



The benchmark of industry standards.



The benchmark of training standards.

MEDIA STATEMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MTA Queensland Racing Team a thunderous success

To a fanfare of ear-splitting, roaring engines and gentle clinking of wine glasses, the MTAQ Racing Team was officially launched at the beginning of May at a party held at the MTA Queensland HQ - the Sir Jack Brabham Automotive Centre of Excellence.

More than 50 guests - including Association members, industry stakeholders, MTA Institute trainers and apprentices, and many of the team's sponsors - attended the event, as did members of Brisbane's Supercar Club who brought along some truly astounding vehicles from Lamborghini, Audi, Mercedes and Porsche to add a million-dollar sheen to proceedings.

The highlight of the evening was the unveiling of the MTAQ Racing Team car. The Hyundai Excel – that will take to the track for the first round of the grassroots Hyundai Excel X3 Series on the weekend of May 20-21 - looked resplendent in its MTA Queensland livery and a round of applause rang out as the car's engine was fired up for the very first time.

It has been a long journey for the Excel which, over the past six months since the MTAQ Race Team was established, has been transformed from a tired, battered and worn-out clunker to a gleaming racing gem, ready to tackle the track.

The journey was equally long for those who worked on that transformation – a steady stream of MTA Institute apprentices and trainers who worked long hours to ensure the car was ready. Among them were the Support Crew of Gerard Field, Elliott Lemmon and William Salmon who had been chosen from amongst the apprentices and employees of MTA Queensland members to be part of the core team responsible for preparing the car and who will be working pit lane at every Excel X3 Series event this year.

For David Wood, the racing team's driver and the man who conceived the idea of the MTAQ Racing Team, the launch party provided an opportunity to thank everyone involved and highlight that while the focus was now on winning races, the project was not all about the on-track competition.

During his address to guests, he said that the motorsport sector employed more than 1000 people in Queensland and, at a local level such as the Excel X3 Series, was backed by hundreds of small businesses – the very types of businesses that MTA Queensland represents and supports.

“People get involved with motorsport at a local level because they are passionate and enthusiastic about it,” he said. “And they turn up to the track on any given weekend thanks to the support of their local mechanic, local tyre shop, local exhaust and brake guy and so on.

“Through the MTAQ Racing Team initiative, MTA Queensland will be able to engage with businesses that support local motorsport, and that’s really the essence of what the Association is about – supporting those members and those businesses.”

David also focused on other Racing Team project benefits, not least in it being an avenue for apprentices wishing to establish a career in motorsport.

“Most training programs are tailored to providing apprentices and technicians the skills they can use in their workshop or dealership,” he said. “Part of what this project achieves is to develop a pathway that gives them experience and a set of skills with which they can apply for a job with a motor racing team. Being able to offer that opportunity was a key driver.”

Other speakers on the night included Brian Smith, Director Business & Commercial for Bennett & Phil Lawyers, one of the Racing Team’s main sponsors, and Dr Brett Dale, MTA Queensland Group CEO who, in his address, also spoke about the great opportunities the racing team project offered.

“This concept has enormous potential,” he said. “The racing car has been totally rebuilt from scratch and has offered lots of learning opportunities for apprentices, has enabled our trainers to get back on the tools, and provided new sponsorship opportunities.

“It’s a great way to grow the profile of the Association and a great tool and great platform for us, our members, and our partners. It has been a tremendous project.”

The launch event marks the end of the first stage of MTA Queensland’s debut into the world of motorsport. All eyes now turn to the southeast Queensland town of Warwick and Morgan Park Raceway where the first race meeting of the Hyundai Excel X3 Series season will take place on May 20-21.

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Background:

MTA Queensland is the peak organisation representing the specific interests of businesses in the retail, repair and service sector of Queensland’s automotive industry. There are some 13,000 automotive value chain businesses employing in excess of 90,000 persons generating in excess of \$14.5 billion annually. The Association represents and promotes issues of relevance to the automotive industries to all levels of Government and within Queensland’s economic structure.

The Association is the leading automotive training provider in Queensland offering nationally recognised training, covering technical, retail and the aftermarket sectors of the automotive industry through the **MTA Institute** - a registered training organisation. It is the largest private automotive apprentice trainer in Queensland employing many trainers who are geographically dispersed from Cairns to the Gold Coast and Toowoomba and Emerald. The MTA Institute last financial year accredited courses to in excess of 2 000 apprentices and trainees.