

**Submission
No 1**

MOTOR VEHICLE REPAIR INDUSTRY

Organisation: L & M Smash Repairs P/L
Name: Mr GARRY MAHER
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I am a vehicle repairer and instructor for a major training organisation and my concerns are for consumers and the industry as a whole.

1/ As an instructor the number of failures in the new Weld Qualification Tests is a reflection of our Industries poor training. The amount of misinformation and or poor understanding of proper repair procedures by both Repairers and Assessors also reflects our Industries poor training.

2/ The number of poor previous repairs has increased dramatically to the extent some vehicles are no longer safe and would fail if involved in a major collision which would result in loss of life. Two factors attribute to poor repairs:

- (a) Lack of knowledge and necessary training.
- (b) Fixed price repairs and or tendering where the repair is offered to the cheapest Repairer.

3/ The Industry Code of Conduct is a well written document and I have the utmost respect for it but it is a toothless tiger. Some Insurers have completely ignored it and do not use any recognised TIMES/RATES/ALLOWANCES and have not moved to Real Times and are not allowing Materials to be quoted seperately. The Real cost of running our business is \$105 per hour and some Insurers want to pay us \$29 per hour. To maintain technology and training necessary to perform safe and proper vehicle repairs the remuneration has to cover costs. The Code needs to be policed and enforced !

4/ As a consumer why would you expect to have a different quality of repair and safety just because you have chosen one Insurer over another? My opinion is all motor vehicle repairs should be carried out the same and that is to a proper standard not one that is assumed by either an Insurer or Repairer.

5/ Assessing should be carried out by Independent Qualified and Certified assessors. One standard should be followed and the assessors should be able to carry out inspections of work in progress and final quality inspections as part of their job. Funding for this should come from all stakeholder ie (INSURER / REPAIRER / OWNER).

6/ All consumers should be offered choice of repairer without fear of being steered. Insurers should also be able to offer the names of their preferred repairers

7/ A rating system of Repairer Qualification should be instigated to allow better consumer choice and identify different areas of expertise within the industry that would suit a particular repair.

8/ Name and Shame - those that fail to perform should have their name listed for all parties Insurer, Assessor and Repairer.

9/ Conflict of interest for an Insurer to own in full or partially a repair business. In saying that if the assessing was independent and the necessary quality controls and checks were performed and it was totally transparent to the consumer who the repairer actually was it would not be such a big issue.