



THE TRUTH ABOUT
NEW CAR SERVICING

AN INITIATIVE OF THE AUSTRALIAN AUTOMOTIVE AFTERMARKET ASSOCIATION

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The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) have recently provided updated information regarding consumer rights and servicing cars under warranty. This information is consistent with previous guidance that the Australian Consumer Laws (ACL) gives car owners a guaranteed level of protection for vehicles they buy and that this guarantee applies regardless of any other warranty offered by a vehicle manufacturer.

Furthermore, there is NO REQUIREMENT under the Australian Consumer Law (ACL) for a vehicle to be serviced by an authorised dealer in order for the consumer guarantees to apply.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

These FAQ's are provided as an information aid to car owners and to assist in dispelling the myths surrounding new car servicing and manufacturers warranties. The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) also provide guidance on their website.

Question: A Dealer told me I'll void my warranty if they do not service my car, is that right?

Fact: There is NO requirement to service your car at a manufacturer's dealership to preserve:

- any manufacturer's warranty (that may apply to your vehicle);
- any state or territory based statutory warranty (that may apply to your vehicle); or
- your rights to Consumer Guarantees (formerly known as implied statutory warranties).

Question: Can my preferred repairer stamp my log book?

Fact: The logbook in some vehicles includes a box which indicates that it should be stamped by an 'authorised dealer'. The ACCC have confirmed that even if a logbook is labelled in this way, an independent repairer may sign or stamp the relevant page your service logbook (once they have completed the service) without it affecting the manufacturer's warranty, provided all essential requirements are met (see over).

Question: How long should my Consumer Guarantees apply?

Fact: It's a common misconception that your Consumer Guarantees have a specific time limit. Whilst a manufacturer may choose to put a time limit on their warranty, this cannot replace your Consumer Guarantees. Protection provided under Australian Consumer Law will take into account the purchase price, realistic time expectations of when a failure may occur, any advertising claims and the conditions under which a vehicle should operate. A manufacturer's warranty is in addition to, not in lieu of your Consumer Guarantees.

Question: What if I have a warranty claim – who can fix that?

Fact: Should you have a warrantable defect, it may be a condition of the warranty that any work to replace or repair the defect is carried out at a dealer workshop/s. However, the manufacturer may still choose at their discretion to allow any other workshop to do the work on their behalf.

Question: Who can verify my logbook?

Fact: Your log book can be verified if the work has been conducted by fully qualified staff and according to manufacturer's specifications, using appropriate quality parts.

Question: Will having my car serviced preserve my resale value?

Fact: Evidence of a well maintained car will usually augur well for upholding resale value.



SERVICING OUTSIDE THE DEALERSHIP

A question often asked is whether a new car warranty is void if the car is serviced outside of the manufacturers dealership. The answer depends on whether the warranty is offered by the car manufacturer or if it's an aftermarket plan offered by the dealer.

Vehicle Manufacturer Warranties

In addition to the consumer guarantees under the ACL, vehicle manufacturers and dealers often offer manufacturer's warranties.

A manufacturer's warranty is a promise to the consumer that the vehicle will be free from defects for a certain period of time and that any defects will entitle the consumer to a repair or other compensation.

If the manufacturer's warranty states that the vehicle can only be serviced by an authorised dealer, this may raise concerns under the Competition and Consumer Act (2010) and you are encouraged to report this activity immediately to the ACCC.

Dealers Extended Warranties

Dealers sometimes offer their own 'extended' warranties that usually kick in at the completion of the manufacturer's warranty. Although these warranties **CANNOT REPLACE** the manufacturer's warranty or the consumer guarantees, imposing conditions maybe permissible.

If there are exclusive requirements in a dealer's warranty, an independent repairer may void the warranty if they service the vehicle. Many workshops offer their own extended warranties or instead choose to educate customers on the many pitfalls that may be associated with them.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ESSENTIAL WORKSHOP PRACTICES

In order to perform servicing on your new car, your workshop must abide by some minimum essential requirements:

- use quality spare parts from reputable suppliers.
- service in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.
- staff are trained, supervised and suitably qualified.
- fluids and lubricants meet manufacturers specifications.

DEALERSHIP DISPUTES

If a dealer or manufacturer declines a valid warranty claim solely on the basis that your car was not serviced by a dealership and/or 'non-genuine' parts were fitted we would encourage you to report this to the ACCC;

Tel 1300 302 502
or website: www.accc.gov.au

For further information and complimentary legal support, contact the AAAA via the details below.



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