



MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Intervention Required against Catalytic Converter Theft

The Motor Trades Association of Queensland (MTA Queensland) is calling for urgent intervention against the alarming growth in theft of catalytic converters around the country.

Catalytic converters, diesel particulate filters (DPFs), and diesel particulate diffusers (DPD) have become high-value targets to thieves to access rare earth metals such as palladium and rhodium, which can be worth up to seven times as much as gold.

As the devices can be removed in just a few minutes, offenders are targeting shopping centre car parks, car yards, and anywhere else large numbers of unattended vehicles are found, impacting both unassuming consumers and businesses.

The issue has been exacerbated over the last 24 months due to ongoing stock shortages and extended wait times for replacement parts, and with the high costs of the parts, vehicle owners can be left thousands of dollars out of pocket.

One MTA Queensland member business in the rental vehicle sector has reported the theft of 12 catalytic converters and at least 20 Diesel Particulate Diffusers from their vehicles this year alone, resulting in damages in excess of \$110,000 and impacting the viability of the business as they wait for vandalised vehicles to be repaired or replaced.

MTA Queensland CEO Rod Camm said "This is a major problem for our industry and offenders are increasingly targeting and stealing catalytic converters, with repeated hits on car yards. It is clear the penalties for performing this illegal activity as they currently stand do not go nearly far enough to deter offenders, nor are they enforced to an extent that discourages the act.

Motor Trades Association of Queensland

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“We need urgent government and Queensland Police intervention. It is important as we move into the festive season where Queenslanders everywhere will be heading to busy shopping centres and to functions and events, that car owners are educated on the topic – on what to do if they are targeted and how they can potentially safeguard themselves.

“The other challenge that must be addressed is that these devices are currently not monitored or identifiable with serial numbers, meaning there is no ability to track and trace the movements of each individual artifact. An offender can walk into an unscrupulous, illegitimate scrap yard with a handful of cut-off converters with no questions asked and they are lost from circulation forever, which jeopardises the integrity of the automotive industry and of legitimate parts recyclers.”

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Background:

The Motor Trades Association of Queensland (**MTA Queensland**) is the peak body representing the interests of employers in the retail, repair, and service sectors of Queensland’s automotive industry. MTA Queensland has been performing its vital representative role for the automotive industry since 1929. In Queensland there are some 16,000 automotive businesses employing more than 90,000 people, that generate more than \$7.24 billion to the state economy annually. The automotive industry is estimated to contribute \$37 billion to the Australian economy each year. The Association represents and promotes issues of relevance to all levels of government. In 2019 MTA Queensland was announced as an ABA100 winner in The Australian Business Awards and a finalist in the Lord Mayor’s Business Awards, for Business Innovation.

The **MTA Institute (RTO 31529)** is the leading automotive training provider in Queensland offering nationally recognised training, covering technical, retail and the aftermarket sectors of the automotive industry. The MTA Institute is the largest independent automotive training provider in Queensland, employing experienced trainers who are geographically dispersed from Cairns to the Gold Coast and Toowoomba to Emerald. In the last year, the MTA Institute delivered accredited courses to more than 2,000 students. The MTA Institute is the first trade RTO in Australia to be approved under the ITECA Industry Certification Program and was the winner of the Small Training Provider of the Year at the 2019 Queensland Training Awards.

MTAiQ, Australia’s first automotive innovation hub established by MTA Queensland in 2017, is an eco-system that supports innovation and research for the motor trades.

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