one tonne, while a braked towing capacity of 3 500 kg places it firmly among the leaders in its class.

While the Tasman delivers the toughness expected of a traditional bakkie, Kia has also focused on elevating the in-cabin experience.

A fully integrated digital display setup – combining a 12.3-inch driver cluster, a central infotainment screen, and a dedicated climate control interface – brings the Tasman in line with the brand's latest passenger vehicle offerings.

The cabin is designed to balance durability with comfort, offering generous space for both front and rear occupants, along with modern connectivity features and advanced driver assistance systems.

These include a comprehensive suite of safety technologies, ranging from adaptive cruise control and lane-keeping assistance to blind-spot monitoring and autonomous emergency braking – reinforcing the Tasman's positioning as a thoroughly modern interpretation of the double-cab bakkie.

The local Tasman range will be offered in a clearly structured line-up, catering to both work-focused buyers and those seeking a more lifestyle-oriented double cab. The range comprises the Tasman LX 4x2 and LX 4x2 colour coded derivatives, followed by the Tasman SX 4x4 and SX 4x4 colour coded models, and is topped by the flagship Tasman X-Pro 4x4 and X-Pro 4x4 colour coded variants.

Recommended retail pricing for the range is as follows:

Kia Tasman 2.2D A/T 4WD LX	R 679 995
Kia Tasman 2.2D A/T 4WD SX	R 789 995
Kia Tasman 2.2D A/T 4WD X-PRO	R 999 995

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THE KIA TASMAN



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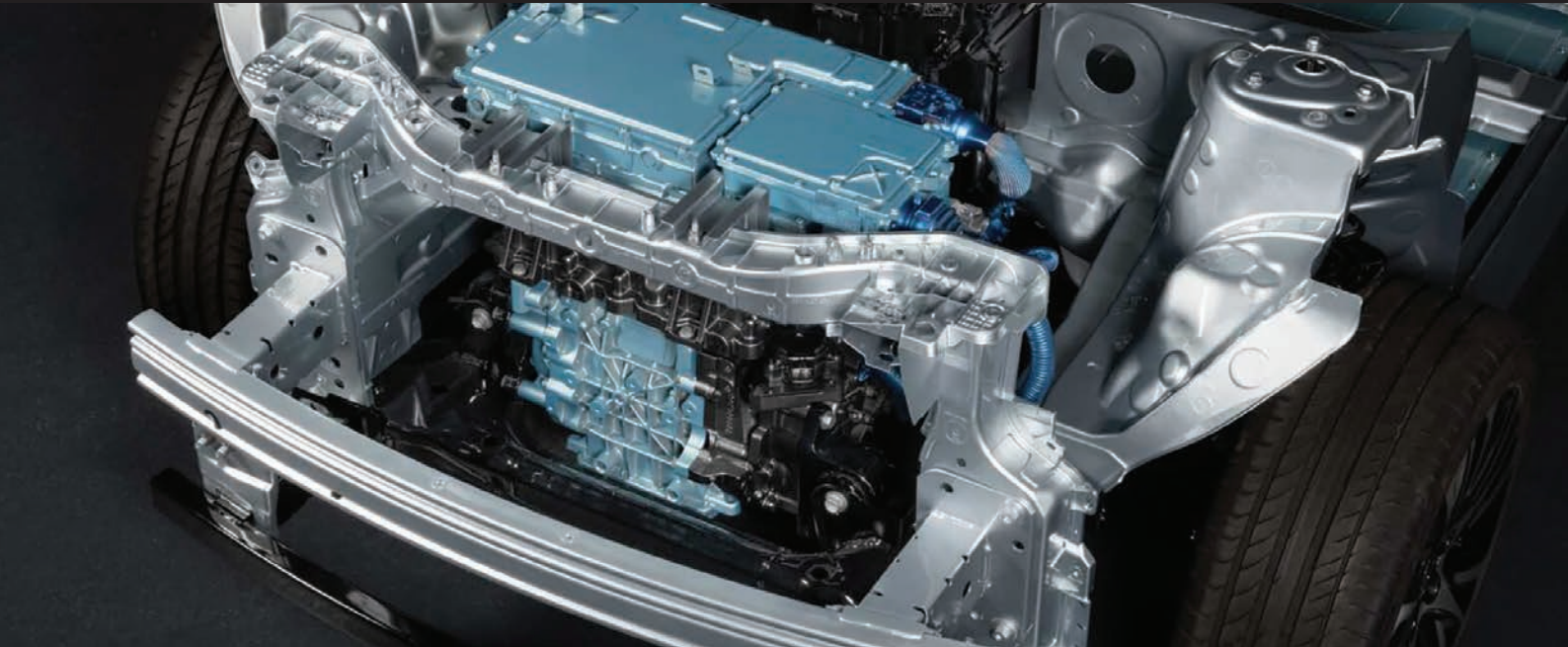
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FUTURE TECH

A LETTER FROM EUROPE - LOST IN THE POST

News from Australia published a status about the European automotive business and the effect of massive exports from China last month. Australia, much like Europe, has relatively static car sales levels – it's not going to be a five million car a year market anytime soon. So, as the China based OEMs sell multiple variations of SUV with multiple brand labels, they join a market which has been selling smaller numbers of more models each year.

Consider the numbers from BYD: Remember this:

- 1. BYD expended it's overall production by roughly one million units per year for three consecutive years... until 2025.
- 2. The vast majority of BYD vehicle output is cars.
- 3. Of those, PHEV accounted for roughly half the car sales, although the up-coming economic belt-tightening in China should reverse this slight dip in growth.
- 4. Tesla's biggest single factory is in Shanghai, where it uses unique ADAS systems for domestic sales compared to USA-based technology for rest of world exports. Further, every single dollar earned by exports from the Shanghai factory remains in China, by contractual obligation.

It shows what we'd thought of as a 'start up' – Tesla – compared to an even more extensively funded version, BYD.

Is China really a powerhouse – or is it just trying to make a huge and growing market, or the long-promised ever imminent car ownership growth in India – there is good reason to buy a complete vehicle, white label, and place it in those markets. The risk is low, while the profits should be good.

China has long-standing problems of private investment property market 'slightly falling over' which is directly linked to vast over capacity in the domestic automotive manufacturing sector, happening as the automotive market enters its fourth consecutive year of vicious new vehicle sales competition combined with removal of subsidies for some powertrain types. The upswing to buy China vehicles because the apparent quality, apparent reliability and very competitive pricing eclipses any vehicle imported or built in China by a

foreign company – has just run out of steam.

Hence the rush to keep production rolling, keep the endless flow of identikit SUV 'new' models, just to keep paying for loans on excess manufacturing capacity. Even with the severe disruption in the Middle East during 2026 meant a ship load of vehicles landed in Australia are demonstrably more profitable than if sold in the China domestic market.

So, what are the problems?

- More models and with even more variations chasing fewer sales per model, per year compared to the ones they replace.
- Over reliance on home-grown software, non-standardised major components and manufacturers' specific structured repair information – it was always so, but the number of models makes this situation worse than ever before.

What are the most valuable bits of an electrified powertrain?

We are learning that with human drivers and mixed traffic conditions, use as well as frequency/type of charging affect the

BYD	Production 2025	Production 2024	P%	Sales 2025	Sales 2024	%
New energy vehicle	4,537,356	4,304,073	5.42%	4,602,436	4,272,145	7.73%
Passenger vehicle	4,479,392	4,281,084	4.63%	4,545,423	4,250,370	6.94%
— Battery electric vehicle	2,221,913	1,777,965	24.97%	2,256,714	1,764,992	27.86%
— Plug-in hybrid electric vehicle	2,257,479	2,503,119	-9.81%	2,288,709	2,485,378	-7.91%
Commercial vehicle	57,964	22,989	152.14%	57,013	21,775	161.83%
Bus	4,923	5,580	-11.77%	4,923	5,580	-11.77%
Others	53,041	17,409	204.68%	52,090	16,195	221.64%
Total	4,537,356	4,304,073	5.42%	4,602,436	4,272,145	7.73%



Andrew Marsh
hello@autobible.com

loss of energy storage capacity. Whereas an internal combustion engine health can be determined by use of a few parameters due to the century of knowledge each parameter represents, some of which read across to electric powertrains (lubricant technology for example) the number of unknowns, the lack of data, is more marked with electrified powertrains, but not for much longer as more vehicles generate more information.

The highest value parts, the easiest to assess in terms of remaining service life are the power control electronics, the traction motor and driveline.

Traction batteries

In the near term these remain the biggest risk for repairers and insurers. The riddle is:

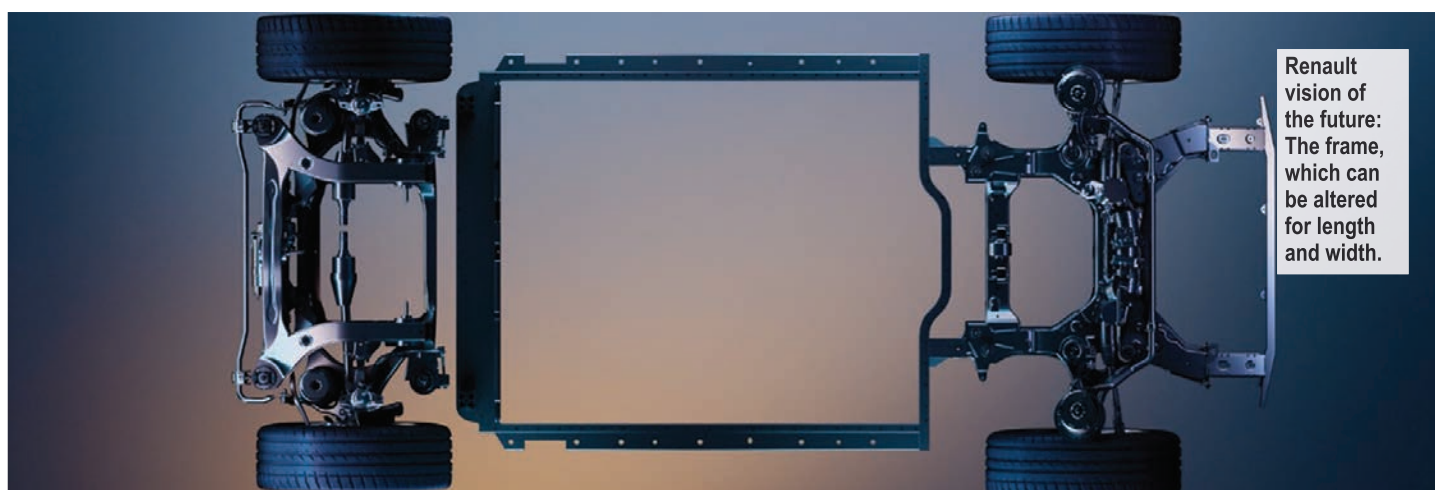
'What's worth nothing – or even costs – after impact, but costs almost all of the residual value to replace? A traction battery'.

Vehicles with large traction batteries seem to be hammered – I think falsely – in terms of residual value. As discussed previously quantifying how much life is left in a used battery pack is a challenge

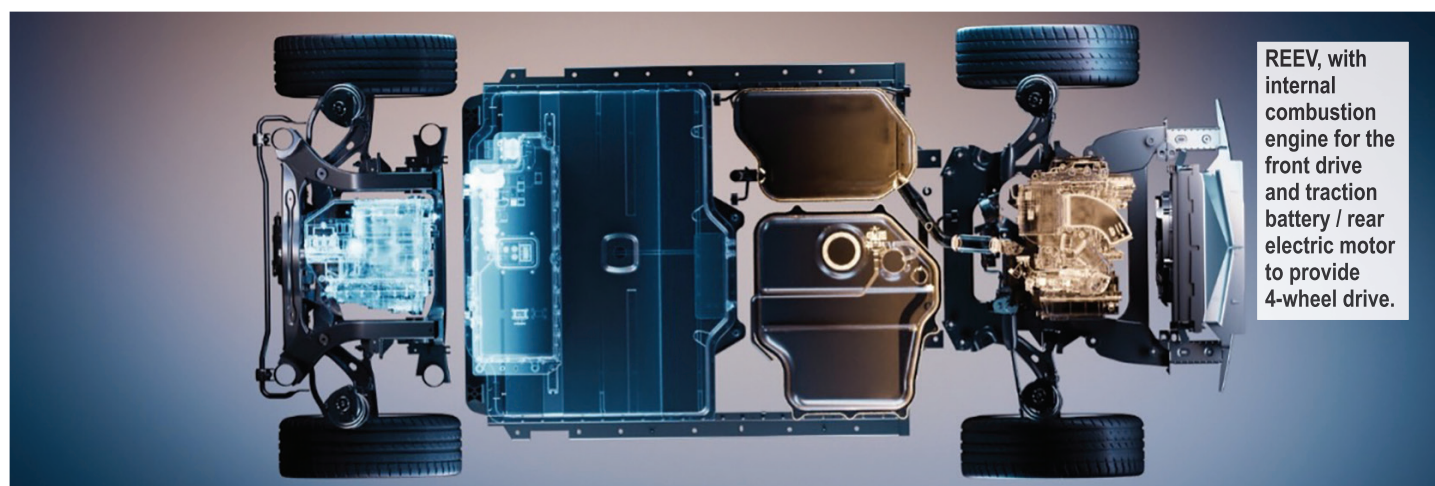
given it is difficult to manage each cell thermally. Hence the HV traction battery is built with cells with as close to identical performance as possible, so the degradation is uniform and the risks of overloading any single cell are minimised.

Things are moving quickly to ensure a damaged or defective HV traction battery, which could be supplied new for upwards of four times the manufactured cost of US\$72 per kWh, could be refurbished. This leads directly to more precise recycling of the defective components, and prevention of the cell level imbalance that might initiate thermal runaway.

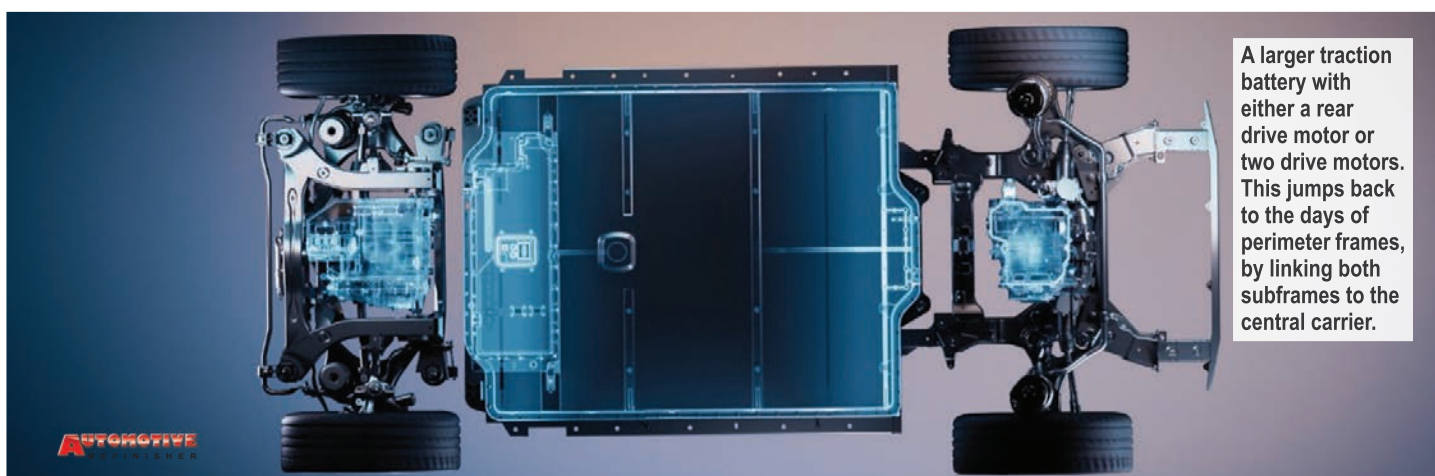
- The cost of a 100kWh battery should be circa US\$7 200 for the most common Li-Ion electrolyte, anode and cathode cell combinations, which can retail for anything upwards of US\$28 800. Newer and better battery technologies cost much more until production volumes increase.



Renault vision of the future:
The frame, which can be altered for length and width.



REEV, with internal combustion engine for the front drive and traction battery / rear electric motor to provide 4-wheel drive.



A larger traction battery with either a rear drive motor or two drive motors. This jumps back to the days of perimeter frames, by linking both subframes to the central carrier.

• Insurers know there isn't a lot of quality information to use if the pack should be replaced or repaired and also know HV traction battery repairers are not yet common either.

• Insurers also know the HV traction battery will survive the impact (front, side or rear) but could get hit from the underside in subsequent collisions after the initial impact.

The packaging of the HV traction battery, especially on a battery electric vehicle (BEV) or a range-extender electric vehicle (REEV), is super critical in terms of: height, since the sides are defined by the engineered allowable intrusion for the ANCAP side impact tests.

• The front is defined by the engineered impact load transfer for the ANCAP front impact tests,

• The cabin height is defined by the 95-percentile size of the target market,

• The underside is defined by the ground clearance line.

• The rear is defined by engineered load transfer from type approval and internal manufacturer impact test standards.

The HV traction battery is literally boxed in. Addition of full-length skid plates is possible if there is some latitude on the ground clearance line but really needs gapping from the lowest face of the HV traction battery so as the skid plate contacts and bends, it does not press into the battery it's trying to protect. If the latitude is not there, the HV traction battery internals need to be made smaller.

What's next for traction batteries?

Much like fusion technology, solid state and/or solid electrolyte batteries are full of promise in terms of energy density and resistance to internal shorting, but the technology has been 'just around the corner' for at least a decade. When it does finally appear, it is likely to be not inexpensive, nor significantly safer than a well built and well operated conventional Lithium-Ion cell pack.

There are interesting questions about how charging systems could be much, much common and much, much easier to use. This could lead to the reduction of the 100 kWh giant packs down towards 60 kWh, which makes the whole packaging issue far more straightforward. Similarly, for vehicles with a range of circa 200 km, a battery pack offering 30 kWh of energy storage would be less expensive, easy to package and inherently lower risk in the event of catastrophic impact damage due to the lower levels of stored energy.

What is the European Commission doing about this?

The EU27 Commission creates the law approved by member states which becomes part of the new vehicle type approval process, without which no new vehicle can sold. The UK and other countries outside the EU27 adopt these laws, or mix them with similar law from the USA, South Korea or Japan as well as creating their own standards.

The EU27 Commission became aware the tail pipe emissions law, the incentives for battery electric vehicles along with the internal market for 'carbon credits' had left the vehicle manufacturers in

member states weighed down with extra direct costs. Further, imports from China took advantage of the consumer incentives but side stepped the extra direct costs.

The EU27 Commission were really rattled by Dacia Spring, which was originally engineered in India with a core of Renault and Nissan engineers to become Kwid. The project was then turned into a BEV by a Renault Nissan team in China and then exported the cars from there back to Europe. This was the cheapest BEV on the market, with BEV centric mandates set by the EU27 Commission.

The conundrum. How to keep trade, prevent import of complete vehicles but not upset China.

The EU27 Commission went on tour starting at the end of 2024 and gathered lots of ideas from all over. The result was to be published in December; January, February and then it did finally appear as a definite maybe to start discussions in March 2026. Once again, the dreaded EU27 'carbon' credit trading scheme features, leading to all sorts of tiered effects and taxes.

In effect, nothing has been done, and the wave of product coming in from China gets bigger every single day. The manufacturers in the EU27 and UK do not agree with what should be done, but all are aware right now the main source of all the parts and materials required to make electrified powertrains come from China.

There is so much pressure to move supply of processed raw materials and finished products from China, but time is against the rest of world, given China has a massive, massive manufacturing capability right now.

For collision repairers the effect of the above will be ...

New skills to not only assess HV traction battery condition, but where possible the ability to strip, replace certain components, rebuild and verify the repair.

Realisation that even if a platform is used by many different models, the number of a certain make/model/body shape will decrease, and the collision repair parts will not be supported for as long after production stops. That drives new skills to source parts, get parts made and even do some of that within the business.

New skills to support ever evolving software, and to support vehicles left behind as their software becomes unsupported. After all, a vehicle is rather bigger and more complex than a phone, so it's not going to get thrown away so easily (I'm looking at Apple ...).

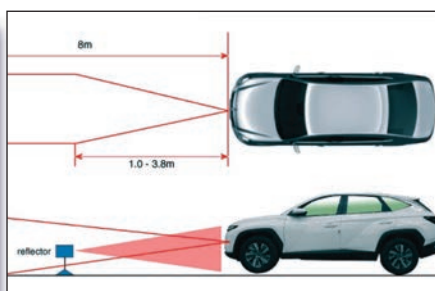
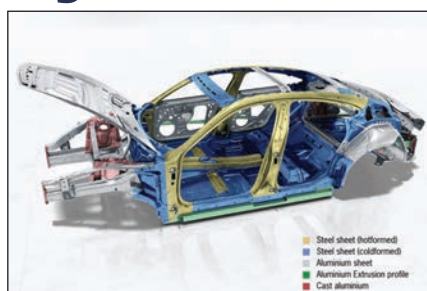
Regularising automotive engineering is not going to happen very much even withing a single vehicle manufacturer. While we get some wins via platform use across different brands, in the main the day job in collision repair is going to present a significantly increased variety of models within effect shorter life cycles ... unless we can prevent that.

Isn't that a better ecology solution to just throwing whole vehicles away?

(Source of sales numbers: Tesla, BYD and www.best-selling-cars.com)

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CRA UPDATE

INTERVIEW WITH DEON SMIT, CRA CHAIRMAN

Q *The Collision Repair Association (CRA) has been around for 13 years. What for you, stands out as its biggest achievement?*

A The CRA has made a major contribution in several facets. Our highly skilled membership now takes care of over 50% of all insured vehicle repairs in the South African marketplace.

We are very proud of that achievement. This has been achieved by a committed team who have provided a nucleus of excellent standards and professional capability to improve the levels of customer satisfaction for all stakeholders, by treating policy holders fairly.

It is not and won't be just an organisation with a 'one size fits all' drive for every single shop out there. We touch on points of conduct and accountability in the industry and take this seriously.

The result is strong customer satisfaction, with very few complaints – and when they do arise – they're resolved quickly. That credibility has become a cornerstone of our reputation.

Q *The relationship between repairers and insurers is often complex. Are insurers keeping up with modern vehicle technology?*

A I don't think that any prospective vehicle owner could have envisaged the electronic wizardry that is now included in today's cars going forward. It is quite staggering to keep up! Vehicles have become incredibly advanced – essentially, they are quite simply "computers on wheels" – and that's changed the repair landscape dramatically.

Some short-term motor book insurers are failing as they continue to take a short-term view on profitability as their number one objective in the entire process of damage repair. Cash-in-lieu payments from direct call insurers all too often denude our workshops of repairable cars as well as unhappy customers. The good news is that insurers are starting to realise that poor outcomes lead to high customer churn rates, which simply isn't sustainable.

Q *Write-off rates are rising globally. How is the local industry coping?*

A Globally vehicle write off rates have become an alarming reality for us to contend with. As a nation we're not alone in this developing world trend. The reliance on photo-based assessments often fail to spot hidden or electronic damage. Fraud in this area is growing as well due to AI's ability to generate photographs of damaged vehicles. Accurate repairs require skilled assessors – something the industry currently lacks, sadly.

One of the association's key emphasis areas is clear communication with customers during the assessment and repair process. Keeping clients informed reduces friction and improves trust, which is critical in a high-stress claims environment.

Q *Labour rates remain a contentious issue. Can repairers sustain current pricing structures?*

A It's common practice for insurers to downgrade their labour allowance for repairers in body shops by close to less than 50%



of the current rate allowed for mechanical repair which doesn't even match up with official inflation rates. This year's increases of 2-2.5% doesn't come close to covering rising costs, training, and technology investments. A sustainable national hourly rate would be approximately R650 per hour.

After years of receiving under recovery rates we have taken a route to speak to the department of trade to institute wage bargaining activities. Without fair compensation, the industry cannot maintain the standards required to repair modern vehicles safely and correctly.

Q *Access to manufacturer-approved repair methods is still a hurdle. What is the CRA doing about it?*

A We're committed to maintaining high repair standards, which means ongoing investment in training and equipment. While manufacturer approvals are becoming more accessible, the pace of technological change means repairers must continuously upskill.

It's not optional – without proper methods and training, repair quality and vehicle safety are at risk. The reality of being able to maintain top level repair means constant training on skills and upliftment from our members.

Q *What should repair centres focus on to remain sustainable?*

A The future of any viable concern is balance – that of daily work and keeping insurers happy – not always an easy task. That means better communication, stronger marketing – especially online – and efficient internal processes. Customer satisfaction is crucial and will increasingly determine long-term success.

Q *With over 2 000 vehicle models on local roads, what is the outlook for parts availability?*

A Regarding parts availability, shops will, and are already, bearing the brunt of reputational damage. It's important to note that OEMs often state that they have up to a 95% back-up parts available, but it often falls far short of the truth where crash parts are concerned. This is probably closer to 90% and pieces need to be imported for the 2000 plus models on offer. Parts supply is becoming a serious concern, especially with the influx of new brands as well as disrupted supply chain problems internationally.

Repairers purchase a significant share of OEM parts – almost 30% – yet supply chains often fall short. Without improvement, this will impact both repair timelines as well as body shop reputation.

On a final note, the CRA has always shown a position of market leadership. Our annual conference sessions which we have brought to South Africa have showcased the latest trends and what is to come in the collision repair industry to keep ourselves ahead of the rampant change onslaught.

We are embarking, with Automotive Refinisher, another industry event later this year. Watch this space and our own socials for upcoming details. Don't miss out!



Enjoy the recognition you deserve

The Collision Repairers Association (CRA) has evolved as an organisation with passion, understanding and the will to provide results to our esteemed members from the basis of being a voice to the collision repair industry. We employ consultants and are associated with people suitably qualified in all aspects of collision repair and related business management skills with high integrity and willing to offer their support to ensuring the success of your facilities.

Our objectives are issues the proactive body shop owner does not really have the time to concentrate on to ensure the optimisation of their business. As with any Association annual membership fees are payable to cover administration costs and our membership is based on grading status. We provide an on-line E Procure business data profile of members to support recognition for independent role players in every area of activity in the collision repair industry.

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TRAINING

BORDER PAINTS HOSTS MARKET DAY AT AXALTA

Standex importer, Border Paints, treated a large contingent of key body shop owners and management to an on-site event held at Axalta's state-of-the-art training centre based in Midrand.

The focus of the day was for attendees to experience some of the world's most advanced body shop workflow management systems and to workshop incorporating AI into the body shop. Border Paints CEO, Bruce Cumming, outlined their vision for the industry's future and how they aim to partner with body shops to meet the challenges.

"Over the years, Border Paints has served leading repairers in the industry based in the Eastern Cape," he said, "and now we are ready to expand our innovative offering over a much wider scope." Whilst guarded about the details, he said that "something big is coming."

The Border Paints Head Office, based in East London, supports customers through an expert technical team led by Chris Steyn. Behind the scenes, they are backed by dedicated Customer Service, IT and Reporting, and Finance and Administration teams.

Cumming was upbeat about the success of the one-day event that also included a high-profile technical demonstration for express vehicle repair production and quality excellence.

Jeremy Locke, Locke and Partners Managing Director, showed their Business Solutions Intel (BSI), a comprehensive suite of modular tools that work together to achieve optimal workflow efficiency through assessment, action and operational control, all in one platform. It's not an audit tool, but a continuous improvement engine.

While most software programs tell you what's wrong once a year, BSI acts as an aide-de-camp throughout the body shop to enable smarter decisions, higher profitability, and continuous improvement in real-time.

The six BSI modules include:

BSI Base: Addresses assessment, benchmarks and uses an "AI LEAN expert" to increase the knowledge base.

Workflow tools: Lean Kanban OS optimises production management as the AI learns each individual shop.



Chris George put the FCLE Standex refinishing system through its paces with an incredible start to finish time of 40 minutes to final dry and polish.

- Elite Lean: A modular, data-driven component designed to optimise every aspect of the body shop's performance.
- Capacity planner: View what your shop can actually produce in real-time.
- QRG/SOP Manager: Once you know the best standard for your shop, lock it down.
- Network and benchmarks: External reference points of global, national and regional data that grow as the network grows.

During a practical demonstration, Speed Revolution was showcased with the use of the innovative Fast Cure Low Energy (FCLE) patented technology that offers condensed respray times and a spraying cycle to hard-dry to polishable in under one hour. This is all achieved without the experience of running a spray booth heat cycle, which costs on average approximately R80 per hour to achieve in diesel utilisation costs alone, and this price keeps escalating with the fuel increase.

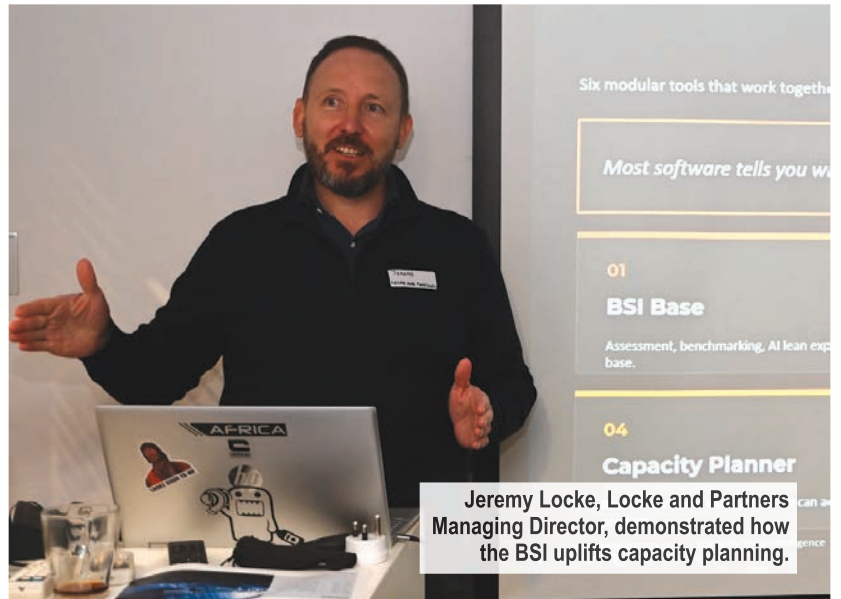
Guests were shown the application cycle, which saw Christopher George, technical service demonstrator, complete a local area repair in just 40 minutes from start to finish with FCLE technology materials.



The Border Paints team hosted a trade delegates from across the country for a technical day. They are the national importer and distributor for Standox.



Bruce Cumming, Border Paints CEO, outlined their vision and how they will partner with body shops to meet challenges.



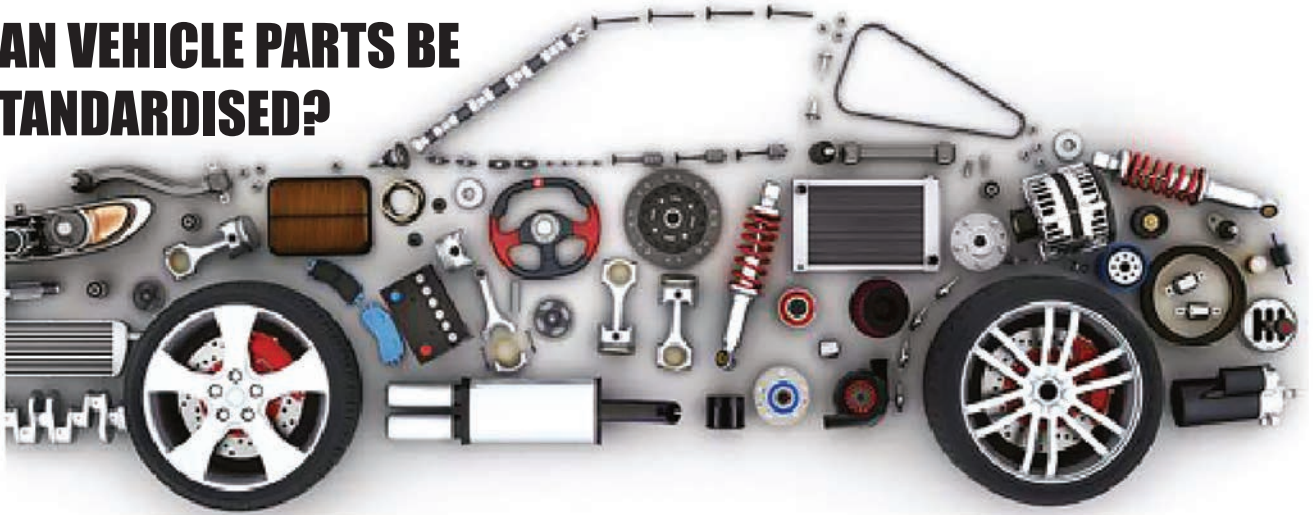
Jeremy Locke, Locke and Partners Managing Director, demonstrated how the BSI uplifts capacity planning.



Carl Roy, Axalta Strategic Account Manager, EMEA, was on hand to present AI solutions for body shops in a breakaway session during the market day.

PARTS

CAN VEHICLE PARTS BE STANDARDISED?



China has long standing problems with the private investment property market being directly linked to vast over capacity in the domestic automotive manufacturing sector; as the domestic market enters its fourth consecutive year of vicious discounting.

Hence the rush to keep production rolling, with a flow of Identikit SUV “new” models just to keep paying for loans on excess manufacturing capacity. A shipload of vehicles landed in Europe is demonstrably more profitable than if sold in the China domestic market – in spite of import duty increases.

So, what are the biggest problems for motor insurer underwriting and claims?

*More models and with even more variations chasing fewer sales per model compared to the ones they replace.

What are the most valuable bits of electrified powertrains?

Whereas internal combustion engine health can be determined by use of a few parameters due to the century of knowledge each parameter represents, some of which read across to electric powertrains (lubricant technology for example), the number of unknowns, the lack of data, is more marked with electrified powertrains – a situation rapidly correcting as more vehicles generate more information. In the same way, real-world battery capacity loss understanding is improving too.

The highest value parts, the easiest to assess in terms of remaining service life are the power control electronics, the traction motor and transmission.

In the near-term traction batteries remain the biggest risk for repairers and insurers. Quantifying how much life is left in a used battery pack is a challenge given it is difficult to manage each cell thermally. Hence the HV traction battery is built with cells with as close to identical performance as possible, so the degradation is uniform and the risk of overloading any single cell are minimised.

Identifying damaged or defective HV traction battery components prevents cell level imbalance that might initiate thermal runaway, which drives the needs to repair or refurbish assemblies.

The cost of a 100kWh battery should be around US\$7 200 for the most part. Common li-ion electrolyte, anode and cathode cell combinations, which can retail for anything upwards of \$28 000, newer and better battery technologies cost much more until production volumes increase.

Insurers know there isn't a lot of quality information to use if the pack should be replaced or repaired – also known HV traction battery repairers are not yet common either.

The packaging of the HV traction battery, especially on a battery electric vehicle (BEV) or a range-extender electric vehicle (REEV), is super critical in terms of:

- Height, since the sides are defined by the engineered allowable intrusion for the Euro NCAP side impact tests.
- The front is defined by the engineered impact load transfer for the Euro NCAP front impact tests.

- The cabin height is defined by the 95th percentile audit.
- The underside is defined by the ground clearance line.
- The rear is defined by engineered load transfer from type approval and internal manufacturer impact test standards.

The HV traction battery is literally boxed in. Addition of full-length skid plates is possible if there is some latitude on the ground clearance line, so as the skid plate contacts and bends, it is spaced to prevent pressing into the battery it's trying to protect.

Solid state and/or solid electrolyte batteries are full of promise in terms of energy density and resistance to internal shorting, but the technology has been “just around the corner” for at least a decade.

When it does finally appear, it is likely not to be cheap, nor significantly safer than a well-built and well-operated conventional lithium-ion cell pack.

For every one of the above reasons, the larger HV traction batteries remain platform specific and are likely to remain so for some time, until batteries can exceed the volumetric stored energy density of petrol or diesel. Unified cell formats might be possible, but the chaotic approach going on now is likely to be with us for 10 more years.

What is the European Commission doing about this?

The EU27 Commission were really rattled by Dacia Spring, which was originally engineered in India to become Kwid, then turned into a BEV by the Renault-Nissan team in China, by exporting the cars back to Europe once completed. A China built BEV sold by an EU manufacturer with BEV mandates set by the EU27 Commission.

The conundrum. How to keep trade, prevent import of complete vehicles but not upset China.

The EU27 Commission finally published at the third attempt as a definite maybe to start discussions in March 2026. Once again, the EU27 carbon credit trading scheme features, leading to all sorts of tiered effects and taxes.

As those discussions roll on, the wave of product coming in from China gets bigger every single day. The manufacturers in the EU27 and UK do not agree with what should be done, but all are aware right now that the main source of all the parts and material required to make electrified powertrains mostly emanate from China.

There is so much pressure to move supply of processed raw materials and finished products from China, but time is against the rest of the world, given China has a massive, massive manufacturing capability right now.

Unifying automotive engineering is not going to happen very much even within a single vehicle manufacturer. While we get some wins via platforms used across different brands, but collision repair is going to deal a significantly increased variety of models within so effect shorter life cycles... unless we can prevent that.

Isn't repair a better ecology solution to just throwing whole vehicles away?



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TECHNICAL TIPS

IDENTIFYING AND FIXING COATING DEFECTS

Defects are an unavoidable challenge in the automotive refinishing industry. Coating imperfections can arise from various factors, including accidents, exposure to harsh substances, poor application methods, or incorrect paint formulation. By helping you recognise and minimise these issues, you can consistently achieve high quality results. Reducing defects also leads to improved efficiency, less rework and most importantly, greater customer satisfaction.

Here are four examples, their causes and how to prevent them, as well as how to fix the problem.

Clearcoat adhesion loss

Loss of adhesion of the clearcoat from the basecoat.

Cause

- Excessive film thickness of basecoat.
- Intermediate and final flash-off times of the basecoat were too short.
- Wrong mixing ratio for clearcoat and activator.

Prevention

- Proper flash-off times between coats, basecoat and before applying clearcoat.
- Apply proper film thicknesses of all layers.
- Mix clearcoat correctly.
- Follow system advice as per the technical data sheets supplied.

Remedy

- Sand, isolate if necessary and refinish.

Loss of adhesion on plastic parts

Loss of adhesion of the refinish system and a plastic part substrate. This defect is often noticed some time after the painting took place.

Cause

- Improper cleaning, drying or preparation – failure to remove mould-release agents.
- Incorrect treatment.
- Wrong identification of substrate.
- Failure to use proper sealer/primer.
- Failed to use proper/recommended topcoat system.

Prevention

- Clean and degrease the plastic part properly.
- Identify the type of plastic substrate and follow advised system.
- Use suggested sealer/primer using the correct mixing ratio of activator, flexible additive and thinners.
- Apply sealer/primer to recommended film build using suggested viscosity.
- Use topcoat as advised for type of plastic substrate to be painted.
- Where suggested, use a suitable adhesion primer for the type of plastic substrate being finished.

Remedy

- Remove all layers from the substrate.
- Refinish using suggested preparation and paint system for type of plastic substrate to be painted.

Bleeding

Also known as bleed through, staining or stains. Original finish colour or peroxide hardener for polyester body filler seeping through the topcoat, causing a discoloration of the new finish.

Cause

- Reaction of pigments from the original finish with solvents of the coat which has been applied on top of it.
- Old finish not well sealed.
- Contamination – usually in the form of soluble dyes or pigments on the older finish before it was repainted. This is true with older shades of red.
- Too much hardener used in the polyester putty or filler.
- Insufficient mixing of the polyester putty or filler.

Prevention

- Test old finish applying a coat of the colour on a small area if bleeding is likely to occur; if so, apply sealer.
- Use only the recommended quantity of hardener when mixing the polyester putty or filler.
- Check quantity of hardener; mix by weight or use a dispensing machine.
- Mix all putties or fillers thoroughly.

Remedy

- Remove polyester and re-do repair.
- Sand, isolate the original finisher with sealer and reapply the topcoat.

Chipping

Small chips of a finish losing adhesion from the substrate, usually caused by impact of stones or hard objects against the vehicle's finish. While the refinisher has no control over local road conditions and can't help the prevention of these happening – they can take steps to minimise their effect if they know beforehand that these conditions will exist.

Cause

- Stones and other hard objects hitting the vehicle finish at high speed.

Prevention

- Use a flexibilised primer surfacer within your refinishing system.
- Activated basecoat improves chip resistance.

Remedy

- Repair area affected by chipping with a flexible system. Areas to pay special attention to are the bonnet, leading edge of roof, lower side areas and around wheel openings.





OCTORAL

DISCOVER CONTINUOUS INNOVATION

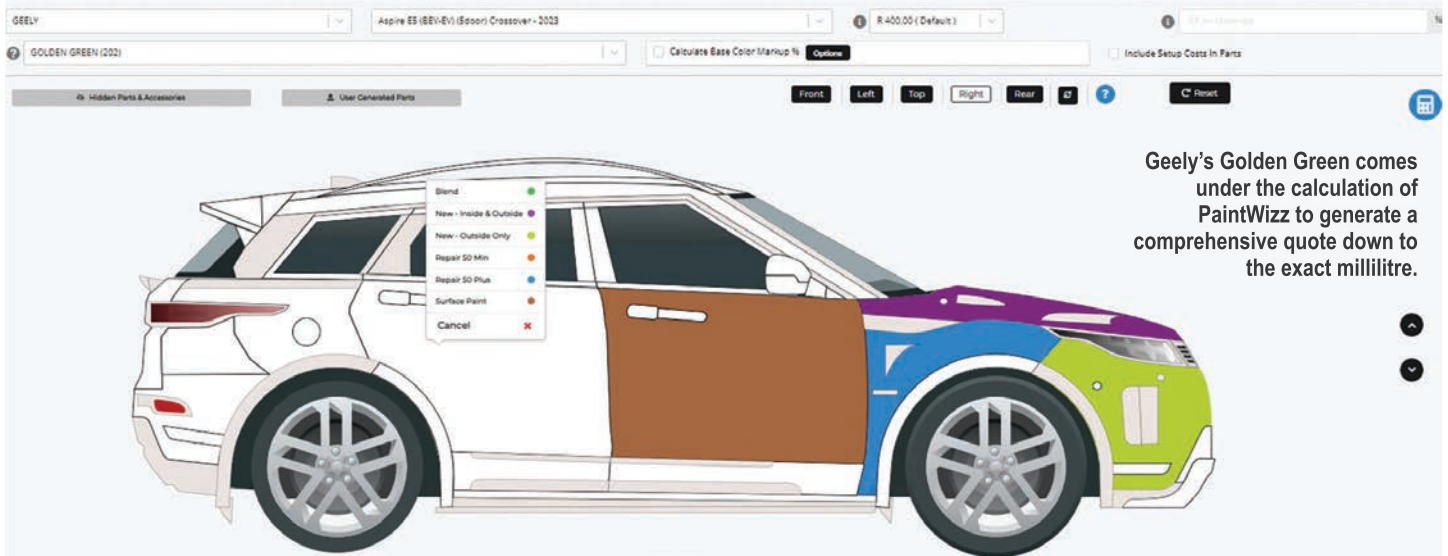
Octoral is a technologically progressive market leader, constantly keeping ahead of industry trends and future vehicle, material and colour challenges. This spirit of innovation permeates every aspect of Octoral's work, from enhancing refinish system reliability and efficiency to introducing advances in digital colour, training and support.

Octoral develops advanced solutions for a more productive business.

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COATINGS COSTS



PRODUCT PROFILE

PAINTWIZZ REMOVES PAINT QUOTE GUESSWORK WITH SCIENTIFIC SOLUTIONS

PaintWizz delivers calculated repair quotations to avoid hit and miss estimates on fast rising paint refinish costs. It is an accepted system that has scientifically proven solutions behind it. Insurers are increasingly recognising and adopting the system based on factual data and proven results. It also allows for much greater transparency between estimators and assessors. Gradually PaintWizz will help eliminate uncertainty and inconsistencies when it comes to calculating paint on any repair job.

For a collision repair business, one of today's critical costs relate to paint and consumable material increases where cost estimates all too often fall far short of actual repair costs. It is however just as important to ensure adequate labour hours are allowed to conduct a quality repair – these processes don't just happen, but must be performed by qualified and trained staff. Make sure you get the hours you need and compare PaintWizz to your actual job clocking for productivity analysis.

Many estimators and assessors don't have a proper mechanism to keep track of these costs or the time to do a proper analysis, often resorting to guesstimated averages.

With daily updates, PaintWizz incorporates the latest vehicle models and colour variants and takes into consideration fluctuating fuel prices, making it easy for all parties to keep up to date with real-time pricing.

The system is colour specific and therefore excellent to identify and calculate for more expensive colours, but the real value is in ensuring fair compensation on every repair in a quick and hassle-free manner, strengthening the relationship between body shops and insurers through fair, scientifically calculated paint pricing from the heart of the PaintWizz system.

Ryno Opperman, head estimator at Alberante ARC and PaintWizz partner says: "PaintWizz's online revolutionary costing tool is setting a new era of transparency and precision".

Each quote delivered is designed to achieve unparalleled accuracy in the marketplace. A special offer that includes 20 free quotes will take you 10 minutes to sign up. At a cost of just R25 to R40 a quote, the financial benefit of knowing actual paint costs are simply too big to ignore.

For more information call Ryno on 082 698 7164, or visit www.paintwizz.com



PAINT REPAIR QUOTE

Create User: rymo@alberante.co.za

Created: 18 May 2026

Job Card / Description:

GOLDEN GREEN Aspire E5 (BEV-EV) (5door) Crossover 18-05-2026 09:58

Vehicle Registration:

Color: 202 - GOLDEN GREEN

Insurer:

Make & Model:

GEELY Aspire E5 (BEV-EV) (5door) Crossover

Material:

R 9 990,15

Labour: R 6 025,60

Total Cost:

R 16 015,75

Part count: 5

Parts

	Toner Vol.	Labour	Material	Total
1. Bonnet (New - Inside & Outside)	Base Coat: 483 ml.	R 1 587,39	R 3 628,30	R 5 215,69
2. Left Front Fender (Blend)	Base Coat: 39 ml.	R 386,92	R 349,18	R 736,10
3. Right Front Fender (Repair 50 Plus)	Base Coat: 97 ml.	R 975,75	R 934,54	R 1 910,29
4. Front Bumper Cover (New - Outside Only)	Base Coat: 353 ml.	R 1 274,56	R 2 664,69	R 3 939,25
5. Right Front Door (Surface Paint)	Base Coat: 284 ml.	R 880,98	R 1 805,61	R 2 686,59
Parts Total		R 5 105,60	R 9 382,32	R 14 487,92
Repair Setup Cost	Base Coat: 30 ml.	R 920,00	R 607,83	R 1 527,83
Total		R 6 025,60	R 9 990,15	R 16 015,75
Recommended Mix Volumes	Base Coat: 1286 ml.			



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PROFILE

**CAELEIGH PAWSON,
AN OPTIMISTIC
INFLUENCE IN
COLLISION REPAIR**

story by Claire Macfie
pics by Jay Groat

Caeleigh Campbell Pawson didn't set out to build a career in the motor industry. In fact, her early ambition was to become a hairdresser — a career her father strongly discouraged believing she'd spend too many hours on her feet. Ironically, the industry she ultimately chose proved far more demanding.

Today, as Operations Manager at Sanrose Motors, Caeleigh has spent more than 20 years immersed in the world of panel beating and vehicle repair — an industry that was, in many ways, part of her from a young age.

Raised in Johannesburg South, Caeleigh grew up surrounded by the trade. With her father owning two panel shops, Caeleigh was exposed early to the realities of the trade. She began at the ground level — working in reception, client liaison, vehicle assessments, and even spending time on the workshop floor. There were no shortcuts — only long hours, practical learning, and a drive to understand every aspect of the business.

At just 22 years old, her life changed dramatically when her father was seriously injured in a motorbike accident, leaving him unable to continue working. Overnight, Caeleigh found herself responsible for running two workshops in different locations.

"It was one of the toughest periods of my life," she reflects. "I had to learn quickly, adapt and push through challenges I wasn't prepared for."

Despite the pressure, she persevered — supported by loyal staff, mentors, and the resilience her father had instilled in her. She had grown through experience. Soon after, she took an even bolder step: opening her own panel shop and becoming one of the first women under the age of 30 to receive a government grant.

But for Caeleigh, success was never only about business. Her true passion has always been people. "I've always believed that leadership is about uplifting people, not just building a company," she says.

It is her humility and ability to learn, as well as ask for help from her team and peers, that has created her leadership style. She is well respected by the company team and is a competent person in her own right. She hasn't followed a traditional study path but has learnt everything she knows firsthand. The classroom doesn't teach problem-solving, people skills and most importantly gut instinct. This "know-how" is only developed through tons of hard work and being hard at work consistently.

That belief is evident in her role at Sanrose Motors, where she

has helped shape a business known not only for technical excellence, but for forward-thinking innovation. Under her leadership influence, Sanrose has embraced the future of mobility — positioning itself as a leading electric vehicle repair facility at a time when the industry was still finding its footing.

Her journey, however, has not been without personal loss. In 2016, Caeleigh lost her father unexpectedly — a devastating personal and professional blow. "He was my mentor, my guide, and my biggest influence," she says. "Losing him shook everything."

In time, she found renewed purpose. New opportunities within the industry allowed her to expand her leadership role and shift her focus from working in the business to working on it — developing systems, strengthening operations, and driving long-term growth.

Along the way, several mentors helped shape her path by challenging and supporting her growth, while helping her develop into the leader she is today. "My number one mentor will always be my father Gavin Pawson. He taught me everything — the fundamentals, the discipline, and the grit it takes to get the job done. He showed me how to roll up my sleeves, how to push through, and to take pride in the work we do. From skill and dedication to drive and resilience — he laid the foundation for everything I am today. I am very grateful for those men who saw something in me and who took the time to guide and nurture me when I needed it most. Each of these mentors shaped my mindset as well as my resilience and the way I lead today."

Today, Caeleigh is deeply passionate about mentoring others, particularly young people and women entering the industry. "I want people to know there is space for them here," she says. "This industry can change lives if you're willing to work for it."

"The environment you create has a real impact on how people feel," she explains. "It's not just about the repair — it's about the experience."

Looking ahead, her vision is clear: to contribute to a stronger, more progressive motor industry — one that embraces innovation, prioritises people, and continuously raises its standards with smarter systems, stronger leadership, and a more people-focused future for the sector.

For Caeleigh, legacy is not measured in buildings or business success alone. "It's about the people you help grow along the way. That's the impact that truly lasts."



Never settling for less and developing the potential within her team is what Caeleigh makes look easy as she goes about maintaining operations at Sanrose Motors.

BRAND PROFILE

AWARD-WINNING FINISH SHOWCASES POWER OF PRECISION AND PARTNERSHIP

A shared passion for automotive customisation has propelled the Naidoo family from hobbyists to award-winning competitors on South Africa's biggest custom car stage.

Their journey culminated in a standout victory at Camp Fest 2026, where their meticulously finished vehicle earned Best Paint on the Day, a testament to craftsmanship, collaboration, and premium refinishing technology.

The family's custom workshop, Pre-Paid Utilities World, was established to bring all aspects of vehicle builds in-house, ensuring complete control over quality and execution.

Central to this approach was the use of Glasurit 100 Line, BASF's premium waterborne paint system, renowned for its colour accuracy, efficiency, and exceptional finish quality. The vehicle underwent a full transformation inside

and out, including a complete colour change from blue, and was finished with PC30 clear coat for superior depth and durability.

The project was supported by BASF Coatings Services (Pty) Ltd, with technical guidance provided by the Durban team under the leadership of Regional Manager Sanjeev Kataroo.

Senior Technician John Peter "Pipes" Gilbert assisted with the paint application, ensuring precision, consistency, and an exceptional final finish throughout the build.

Reflecting on the achievement, Sanjeev commented: "We are passionate about the Glasurit brand in Durban, and it is incredibly rewarding to see our customers' excitement when they achieve recognition at a prestigious car competition that takes place once a year in South Africa."

Shop owner Poobalan Naidoo praised the collaboration and technical support received throughout the build: "On behalf of the team at Pre-Paid Utilities World, I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation for everything that you and your team have done regarding our car build."

"The exceptional quality and skill demonstrated made it possible for us to work effortlessly as one combined team. Thank you once again, and we hope to see you soon."

The success at Camp Fest 2026 highlights how expert application, premium coating solutions, and strong partnerships can deliver show-winning results, setting a benchmark for excellence in South Africa's competitive automotive customisation industry.

The team that made it all happen, back left to right: Mikail, Workshop Assistant; Deon Sarjoo, Workshop Manager; Kershen Baroon, Asset Manager; Yuver Kusiah, the Sound and Interior Designer; and Nathaniel Rajesh, Business Co-owner and Chief Designer of Pre Paid Utilities World.

Front left to right: Kerston Diedrisk, Bulldog Representative, with John Peter "Pipes" Gilbert, Senior Technician, along with Brendan Duval, Technicians from BASF Coatings Services, and Vusi Jobe, Senior Mechanic.



Glasurit Show-Winning Finish

Premium paint technology engineered for perfection.

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CELETTESA

WHAT'S HOT?

THE VORTEX RG1
FROM CELETTE

In an increasingly competitive refinishing environment, where cycle times, energy efficiency and finish quality are expected time and time again, the introduction of the Vortex RG1 spraybooth by Celette South Africa signals a deliberate return to fundamentals. These are, build it properly, build it to last, and support it long after installation with its flagship specifications.

That philosophy has long underpinned the Celette SA name. With more than three decades of supplying OEM-approved equipment into the Southern African collision repair sector, the company has built a reputation around durability, engineering integrity and aftersales support that workshops can rely on.

At the core of the Vortex RG1 proposition is component quality. Celette has focused on specifying proven, industrial-grade elements throughout the structure. From the structural panels to the airflow system, the emphasis is on rigidity and longevity. This is not a booth designed for light-duty throughput, it is engineered for consistent, high-volume use, where thermal stability, airflow consistency and contamination control must remain predictable over time.

"Critically, the heat exchange system reflects this same thinking drawing from established Celette booth design principles, stainless steel heat exchangers and robust burner systems that are specified to ensure long-term resistance to thermal fatigue and corrosion," says spokesman Richard Gagic.

The Vortex RG1 is offered with both diesel and LPG gas heat exchanger options to accommodate shops preferences with energy efficiency playing a key part of the booth's performance. By engineering the booth to accommodate either system without compromising performance, both configurations retain the same focus on energy efficiency.

The touchscreen digital interface is designed to automate and monitor critical paint booth functions these features include: Automated environmental control: The system provides automated management of temperature and pressure, ensuring consistent conditions for both spraying and drying cycles.

Job analysis and reporting: The software includes tools for time and cost analysis per job, as well as broader monthly or yearly

performance analytics.

Operational monitoring: Users can track filter usage directly through the interface, receiving alerts when maintenance is required.

Remote accessibility: The control panel often includes a web server, allowing the booth to be operated or monitored wirelessly via mobile devices, tablets, or laptops.

The user-friendly digital colour touchscreen booth management system allows users to customise booth settings to optimise operations and deliver stable curing temperatures efficiently and economically which is essential for drying today's modern paint systems where heat consistency is essential for their hard-baked glossy finishes.

Spraybooth design is ultimately about airflow management with high-volume, balanced airflow required to remove overspray, maintain visibility and ensure a contamination-free finish – all while supporting safe working conditions. The Vortex RG1 addresses this through a carefully engineered ventilation system that prioritises uniform air distribution and effective extraction which translates to seamless finishes, reduced rework and improved throughput.

With a long history of service, maintenance and technical back-up, Celette SA's long-standing presence in the region is supported by dedicated training facilities and ongoing customer support, ensuring that equipment continues to perform.

Customer testimonials reinforce this point, with repairers highlighting decades-long relationships and consistently strong aftersales service as a key reason for continued loyalty and in an industry where downtime equates directly to lost revenue, that level of backup is a necessity.

The Vortex RG1 refines it focusing on the elements that matter most: energy efficiency, robust construction, service and dependable product support. For collision repairers it's simple, invest in equipment that delivers consistent results, stands up to daily use, and is backed by a supplier with a demonstrable commitment to the industry. Celette South Africa's latest offering appears to stay firmly on message: "Engineered to last and supported for the long term."



A contamination-free finish is key and the balanced airflow and removal of overspray is what this booth was designed for. LED lighting is excellent as well throughout the unit.



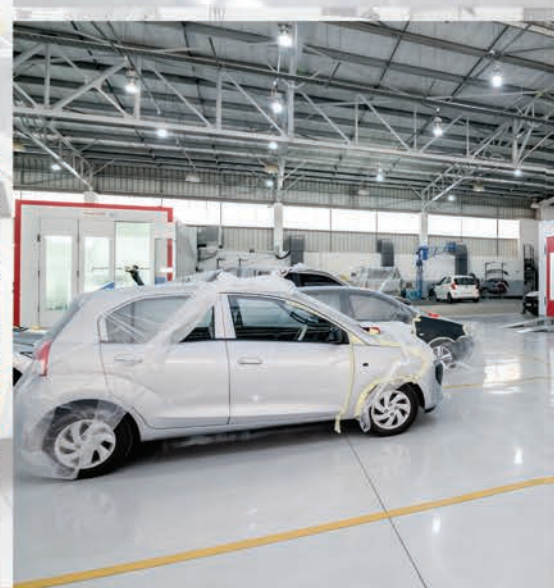
The touchscreen allows users to customise booth settings for optimal operation.



The Vortex RG1 can be powered with diesel or LPG gas heat exchanger options.



Brands Unplugged recently installed a new booth at their facility in Randburg. The company were looking for the highest grade gloss finish for their display units and the Vortex RG1 has delivered just that as well as energy efficiency.



Drive up speed and efficiency with th



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Monti MBX
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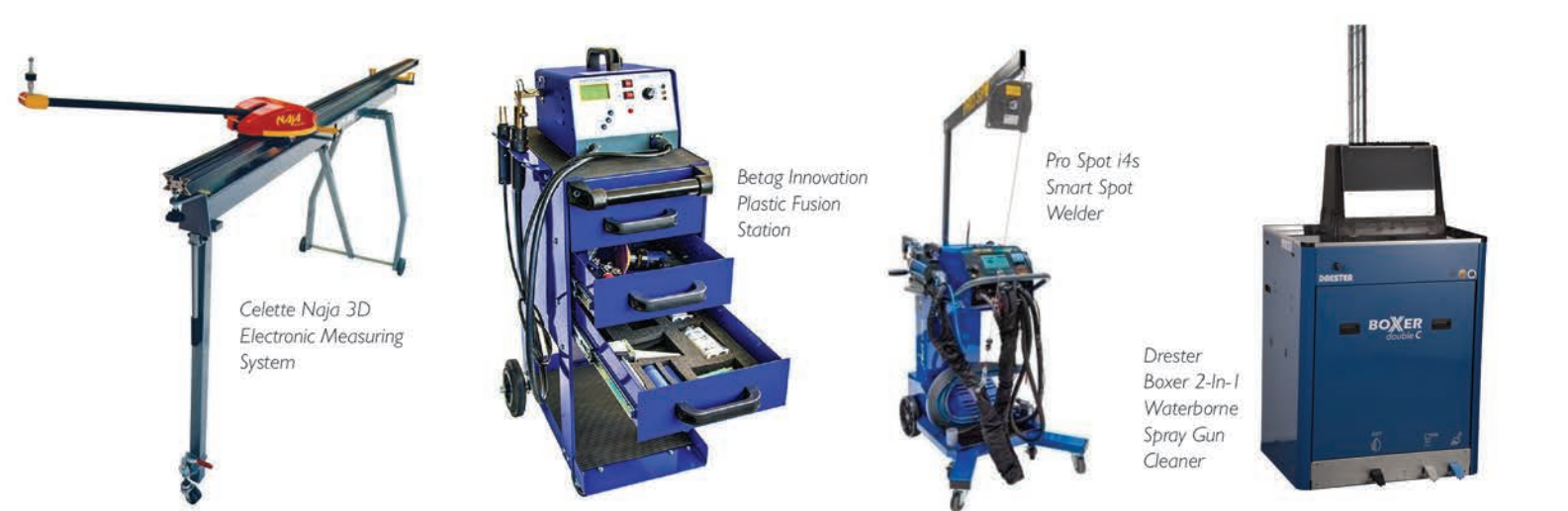
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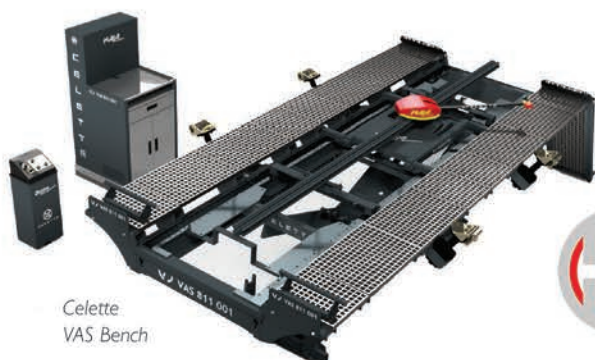
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GUIDELINES

PERFECT POLISHING TIPS

Is polishing the way to achieve a showroom finish on a well-executed repair job? Absolutely it is. However, what looks like a simple process requires a systematic approach in combining proper surface preparation with the right tools and correct technique to remove imperfections without damaging the paint. Key techniques include starting with a clean surface, using a "test spot" to determine the right combination of pad and compound, and maintaining a flat pad position to prevent burning.

Preparation and set-up are key. Remove any dirt by giving the vehicle a good wash. Use a clay bar to remove any hidden contaminants that may be embedded on the surface. To prevent staining, utilise a good quality masking tape to cover the plastics, badges, rubber trim and sharp edges. You will need a bright focused light, or sunshine, to identify swirls, scratches and orange peel. Mark them with masking tape. Work in small sections to prevent the polish from drying out.

Techniques and tips

Always start with a test spot with the least aggressive method – for example, a finishing polish and a light pad – on a horizontal panel to see if it corrects the issue before moving to heavy cutting compounds. Keep the buffer pad flat against the surface to distribute even pressure and avoid any heat build-up that could burn through paint.

Start at a low speed (1-2) to spread the polish, then increase to a medium high speed (4-5) for cutting. The lower speeds will prevent heat build-up. Move the polisher from side-to-side, then up and down with slow, steady movements to give you consistent coverage. Don't let the polisher sit in one spot. Keep it moving constantly, especially on the edges and body lines.

Use a clean, soft micro-fibre towel to wipe off any residue after each section to inspect for results and to prevent cross-contamination of products.

Professional hacks

- **Edge Protection:** Tape off body edges or use a smaller (75 mm) pad to avoid removing too much paint on sharp, thin areas.
- **Pad Maintenance:** Clean your pads frequently with a brush or compressed air to remove accumulated compound and paint residue, which can cause scratches.
- **Wet Sanding Prep:** If dealing with heavy orange peel, use 1500-2000 grit wet sandpaper to level the surface, then follow with 3000 grit to make the compounding step faster.
- **Inspect with IPA:** Wipe panels with a mixture of Isopropyl Alcohol (IPA) and water to remove oils from the compound. This ensures

you are seeing the true, finished result, not just filled-in scratches.

- **Final Protection:** After polishing is complete, apply a wax, sealant, or ceramic coating to protect the newly exposed, delicate clear coat.

Common mistakes

- Too much pressure, high speed and high heat will burn paint.
- If you use dirty, old or dried compound on pads, it will create new and deep scratches.
- If you polish in direct sunlight, it will dry too fast which makes it difficult to work and remove. By skipping a test spot, you may use a harsh compound when a light one would have been a better choice.

Achieving a showroom finish needs a systematic approach of proper surface preparation, the correct tools and technique to remove imperfections without damaging paint.





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Interface cushion pads

SG SPC00129 – 6" (150mm), no holes
SG SPC00130 – 6" (150mm), 6-hole

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Precision sanding. Reliable control

- Quick-change hook & loop system
- Smooth, even sanding performance
- Medium density
- Fits most standard DA sanders
- Dust extraction option available (6 hole)
- High-speed durability up to 12,000RPM

DA sander pads

SG SPC00107 – 6" (150mm) 6-hole, 5/16-24UNF
SG SPC00110 – 6" (150mm) no holes, 5/16-24UNF
SG SPC00120 – 5" (125mm) M14, 8mm spindle

Scratch removal High gloss finish

- Double-sided design for extended lifespan and durability
- Removes scratches and marks from painted surfaces
- Recommended speed: 600 – 1,500 RPM
- Clean after use for best performance

Double sided wool buffs

SG MMDS7 – 7" (180mm) with M14 thread
SG MMDS7-2 – 7" (180mm) with 5/8" thread
SG MMDS9 – 9" (230mm) with M14 thread
SG MMDS9-2 – 9" (230mm) with 5/8" thread

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INDUSTRY NEWS

by Alejandra Gallego



WHAT'S HOT?

AUTOMATION AND PAINT PREP TECHNOLOGY IS HERE TO STAY

Automated paint stirring systems are transforming paint preparation. Manually stirring paint leads to pain points such as inconsistent mixing, and even physical pain points such as CTS (carpal tunnel syndrome) from stirring in circles over-and-over again. That's not to mention material waste from countless cups, stirring sticks, and wasted paint left in the cups. Shops using automated stirring systems have reported up to a 10% reduction in waste from disposables.

Along with wasted materials, manual stirring also leads to inconsistent mixes from paint sticking to the bottom and sides of cups, which can contribute to rework being necessary. High-quality painters deserve to spend their time doing what they do best, painting. Automated stirring systems free up the technician's time for higher-value tasks.

The right automated stirring systems can deliver a fully homogenised paint mix in less than 90 seconds.

A recent field study of multiple global body shops measured the minutes – and found real results:

Let's say the body shop averages six jobs per day. Automated stirring technology saves 3.5 minutes per job, which totals 21 minutes per day. That yields 10 and a half working days each year that are now free to do other value-added activities, perhaps starting another new repair. Plus, because the colour accuracy is better since it is so well mixed, it is calculated that 3.5 days are saved by avoiding rework – which subsequently results in 14 working calendar days saved per year!

An integrated solution

A stirring device integrated with the spraying cup is designed and tested together to deliver consistent results. A bonus is a cup system designed with indented sides. The sides will then act as a "propeller" to completely and fully mix the paint. Also important, having one lid that fits all cup sizes, to make the technician's life easier and cut down on waste. And, to save time, use a cup that connects to the spray gun.

Manual stirring may seem like a minor task, but its impact adds up in a positive way. Recent advancements in automation make manual stirring (and stirring, stirring, and more stirring) a thing of the past.

In today's collision repair landscape, efficiency is no longer just an operational goal – it's a competitive advantage. Shops that embrace smarter tools, advanced materials, and automated processes, position themselves to deliver faster cycle times, higher-quality repairs, and stronger profitability.

TALKING INSURANCE

PROPAGANDA MACHINE



Tim Kelly
Motor Claim Guru

It is difficult to get an accurate indication of what's going on just by watching the media; Noam Chomsky explained it perfectly in his book *Media Control: The Spectacular Achievement of Propaganda*.

In our industry, the Association of British Insurers is, I believe, the largest propaganda machine. It controls the narrative and works tirelessly to influence public opinion through the media.

In recent years it pushed the line that fraudulent whiplash claims increased premiums, and now I hear constantly from the heads of engineering at insurance companies that they cannot pay body shops retail rates as it, too, will increase premiums.

I find it interesting that most of those who say this have little or no insurance training, or even a holistic understanding of how everything works. What they do have in common is "social conditioning" and they all believe that what they are saying is 100% true.

But I can disprove it with facts.

Group ratings

Firstly, when group ratings are worked out, retail cost is used to calculate repair cost to assign that group rating. The premium is linked to the factor used. Insurance as a contract should be paying out the retail cost of repair irrespective of the insurance product – that is the principle of indemnity and any time an insurer negotiates they are doing so to save money and increase their profits. It is never about reducing premiums.

People will call me anti-insurer, but I can prove what I have just said. The ABI used the media to make whiplash claims an issue. But the English don't have especially soft necks. There are more whiplash claims in Italy, while the value of whiplash claims in England is £50 000 compared to £66 000 in Switzerland.

I do not dispute that whiplash claims were an issue, but only 1% were found to be fraudulent. That means 99% of whiplash claims were genuine cases.



Despite this, the insurance industry lobbied for change, promising that reforms would reduce premiums in the UK, by £3 000. Then they reduced that to £2 000, then £1 200, and then £770 but they have failed to prove that they delivered these savings to customers.

Benefit

However, insurers themselves have saved around £48 bn as a result of these reforms, according to the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers, none of which has been passed on to consumers.

In fact, premiums went up from 2017 to 2025.

So, if £48 bn savings do not convert to reduced premiums for consumers, they cannot argue that paying retail rates to body shops will increase premiums.

Insurers save millions per year in having their engineers negotiate cost with independent repairers, but based on the above example, there is no evidence that this reduces premiums.

Insurers could pay every independent repairer retail rates on every job and it would not increase a single premium. There is no excuse.

THATCHAM RESEARCH

THATCHAM LAUNCHES "REAL WORLD" ADAS TESTING



Thatcham Research is ending its partnership with Euro NCAP and will now develop its own ADAS testing programme.

It joined Euro NCAP in 2004 but plans to introduce a more nuanced approach to ADAS testing that measure their safety features in "real-world" scenarios.

The announcement comes just a few months after Euro NCAP revealed it was overhauling its testing procedures to bring them in line with modern vehicle technologies.

Speaking to Autocare, Thatcham Research chief research operations officer Richard Billyeald said, "There is a need, from our point of view, for a little more nuance. The discussion is around how ADAS systems interfere with the job of driving and that is mostly a negative and not a positive thing. When we talk about real-world safety, it's how do we make these systems work when they're supposed to? We want these systems to reflect their capability."

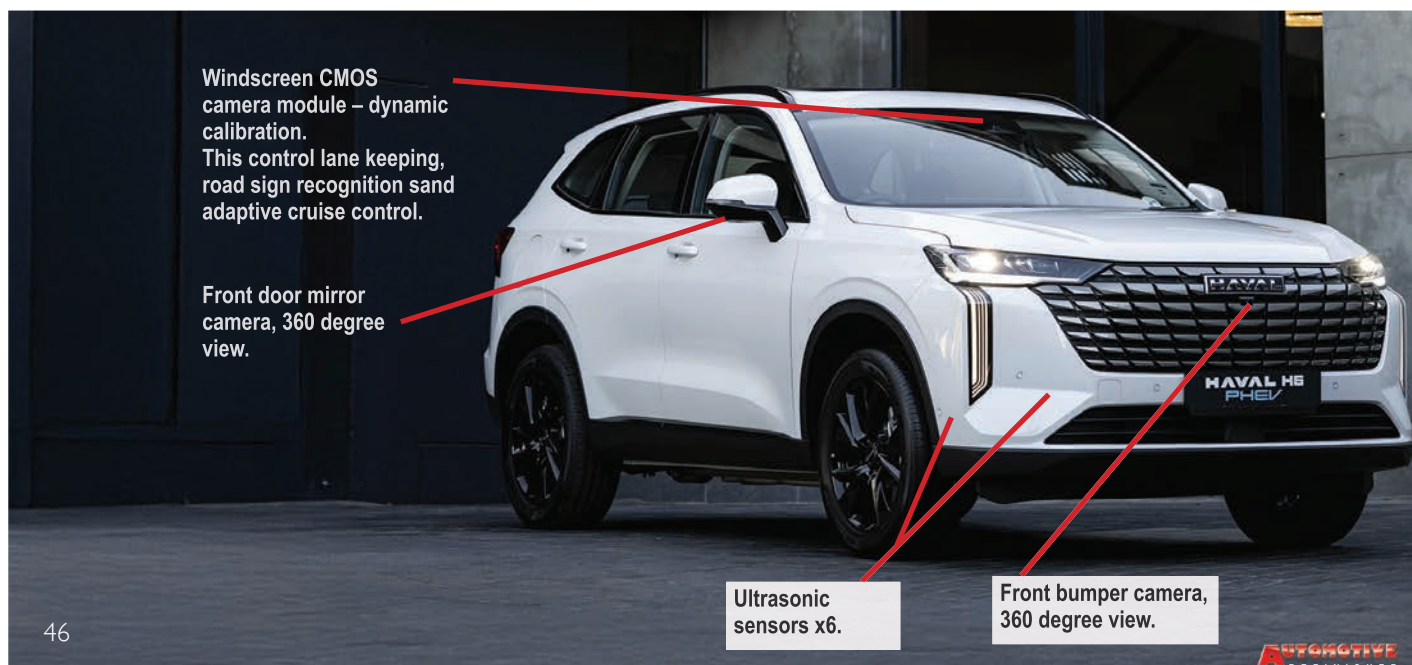
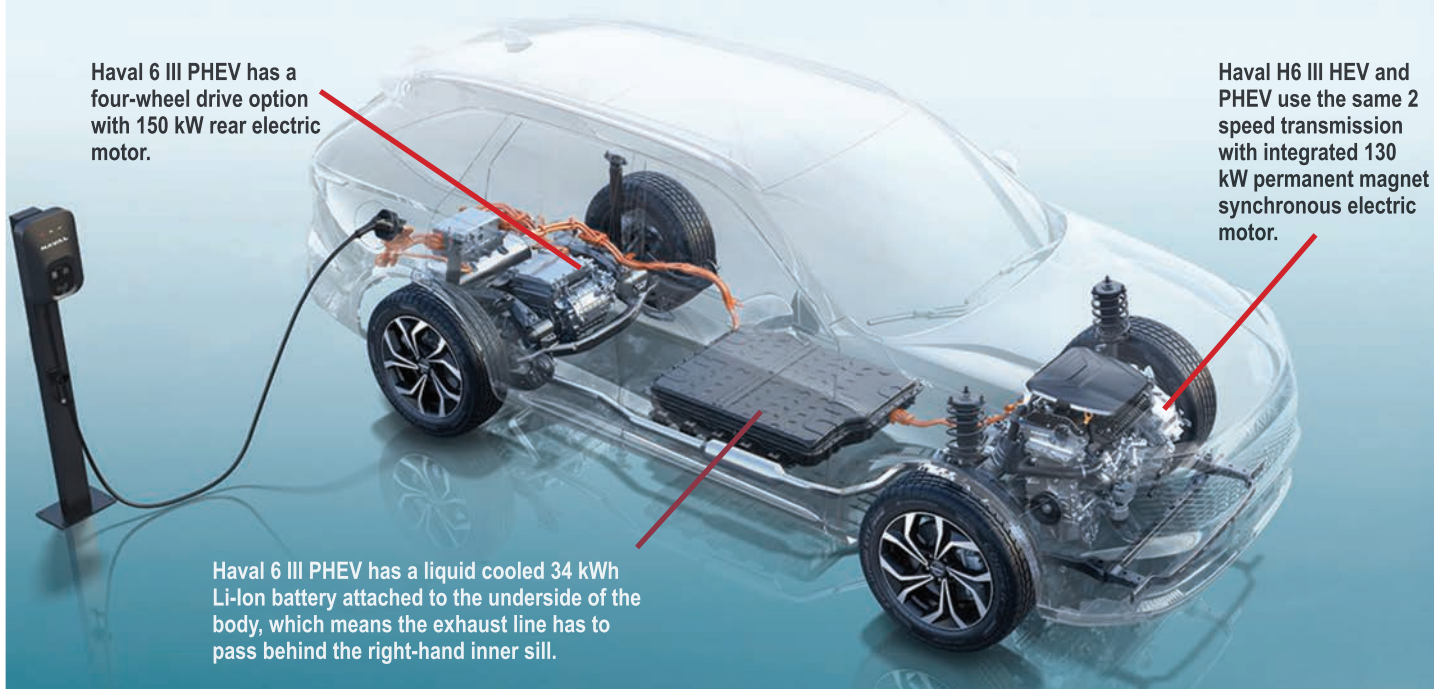
"We want them to stop you from running into someone, but we don't want them to

interfere when they shouldn't. When they do, drivers turn them off and so are not getting the safety benefits and that's the key here. We want a more collaborative driving experience."

A study by Thatcham Research carried out last year revealed that 82% of UK drivers feel safer with ADAS features in their vehicles. However, the survey also revealed that 23% of respondents said that some ADAS features can be distracting, irritating or intrusive during driving.

GWM Haval 6 III

- Great Wall Motors, now simply called 'GWM', launched Haval in 2005 with 'Hover' / 'Hover CUV' which was re-named Haval 3.
- Haval 6 first appeared in 2011 as an SUV and SUV coupé – followed by the second generation in 2017.
- Haval 6 III was launched in 2020, first to have GWM L.E.M.O.N. platform – Lightweight, Electrification, Multi-purpose, Omni-protection, Network.
- It was facelifted in late 2023, with a new Dedicated Hybrid Transmission ("DHT") which was shared with HEV and PHEV.
- Haval 6 III has mechanical front wheel drive powertrain 9 speed dual clutch transmission, and a four-wheel drive option too – with a 2l petrol turbocharged engine producing 170 kW.
- Haval 6 III HEV uses a 1.5l petrol turbocharged engine / DHT front-drive powertrain with an air cooled 1.69 kWh Li-Ion battery located in the boot. Next to the 12V battery. Combined output is 179 kW.
- Haval 6 III PHEV uses the HEV powertrain with a 34 kWh Li-Ion battery. Combined output is 240 kW.
- Haval 6 III PHEV 4x4 adds an electric motor for the rear wheels, to deliver a combined output of 268 kW.
- Empty vehicle weight range – 1550 kg to 1950 kg for the PHEV 4wd

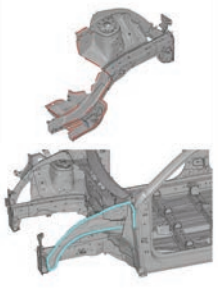


Roof skin detailed, but not the cant rail or roof bows.

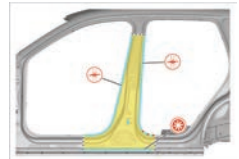
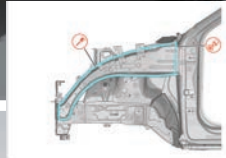
Rear panel detailed, but not the rear chassis leg section.

B pillar outer detailed, but not the reinforcement or inner.

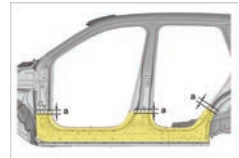
Front chassis leg with strut tower and front upper longitudinal inner serviced as 1 assembly, no sections



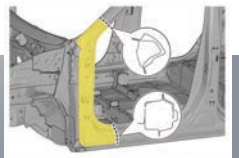
Front upper longitudinal outer – 1 part, no section offered.



Sill outer detailed, but not the reinforcement or inner.

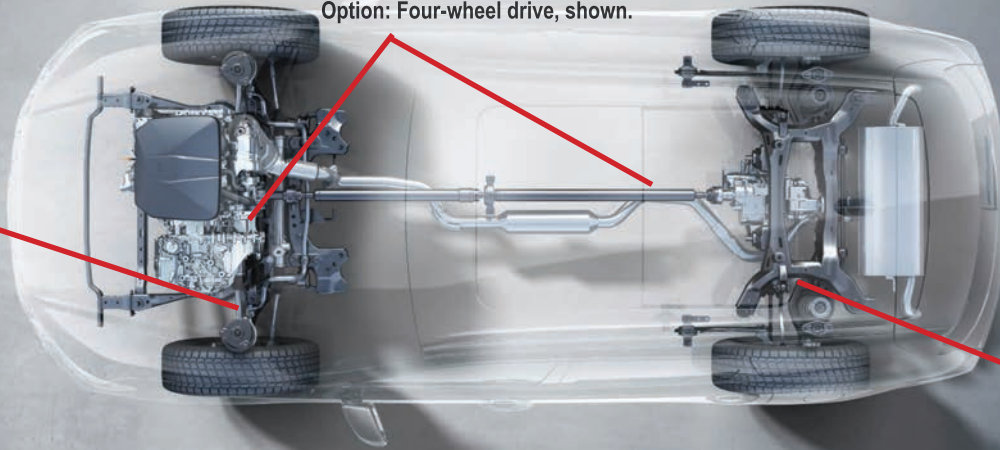


A pillar outer detailed, but not the reinforcement or inner.



Front suspension: McPherson strut, turbocharged, engine driving and Borgwarner 9 speed DCT driving the front wheels. Option: Four-wheel drive, shown.

Mechanical driveline: 2 litre petrol turbocharged engine driving and Borgwarner 9 speed DCT driving the front wheels. Option: Four-wheel drive, shown.



Rear suspension: Single trailing link, single upper transverse link, twin lower links per wheel.

Rear bumper RADAR module, fitted to the bumper skin.

Ultrasonic sensors x6.

Reversing camera, 360 degree view.



SECURITY

SERMI AND HIGH POWER

A new system was launched in Europe to access vehicle manufacturer operated websites that host repair information for their own models. It is called 'SERMI', and that is Security-related Repair Maintenance Information.

The process for approval is similar to security service/locksmiths, which requires verification as well as approval for both the business and the people working in the business. It is a new, additional gateway to get hold of information.

Within Europe there are appointed 'agents' who deal with the registration, verification and approval. In the UK that is the Independent Garage association ('IGA') who operate under the Retail Motor Industry Federation (known as 'RMI' not to be confused with the South African RMI).

The problem

For some time there has been little protection from criminal activity via the diagnostics socket ('OBDII'/'EOBD') where nefarious individuals can do the same things as a legitimate repairer normally to hide pre-existing damage or to mis-represent the mileage covered. Indeed, just 'making the lights go out' on the instrument panel has long been a major reputational problem for vehicle manufacturers, insurers, warranty companies and... the people who pay for the whole show... the public.

Every time new, better, security processes were introduced, they were vehicle manufacturer specific and quirky. This meant unless a shop used vehicle manufacturer approved diagnostic tools, they could find accessing the vehicle data system would involve moving the wreck or recently completed repaired vehicle back and forth to a local manufacturer approved repair shop. Time consuming, expensive and, let's face it, not always successful.

The root cause was and is not all vehicle repair outlets are as capable as a collision repairer; and since their entire activity is not routine maintenance, the components and systems requiring software access are beyond what most maintenance outlets come across. The competence block is seriously frustrating and expensive.

The proposed solution

Enter SERMI. This has been more than 20 years in the making. It

places the collision repairer, upon signing up, with the ability to access repair information direct from the vehicle manufacturer website, along with software access. It does not change the way the vehicle manufacturer websites work.

So, that means: Payment of annual fees for SERMI membership for the business. The approval is valid for five years and includes two independent audits.

Payment of annual fees for SERMI registered employees of the same business. The employee will undergo a security clearance check for criminal activities, which depending on the approval authority is valid for some years. The employee can only access information in connection with their employer's business.

The approved business must sign and return a declaration the company pursues 'legitimate business activities'.

From the IGA: In accordance with the SERMI Standard, this means that the business does not offer services which would 'negatively impact the emissions performance of a vehicle'. This includes: Deactivating or removing pollution control devices or emission control systems, or degrading their performance or concealing their malfunction.

Installing defeat devices (any element of design which senses temperature, vehicle speed, engine speed (RPM), transmission gear, manifold vacuum or any other parameter for the purpose of activating, modulating, delaying or deactivating the operation of any part of the emission control system, that reduces the effectiveness of the emission control system under conditions which may reasonably be expected to be encountered in normal vehicle operation and use).

Installing defeat strategies (an emission control strategy that reduces the effectiveness of the emission controls under ambient or engine operating conditions encountered either during normal vehicle operation or outside the type-approval test procedures).

Deactivating, removing or tampering with devices for the monitoring of the consumption of fuel or electric energy, or tampering with odometer readings.

The SERMI process requires the following information and is kept for up to five years:

- Vehicle registration number

- Vehicle make and model
- Recorded vehicle mileage
- The reason for the repair
- A customer signature (owner and/or the person presenting the vehicle).

The reality: Fees are still due to access vehicle manufacturer websites, along with specific application processes.

Vehicle manufacturer software updates are available, via the paid access to their websites.

Use of third-party diagnostics such as Target, Bosch, Texa et al is possible – they must agree to SERMI as well.

Access to such information is a vital service and source of profitable business for collision repairers, but this has to be weighed in light of the operational on-cost.

Why should we care?

There are several aspects. In Europe right to access vehicle repair information by independent automotive aftermarket businesses in exchange for fees was made law under 'sister' legislation related to Euro 5 emission regulations. This was met with qualified joy by the vehicle manufacturers, who would rather purge as many independents from the 'value chain' as possible – even if they do not have the capacity or in some cases the capability to offer this service. There have been many attempts to subvert this law, which was adopted by the UK when it left the European Union.

SERMI opens up the debate once more. In the short term some vehicle manufacturers use the following logic: While originally the 'diagnostics port' was designed to access the powertrain emission control system, with the correct type of equipment and expertise it can access the entire data system of a vehicle.

Thus, the port should be 'locked' to apart from those who are approved to access it (see SERMI).

This means everything from system resets to software updates – many, many vehicles do not have over air software update capability right now – is in effect locked.

Anyone accessing this who is not SERMI registered is thus some sort of potential criminal.

It's only the beginning

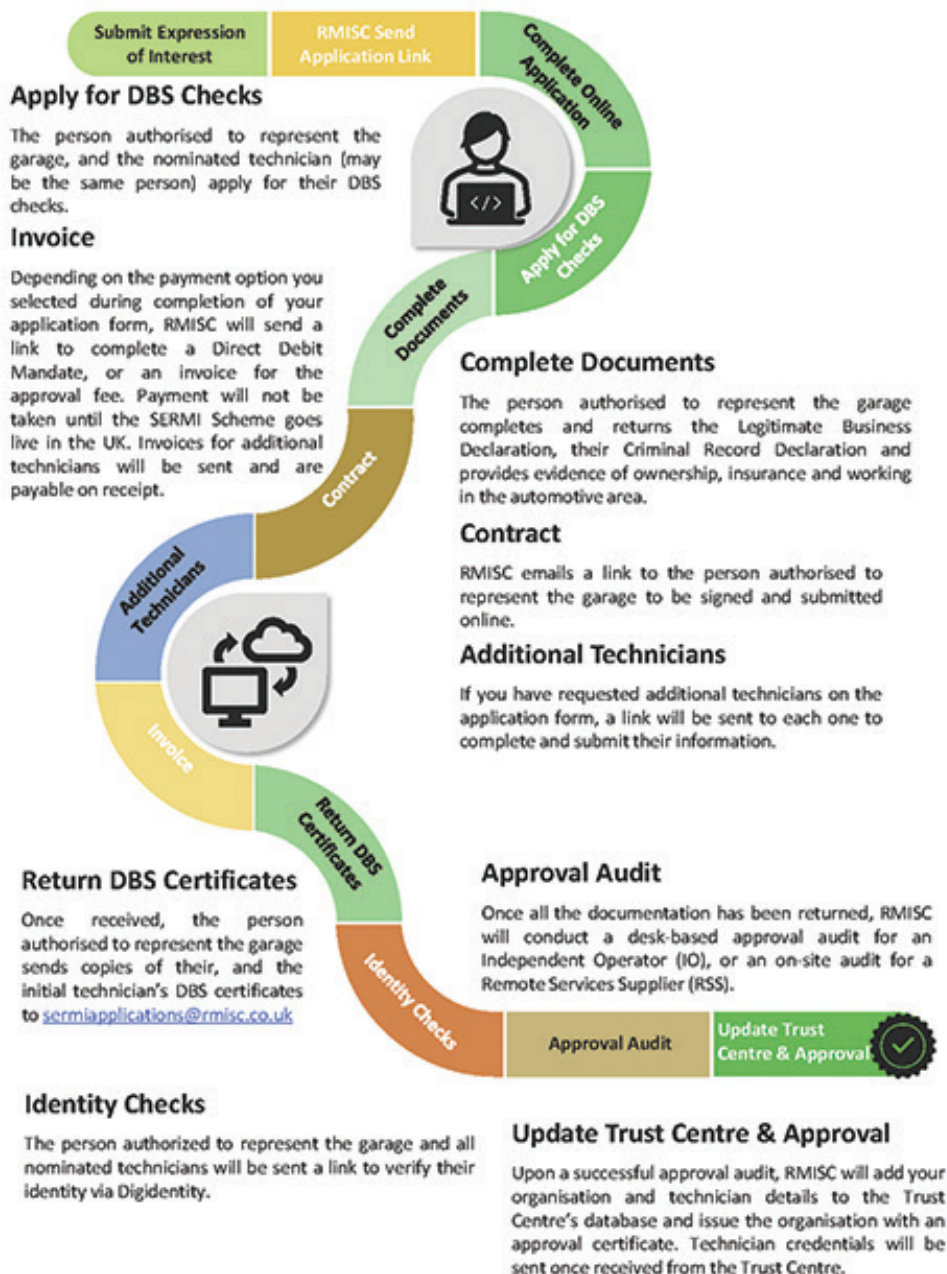
The initiation of SERMI on

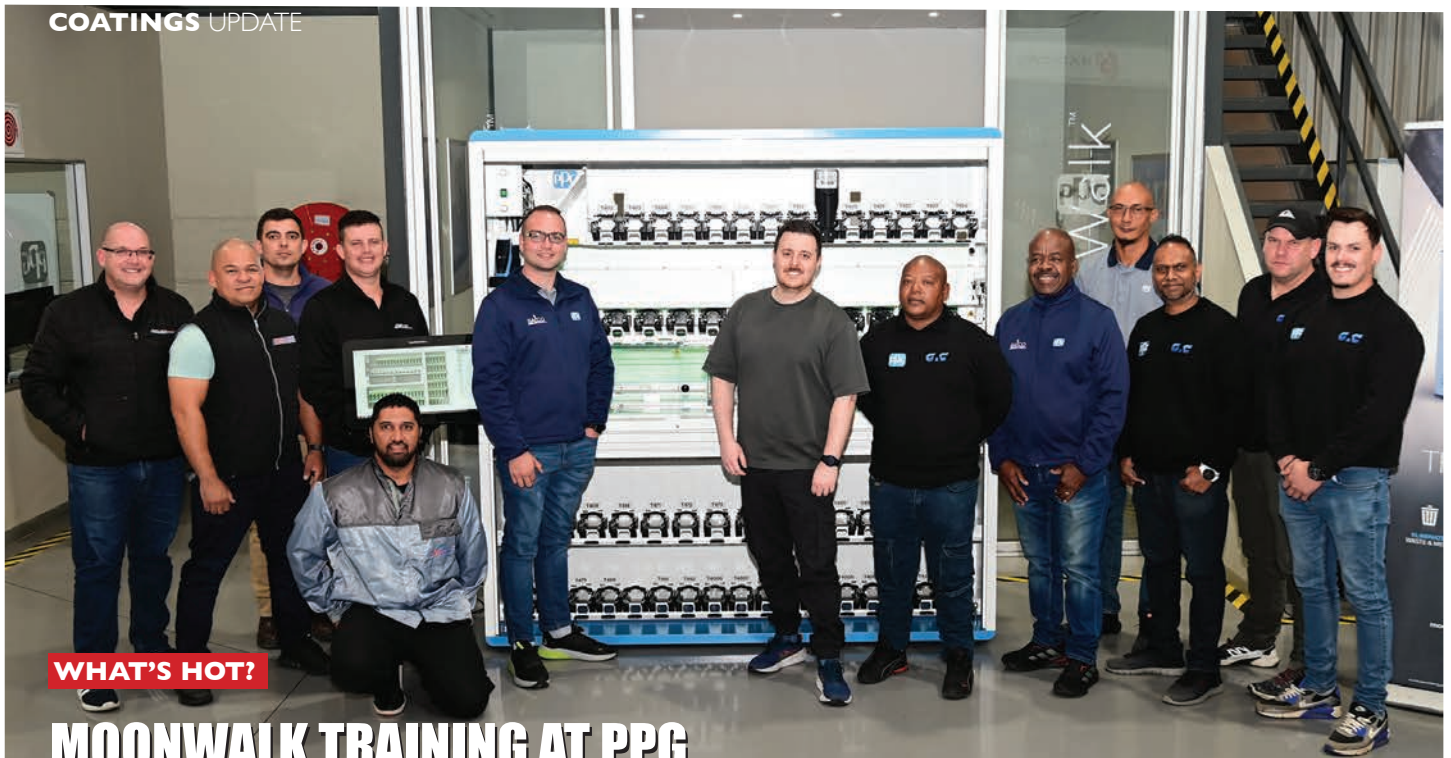
1st April 2026 has initiated the wider aftermarket to become involved in security clearance to access information, quite often for the very first time. In the short term some vehicle manufacturers are stuffing everything they can behind the SERMI front, which subverts 'Euro 5' access rights, and mayhem is underway. Could changing the oil be a 'security' matter?

There is the clash between an automotive business model built on selling bits, often specifically 'unique' (non-standardised), and the electronics business more interested in selling vapourware (converging on a few major standards).

That's the direction of travel. The answer is not very clear, except the make/model/body shape specific parts are narrowing due to ruinous manufacturing costs due to unsustainable market conditions undermining return on investment let alone profit. The question is

The SERMI Application Process





WHAT'S HOT?

MOONWALK TRAINING AT PPG

The automotive refinish industry continues to evolve through the introduction of new products, advanced equipment, innovative techniques, and emerging operational challenges. Ongoing training remains essential in ensuring that technical skills stay current, while also enhancing efficiency, safety, compliance, and overall operational performance.

The MoonWalk® Certification Training Programme, conducted by COROB, consists of a comprehensive two-day, in-person course incorporating both classroom-based learning and practical hands-on training. The programme focuses on mastering and embracing this industry-leading automated paint mixing system designed specifically for collision repair centres, with key benefits including reduced labour time, minimised waste, and improved accuracy.

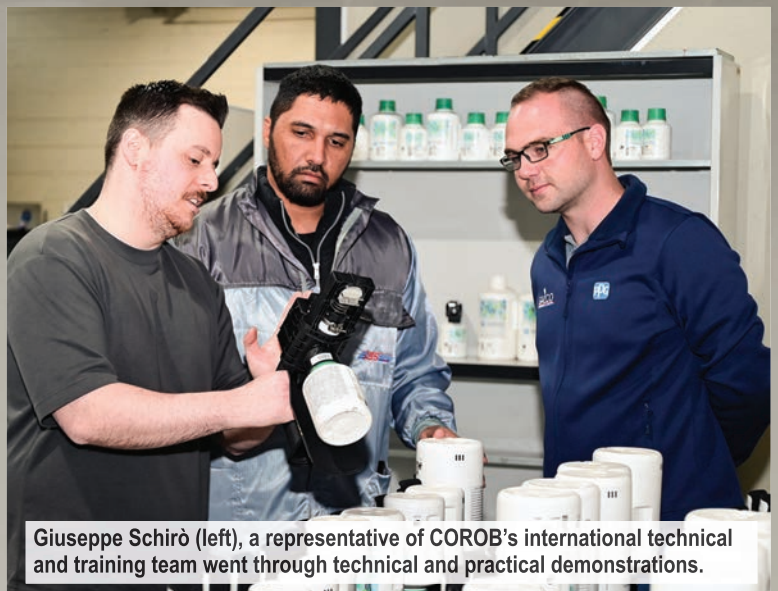
The MoonWalk system contributes towards a cleaner and safer working environment through precise and consistent colour mixing, while significantly reducing the potential for manual mixing errors.

Recently, MoonWalk training sessions were successfully conducted at the PPG Longmeadow Training Centre. The sessions were attended by PPG personnel, together with distributor technical and sales teams. Giuseppe Schiro, representing COROB's international technical and training team, facilitated the programme through detailed technical presentations and practical demonstrations.

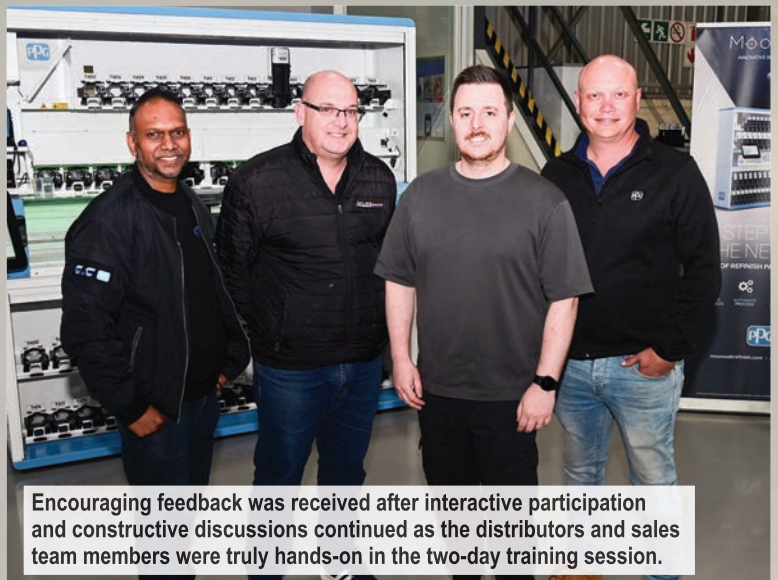
The training sessions delivered valuable technical insight, operational guidance, and an enhanced understanding of the MoonWalk system and its capabilities. Participants remained highly engaged throughout the programme, contributing positively through constructive discussions, interactive participation, and encouraging feedback.

The programme significantly strengthened technical knowledge, operational confidence, and the application of best practises within the workplace environment.

PPG extends its sincere appreciation to COROB and all attendees for their commitment, participation, and contribution towards the success of the training programme.



Giuseppe Schirò (left), a representative of COROB's international technical and training team went through technical and practical demonstrations.



Encouraging feedback was received after interactive participation and constructive discussions continued as the distributors and sales team members were truly hands-on in the two-day training session.



PPG MoonWalk®

Automated Paint Mixing Precision

PPG's automated paint mixing system, *PPG MoonWalk*, replaces manual paint mixing processes to deliver greater efficiency with less wasted product, a cleaner work environment for technicians, and reduced environmental impact.

This revolutionary system features a high-accuracy scale and precision mixing to ensure quality and consistency in every paint mix. Automated processes also help to reduce labor time and minimize human error, which means that *PPG MoonWalk* can significantly boost the productivity and profitability of your body shop.

PPG MoonWalk is part of the PPG LINQ™ digital ecosystem.
Visit PPGLINQ.com for more information.



LINQ™



SAFETY

WHY BATTERY SUPPORT IS CRITICAL

As modern vehicles become increasingly software driven, the importance of proper battery support during diagnostics scans, module programming and ADAS calibrations can no longer be overstated. What was once a quick scan tool connection is now a complex electronic network communication and extended ignition on time. In this environment, battery voltage stability is not just best practice; it is essential to protect vehicle electronics and ensure successful service outcomes.

The hidden electrical load of modern vehicles

When a vehicle is placed in diagnostic mode or prepared for ADAS calibration, it often operates in a state very different from normal driving. The ignition may remain on for long periods while safety systems, cameras, radar modules, power steering, brake controllers, infotainment systems, and body modules remain active simultaneously. Cooling fans may cycle on and off, and network traffic across CAN, LIN and Ethernet systems increases dramatically.

All of this places a sustained electrical load on the battery. Even a healthy battery can experience a rapid voltage drop under these conditions, especially if the vehicle is not running. Without external battery support, voltage is not running. Without external battery support, voltage instability becomes likely, and that is where problems begin.

Why voltage stability matters

Most OEMs specify a narrow voltage range during programming and calibration events, generally centred around the mid-13-volt range. Voltage that drops too low can cause modules to shut down mid-process, while voltage that spikes too high can trigger programming faults or abort procedures entirely. Either scenario can corrupt data being written to a control module. (Although the common reflash voltage setting is 13.9V, depending on vehicle brand the range can be between 13.5V to 14.4V, each OEM requires an exact voltage setting or the reflash will not take) when considering the purchase of a clean power supply it might be wise to consider one with adjustable voltage settings capabilities.

In the worst cases, insufficient or unstable voltage can permanently damage an electronic control unit, rendering it inoperable – commonly referred to as a “bricked” module. Replacing these modules can cost

thousands and may require dealer-only access for setup and coding.

Amperage: The often-overlooked requirement

While voltage specifications are widely discussed, amperage capacity is where many service operations run into trouble. It is not enough for a power supply to reach the correct voltage if it cannot sustain the current demanded by the vehicle.

For many Asian and domestic vehicles, a support unit capable of approximately 60 amps is typically sufficient. However, certain manufacturers – particularly European brands – place a significantly higher demand on the electrical system during programming and calibration. Vehicles from BMW and Mercedes-Benz, for example, often require power support capable of 100 amps or more to remain within safe operating margins.

These higher current requirements reflect heavier module loads, more complex network architectures, and stricter OEM protections designed to prevent data corruption during software updates.

Battery support units vs traditional chargers

A common misconception is that any battery charger can serve as adequate support during scans and calibrations. Traditional chargers are designed to replenish battery capacity, not to act as a stable power source for sensitive electronics.

Dedicated battery support Units (BSUs) or service power supplies are engineered specifically for diagnostic and programming environments. They provide tightly regulated voltage, rapid response to load changes, and low electrical ripple – qualities that are critical when working with ADAS sensors and modern vehicle networks.

Many OEM procedures explicitly require placing the support into a ‘power supply mode’ ensuring the vehicle receives consistent electrical power independent of battery condition.

ADAS calibration raises the stakes

ADAS calibration amplified the need for proper battery support. These procedures often require the vehicle to remain powered for extended periods while sensors are initialised, measured, and synchronised. Any interruption – whether from voltage sag or current limitation – can force recalibration or invalidate results.

Additionally, ADAS systems rely on precise electronic signals. Electrical noise or ripple introduced by inadequate power equipment

can interfere with sensor communication, leading to calibration failures that are difficult to diagnose.

Practical guidelines for shops

While exact specifications vary by manufacturer, some practical guidelines emerge across OEMs:

- Most vehicles require a stable voltage centred around 13.9V during programming and calibration.
- A current capacity of at least 60 amps should be considered a baseline for modern vehicles.
- European platforms and high-content vehicles often demand 70-199 amps to safely support all active systems.
- Voltage must remain stable throughout the entire procedure – even brief drops below acceptable thresholds can cause failure.
- Technicians should always consult OEM service information, but having a capable battery support unit in place ensures those specifications can be met consistently.

Protecting vehicles, shops, and technicians

Proper battery support is not just about avoiding failed scans; it is about risk management. A single voltage related module failure can erase the profit from dozens of successful repairs. More importantly, it can damage customer trust and expose the shop to unnecessary liability.

As vehicles continue to evolve, battery support equipment should be viewed as foundational infrastructure, not an optional accessory.

Conclusion

Modern diagnostics, programming, and ADAS calibrations demand clean, stable, and adequately sized electrical power. Relying on a vehicle battery alone – or on undersized charging equipment – introduces unnecessary risk during some of the most sensitive procedures.

By understanding OEM voltage and current expectations and investing in proper battery support, shops can improve repair success rates, protect expensive electronic modules, and confidently service the advanced vehicles their customers rely on every day.

DID YOU KNOW?

ELECTRIC CARS HAVE BEEN AROUND SINCE THE 1800s

While many consider electric vehicles (EVs) a modern innovation, their origins trace back to the 19th century. In 1828, Hungarian physicist Ányos Jedlik created a small-scale model vehicle powered by a simple electric motor. Between 1832 and 1839, Scottish inventor Robert Anderson developed a crude electric carriage. However, it wasn't until 1888 that German inventor Andreas Flocken built what is often considered the first real electric car, the Flocken Elektrowagen. Today, EVs are experiencing a resurgence as sustainable transportation solutions.



Steal the spotlight!

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BRAND PROFILE

EAZY PAINT AND HENKEL TECHNOLOGY TRAINING DAY

Inside the mobile Henkel training centre, Kiran Ghirao (left) from Henkel, Delia Jackson and Pieter Goosen from Eazy Paint.

The technical and front-line sales team from Eazy Paint recently received an update on world-class seam-sealing and multi-purpose sealant application methods at the company's Pomona distribution hub centre.

Henkel, which operates a state-of-the-art mobile training centre, took time out to offer extended, hands-on training on how to use its top-selling range, including the latest sealant formulation, MS9320.

This user-friendly product offers health advantages, as it is isocyanate-free and based on silicone polymer technology developed by Henkel. It enables any body shop to easily replicate both standard-size beads and very wide stream beads – now commonly seen in modern vehicle storage boots and engine bays. "It is simple to achieve OEM-look seam textures," says Delia Jackson, from Eazy Paint.

Thanks to its fast tack-up time of approximately 10 to 20 minutes when used with professional pneumatic dispensers, it is easy to work

with. The Powerline II gun and the ET Air Gun Multi Press were tested by more than 20 staff and technical sales personnel, consistently delivering professional results. When the Teroson VR20 surface preparation system is used, the one-part sealant also helps to reduce waste.

Rob Ryan from Eazy Paint, says that the Teroson range of world-class sealants is a strong addition to the company's product line-up and mix. It offers a professional solution for achieving high-quality body shop repairs, even on complex underbody applications, as the product is fully brushable.

As a major Axalta refinish importer and technical service supply chain provider, Eazy Paint believes that the full Henkel range of panel bonding and sealants will strengthen its offering and help the team keep pace with ever-changing OEM standards.



Obtaining a wide seam delivery of the multi-purpose sealer is now an easy task to achieve.



Technical training for the entire Eazy Paint technical and sales team was enjoyed by all.

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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

36 Maple Rd, Unit 4 Maple Business Park, Pomona

DUXONE.COM

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HUMAN ASSETS

FROM LAW TO AUTO BODY REPAIR

The collision repair industry is an exhilarating place to be, because it is filled with amazing and colourful people. **Automotive Refinisher** took time out to find out more about one of the up-and-coming young apprentices in the business.

Boitshoko Hlongwane is absolutely in love with small repair through to full restorations. It wasn't always that way. After a law degree took a different turn, her Dad encouraged her to apply for a position as an apprentice at C3 Autobody Repair Academy, and she hasn't looked back. "Honestly, Autobody Repair wasn't on my radar at first. Once I got a taste of it, I knew this was the path for me," she said.

"It definitely hasn't been easy. Adjusting to different mentors and teaching styles was tough. Learning to be precise, detail focused, and deadline driven under pressure pushed me. But I've taken lessons from every good and bad experience."

Boitshoko worked at Revive Autobody Repair and was mentored by Sergio. "He was very knowledgeable while firm," she said. But unfortunately, the company had to close. She is now based at Safana Panelbeaters and is mentored by Solomon, Mokoena and Ayanda. "Each person has a different approach and personality, and they have taught me how to adapt, listen and find the best in each teaching style. They have drilled the importance of logic, detail and discipline."

Her long-term goal is to become a Vehicle Damage Quantifier and eventually own her own body shop. "I would also love to guide other women coming into the trade and if I can inspire one other girl to pick up a plenishing hammer, I've done my job!"

"I believe that my greatest asset to a team is problem-solving under pressure, attention to detail, and teamwork. I've learned to stay logical when things get hectic and to work with all kinds of personalities." And she tackles life in the exact same way.

"Some of the highlights along my journey has been the three years of hard work and completing my first restoration solo. Knowing I'm almost at the finish line with my Red Seal keeps me motivated! This programme pushed me out of my comfort zone in the best way possible. It has groomed me technically and personally. It gave me the tools to restructure myself and take everything I've learned straight into the real world," Boitshoko concluded.

Boitshoko Hlongwane displays a hope and eagerness to learn that is seen in few apprentices. Her thirst for knowledge and ability to grow from the good and tough times, along with her planned goals, certainly promise a great future.





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Ian Schofield at speed in his winning March 77B.

MEMORY LANE

HEAD FOR THE HILLS

The 16th rendition of The Knysna Hillclimb was run on May Day on the outskirts of one of South Africa's most scenic tourist spots. It's the most talked-about motorsport event on the South African calendar, and as usual it drew a sell-out crowd, run in perfect weather over the long weekend that gladdened the hearts of all and sundry.

Classic Car Friday was run for four-wheeled machines ranging in age from 1926 to the year 2000 and over 60 old-timers (the cars, not the drivers) lined up for the flat-out run of about two-and-a-half kilometres up to the Simola Golfing Emporium. Needless to say, a good time was had by all.

Craig Czank and his 1989 Nissan Skyline R32, the very first rendition of Japan's ultimate wolf in sheep's clothing, which looked for all intents and purposes like a four-door sleeper you could buy right here in South Africa. In its heyday it was capable of running very close to Porsche and Ferrari levels of giddy-duo.

Enzo Kuun was one of our top rally drivers in the late 1980s and early 1990s pedaling a fire-breathing, rough-riding Golf GTi to great effect. The Cape Town-based ace regularly finished in the top-three positions in South Africa's premier rally series. Noted for his calm, sunny disposition and his extraordinary speed in one of our most competitive motorsport eras, today Enzo is a successful

businessman and an avid collector of fine classic machinery. He ran his Ferrari 348 to great effect at Knysna, notable for the motorised music he played all the way up the hill.

Ian Schofield is no stranger to the winner's circle in Knysna. The veteran driver, originally from the UK, is a past-winner at Knysna, driving his understated-looking bronze-coloured March 77B single-seater. Powered by one of the most potent naturally-aspirated four-cylinder motors in classic motorsport history, Ian set fastest time of the day, beating out his perennial rival in Knysna, Franco Scribante.

The immaculate Chevron B19 sports racing car fielded by the Scribante motorsport clan is the best-turned out classic racer in the country, thanks to a huge budget enjoyed by Franco and his motorsport syblings in various types of machinery. Franco Scribante is a multiple winner in Knysna and this year the 10 000 rpm two-litre Cosworth Ford engine in the back of his Chevron sounded as thrilling as ever. He just missed out on the top spot-on Classic Car Friday.

At the other end of the horsepower scale, you had John Craig's Nissan Sentra 200 Sti sedan. This 1996 Group N-spec racer was a championship-winning car in its era and John's car is really understated, run in unadorned road-car livery by the likeable engineer-cum-master-driver. John has been racing since the 1970s in



Franco Scribante was the bridesmaid in his 1970 Chevron B19.



Craig Czank in the iconic 1989 Nissan R32.



John Craig's 1996 Nissan Sentra 200STi.



The Classic Car podium.



Rally ace Enzo Kuun in his 1989 Ferrari 348.

one form of motorsport or another, including on two-wheels at his hometown Killarney circuit in the Western Cape. No surprises, he went extremely rapidly on May 1.

Roy Obery's 1979 Porsche 924 GTP Tribute car was one of the early turbocharged machines produced by the Zuffenhausen factory in Germany. Converted to racing-spec by Roy, the standard 924 was a budget Porsche back in the days, and a similar machine was owned in road-going form by South Africa's double motorcycle world champion in 1980, one Kork Ballington!

Rui Campos's Martini-liveried Porsche 911 RSR is a replica of an all-out factory racer. The white projectile ran in World Championship events in 1974 in 3,0-litre naturally-aspirated form

and produced 330 horsepower, enough to dominate the Group 4 category of the championship. Johannesburg-based Rui, whose sons raced very successfully in Volkswagen Polo Cup events, is a man with motorsport in his veins.

Margaret White. And last, but by no means least is Margaret White who pedals an obscure 1967 Mallock Mark 6B. This British club-racing machine ran a ubiquitous Ford engine in its heyday and was very successful fast grass routes level. The Mallock takes huge....errr, skill... to drive quickly and Margaret is unphased by the cutaway flanks of this car which leaves her overalled torso extremely vulnerable at speed. Quick for its day, the Mallock is one of the most obscure and rare machines ever to compete in Knysna.



Roy Obery's 1979
Porsche 924 GTP
Tribute.



Celebrities like Sarel Van der
Merwe (left) seen here with
organiser Ian Shrosbree.



Rui Campos 1974 Porsche 911RSR.



Margaret White's 1967 Mallock Mk 6B, the
oldest single seater in the event.

COLOUR

WHERE COLOUR MEETS SPEED, STRENGTH, AND SUSTAINABILITY



Automotive colour is where emotional design meets materials science. It influences brand identity, purchase decisions, safety perception and even sustainability. In anticipation of International Colour Day on March 21, BASF Coatings highlighted the crucial role colour plays in automotive design, manufacturing and repair. Far beyond aesthetics, automotive colour is a complex, data-driven, and technically precise discipline that requires profound knowledge substrate pre-treatment, the development of different layers that build the final coating and the skill to exactly replicate the status quo of a colour shade even years after its application.

Protecting colour from the very first layer

With decades of expertise in colour innovation, BASF Coatings is well-positioned to create, protect and preserve automotive colour across the full lifecycle of a vehicle. When car owners talk about the colour of their car, they usually refer to the visible, colourful basecoat only. But to make a colour shine, it takes way more than just the pigmentation. BASF Coatings' integrated approach ensures that vehicles also adhere to stringent durability and sustainability standards such as corrosion protection.

"Pretreatment is the invisible enabler behind durable, sustainable automotive coatings. By offering tailored pre-treatment solutions for modern automotive substrates, we create the chemical foundation for corrosion resistance and robust paint adhesion. This first process step is decisive for the long-term performance, durability and sustainability of the entire coating system and the basis to make every colour shine," said Meike Flöck, Head of Global Segment Management Automotive OEM Surface Treatment.

Designing automotive colours for performance and with responsible material choices

The diversity of today's automotive colours is driven by the precise interplay of pigments and effect materials that give each basecoat its distinctive character. At BASF Coatings, this expertise is combined with close collaboration between the global Colour Design team and automotive manufacturers, enabling innovative colour solutions that meet high performance standards while allowing the integration of more responsible material choices – where feasible.

This approach has recently been recognised by leading design and technology institutions. The trend colour REVERENCE DARKNESS of BASF Coatings received the MATERIALICA Design and Technology Award 2025, honouring its use of recycled tyre materials as a carbon black source. In parallel, BASF Coatings was nominated as a finalist for the German Ecodesign Award 2025 with its project "Colours with

Renewable Pigments", demonstrating how bio-based waste streams can be transformed into expressive colours without compromising durability or production reliability. The German Ecodesign Award is Germany's highest state award for ecological design.

"Colours play a vital role in how consumers connect with a vehicle. Across all regions, we see a clear desire for more individual, expressive colour identities, and growing interest in colour solutions that incorporate responsible material choices," said Mark Gutjahr, global head of Automotive Colour Design at BASF Coatings. "As colour designers, our task is to translate cultural signals, technological advances, and emotional needs into colours that not only look compelling but also perform reliably in industrial production over a long period of time. Together with our customers, we develop more than 1 300 colour concepts each year and have around 450 commercialised."

Preserving colour authenticity throughout a vehicle's lifecycle

Once a vehicle is in use, maintaining colour authenticity becomes a key factor for its long-term and sustainable lifecycle. Today's coatings include functions such as UV protection that prevent colours from fading when exposed to sunlight. "In automotive refinishing, we approach colour as a dynamic and evolving element. Every vehicle shade is defined by countless subtle differences that emerge over time, across different repair situations and with varied materials. Our strength is in capturing and digitally replicating these unique nuances, ensuring that body shops can achieve an authentic colour match and restore vehicles to their original appearance – even years after the car first left the factory," said Jane Niemi, Head of Global Marketing.

When it comes to restoring vehicles to their original condition, matching the current colour shade after a repair job or even an entire recolourisation, BASF Coatings provides an online database that gives detailed information on millions of colours and the correct mixing formulas of cars from right around the world. Professional body shops benefit from exact colour data and a state-of-the-art portfolio of high-quality refinishing paint products which exactly match OEM requirements.

Automotive colour is a complex discipline and guiding customers through that complexity has long been part of BASF Coatings' DNA. As the company enters a new chapter under Carlyle's ownership in Q2 2026, it is strengthening its technical expertise, investing in its people and deepening its passion for colour, ensuring it remains a reliable and forward-thinking partner across the entire automotive value chain.

DID YOU KNOW?

THE RED FLAG LAW

When the first motor cars hit the roads in the UK, a law required a man to walk in front of the car waving a red flag to warn pedestrians. Top speeds were capped at 4 mph in the country and 2 mph in town.





LOCAL UPDATE

IRAN ONCE HAD A HUGE NATIONAL MOTOR INDUSTRY...

Iran has been very much a closed-door country to most of the world's population for the past 45 years. One of the little-known facts about this country is the extent of its nationalised automotive industry. Due to sanctions and a focus on nationalisation of industry Iran had developed a strong local industry for the past six decades.

However, these factories have evidently been bombed in the ongoing conflict in the country where industrial infrastructure has been a prime target.

The Iranian vehicle manufacturing industry was ranked the 17th largest vehicle producing country in the world in 2024 and the 1.1 million vehicles it made was 85 000 more than the British motor industry produced that year!

Production in 2025 again amounted to production of more than a million new vehicles, with most of them (75%) being cars, with the next most popular segment being pick-up trucks with a 15% market share.

The country has a vehicle parc of about seven million cars, trucks, and buses and eight million motorcycles, with the latter said to be responsible for 30% of the air pollution in Tehran. Iran has also developed a vast network of component suppliers for both vehicle production and the aftermarket.

The door was opened in July 2024 for the introduction into Iran of used vehicles, mainly from Japan and Korea, but also from some European countries.

The country aims for 80% of its new vehicles to be produced locally, while there is a growing number of Chinese brands importing cars, while some vehicles from well-known brands such as Toyota, Land Cruisers still find their way into the country on circuitous routes from legitimate importers in the region to beat the sanctions.

The desire for localisation has resulted in several models being licensed for manufacture in Iran where they are given their own names. These models were also then updated locally down the years. Iran Khodro (IKCO) and Saipa are the two main manufacturers, both nationalised.

European car makers, Renault and Fiat, were the first OEMs to set up assembly plants in Iran. This was in the 1960s. However, local manufacture took a big leap forward when the Khayami brothers, two Iranian entrepreneurs, did a deal in 1966 with the British Rootes Group to assemble its Hillman Arrow series of cars from completely knocked-down kits imported from the UK.

The cars were given the name Paykan in Iran, with the name derived from the word "paykan," which is Iranian for "arrow." The Paykan subsequently became Iran's national car for many decades.

Construction of the original factories was supervised by British

employees from Rootes Group and Brits also provided training for the factory workers. The cars got significant tax concessions and were far cheaper than cars such as the Volkswagen Beetle and Fiat 1100, which were sold there at the time. Initial volume was 15 000 Paykans a year, which resulted in long waiting lists.

The Iranian rulers soon instituted major localisation programmes to increase production, and the cars were significantly improved during the long period they were produced. The original Hillman Hunter-based Paykan was run out in 1979 when the Shah of Iran was overthrown and the factories taken over as part of Iran's Islamic Revolution.

The British link may have been broken, but the Paykan cars soldiered on until 2005 as a homegrown product built by IKCO. During the Paykan's life its original 1725 cc Rootes engine was replaced by a 1600 cc Peugeot 504 power unit, because during this time the Rootes Group had been acquired by Peugeot and renamed Talbot.

A pick-up truck, based on the Hillman Hunter and known as the Bardo, was introduced to the range as early as 1969 and continued, unbelievably, until 2015 – a period of 45 years! The Paykan bakkie was built and sold in South Africa, badged as the Dodge Husky, for a short period before Chrysler South Africa merged with Anglo American's automotive interests to form Sigma Motor Corporation.

There should have been a change in the national car in 1979, but the revolution put paid to that with the new Peugeot 305 to have taken over the title of Iran's national car. Finally, in 1990, at the conclusion of a war between Iran and Iraq, the country received a new car from its partner, Peugeot. This time it was the 405.

After the Peugeot 405 had been in production for a decade it was transformed into what was hailed as the first truly Iranian car, and the spiritual successor to the Paykan, which remained in production until 2005. The new car was named the IKCO Samand.

Many other car makers were attracted to Iran over the years and in 2001, there were 13 public and privately owned vehicle manufacturers in Iran, but 94% of sales were taken up by IKCO and Saipa, which were still 40% owned by the state.

Nowadays there are a host of different brands on sale in Iran, including imports from China. However, the many sub brands from IKCO and Saipa still lead the popularity stakes, with IKCO using various Peugeot components, while Saipa has built a successful range of cars, using the Kia Pride from the late 1980s as the original base. IKCO is, in fact, the largest vehicle manufacturer in the Middle East, although government subsidies and tax breaks obviously play a role in this situation.



RECALLS

RECALLS IN SOUTH AFRICA REACH OVER 50 000

For decades, automotive research and development programmes typically followed a 60-month cycle from concept to launch. This extended gestation period allowed manufacturers to thoroughly test, refine, and validate new models before they reached production.

Today, however, intensifying global competition and the rapid evolution of propulsion technologies have compressed development timelines to as little as 40 months. While this accelerated “rush to market” approach enables brands to stay competitive, it often comes at a cost.

In many cases, critical testing processes – including extreme hot and cold cycle validation – are shortened or overlooked. The result is an increasing number of manufacturing defects and component failures that only become apparent once vehicles are already in customers’ hands.

For the average driver, these issues are largely invisible – yet potentially dangerous. Beneath the surface of even the most premium vehicles, risks such as advanced driver assistance system (ADAS) brake failures, component malfunctions, and even fire hazards (particularly in battery electric vehicles) are becoming more prevalent.

These shortcomings are now reflected in a growing number of recalls and so-called “lemon” vehicles entering the market. Even traditionally trusted manufacturers such as Toyota have not been immune, recently recalling hundreds of thousands of vehicles worldwide.

Big Picture

Over 50 000 vehicles were recalled in South Africa during 2025 alone ... Recalls span nearly every major global manufacturer.

The most common defect categories:

- Braking system failures (software & mechanical).
- Airbag failures (especially Takata).
- Fire risks (electrical, fuel, ABS systems).
- Structural/component failures (axles, seatbelts).

Insight

What stands out in 2025–2026 is not just the volume – but the nature of the failures:

- Increasing software-related defects (ABS, ADAS, braking logic).
- Persistent legacy component failures (airbags, fuel systems).
- Rising EV/hybrid-related risks (battery and braking integration issues).

There is no single official “master list” published publicly in SA. The NCC releases recalls case-by-case, so this is the most complete aggregated list currently available – but not exhaustive of every minor campaign.

Top Ongoing Auto Recalls in South Africa (2025–2026):

Takata Airbag Recall (Various): Affects numerous manufacturers including BMW, Ford, Toyota, Nissan, Mazda, and Stellantis, with over 230 000 BMWs (1997–2018) alone affected. Faulty airbags can rupture and send metal fragments into the cabin.

Ford Ranger, Everest, Transit Custom: Over 20 000 units (2021–2025) recalled for rearview cameras that freeze or turn black. Another 1 050 Ranger/Everest (2022–2025) units recalled for potential engine stalling due to a faulty camshaft sprocket.

Toyota & Lexus: Over 1 800 Land Cruiser 300 models and over 100 Lexus LX SUVs (2025–2026) recalled for potential transmission solenoid failures, causing loss of power or fire risks.

BMW Starter Motor & Seat Belts: Around 17 300 BMW models (2018–2024) recalled for starter motor wear; and numerous models (including X3–X6, 1–6 series) recalled for various manufacturing issues, including seat belt defects.

Jaguar Land Rover: Over 120 SUVs (2017–2026), including Land Rover Defenders (seat belt bracket issue) and Jaguar I-Pace (battery fire risk), recalled.

Volkswagen & Others: VW Polo models (2025) recalled due to rear axle bolts, and VW Golf models/Volvo XC90s also cited for safety issues in 2025.

Here is the most comprehensive, verified list of vehicle recalls affecting South Africa (2025–2026) based on official National Consumer Commission NCC notices and credible reporting. I’ve grouped them by brand, model, and defect.

South Africa Vehicle Recalls (2025–2026)

Major 2026 Recalls (current / latest)

Volkswagen

- Model: Polo Vivo (2025–2026)
- Units: ~25,729
- Issue: Faulty handbrake (defective rivet)
- Risk: Vehicle may roll away when parked

Lexus

- Model: LX500d (F-Sport & Overtrail) (2025–2026)

- Units: ~110
- Issue: Not publicly detailed (NCC safety recall)
- Risk: Safety compliance defect under investigation

Renault

- Model: Kwid
- Units: ~1,393
- Issue: Safety-related defect (not fully disclosed in summary notice)
- Risk: Potential safety non-compliance

MG Motor

- Model: MG3
- Units: ~209
- Issue: Safety defect (unspecified in summary)
- Risk: General safety concern

Toyota (Hino division)

- Model: Hino 700 Series trucks
- Issue: Component defect (details limited in public summary)
- Risk: Heavy vehicle safety concern

Ford

- Model: Ranger (2025–2026)
- Issue: ABS module software fault
- Risk: Loss of brake boost / reduced braking performance
- Large-Scale / Ongoing Campaigns (2025–2026)

Stellantis (multi-brand recall)

Brands affected: Citroën, DS, Chrysler, Jeep, Opel, Peugeot,

Chevrolet

- Models: Multiple (2008–2018 primarily)
- Issue: Faulty Takata airbags
- Risk: Airbag inflator explosion * serious injury or death
- Status: "Stop-drive" warnings issued for some vehicles

Jeep

- Model: Wrangler (older models)
- Units: ~323
- Issue: Faulty clockspring (airbag system)
- Risk: Airbag may fail to deploy in crash

Kia

- Models: Sportage, Sorento, Optima, Cerato, Soul (2009–2015)
- Units: ~18,600
- Issue: ABS fuse defect

- Risk: Potential fire hazard in engine bay
- Additional 2025 Recalls (important context)

Isuzu

- Model: RT66 (2025)
- Units: 10
- Issue: Faulty airbag electrical connection
- Risk: Airbag may not deploy

Volvo

- Model: XC90 Plug-in Hybrid (2025–2026)
- Issue: Braking system software issue
- Risk: Temporary loss of braking in certain drive modes

Volkswagen

- Model: Golf TSI / GTI (2025)
- Issue: Seatbelt defect
- Risk: Reduced occupant protection

Volkswagen

- Model: Polo (May 2025 batch)
- Issue: Rear axle bolts not correctly tightened
- Risk: Loss of vehicle control

Toyota

- Model: Hilux (2023–2025)
- Issue: Faulty fuel pump
- Risk: Engine stalling at speed

BMW

- Model: 3 Series (2024–2025)
- Issues:
- Oil leak near turbo * fire risk
- Parking brake defect
- Risk: Fire / rollaway incidents

Toyota

- Model: Corolla Cross (2024)
- Issue: Rearview camera failure
- Risk: Increased accident risk when reversing

Ford

- Model: Ranger (2024)
- Issue: Brake software glitch
- Risk: Unexpected emergency braking

TELEMATICS

RESISTANCE RISING TO TELEMATICS-BASED INSURANCE

New research suggests high premiums are forcing young drivers to take telematics-based insurance and creating a lifetime of resistance against the technology.

Analysis of 6 868 insurance quotes in November found that traditional policies for 17-19-year-old drivers were on average £2 172 more expensive than telematics-based policies.

The Consumer Intelligence research found that 83% of drivers in that age bracket couldn't afford the difference, meaning that if they wanted to drive, they had no choice but to take telematics-based insurance.

However, instead of introducing young motorists to the benefits of telematics, it is

turning them against the technology, with only 51% of drivers aged 25-29 retaining it and only 25% of drivers aged 35-39.

Insurance sceptics

Ian Hughes, CEO of Consumer Intelligence, said: "Insurers have weaponised pricing to create a captive audience, then wonder why adoption collapses after age 25. They're not building a customer base; they're creating a generation of connected-insurance sceptics."

"The industry is training an entire generation to hate the technology it needs them to embrace for usage-based and connected insurance products in the future."

"Insurers think they're selling clever technology. Customers hear 'we don't trust

you.' That fundamental miscommunication is costing young drivers thousands and threatening innovation adoption for decades to come."

"Insurers need to stop selling surveillance and start selling recognition. Our research shows customers who feel recognised and in control have three times higher voluntary adoption rates. The industry is literally explaining its way out of billions in future premiums."



by Alan Feldberg



OEM NEWS

RENAULT R-SPACE LAB IMAGINES THE CAR AS A PLACE TO LIVE

Renault's R-Space Lab is less a conventional concept car and more a rolling manifesto for how the brand believes people will use cars in the next decade.

Developed by Futurama, Renault Group's innovation laboratory, it explores the idea of voitures à vivre or cars designed not just for transport, but for everyday life in all its choices. While Renault is clear that R-Space Lab is not a direct preview of a production model, it offers a detailed glimpse of the thinking that could shape its vehicles from around 2030 onwards.

From the outside, the one-box silhouette immediately signals its priorities. Measuring around 4.5 metres long and 1.5 metres tall, the proportions are chosen to maximise interior volume rather than visual drama. Extensive glazing plays a major role in the design, with a windscreen that flows into a fully glazed roof, slim pillars and frameless doors. Together, these elements flood the cabin with light and create a strong sense of connection with the surroundings, making the interior feel far larger than the dimensions suggest.

Inside, the R-Space Lab focuses on flexibility and intuitive technology. A full width, curved, open, panorama screen stretches across the dashboard, combining driving information, driver assistance systems and multimedia into a single, easily readable surface. Most functions are operated via a central touchscreen designed to feel as

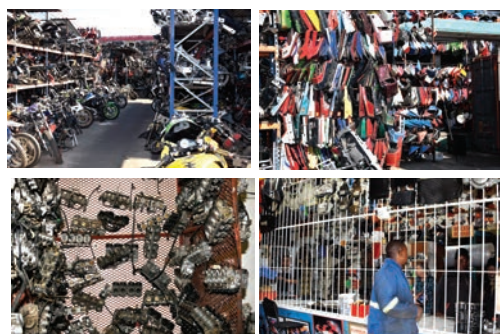
familiar as a smartphone. A compact steering wheel, enabled by steer-by-wire technology, improves forward visibility and frees up space in the front of the cabin.

The interior layout is designed to adapt to different moments of daily life. The front and curtain airbags are integrated into the seat structures rather than the dashboard, allowing for an ingenious multifunction glovebox that can store items or fold out as a leg rest. The front passenger seat can slide rearwards to interact more easily with passengers in the second row or attend to a child seat. At the back, three identical individual seats slide, recline, fold and flip up, creating space for anything from a bicycle to bulky luggage or even one's pet! Rear doors opening to 90 degrees make access and loading straightforward.

Safety and human-centred technology sit at the heart of the concept. Renault is testing features such as a tactile alcohol detector aimed at educating and supporting younger drivers, alongside in-car artificial intelligence that could act as a safety coach, offering personalised advice or helping occupants interact with the vehicle more naturally. In this way, the R-Space Lab presents a future where the car is a supportive, adaptable living space rather than just a machine for getting from A to B.

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There's something refreshing about a car that doesn't try too hard to be complicated. The new Citroën Basalt arrives in South Africa with a sporty character, and a level of comfort that honestly feels like it belongs in a class of its own considering what we get for the price. It's the latest addition to Citroën's growing local line-up, joining the C3 and Aircross, but the Basalt brings its own personality to the road with a sleek SUV-coupé shape and the kind of comfort you can only expect from the European automaker Citroën.

The Basalt has great presence at first glance. The raised ride height gives it that confident SUV look South Africans love, while the sloping fastback roofline adds a sporty edge that makes the whole vehicle feel more dynamic and modern. It's rugged enough for everyday life, but stylish enough to turn heads in the parking lot. The design has energy to it — like it's ready to move even when standing still. And once you get behind the wheel, that feeling continues at a pace thanks to its lively 1.2-litre turbocharged engine. It's genuinely one of the highlights of the Basalt. Producing 81kW and 205Nm of torque, it feels punchy and eager especially when pulling away from robots or overtaking on the highway. Paired with the 6-speed automatic gearbox, the Basalt delivers a smooth but sporty driving experience that puts the fun back into everyday commuting. This is a car designed to make daily driving easy and enjoyable.

Step inside the cabin and the first thing you notice is the sense of space. There's plenty of room for everyone, whether you're driving with friends, family, or loading up for a weekend away. Rear passengers especially will appreciate the generous legroom,

while the massive 470-litre boot means luggage, shopping bags, sports gear, or camera equipment fit in without a struggle. It's one of those vehicles that simply makes life easier. Then there are the seats, Citroën has always understood comfort differently, and the Basalt continues that tradition beautifully, with soft yet supportive seating that is really comfortable. This combined with the smooth ride quality and well-insulated cabin, the Basalt just feels premium.

The dashboard boasts a neat 10-inch floating touchscreen display with wireless Apple CarPlay® and Android Auto™ keeping everything connected without cluttering too much, while the digital instrument cluster keeps important information directly in your line of sight. Features like automatic air-conditioning, rear air vents, cruise control, keyless access, and electrically folding mirrors all add to the premium qualities of the Basalt and that it's designed for real everyday use. Safety hasn't been forgotten either, with six airbags, ESP, Hill Hold Control, rear parking sensors, and ISOFIX child-seat mounts helping deliver extra peace of mind.

With two Basalt automatic derivatives available. The entry level version will cost you R359 000 for the Plus/AT edition, or you can opt for the top of the range Basalt Max/AT which is the version we had on test, that included 16-inch alloy wheels, a reverse camera, electrochromic auto-dimming rear view mirror, more sound and a light in the boot compartment, all for the price of R369 900. Overall the Basalt feels modern, sporty, spacious, and incredibly comfortable all at once. More importantly, it feels fun - so if you're in the market for a new car, I would suggest to definitely include the Basalt Max/AT on your test list.



DRIVEN

CITROËN
BASALT
MAX/AT

WHAT'S HOT?

HARP NATIONAL ROADSHOW UPDATE



The Hyundai team (from left to right): Zaheera Hassan, General Manager parts sales, Ndabezinhle Nyathi, HARP manager and Lebo More, Compliance Specialist.

Hyundai started a national road show over a year ago as part of their revised initiative to streamline their Hyundai Approved Repairer Programme (HARP) programme. "This has proved so successful that we are now rolling it out through the Motus Group," said Zaheera Hassan, general manager for parts sales.

She explained to the well supported collision repair audience, that parts flow and the supply of Hyundai parts was in much better shape than ever before and that regional parts hub centres had seen a larger investment on model-by-model parts availability.

There was also a marked improvement from insurance companies and brokers which has seen an uptick on demand from the MBR network because of customer education campaigns now in operation. These are targeted to a number of key Hyundai customers with insured vehicles.

Non-insured vehicles, cash in lieu transactions, and first customers obtain quality Hyundai original parts for their vehicles to be restored to manufacturer pre-accident level. Currently over 377 approved repair body shops are accredited, and the company has an aggressive approach to increase compliant shops.

Over 495 Hyundai vehicles are now being seen per year using the Save-a-Car developed assistance packages which are designed to avoid vehicle write-off levels and increase customer retention for the brand.

Far better body shop and insurance levels of enquiry have been noted in last years' market survey results for Save-A-Car. Using original parts advertising targeting vehicle owners and insurance brokers has delivered a positive result. All this plus no major charge on parts pricing levels for body shop repair is currently envisaged. "World upheaval will become one unknown factor to contend with going forward," said Zaheera.

New models to be launched were shown and discussed, along with some training for repair developments.

It is great to see the Hyundai commitment to their loyal band of approved body repair shops.



The team from KIA were on hand to meet their approved body shops and learn more about the success of the HARP programme for future implementation.



The Gauteng leg of the national roadshow was well supported.



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MUCH HAS CHANGED SINCE 1776



by Andrew Marsh

In a series of unintended consequences which can lead to automotive global market domination by China, what can we expect?

Like many connected the UK, the USA seems to have unfinished business from long ago. Indeed, the 14th July 2026 marks the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Much has changed since 1776...

Often we don't appreciate what's on our own doorstep – I live 15 miles from Stratford-upon-Avon where William Shakespeare was born and wrote many fine works. For-strewh, (I think that's a Shakespearian term) I don't visit very often and have seen a play once in the last decade. Familiarity and all that.

Right now, the European vehicle manufacturing companies are considering lopping off entire limbs one by one ('Tis but a scratch!', copyright Monte Python and the Holy Grail) and the red stuff gushes from the financial statements. Why?

Chasing the dragon

A long time ago the European manufacturers had multiple booming markets and a steady global demand for product. As is often the case the manufacturers did not follow the wise business model of Enzo Ferrari – precisely less product than the demand, always – and decided big, bigger and vast was the way forward. Hence Citroen building thousands of Wankel engines without a single customer for two years. That kind of madness.

The factory space became an emblem, and by the 1990s one third or so of all activity could fit into the un-used factory space. That unused space was not free, and it came with employees. Fortune shined and the problem was eventually addressed in the depths of the 2008 financial crisis – there was no choice – and has been ever since. Some plants were relatively empty, but until 2023 most were running at between 67 and 90 percent capacity.

This did not address relatively high wages nor, thanks to the love of President Jo Biden, the loss of inexpensive natural gas which led directly to some of the highest energy costs in the world.

Meanwhile the overnight success of China, 40 years in the making, stirred. With plant utilisation running at around 50 percent and a ruinous internal market price war, export was the only route to salvation. They had no choice.

So, China can land vehicles with or without import duties 'fully loaded' at prices that undercut the European manufacturers. The trimming that has gone on since 2008 was undone overnight, as the EU27 Commission and Parliament decided to have meetings to discuss meetings about meetings. In just over a year, and the prospect that things are not going well, this has happened:

Stellantis offered Brampton in Canada CKD build of Leapmotor models, the China manufacturer they invested in. Brampton has not worked since 2023 and said 'no' since that eliminated the body and paint shops.

Stellantis are offering around four plants in Europe, in Spain and Italy, as possible sites for China manufacturers. The logic? If staff are axed, it won't be Stellantis doing it.

Stellantis at the very same time have removed 650 engineer jobs from Opel, about one third of the present head count. That's pretty alarming – deleting your own engineers to invite engineers in from an associate company.

Volkswagen are making the same overtures to major China manufacturers, with the same intent of not being held accountable for job losses.

'Tis but a scratch!'

Short termism

The idea that cutting plants to then hand them over complete with 'technology transfer', as China repeatedly claims it is the 'best in the world' and the 'most advanced in the world' beggars' belief.

In two years, new vehicle imports from China to EU27 and UK have gone from a fraction of a percent to around 10 percent. This is because the China automotive sector has to find ways to charge more for their products and export is the only way forward. In a significant misreading of the politics, it would appear Stellantis and Volkswagen Group would rather roll out the red carpet than earn market share.

The automotive sector and especially the collision repair business faces being eaten alive unless our governments and business leaders start to really think. Already from Germany alone there have been 350 000 automotive manufacturing jobs lost, with the prospect of at least that number again by 2030. By taking into account the jobs in companies making parts, which has been underway since 2018, the sector is already past the first million jobs.

For China the objective is to dominate the market, and to supply a lot of new cars to the world in order to use up the present domestic manufacturing capacity of 25 million vehicles per year, and the planned 55 million units per year.

- China has no reason to engage with governments about:
- Local content laws
- Local assembly/manufacturing
- Provision of parts for repair.

Thanks to the European manufacturers thinking they can invite China manufacturers to help them out but failing to realise once they are inside, they are not leaving; this is not like the China market of the 1990s. Instead, Europe faces circa 30 percent of all new vehicles sold

in EU27 plus UK coming directly from China with or without import duties well before 2030.

Best not disturb the European governments as they sleep at the wheel.

What does market domination look like?

The biggest mistakes the European automotive companies have done so far are:

Rushed product development for BEV, PHEV, HEV and MHEV powertrains. This was in part due to government appearing to want all these options and then as product came to market, decided BEVs were the only way forward. So, reliability suffered.

Energy costs rose, greatly aided by President Biden's administration deciding to blow up Nordstream 1 and Nordstream 2 natural gas pipelines. How so very 1776.

Of course, Net Zero has also added significantly to energy costs.

The automotive companies fell in love with China market style, failing to realise that China was very good at that by 2019 and if they wanted foreign vehicles at all, they had to be stylish. Meanwhile the rest of the world is puzzling why we have to buy cars with illuminated external badges and interior lighting akin to certain types of late-night clubs.

The European manufacturers assumed China companies do business the same way. They don't.

Aside from the many mis-steps Europe and especially the German auto industry will not face up to the China domestic market has closed to them, for the time being. Watching sales numbers, brand after brand collapse between 2024 and 2025 was incredible.

All of this is what Australia went through when the domestic automotive manufacturing business collapsed – not just the providers of complete vehicles but many specialist companies too.

That's what is underway in Europe now.

So, as repairers clamour for any information about any China made vehicle – which is straight business after all – there is almost no recognition of what could happen if the China manufacturers end up supplying 60 or 70 percent of the market by 2035.

- No repair parts
- Vehicles shipped back to China for repair or destruction.
- A massive change to the collision repair business.

The bottom line

The European vehicle manufacturer 'execs on expenses, appear not to understand as they axe their own company production capacity, it re-appears as China dominates market after market. Those same leaders think the most they can do is massage the monthly financials, and, so have decided to be pro-active by doing very little (copyright MG Rover, RIP).

So, those same executives court Chinese companies because the EU Commission is 'bound' to insist on local content laws, so they'll need factories ... except the rolling five-year plan in China sees none of this.

If China will dominate in Europe, 'cheap' new cars will disappear given the lack of competition. In the same way parts supply can go and whistle Dixie because ... domination means not having to comply with other countries rules. Similarly, domination means turning export markets into cash cows to be milked for every last cent.

Look at the effect of 'free trade' (which it isn't) as Brazil opened its market to China imports to find a massive influx of imports and decimation of their automotive manufacturing sector. Brazil now realises the mistake, but the problems are already huge. Europe is already importing way more vehicles than Brazil.

Many European collision repairers do not know what's coming. Australia does.

You've been here since at least 2014/15 or so.

Every previous 'threat' from Japan and South Korea ended up with collaboration, domestic market assembly as well as locally made parts. Parts that are easier to get for collision repair if they happen to be made in the same country, or region in the case of Europe.

I'm not convinced this is possible with China.

Let's act to protect the collision repair business now, so major international companies are not able to sweep in, take and leave nothing behind.

TURMOIL

RETHINKING SUPPLY CHAINS AMID MIDDLE EAST TURMOIL



The conflict in the Middle East has disrupted global supply chains and exposed the risks of relying too heavily on concentrated hubs.

Andre Scholle, Vice President and Head of Region India, Turkey, MEA and CIS at ZF Aftermarket, stresses that the disruption is not simply logistical but structural. "While this seems like a logistics problem on the surface, it is a strategic design flaw in global supply chain resilience and redundancy," he explains.

For years, Dubai has been the linchpin of trade between Europe, Africa and Asia, supported by strong infrastructure and a business-friendly environment. This central role was reinforced by the widespread adoption of Just-in-Time manufacturing, which reduces storage costs but depends on uninterrupted logistics. Scholle observes that "this focus on efficiency meant companies channelled vast amounts of trade through a few concentrated, highly efficient hubs, but this concentration created a single point of failure".

The closure of the Strait of Hormuz has turned this strategic gateway into a high-risk zone. Rising oil and gas prices, supply shocks to base materials and rerouted cargo have all added to costs. Customers in East Africa and Asia, once served reliably through Dubai, suddenly needed alternatives. Firms scrambled to reroute shipments around the Cape of Good Hope, switch to premium air freight or rely on trucking. These costly adjustments highlight the vulnerability of a system built on efficiency rather than resilience.

Scholle insists that staff safety must come first. "No business strategy should override the obligation to keep staff safe," he says. Relocating regional offices, whether temporarily or permanently, may be necessary. Agility and scenario planning are vital. "Scenario planning is not about predicting outcomes, but about pre-authorising decisions before emotion and urgency take over," he explains. Each scenario requires a decision tree so teams can act decisively in uncertain conditions. Information discipline

is equally important. Scholle warns that "a critical error that business leaders can make is focusing on Western media for information on the path and trajectory of the conflict". He argues that ground-level intelligence matters more than headlines when building resilient strategies.

Although Dubai's logistics chains have not yet collapsed, Scholle believes diversification is essential. "Whatever happens, the conflict in the Middle East and its impact on global supply chains have reaffirmed the value of a decentralised model and the importance of diversity in locations, with customer proximity creating more resilient logistics networks."

Adaptability and flexibility remain the hallmarks of resilience. As Scholle concludes, "adaptability, flexibility and the ability to ramp up the business on demand offer businesses with a global footprint the competitive advantage they need when the regional hubs they have come to rely on go dark."

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All good things come to an end and even some bad ones too. I have been scribbling out stories since the early 70's and got into the publishing business by meeting the 'King of the Crazies,' Simon Fourie from *Bike SA*. Over a period of a decade or so he showed me how to get it all wrong with misplaced captions and photos printed back to front. It was a wild ride becoming a *Bike SA* motorcycle correspondent, where to be honest, my stories written on the back of a cigarette packet varied wildly, but always with abiding enthusiasm! Through that phase and my other lifetime hobby of photography, it towed me along admirably.

One of the biggest changes of aging is where old age sneaks up and mugs you from behind when you're not looking. For now, it's over 40 years since, quite by accident, I became a publicist when a friend of mine asked me to put together some technical process features on car refinishing. Well, after about six of those efforts under my belt, and armed with a huge ego, we produced *Automotive & Fleet Refinisher*, as it was known back then in 1985, with a covert 'invisible me' hiding behind my partner at that time. Then, there were only two major paint maker's on the market – not like today. After three editions the front man disappeared, taking 50 grand out of the bank account with him, and vanished to Europe.

"Welcome to publishing", said my lifelong friend Gavin Stapleton (of Four First & Only Printers - Camera Press) and only printing accomplice. He calmly sat on a stack of newspapers and on hearing the news gave me my one-and-only lesson in journalism: "I think you are full of nonsense so just keep going and we'll get out of this mess!" he said. We had in better times already travelled to Bike GP races, Le Mans, and Formula One events – taking what I like to think were world-class pictures to cover motor racing for various SA magazines.

In a South Africa that was changing relentlessly, no dedicated body shop magazine existed. Having spent so much time down in the trenches supplying knowledge to the trade of car repair, for once I could call on all those dead-end jobs to contribute to my new life. In those distant heydays as a scribbler only one thing held me back – and it's fully regretted really – in that I can't write too well. In real terms it's standard three with poor punctuation that's dragged the trade along for these 30 years or so. Thankfully, there are always many clever people around who can proof-read and punctuate with enough goodwill to make sense of my scrawl in long hand. I guess that's the way it will always be for me ... Simon Fourie once said that I was the

most successful writer of the "unsuccessful writers" he had ever met.

By being ridiculously obsessed in technology and coupling this to travelling the globe and believing in the collective good of what we are all bound up in, has resulted in this magazine's huge success. Today it's just a small family business run by my two talented children, Claire and Jay who have redesigned it and tweaked the look of it all beyond my wildest kitchen table dreams from all those years ago.

So, at 81 years of age there is no new me about to leap out of the wardrobe. Valerie, my wife that has backed me for over 50 years is still working hard at it every day on the debt collection side of the business, while Nataschia hums along in the background keeping it all up to speed. Unlike my contemporaries I'm not out there playing golf or worrying about my offshore investments.

For me it's just another working day as I'm still supple enough to put on my own socks while living in a world where it's best at my age not to have too many mirrors in your sightline. So, what is this all about you may well ask...

Well, my second life in South Africa has quite simply been amazing for travelling – from Russia to China, to the USA – all in the quest for updated technology or process change that has proved rather time consuming – yet delivering a huge vision on just how varied life and its everyday reality can be ... for just about everyone.

I could go on, but space is limited, and my time is nearly up. I never had a plan to publish and no great ambition for my kids too either; but I can honestly say that nothing that they will ever achieve will ever make me prouder of them other than the day they were born. Unlike in my other life where I chose to emigrate and leave my family far behind, we all see each other every working day of the week. That in my opinion is a real bonus.

So, for those of you who have stuck with my bi-monthly meanderings and past features and even possibly enjoyed them, fear not, for it to look like I'm doomed to carry on for a bit longer between mending race bikes down in the shed for some time yet. Quite how many trips are left in this old dog to see the TT racers or international shows is clearly uncertain. With some luck I will see many more Christmases, and based on the assumption that ageing is just a physical process, it's also a maturing one.

It's not just a feeling; it's an experience where you are as old as you can remember and Lord knows I have plenty of those – a lifetime in fact – of great memories in making a difference.



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