

Media Release

Unique Australian standards don't come free – MTAA backs review of Australian Design Rules

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The Motor Trades Association of Australia (MTAA) welcomes the Australian Government's announcement of an independent review of the Australian Design Rules (ADRs), viewing it as a crucial step in removing regulatory barriers and promoting innovation in the Australian vehicle market across cars, trucks and motorcycles.

MTAA also supports the Government's decision to use this review as an opportunity to address obstacles in the supply of electric and low-emission vehicles, which are seeing increasing demand as Australia moves toward a more sustainable transport fleet.

MTAA is encouraged by the appointment of Dr Warren Mundy, whose extensive experience in the transport sector will bring valuable insights to the review.

Matt Hobbs, CEO of the MTAA, said, "Dr Mundy will bring a fresh perspective to regulatory frameworks that have traditionally served not only safety and emissions goals but also protected local manufacturing. We commend the Government for committing to an independent review of the ADRs which will contribute to a competitive and safe market for all consumers."

The review will evaluate whether Australia's current ADRs align with international standards, identify opportunities for improvement, and streamline the adoption of globally harmonised standards. This comes on the eve of the commencement of the New Vehicle Efficiency Standard (NVES), with manufacturers planning future product strategies for Australia. It is therefore vital that unnecessary and unjustified barriers are removed.

The goal of the review is to ensure Australia's vehicle standards evolve to better support consumer choice, promote price competition and drive technological innovation in the automotive sector. As the global transition to electric vehicles and cleaner technologies continues, aligning ADRs with international standards is crucial in supporting Australia's transition to net zero.

However, MTAA notes that while harmonisation offers significant benefits, unique Australian standards come with additional costs. Customising standards for local conditions can increase compliance costs for manufacturers, which may be passed on to consumers.

This review presents a timely opportunity to evaluate whether these standards are still necessary or if more efficient, globally aligned alternatives could streamline production without compromising safety or environmental goals.

"We fully support this review as an opportunity to address outdated regulatory barriers that hinder the adoption of new technologies, especially electric vehicles," said Matt Hobbs. "Aligning Australian standards with international best practices will create a more competitive market and accelerate our nation's transition to a sustainable future."

ENDS

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About MTAA

The Motor Trades Association of Australia (MTAA) is the peak body representing the interests of the automotive retail sector across the nation. Through proactive engagement, MTAA helps shape sound public policy on issues that affect the retail motor trades, small businesses and consumers.

MTAA's member associations include the Motor Traders' Association of New South Wales, the Victorian and Tasmanian Automobile Chamber of Commerce, the Motor Trade Association of South Australia and Northern Territory, the Motor Trade Association of Western Australia, and the Motor Trades Association of Queensland.

At the national level, MTAA acts as a unified voice, representing the interests of the automotive sector to the federal government and influencing key policy decisions. Its work includes identifying and addressing issues impacting the sector and advocating for the needs of automotive businesses through ongoing discussions with government.