



HOT AIR

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2009

The Automotive Air-conditioning, Electrical and Cooling Technicians of Australasia

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Let's get back to the good old days of well attended VASA regional workshops and forums - South Australia and Queensland show how it's done

In times past, between 50 and 80 technicians would think nothing of travelling hundreds of kilometres to attend a one day VASA workshop in Brisbane.

It was a few hours of intense training, followed by an open forum, which often ended in spirited debate about the state of the industry, and then a couple of beers with kindred souls. Ah... those were the days.

In most cases, the days were organised by enthusiastic members, assisted by a regional member of the VASA Board. As those enthusiasts disappeared, so too did the motivation to keep the idea alive.

Then South Australia came up with a different model. Adelaide is the hub of a close-knit a/c repair community, so the tyranny of distance wasn't so great. However, it still needed local enthusiasts to get it off the ground, and if were not for people like Dave Jackson, Ian Stangroome, Glen Watkinson and Daryl Brougham it may never have survived there either.

Today, the South Australia VASA group is dynamic, engaging in cooperative advertising and promotion. The group has big annual training weekends, but usually meets at night to discuss VASA and wider issues. As a result, a great camaraderie exists in SA, and one gets the feeling from these meetings that they act like a cooperative of like minds, rather than a group of

competitors. They share ideas and generally support each other. That's the way VASA is supposed to work.

If VASA director Mark Mitchell of Queensland has his way, the VASA Board will be asked to consider a workshop roll out in all states and major regions during 2010, with proper funds dedicated to promotion and enticing members to turn up.

"It's not easy to pry hard working members from the TV, sport, family and couch for a full Saturday, but once they do it, they thoroughly enjoy it and learn a lot from the sharing experience," said Mark.

Top trainers will be organised for each event, together with a forum where members can let the Board know what's on their minds.

During October, in Brisbane, Mark lit a new fire under the regional workshop idea, with a great day, attended by 43 members, and a handful of new members who joined up on the day. Trainers Grant Hand and Jeff Smit were in top form, and a forum and happy hour filled in the rest of the day.

Technicians travelled from Roma in the mid west of the state, and Grafton, way down in New South Wales.

Mark labelled the day a huge success, but believes future events need to offer advanced training in a/c and electrics.



Above: Grant Hand was in fine form as usual. Below: Anthony Wenning, owner of Diesel Electrics at Dalby brought his team of eight technicians to the VASA workshop. From left to right are Ryan Ringelstein, Greg Campbell, Grant Hand, Anthony Wenning, Nick Best, Rick Lloyd-Jones, Bernard Brinoza and Kieran Radke. Another staff member, Steve Lewington was looking at new equipment on a trade stand when this pic was taken.



"While the training we did in October was brilliant as always, I gathered that members would pay more for advanced training, and that's something we used to do in the '90s," Mark said.

He intends putting a proposal to the next Board meeting for a concerted effort to stage VASA workshops of advanced training in all states and New

Zealand during 2010, in a well orchestrated promotional effort, with the help of wholesaler members to get the word out.

Mark Mitchell
welcomes members



A little reflection might change your course for next year - for the better

...some good advice from VASA President Ian Stangroome

With the year drawing to a close and the Christmas holiday season on everyone's mind, those of us in the vehicle air conditioning business face the busiest time as the heat of summer begins to bite.

As our customers are making sure the family car is good to go, we in the industry are frantically trying to get the work out the door so we too can enjoy a break with our families and friends.

But what a year it has been. Interest rates plummeted to record lows, the government splashed out cash to all and sundry and we even dodged a recession. Or did we?

We have a government still promoting accelerated spending and yet a Reserve Bank Board attempting to put the brakes on the economy by tinkering with interest rates. What's going on?

In the automotive game, we'd call this traction control at work! Maybe a more sophisticated Electronic Stability Program is required.

Despite the turmoil of the GFC, I trust you have all come through the year in good shape.

The end of year break is always a good opportunity to reflect on the year and assess how you went, personally and professionally.

Self assessment is vitally important, because if we don't do it, there's a danger that we just regurgitate the same old stuff in our lives and our businesses, good and bad, year after year.

Consider the highs and lows of your year and the factors that brought them about. By repeating the circumstances and planning that led to the highs you are more likely to have more highs.

By deliberately removing the negative impacts that led to the lows in your year you will minimise, by default, the lows.

If you feel things have 'just got to

change', then you have to cause or initiate that change, because it is utter lunacy to expect a different outcome by performing the same actions.

As Albert Einstein once said 'You can never solve a problem with the same level of thinking as it was created'.

Running a business is a matter of constantly evaluating what is going on within the business as well as in the market place.

What do our customers want and need from us? What are we doing or not doing, or what are the competitors doing that may cause us to lose market share?

What technologies do we need to equip and train for? ***There can be no progress without regress.***

In other words keep looking at what has previously occurred and you will be in a much better position to accurately predict and control what is likely to happen in the future.

Look to the past to see the future and you will hold the power to steer your business in the right direction. If you do not believe you are able to predict the future, invent your own.

Constantly measure and evaluate everything and this will enable you to make the corrections exactly as required to perform at 100% and better.

So put some time aside during this festive season to recall the best and worst aspects of your year just gone, and make some plans to increase the best and reduce the worst.

Put those plans into practice and, no matter where you are at now, you will begin to see an overall improvement in the coming year.

On behalf of the VASA Board, I wish all VASA members and their families a safe and very merry Christmas and a happy, prosperous New Year and I hope next year is an absolute bumper for you all.



VASA President Ian Stangroome and the Board of Directors together with the admin and Hot Air team wish all members and friends of VASA a safe and enjoyable festive season, and may next year be an absolute winner.

PADWICK RE-ELECTED TO ARC AND KEEPS THE CHAIR

VASA Vice President Mark Padwick has been re-elected to the Board of the Australian Refrigeration Council (ARC), which administers the Refrigerant Handling Licence and Authorisations on behalf of the Australian Government.

With the help of Automotive Training Solutions director Grant Hand and a special committee of members, VASA also had a major input into the writing of the new automotive Code of Practice, along with the Motor Trades Association of Australia.



Left to right back row: Robert Taylor – (Refrigeration & Air Conditioning Contractors Association), Peter Taylor – (Motor Trade Association of Australia), Mark Padwick (Chair) – (VASA).

Left to front row: Larry Moore – (National Electrical Contractors Association), Glenn Evans (CEO) – ARC, Gary Kenworthy – (Air Conditioning & Refrigeration Wholesalers Association), Gunther Jurkschat - (Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce).

The VASA directors, at their last meeting in Sydney, thanked Mark for his efforts on the ARC, and voted unanimously for his re-nomination.

Mark took over the ARC directorship as one of the three automotive representatives when foundation member Mark Mitchell vacated the chair several years ago.

Through Mark Mitchell, VASA has been involved in the ARC process from its very beginnings.

As a result of the Annual General Meeting held on 24 November 2009, the Board of ARC remains unchanged.

Mark Padwick commented "Amid the global credit crisis, CPRS and National licencing reforms, the ARC has been about setting the direction and managing the change.

"The underlying theme of our new road plan is to deliver improved value to licence holders."

Obituary

Jim Russell, founder of A.K.T.F. Pty Ltd



Until 1970 Jim Russell was a fitter, working in the Sydney port area, during which time he became interested in tooling and engineering

design work especially on vessels.

That was the year he applied for and started a job with Mounts and Pulleys, known to the industry as MAPCO. He learned about the auto air conditioning industry from the manager of MAPCO, Preston Hazzard, an American with enormous experience.

Jim worked at MAPCO until 1978, when he recognised the need for mount kits which fitted easily and compared favourably with Japanese mounts, which only suited Japanese engines. So Jim and his wife Carol set up their business at Kirrawee in 1978, which is still known as A.K.T.F. and commenced manufacturing Mount and Drive kits for Australian vehicles.

In typical fashion the name was derived from Jim's passion to design and build a mount that was every bit as good as the Japanese and one that fitted without the need for a file and a large hammer.

The range quickly expanded as

did A.K.T.F.'s reputation. Jim, always supported by Carol, has been actively involved in the automotive air conditioning industry since the early days and has contributed much to its growth.

In 1996 Jim was the first recipient of the now well established VASA Pioneer Award, in recognition of those who contribute to mobile air conditioning in a substantial way.

Jim was humbled by the presentation by then VASA President Mark Mitchell and really didn't understand why he was being considered as a pioneer of our industry.

He wondered why people were fussing over him, when all he did was make really good mounts.

VASA Vice President Mark Padwick, who delivered the eulogy at the service, recalled the many times he had suggested to Jim where and how the compressors should be mounted.

"Jim would go along with me, never wanting to offend, but you knew he had other ideas. He would work late into the night to ensure the best mount was made."

One of Jim's sons, Jamie, later joined Jim in the business, adding machining to their capabilities.

As the industry changed, A.K.T.F. downsized and moved to Taren Point and then finally closed.

Jim is survived by his wife Carol and sons Jamie and Jason.

Leaking refrigerant while waiting for repair - is the law being broken?

A Western Australian member, obviously anxious to do the right thing to limit the release of R134a into the atmosphere, was concerned that in cases where an a/c can't be repaired immediately due to availability of parts, a leaking system can be sent back to the streets for days.

The workshop wanted to know if knowingly letting the vehicle go with refrigerant slowly leaking was the right thing to do, or should they have decommissioned the system until parts were available.

The workshop in question is not in the city, and they often have to wait days for parts.

The member was worried that under the code, which they read from cover to cover, it doesn't tell them how to handle this situation but stresses that it is their responsibility to fix the leak, provided the customer agrees. Were they within the law by letting the vehicle go, knowing that it will leak refrigerant until the repair can be done?

VASA put the question to

the Australian Refrigeration Council (ARC), and this was the response:

'Your member has diagnosed the problem and suggested the only practical solution.

The next step is up to the customer. It is the customer's decision to agree to the repair and to return the car when parts are available.

If the workshop was to recover the refrigerant against the will of the customer, it would almost certainly be breaking another law - stealing!'

Fortunately, common sense is applied to these situations by the ARC auditors.

In this case, the workshop fulfilled its obligations by explaining to the customer what has to be done to fix the leak.

It was then the customer's decision to go ahead with the fix and, once having made that decision, the job could only be done when the vehicle is returned and the parts are available.

Snap up a few a/c equipment bargains

An Ipswich (Qld) based company, Heavy Plant Hire has closed down its a/c repair business and has a number of surplus workshop tools and equipment to sell off. Manager Gerry Kirkpatrick says all genuine offers will be considered.

Members in the Brisbane area might want to make contact and check it out. Contact: Gerry Kirkpatrick
Mobile: 0400 937 087
Ph: 1300 851 871
Email: admin@heavyplanthire.net
Depot 43 Belar St Yamanto Qld 4305

- Atco 3700 hose crimper
- Promax-Minimax-E recovery machine
- Ice electronic refrigerant scale
- Leak finder kit
- TIF refrigerant leak detector
- Robinair high vacuum pump
- CPS gauges
- Spare parts - CXS8034 and CXSA909 compressors
- Thermo fan
- Electric water pump
- A/C hose
- 3x receiver dryer filters
- 100s various a/c fittings



**ON YOUR WEBSITE
FOR MEMBERS ONLY**

- All 51 bulletins of the famous VASA RTP bible on vehicle air conditioning
- MACS Worldwide service bulletins from Feb 2005
- Hot Air newsletters back to May 2005
- 2009 Annual Report and minutes

VASA challenges Green lobby on claims of HC adoption by car maker

Claims have been made at an international natural refrigerants forum that an Australian car manufacturer is charging its vehicles' air conditioning systems at the point of production with flammable hydrocarbon refrigerant.

Such a move would run counter to Occupational Health and Safety rules in most states but, more importantly if the claim is true, it could change the industry's attitude towards the controversial product.

Everything hinges on proof forthcoming that a car manufacturer has at last designed and is installing a/c systems which fall within the safety guidelines for highly flammable refrigerants.

If proof is not forthcoming, the veracity of many claims made by the hydrocarbon lobbyists in this country could immediately be more closely scrutinised and challenged by a range of government and industry authorities.

Another of the claims relates to mining companies retrofitting from R134a to HC refrigerants. If that claim is true, it beggars belief that mining camps, reputedly the most occupational safety conscious of industries, would knowingly introduce such a risk into a plant which relies so heavily on maximum production which is in turn so dependent on rigid safety rules.

Claims of this nature have been made before by the natural refrigerant lobby on the world stage.

In 2003, at a similar world summit in Brussels, the hydrocarbon presenter was forced to withdraw statements from his presentation that indicated a system for handling flammable refrigerants in cars had been designed and that an OEM had approved the use of hydrocarbon refrigerant. No such thing had ever happened, and to VASA's knowledge, no safe system has yet been developed for handling HC refrigerant in car a/c systems.



There is ample evidence that no car maker in the world is considering turning to natural refrigerants for the obvious safety reasons. At a more practical level, those professional workshops which have seen the result of HC use in vehicle systems, report costly damage to other components, including the compressor. A major manufacturer, Denso, has issued a public warning that serious component damage will result from use of refrigerants other than R134a.

The most recent claims, in a public domain paper which can be found on the internet, the Australian-based Green Cooling Association Inc. spokesman Brent Hoare (pictured) made a number of startling claims relating to HC use in Australia.

If what Mr Hoare told the world forum is true, it represents a major breakthrough for natural refrigerants. If Mr Hoare is not prepared to be more forthcoming about his claims, considering their importance to the automotive sector, he can't really expect any support or acceptance by industry. His statements will be relegated to the same grab-bag of unproven claims which have typified the presentations of hydrocarbon sales lobbyists in Australia for many years.

Mr Hoare is best remembered for his classic PR spin when interviewed on a widely circulated video following an explosion which injured four people at the University of NSW. It was a botched experiment aimed at demonstrating that hydrocarbon refrigerant

No substance, hence very little left to discuss

Acting on a decision of the Board of VASA to approach Brent Hoare for verification of his European claims, President Ian Stangroome spoke by phone with Mr Hoare on 2 November 2009. Ian has reported



to the Board "The conversation with him made me quickly realise there was little to no substance at all to his claims and hence left very little to discuss."

The responses to questions were noted by the president during the conversation.

"I advised Brent that I would follow up our conversation with a formal written request for some more informative responses to his claims and dispatched a letter to him immediately following our discussion. At the time of going to press with this issue of Hot Air, with more than one month elapsed, there has been no response.

"Without Brent being prepared to supply any supporting facts to substantiate the claims in his Brussels presentation, one may draw the conclusion that the bulk of his presentation, if not all, holds no credibility.

"I patiently await a written response from him to prove me incorrect."

The conference that Hoare was addressing was called Atmosphere 2009, an international conference on natural refrigerants, held in Brussels on 19 and 20 October 2009. It was devoted exclusively to the natural refrigerants CO₂, ammonia, and hydrocarbons.

His presentation can be found at:

<http://www.atmosphere2009.com/speakers.presentations.php>

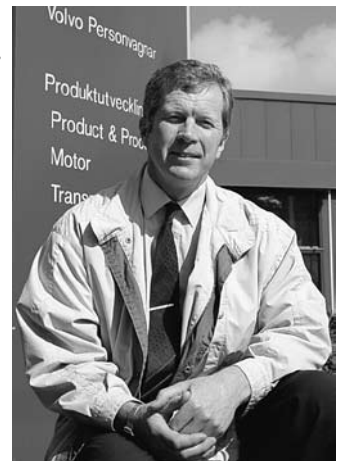
An expert spells out the design requirements

Hans Fernqvist, Technical Expert, Climate AC System Strength & Endurance Testing, Volvo Car Corporation, Gothenburg, Sweden, is an internationally acknowledged expert in the design of vehicle air conditioning systems.

When asked in 2006 for his view on the future of hydrocarbon systems in vehicles, this was his response.

"All engineers in this business are in full agreement that if HC, or any other flammable refrigerant, is to be used in a MAC, it has to be in what is called an indirect system or 'Secondary Loop' system. This means that the systems need to be fundamentally redesigned in order to be safe in both safety and reliability aspects.

"For the moment, there is no development work whatsoever on HC-Secondary Loop systems in either Europe or USA and I do not know of any plans to do any such work for the near future."



released into the cabin of a car, would cause no significant bodily injury or property damage if ignited.

"Well, you live and you learn. at least we have proved that the product can't kill you at least," said Mr Hoare.

VASA calls the HC bluff

MR HOARE'S PUBLISHED CLAIMS

"In Australia, at least one small scale vehicle manufacturer uses HyChill refrigerants in their production".

"...while another manufacturer is seriously considering the issue because of the excellent results being achieved by one of their distributors who converts the systems to hydrocarbons prior to delivery".

"Moreover, a number of Original Equipment Manufacturer distributors are removing R134a and replacing it with HC prior to delivery of new vehicles."

"...while a number of mining operators have a policy that HFCs and HCFCs are prohibited from their site in all vehicles and must be changed to hydrocarbon refrigerants before being brought into service."

VASA'S QUESTIONS

Any move by any vehicle or component manufacturer in this direction is of vital interest to the automotive industry.

Who is the vehicle manufacturer, with the address of their plant where HC refrigerant is being charged in a/c systems in production line assembly?

Who and where is the second manufacturer who is considering using HC refrigerant?

Provide the names and addresses of the OEM distributors who are removing R134a in favour of HC prior to delivery.

Produce the policies of any mining operators who are charging mobile equipment with hydrocarbon refrigerants. If you don't have copies of these policies, please provide the names of the companies who promote these policies and we will get in touch with them direct.

MR HOARE'S RESPONSE

"I am not really at liberty to say."

"To protect the privacy of this manufacturer, for obvious reasons, I would rather not say."

"I really am not at liberty to say. As to the actual figures I would have to check to be more certain, but my sources are believed to be fairly reliable."

"I am not really at liberty to say."

THE NEED FOR FACTS IN THE HC DEBATE

VASA's request for information from the Green Cooling Association Inc. made the point that it would seem to be in the HC industry's best interests if an industry group such as VASA could conduct its own independent research, with the Association's assistance.

The point has been made many, many times when VASA has been attacked as being pro fluorocarbon refrigerants, that VASA is not responsible for any of the current world view, legislation or standards adopted by all car makers.

In other words, VASA is only the messenger, and as a professional association, it would be counter-productive to ignore the standards which are set in concrete by those who research and make the vehicles.

VASA asked Mr Hoare, "If we were able to make contact with the organisations you have cited in your Brussels presentation, our technical people could properly assess the results of their usage of HC.

"And if, as you seem to indicate, HC refrigerant is destined for wider use in the automotive sector, VASA needs to understand the nature of the equipment design which presumably would satisfy all authorities. "Currently, we are sure you would agree,

there is some scepticism among a range of authorities on the product's safety and long term impact on mobile a/c components and systems.

"VASA would also be interested to know your views on how HC refrigerant in automotive applications fits into the global scene which currently seems clearly focused on world wide adoption of the low global warming potential replacement for R134a, HFO-1234yf refrigerant, with some German manufacturers still apparently favouring CO₂ but wavering in this commitment because of design costs."

Other claims made by Mr Hoare for which VASA would like to see some tangible evidence

The following statements were also included in Mr Hoare's Powerpoint presentation, and VASA will be asking for the source of these statements in its next letter.

"Collated industry data indicates that approximately 10% to 15% of vehicles on the road use HCs."

"Many TAFE colleges in Australia now teach the safe uses of HCs in MACs as part of their normal training for tradesmen/apprentices."



New members

Allan Hill
ERG Cargo Pty Ltd
72 Flanders Street
SALISBURY QLD 4107

Elaine Johns
Globo Hydro Power Limited
MT LEWIS NSW 2190

Gary Kelley
Kelley's Mobile Auto Elec & Air
Cond Service
4E/105 Cook Road
CENTENNIAL PARK NSW
2021

Tim Broadbent
Kat Diesel Pty Ltd
Arnhem Highway
MT BUNDEY NT 0886



Queensland training day

"The day was extremely interesting and the presentations were 110%."

"Well worthwhile day. Many thanks to all concerned. Look forward to future tech day presentations."

Ken Butler
KGB Auto Repairs
Redbank Plains Qld



Regulars Clint Parker and Brett Meads from Gympie on the Unicla stand with Mark Mitchell.



Product Manager Aryind Datt and Category Manager Greg Chambers on the Ashdown-Ingram display.



VASA acknowledges the ongoing support from wholesale members who help to keep the costs low for members by taking display space at training days.

For this event, big thanks are due to CoolDrive Brisbane, Ashdown-Ingram and Unicla International for devoting their time and staff to help make the day a great success.

Thanks are also due to Jeff Smit (above) from The Automotive Technician and Grant Hand, from Automotive Training Solutions, for top line presentations.



Ryan Ringelstein from Diesel Electrics in Dalby won the door prize, presented by Greg Chambers of Ashdown-Ingram.



VASA director Mark Mitchell, with Diesel Electrics' Rick Lloyd-Jones, from Dalby.

PROGRAM



RACV Royal Pines
Resort

The first electrical ignition system or electric starter motor for cars was invented by GM engineers Clyde Coleman and Charles Kettering. The self starting ignition was first installed in a Cadillac in 1911. The invention eliminated the need for hand cranking.

Charles Kettering became the founder of Delco (Dayton Engineering Laboratories Company). He also went on to invent other automotive lighting and ignition systems, lacquer finishes for cars, antilock fuels, leaded gasoline, and an electric cash register.

FRIDAY 11 JUNE 2010

9am – 3pm Wire & Gas golf tournament at Royal Pines course (including lunch)
6pm – 9pm Official opening function at the Trade Show

SATURDAY 12 JUNE 2010

9am – 9.45am Industry update by Grant Hand and Jack Stepanian
9.45am Trainers provide three minute introduction to their training sessions
10.15am Morning tea
10.45am Open forum – including VASA Annual General Meeting
12 noon Lunch in the Trade Show
12 noon – 4pm Trade Show
2.30pm – 4pm Training sessions
4pm – 5pm Happy Hour in the Trade Show
Evening Free

SUNDAY 13 JUNE 2010

10.30am – 12noon Training sessions
12 noon – 1.30pm Lunch in the Trade Show
1.30pm – 3pm Training sessions
3.30pm – 5pm Training sessions
7pm – 11.30pm Gala Dinner

MONDAY 14 JUNE 2010

10.30am – 12 noon Training sessions and Farewell Lunch



New DVD on air conditioning servicing procedure is a must-have for all workshops

One of Australia's most experienced air conditioning trainers, Grant Hand of Automotive Training Solutions, has delivered the most comprehensive and clear air conditioning service message ever produced.

It's a timely refresher course for the experienced and an essential tool for apprentices and newcomers to the industry.

to sell a professional service, as opposed to a quick 'top up' (now illegal) and an in-depth study of why components fail.

And, inside the DVD case is a 24 page workbook containing a summary of professional air conditioning service procedures.

This total package is retailing for \$50 but, for VASA members, a limited number of DVDs are available for only \$40.



To order your copy, email a request to secretary@vasa.org.au with your name, membership number and phone number and we will post it to you immediately along with your invoice.

Thanks to sponsorship funding from Refrigerants Australia, creative input from Grant Hand's company Automotive Training Solutions and production support from VASA, this long awaited program is now available at a special price to VASA members.

You receive a DVD case containing three programs, including a detailed air conditioning service on a vehicle, an insight into how

Reduced fees for importers

Those who import equipment pre-charged with fluorocarbon refrigerants including importers of vehicles containing air conditioning equipment, are required to obtain a Pre-charged Equipment Licence from the Australian Government Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts.

Once off, low volume importers of such equipment can now apply for a partial application fee waiver, reducing the application fee from \$3000 to \$400.

Further information about the pre-charged equipment licence and the partial application fee waiver is available at the department's website:

www.environment.gov.au/gaslicence

or

Contact the DEWHA Compliance, Enforcement and Licensing Team

Phone 02 6274 1237

Spreading the word - that's what we need!

VASA has always said that the refrigerant licensing regime will not reach its full potential until the public understands why the system has been implemented.

The Australian Refrigeration Council (ARC) must be congratulated on a refreshing new wave of information, carefully aimed at the right target - the consumers.

Glenn Evans, ARC CEO has advised VASA that their recently introduced campaign through 1200 local newspapers around Australia is gaining real traction.

VASA agrees with the ARC that such a campaign will more effectively promote ARC licensed businesses and

technicians and in the process, improve the value proposition for the technicians and their workshops.

The Australian Publishers Bureau, with some 2000 members Australia-wide, has assisted in 'spreading the word' regarding the requirement for an ARC licence number to be included in advertising of refrigeration and air conditioning services.

In time, it is expected that the public will look for the ARCTick symbol, as well as the VASA brand because each will signify a professional workshop doing the right thing by their customers and the environment.

The latest on the progress of HFO-1234yf, the planned new refrigerant for the major market players

VASA has been advised of a significant new step in the progress of the R134a alternate refrigerant for automotive - HFO-1234yf.

On 13 October the US EPA's Administrator signed a rule that proposes to find HFO-1234yf acceptable as a substitute refrigerant subject to use conditions. You can view the proposed rule on EPA's SNAP website at <http://www.epa.gov/ozone/snap/>.

There is a 60 day public comment period but this is not expected to change the ultimate acceptance of 1234yf.

This new refrigerant, developed initially by a Honeywell-DuPont scientific partnership, is the result of action by EU countries to ban R134a, because of its global warming potential, in all new cars out of Europe from next year.

The German car makers had thrown a lot of support for the R744 choice, which is a CO₂ system. They were trying to win greenie points from Greenpeace, but they appear to be backing off this direction because of the massive costs of redesign

and manufacturing the totally different a/c system to handle CO₂.

According to the US EPA, the benefits of 1234yf are that it is expected to be a near drop-in for direct expansion MAC systems; it is suitable for conventional, hybrid, electric and fuel cell cars; it has a low global warming potential of 4 whereas R134a is 1400; it is non-toxic and has a superior life cycle climate performance rating.

Its challenges are that the refrigerant is mildly flammable but apparently in testing to date, scientists have found it difficult if not impossible to ignite; it could be a higher refrigerant cost and it is not yet produced in commercial quantities.

Achieving the SNAP approval rating is a giant step towards acceptance by all car makers.

VASA is kept informed on the global situation with refrigerants by its affiliate association, MACS Worldwide.



Low cost sponsor opportunities now available for convention

Unique opportunities to showcase your organisation and show its products and services to a targeted and influential delegate group are now available for the 2010 Wire & Gas tee up for training convention.



Almost all of the exhibitors from the 2008 convention have re-signed for 2010, and with new exhibitors, it is expected there will be more than 50 trade booths displaying the latest in tools, equipment and services.

In recognition of the tight economic times, the Convention Committee is offering a wider range of low cost sponsorship options than ever before.

The schedule is:

Gold sponsors 3 X \$5000
Silver sponsors 3 X \$3000
Bronze sponsors 5 X \$1000

A bigger effort than ever has been launched to attract a wider audience and, with the help of major wholesalers, upwards of 10,000 potential delegates have been targeted across Australia and New Zealand.

With incentives being offered for delegates to bring additional technicians from their workshops at a greatly reduced fee, and a free apprentice offer as well, the Committee has set a maximum target of between 400 and 500 delegates.

Sponsors have always been an essential component of the Convention income mix.

Not only does it provide sponsor companies with an additional public relations platform, but by contributing to the income stream through sponsorships, it helps to keep registrations and trade show space costs to an absolute minimum, thereby attracting many more people than might otherwise be possible.

Marketing started earlier than usual, with a postcard mailout to hundreds of potential delegates in July, almost 12 months out from the convention.

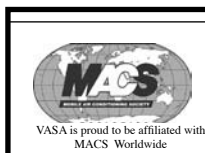
The Wire & Gas training convention has earned a reputation as the most important training convention and trade show in Australasia for vehicle air conditioning, electrical and cooling technicians.

Members should begin planning now for a stimulating long weekend and a tax-deductible break from the daily grind.

- **June long weekend 11-14 June 2010**
- **Trade show target - 50 booths containing the latest and greatest in tools and technologies**
- **Training sessions - longer and better than ever**
- **Learn to Earn - a new emphasis on helping workshops to work smarter**
- **The best networking you will ever find in this industry**
- **... and have fun at the same time - bring your family**

New at
www.wireandgas.com.au

Delegate registration form (downloadable)
Exhibitor kit
Royal Pines Resort kit for exhibitors
Sponsorship kit
Convention program



Go to the members pages at www.vasa.org.au to see the latest MACS service reports.

Australia's 'right to repair' campaign gains traction

The campaign to break the car dealership stranglehold on technical data and warranty repairs at the expense of professional aftermarket repairers and the motoring public, launched recently by the Australian Automotive Aftermarket Association (AAAA), is meeting with some early success.



While AAAA Executive Director Stuart Charity points out that there is still a long way to go, there is no doubt that the organisation has tapped into a well-spring of resentment within a number of automotive organisations, whose members are daily frustrated by the inability to get full access to the technical resources which in most cases are kept under lock and key by dealerships.

VASA has supported the AAAA campaign because it found over many years of lobbying that it was difficult for one organisation to take on the government and OEMs alone.

VASA members have been complaining about the difficulty of finding wiring diagrams and technical support data on most vehicles since the organisation was formed in 1993.

Confusion over warranty issues, especially in relation to vehicle air conditioning systems, has been at the heart of the VASA campaign.

This is partly because it is believed that the majority of the expertise in service and repair of complex air conditioning systems is held in specialist aftermarket workshops which VASA represents.

In fact, most dealerships have traditionally not employed diagnostic technicians skilled in a/c repair, preferring to

concentrate on the basics of keeping a vehicle on the road.

Apart from keeping in touch with international moves on what is commonly called the "right to repair" campaign, and holding reasonably productive meetings with Australia's Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries, the body which represents the major car makers, the AAAA is taking advantage of a current Federal Government look at the laws on implied conditions and warranties, to lodge a submission on behalf of the aftermarket industry.

The submission points out that within the automotive aftermarket and servicing industry, consumers are routinely misled in relation to their warranty rights and the value of additional warranty cover.

Ensuring that owners are fully aware of the warranty conditions and can access a competitive price for their vehicle parts and services can make the difference between affordable and unaffordable motoring.

Consumers are generally under the impression that they must use 'genuine' parts or the warranty will be void, but car makers do not make many car parts and they certainly do not make replacement parts.

These parts are manufactured by the car makers' supply network and delivered to the car dealerships for use in servicing vehicles under warranty.

The AAAA submission says that in 2005, The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission issued a statement that the use of independent replacement parts will not void the warranty and the use of the term 'genuine' parts is not necessary.

However, there are many examples of blatant, misleading warranty information provided to new car owners that leave absolutely no doubt in the consumer's mind that they are required to have their vehicle serviced at the same place they purchased their car and use 'genuine' parts - a mindset actively encouraged by the car dealers and the vehicle manufacturers.