

MOTORING MATTERS *Factsheet*

Ensuring Vehicle Safety: The “De-Speccing” Issue



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Current Situation

- ▶ Vehicle safety has progressed remarkably over the past decade. Much of this is an indication of the success of various New Car Assessment Programs (NCAP) in globally driving improvements in vehicle safety. We now see consistent four and five star results in crash testing. However, some two and three star cars are still offered for sale;
- ▶ Some new cars sold in Australia often do not have the same safety features fitted as in equivalent overseas model. Figures 1 and 2 below provide examples of the sort of vehicle de-specification - “de-speccing” - occurring for leading edge safety technologies such as Electronic Stability Control (ESC) and curtain airbags for passenger 4WDs and small and medium passenger cars;
- ▶ The problem is widespread, and given the proven benefits of features such as ESC and side/curtain airbags, this situation is far from satisfactory.

What AAA Wants

- ▶ Ensure that Australian new car buyers are offered cars with at least the same level of safety equipment as equivalent vehicles sold in the US or Europe;
- ▶ The Federal Government to ensure safety features are retained on vehicles through its role as a major fleet purchaser.

Why We Want It

- ▶ The two significant safety technologies that are available overseas but currently not offered widely in Australia are ESC and side curtain airbags;
- ▶ Research conducted in Europe, Japan and the US all show significant reductions in crashes for passenger cars and 4WDs fitted with ESC – up to 50% in rollover crashes in the US;
- ▶ In 2005 the Australasian New Car Assessment Program, in partnership with the Federal Government, crash tested and reviewed the potential benefits of head protecting side airbags. ANCAP estimated that effective side head/curtain airbags could reduce fatalities in Australia by almost 12%.
- ▶ Passenger cars and 4WDs with the best vehicle safety technologies provide community benefits through
 - Reduction in road fatalities, injuries and trauma
 - Lower human and social cost - cost of road crashes and trauma to the Australian economy is \$17 billion a year
 - Reduced impact on Australia’s health system

Constituent
Member



Help when you need it most.



Figure 1 – Comparison of Availability of ESC

Figure 1.1 - Small and Medium Passenger Cars

VEHICLE MAKE/MODEL	AUS	EU	USA
Ford Fiesta	Not available on any variant	Available on some variants	Not sold in that market or data not available
Ford Focus	Available on some variants	Available on some variants	Not available on any variant
Holden Astra	Available on some variants	Available on all variants	Not sold in that market or data not available
Holden Barina	Not available on any variant	Not available on any variant	Not available on any variant
Honda Civic	Not available on any variant	Available on all variants	Available on some variants
Honda Jazz	Not available on any variant	Not available on any variant	Not available on any variant
Hyundai Accent	Not available on any variant	Available on some variants	Not available on any variant
Hyundai Elantra	Available on some variants	Not sold in that market or data not available	Available on some variants
Hyundai Getz	Available on some variants	Available on some variants	Not sold in that market or data not available
Kia Rio	Not available on any variant	Available on some variants	Not available on any variant
Mazda 2	Not available on any variant	Available on all variants	Not sold in that market or data not available
Mazda 3	Available on some variants	Available on some variants	Available on some variants

VEHICLE MAKE/MODEL	AUS	EU	USA
Mazda 6	Available on some variants	Available on some variants	Available on some variants
Mitsubishi Lancer	Not available on any variant	Not sold in that market or data not available	Not available on any variant
Nissan Tiida	Not available on any variant	Not sold in that market or data not available	Not sold in that market or data not available
Peugeot 307	Available on some variants	Available on all variants	Not sold in that market or data not available
Subaru Impreza	Not available on any variant	Not available on any variant	Not available on any variant
Subaru Liberty	Available on some variants	Available on some variants	Available on some variants
Suzuki Swift	Not available on any variant	Available on some variants	Not sold in that market or data not available
Toyota Corolla	Not available on any variant	Available on some variants	Available on some variants
Toyota Camry	Available on some variants	Not sold in that market or data not available	Available on some variants
Toyota Yaris	Not available on any variant	Available on some variants	Not available on any variant
VW Polo	Available on some variants	Available on some variants	Not sold in that market or data not available
VW Golf	Available on some variants	Available on all variants	Available on some variants

Figure 1.2 - Small and Medium Passenger 4WDs/SUVs

VEHICLE MAKE/MODEL	AUS	EU	USA
Honda CR-V	Available on all variants	Available on all variants	Available on all variants
Mazda Tribute / Ford Escape	Not available on any variant	Not sold in that market or data not available	Not available on any variant
Mitsubishi Outlander	Available on some variants	Not sold in that market or data not available	Available on all variants
Nissan X-Trail	Not available on any variant	Available on some variants	Not sold in that market or data not available
Subaru Forester	Not available on any variant	Available on some variants	Not available on any variant
Toyota RAV4	Available on some variants	Not sold in that market or data not available	Available on all variants
Holden Captiva	Available on all variants	Available on some variants	Not sold in that market or data not available
Subaru Outback	Available on some variants	Available on some variants	Available on some variants

KEY		
	Available on all variants	Available on all variants
	Available on some variants	Available on some variants
	Not available on any variant	Not available on any variant
	Not sold in that market or data not available	Not sold in that market or data not available



Figure 2 – Comparison of Availability Side Head/Curtain Airbags

Figure 2.1 - Small and Medium Passenger Cars

VEHICLE MAKE/MODEL	AUS	EU	USA
Ford Fiesta	Available on some variants	Not available on any variant	Not sold in that market or data not available
Ford Focus	Not available on any variant	Available on all variants	Available on some variants
Holden Astra	Available on some variants	Available on all variants	Not sold in that market or data not available
Holden Barina	Not available on any variant	Available on all variants	Available on all variants
Honda Civic	Available on some variants	Available on all variants	Available on all variants
Honda Jazz	Not available on any variant	Not available on any variant	Available on all variants
Hyundai Accent	Available on some variants	Not sold in that market or data not available	Available on all variants
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Toyota Corolla	Not available on any variant	Available on all variants	Available on some variants
Toyota Camry	Available on some variants	Not sold in that market or data not available	Available on all variants
Toyota Yaris	Available on some variants	Available on all variants	Available on some variants
VW Polo	Available on all variants	Available on all variants	Not sold in that market or data not available
VW Golf	Available on all variants	Available on all variants	Available on all variants

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Mitsubishi Outlander	Available on some variants	Available on all variants	Available on all variants
Nissan X-Trail	Not available on any variant	Available on all variants	Not sold in that market or data not available
Subaru Forester	Available on all variants	Available on some variants	Available on all variants
Toyota RAV4	Available on some variants	Available on all variants	Not sold in that market or data not available
Holden Captiva	Available on all variants	Available on all variants	Not sold in that market or data not available
Subaru Outback	Available on some variants	Available on some variants	Available on all variants

KEY		
	Available on all variants	Available on all variants
	Available on some variants	Available on some variants
	Not available on any variant	Not available on any variant
	Not sold in that market or data not available	Not sold in that market or data not available

NOTE	
	Data for Figures 1 and 2 from:
	• Australian vehicles specifications taken from vehicle manufacturer websites.
	• EU specifications from Euro NCAP website, www.euroncap.com
	• US vehicle specifications from US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) website, www.safercar.gov

