



Media Release 14 April 09

## **2009 Sydney Expos prove the strength of the aftermarket**

**The Auto Aftermarket Expo and Collision Repair Expo held in at the Sydney Exhibition Centre from 2 to 4 April won a strong response from the aftermarket mechanical and crash repair sectors, with 8144 visitors exploring the 370 exhibitor displays.**

An initiative of the Australian Automotive Aftermarket Association (AAAA), the combined Expos covered 20,000 square metres of floor space with high quality exhibits featuring Australian and international products and services.

AAAA Executive Director Stuart Charity said the 2009 visitor numbers for these trade only Expos were 33% higher than the 2005 Sydney show organised by the AAAA. "There were three stand out features of these Expos. First, the exhibitors made significant investments in these shows – 70% were custom designed – and the four full halls of the Sydney Exhibition Centre looked fantastic. Stands were big and bright and the people were buzzing," he said.

"Second, the quality of enquiries and leads received by the exhibitors was very high. The visitors came to talk business and many exhibitors remarked that there were few time wasting 'tyre kickers'.

"And third, the networking opportunities offered by these events were happily accepted. All of the industry events held in conjunction with the Expos were well supported. During the Collision Repair Expo, all of the International Seminar Series sessions were close to capacity, as were the 24 demonstrations held in the Lowbake spray booth. The Awards to Industry Banquet recognising AAAA members' achievements was enjoyed by 500 people, and capacity crowds attended the other AAAA functions held during the Expos.

"There are no other events in Australia that bring together such a large and committed automotive aftermarket audience. We congratulate all exhibitors for their determination to defy the economy and showcase the strength of the Australian auto aftermarket.

"One key to the success of these Expos is enthusiastic industry involvement in producing these shows. Each Expo is driven by a hard working, committee consisting of volunteers representing industry businesses. This means the Expos are run by the industry, for the industry. We are grateful to these teams, and to the major corporate sponsors Armor All and PPG for their ongoing support," said Stuart Charity.

### **Auto Aftermarket Expo**

Innovative exhibits were a feature of the Auto Aftermarket Expo with many displays providing demonstrations of tools and equipment. An effective technique for some exhibitors was the use of mini workshop sessions combining video presentations with the real time demonstrations.

Another creative use of display space tested by Autodata Australia was a mini-meeting room built into the stand. National Sales Manager Brett Engeman said their meeting room was busy virtually non-stop with interested visitors. "The leads were very strong – we got enough work from this show to keep us busy for three months," he said.

The Auto Aftermarket Expo also hosted the second running of the SACHS Masters, Australia's only team based automotive technicians competition, which sponsored by ZF Australia Pacific. The challenging three day competition brought 13 teams of three members each from all over Australia to tackle complex mechanical and diagnostic problems on two identical Toyota Corolla vehicles in full view of thousands of show visitors. Teams have two and half hours to complete their tasks under the watchful eyes of skilled judges from industry and education, including the University of Ballarat (VIC) and the Wetherill Park College of TAFE (NSW).

ZF Australia Pacific Managing Director Peter Duncan and Team BOC V8 Supercar driver Jason Richards congratulated the 2009 SACHS Masters Champions and major placegetters, which all represented independent workshops:

- **2009 SACHS Masters Champion Team** – The HPF Team from the Victorian Horse Power Factory workshop, included Ian Weightman, Martin Rogerson and Paul Farrell took home the first prize \$15,000 cheque.
- **2009 Motospecs Outstanding Achievement Prize** – Victorian Team Gordon, including Richard Johnson, Andrew Kuppen and Andrew Thomas are heading to Thailand to visit the Ferodo manufacturing plant as a part of a four day visit.
- **2009 SACHS Masters Runner-Up Teams** – Winning 12 month AutoTech Subscriptions, both runner-up team are from New South Wales:
  - The Mechanix, including Scott Manning, Dominic Langiewicz and Mitch Madden
  - Prestige Auto Traders, including Kevin Thai, Ashley Gilham and Nathan Klemich

### **Collision Repair Expo**

Enthusiastic participation from industry leading paint companies and body jig manufacturers was a highlight of the Collision Repair Expo. A large number of exhibitors sponsored their international suppliers and principals to visit the 2009 Expo. Many of these visitors said the standard of presentation of this Collision Repair Expo was equal to the major overseas shows, including NACE, the International Autobody Congress and Exposition held in Las Vegas.

In addition to the International Seminar Series and the Lowbake demonstration spray booth activities, a number of Collision Repair Expo exhibitors also hosted special functions as part of their investment in the show. Good attendances were reported for these events and the networking was appreciated.

### **Choice of Repairer campaign**

The 2009 Expos also provided the launch platform for the Choice of Repairer campaign. This AAAA initiative on behalf of the independent aftermarket is designed to promote consumer choice and fair competition in the automotive parts, accessories, repair and service industry.

“The aim of the Choice of Repairer campaign is to protect choice and competition in vehicle repair, servicing and replacement parts sectors by eliminating any technical or legal barriers that impact on the Australian consumers' rights to have their vehicle serviced, maintained and repaired in a timely manner, at competitive prices, and in the workshop of their choice,” said Stuart Charity.

“The campaign was well received by our members, and the synergy with the collision repair industry was recognised by many from that sector. We look forward to working with the industry to progress this important step in achieving a level playing field for businesses in the independent aftermarket.

### **2011 Expos**

“With such an outstanding response from the industry, we consider the 2009 Expos a success. As the shows were winding down on Saturday, expressions of interest started flooding in from exhibitors for the 2011 Expos, which will be held from 12 to 14 May at the Melbourne Exhibition Centre.

“We learned many things to help improve future Expos, and we encourage exhibitors to forward their ideas to make the Auto Aftermarket Expo and Collision Repair Expo bigger and better next time,” he said.

**Photo caption LowbakePres.jpg** : Sessions in the Lowbake demonstration spray booth were consistently full during the Collision Repair Expo.

**Photo caption AkzoNobelSeminar** : The Collision Repair Expo International Seminars, such as this AkzoNobel session, attracted top speakers and capacity audiences.

**Photo caption I-CARWeld.jpg** : I-CAR Australia operated a busy welding qualification testing station at the 2009 Collision Repair Expo.

**Photo caption PPG.jpg** : Major corporate sponsor PPG and fellow exhibitors enjoyed three busy three days of “doing business” at the Collision Repair Expo.

**Photo caption Glasurit.jpg** : Presentation of the exhibits at the Collision Repair Expo was world class.

**Further information:**

Barry Oosthuizen  
AAAA Communication Advisor  
+61 (0)413 185 135