

**Submission
No 25**

MOTOR VEHICLE REPAIR INDUSTRY

Name: Name Suppressed

Date Received: 13/02/2014

Sent: Thursday, 13 February 2014 4:13 PM

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Inquiry Submissions

Attention : [REDACTED]

I have been in the Smash Repair Industry for just on 52 yrs, running my own Motor Vehicle Repair Shop with my husband and Business Partner .

The Industry has never looked so bleak. The Insurance Industry is out of control and we are in a "Catastrophic " situation . It is all about CONTROL.

"CONTROL OF CUSTOMER – CONTROL OF REPAIRS AND CONTROL OF COSTS " by the Insurance Industry.

Licensed Repair shops with Licensed tradesmen are being dictated to by Insurance assessors who are not licensed or qualified, to assess the damaged vehicle. Their instruction from head office is to "CUT COSTS ." regardless of quality or safety.

Assessors sitting in an office looking at images on a computer does not show you the difficulty of the repair. The repairs have to be seen and monitored to justify the method of repair, time and the costs. We do not have the luxury of X - RAY or SCANNING EQUIPMENT to identify hidden unforeseen damage, in our industry. The real cost is when the job is completed and job costed. Which is not happening.

RE : The system of Insurance companies advertising they have their own " NETWORK OF REPAIRERS "

This is misleading to the general public, they have no idea of the ramifications if they have an accident. Most Policy holders do not read or understand the small print of their policy.

When approached to be a "quality Repair shop" for a leading Insurance company we were expected to supply all our company financial reports to them and sign a contract repairing the vehicles " THEIR WAY ".

Not the way we do repairs, which is back to the original pre accident factory finish, using new parts. We want to be proud of our work and reputation ,that is why we have been here so long and have built up a good customer relationship.

We were given legal advice not to sign their contract.

The situation has become so bad policy holders are being directed straight to the Insurance Company Assessment Centres where their vehicle is farmed out to the cheapest bidder. The car owner is unaware of the system and would not know where their car is being repaired.

Insurance Companies are deliberately removing the contact between policy holders and the repair shops which in some cases families have been dealing with the same shop for generations. They are telling our customers the work will not be guaranteed by them if they come to us. We have always guaranteed our work not the Insurance companies.

Repairers are signing contracts for fear of losing all their work and their living and are just trying to survive. These shops who are cost cutting the "Insurance Way" , will eventually go under because they are not making enough profit to keep going. Numerous shops have already closed. The same

repairers are frightened to speak up to you for fear of retribution by Insurers which has happened in the past.

Rectification of poorly and unsafe repaired vehicles are now being done by repairers outside of their network repair system.

Assessors should be completely Independent of any Insurance company.

Repairs should be paid, for work done on the vehicle - at an " Industry Standard."

"REAL TIME FOR REAL MONEY" not funny money for funny times forced on us by Insurance assessors with the main aim to -
"CUT COSTS - MAKE IT LESS."

Nothing has changed in 52 yrs to improve the Industry after many desperate attempts by the repairers.

The time has come for someone to be strong enough to stand up to the Insurance Industry and set an Industry Standard that is fair to both parties. I am tired of hearing my friends in the repair industry are financially ruined , bullied or committed suicide.
It is time SOMEONE ELSE TOOK CONTROL.

Thanking You

Regards