



A message from the CEO

COVID-19 Update 05/06



As we approach this long weekend, I hope that the lift in restrictions has meant that you are seeing more customers as people return to their places of work and families plan regional getaways.

In South Australia and the Northern Territory, we are fortunate to have been spared the worst of the initial impacts of COVID-19 and as restrictions are slowly lifted, the economy is looking healthier than what was originally feared.

There has been some improvement in new car sales which were down 35.3% in May when compared to 48.5% in April, and our members are telling us that used car sales are down roughly 25% for May.

Heavy Vehicle Inspection Scheme Stage 2 delayed again

We were disappointed to learn that the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure has decided to cease procurement activities and will not proceed with stage two periodic inspections and the provisioning of the Heavy Vehicle Inspection Scheme at this time.

South Australia already has the highest fatality rate in mainland Australia, which is now up 27.5% on the previous 12 months. We are calling on strong action from the Government, not more delays, in the interests of saving lives on our roads.

Road safety figures and a push for vehicle inspections

The latest Australian Automobile Association benchmarking highlights some concerning figures on South Australia's road toll. SA has had the highest increase in fatalities in the country over the last 12 months (27.5%), and per 100,000 population, SA has the highest number of road deaths of any mainland state.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics data has again highlighted that SA has the highest age of all motor vehicles in mainland Australia (11.8 years).

These sobering figures support the MTA's call to ensure owners regularly maintain and service vehicles to ensure we deliver safer vehicles on our roads, helping to save lives

With a resumption of business as usual, the MTA will continue to advocate to the State Government on this important issue.

Relief for bus and coach operators and new SA Health guidelines for passenger transport

Following our strong advocacy to the State Government, the MTA is pleased that the government has delivered operator accreditation relief to the bus and coach industry. This will be achieved through an automatic 12 month waiver.

The MTA is also pleased that the State Government has provided guidance, and additional clarity, for bus and coach operators for the carriage of passengers during the COVID-19 restrictions. You can view SA Health's Fact Sheet by [clicking here](#).

Meeting with Consumer and Business Affairs

Our meeting with CBS was delayed due to the early impacts of COVID-19, so I was pleased to attend a virtual meeting with CBS Commissioner Dini Soulio and senior staff to discuss a range of issues facing licenced vehicle dealers and service station operators including:

- The review of the Second Hand Vehicle Dealers Act 1995
 - Continuing our push for temporary relief from Second-hand Vehicle Dealers Compensation Fund contributions
 - Compliance and enforcement updates
 - Real Time Fuel Pricing Trial
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Franchise reforms update

On 1 June a new schedule of regulations to the Franchising Code of Conduct for new car dealers came into effect. This is a significant step forward in addressing power imbalances which exist within franchise arrangements in the automotive industry.

After decades of advocacy, the MTA is pleased that new car dealers are now in a unique position of having their own schedule within the Franchising Code of Conduct. As part of the review of the new regulations, the MTA will continue to advocate for an expansion of the Code's provisions to include other automotive business such as motorcycle and farm machinery retailers, who face identical issues to new car dealers.

Industrial relations reforms

As part of its recent JobMaker announcements, the Federal Government advised it would be looking at an extensive review and overhaul of the Industrial Relations system. However, a different approach is being taken with focussed working groups with members from key business, government and employee groups discussing the following core topics:

- Award simplification.
- Enterprise agreement making.
- Casuals and fixed term employees, especially in light of recent changes through the Fair Work Commission.
- Compliance and enforcement.
- Greenfields agreements for new enterprises.

The MTA are contributing to discussion primarily on award simplification and casuals and fixed term employees, with representation on these two working groups.

Stay safe on our roads over this long weekend and I hope you have an enjoyable break with your families

Regards

Paul Unerkov

MTA SA / NT CEO

