

Hot Air



Hot Air is printed with the generous assistance of

Newsletter of the Vehicle Airconditioning Specialists of Australasia

Second Edition 2000 (pre-convention)

National Secretariat: VASA (ACN 063 969 783) 30 Lexton Road Box Hill Vic 3128

Ready.....set... brrrrrrrrrrr....

Auckland 2000
Proudly
sponsored by



We've packed our long red flannels with the trapdoor in the back ready for the cool of Auckland but the warmth of the greetings of the fellow members of VASA who will be gathering for their first convention outside Australia. From opening day on 20 July 2000, it will be a big moment for the New Zealand contingent of VASA, who were admitted to the association two years ago. There's great interest from local industry people and it promises to be another great convention.

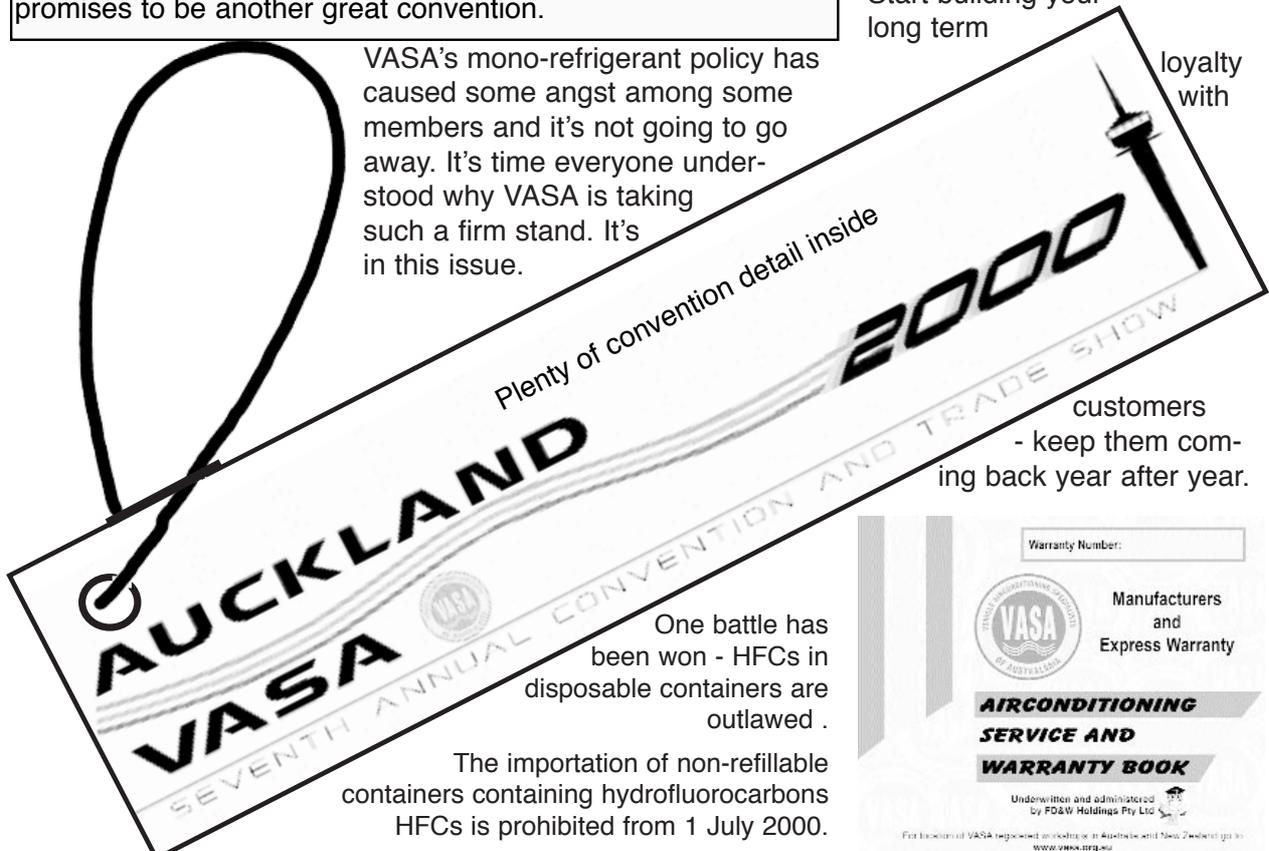
VASA WARRANTY DEBUT
The VASA Warranty debuts in Auckland - look for the order form in this issue.

Be first to offer this unique warranty from your workshop. Start building your long term



VASA's mono-refrigerant policy has caused some angst among some members and it's not going to go away. It's time everyone understood why VASA is taking such a firm stand. It's in this issue.

loyalty with



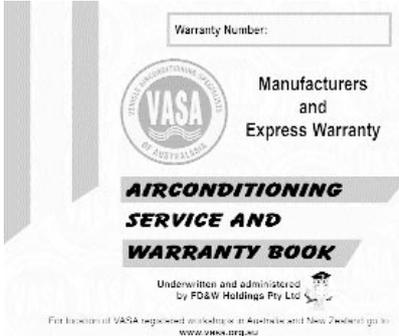
Plenty of convention detail inside

customers - keep them coming back year after year.

One battle has been won - HFCs in disposable containers are outlawed .

The importation of non-refillable containers containing hydrofluorocarbons HFCs is prohibited from 1 July 2000.

The Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations 1956, will be amended prohibiting the importation of non-refillable containers containing HFCs designed for use in the maintenance of refrigerative units (including air conditioning units).



Read inside why the Warranty must be provided FREE to your customers.

With this edition of Hot Air coming out on the eve of the Auckland 2000 convention, registrations will be finalised and delegates will be preparing for four days of debate, decisions, stimulating workshops and guest speakers.

However, like all good conventions, late registrations will be accepted, so if you get a last minute whim to attend, jump on a plane and do it. Sometimes, you can get some great last minute air packages, so check these out also.

Here's the line-up of events for Auckland.

Thursday 20 July 2000

8.30am Committee mtg
7pm -10pm Service Forum (begins with a light meal / followed by workshop session with Grant Hand)

Friday 21 July 2000

7am Exhibitor set up
VASA Golf Tournament at the Gulf Harbour Country Club, venue of the 1998 World Cup Golf Tournament.

SPONSORED BY



Or

Industry tour - Air New Zealand Engineering facility, Sensation Yachts and Alloy Yachts and lunch time wine tour

6.30pm Cocktail party
7.15pm Official Opening
7.30pm Trade Show opens

Saturday 22 July 2000

Annual General Meeting – Conference – Keynote speakers

8.45am Introduction by Chairman
9am Annual General Meeting

8pm

Gala annual dinner
Sponsored by Sanden International

PARTNERS PROGRAM

Partners will be treated to the history of inner city Auckland along with the hospitality of Auckland's

north west, as they visit homes, gardens, arts and craft centres. Our weather can be unpredictable, so please come prepared with a jacket plus gloves and hat if you feel the cold, and comfortable shoes.



10.30am



The RTP in the USA - Frank Allison CEO of IMACA

10.40am



Warranty program presentation - Grant Hand

12.10pm
1pm - 5pm
1.30pm

Questions Trade Show Implications of GST - Allan Gilligan (Gilligan and Co) & John Watson (LBW and Partners)

2.15pm

Multiplex Wiring - Brian Davis (Honda New Zealand)
Alison Handley - Ministry for the Environment

2.40pm



Mark Padwick - Sanden International



3pm



Guest Speaker - Tony Christiansen
Final Address
Pre Dinner Drinks - Sponsored by Sanden Int

3.45pm

4.45pm
7.15pm

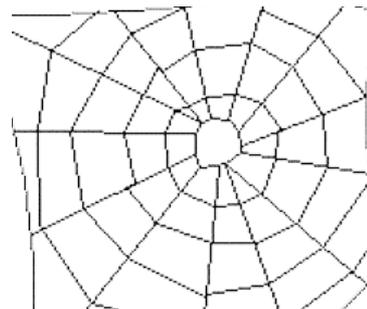
Sunday 23 July 2000

Farewell Breakfast - sponsored by



10am - 12noon Trade Show

The latest on the web



Members on line have now reached the 100 mark. This represents 37% of the membership.

The target is to get the entire membership communicating on line by the end of this year. Members who have recently acquired an email address should go to our website now and log on.

www.vasa.org.au

Why the VASA warranty will be a free service to our customers

At a meeting of Queensland members in May, some concerns were expressed about the fact that the new VASA warranty would be issued **free** and **paid for** by the VASA members.

Since the Queensland meeting in May, and as a result of the issues raised by some members at that meeting about the warranty program the special committee involved with the drawing up of the program had another good hard look at the entire proposal in order to properly address these concerns.

In addition, meetings were held with FD & W Holdings, the company which will manage the program.

IT'S OPTIONAL

The decision to offer the warranty free to the customer is optional at the workshop.

The VASA service centre has these choices: Offer this new 3 year warranty OR offer the "express warranty" currently used in most workshops today, of "12 months parts only". This is particularly useful in those cases where a customer chooses not to go ahead with recommended repairs or replacements to a system and you believe you can't warrant the repairs carried out in isolation.

These points need to be made:

1.

The advice from FD & W Holdings is that the Trade Practices Act clearly states that a service provider or manufacturer cannot sell what they are already legally obliged to do.

2.

Extracts from the handbook "Warranties and Refunds" issued by the Australian Competition and

Consumer Commission. "Many retailers, service providers and manufacturers do not understand the difference between their own voluntary warranties and the statutory warranties provided by the Act. The fact is that the Act gives warranty and refund rights to consumers whether or not retailers, service providers and manufacturers choose to give their own warranty or guarantee." ..and further "Sellers sometimes encourage consumers to buy a warranty where no voluntary warranty is given, or to pay to extend an existing one." Consumers should check whether the likely benefits justify the additional cost and especially that the extended warranty is not simply doubling upon the protection of the statutory warranty provisions of the Trade Practices Act. Sellers who offer such warranties risk breaching the Act if they misrepresent either the real benefits or consumers' need for them."

ELIMINATES THE GREY AREAS

3.

The VASA warranty, which will be given away free to customers, effectively "buttons up" the statutory warranty, leaving no grey areas between the customer and the service centre.

4.

The VASA committee did not want VASA warranty tarnished with all of the other warranties available in the motor trade, which are notorious for their poor management and claims difficulties. They are time consuming and full of "outs" and conditions.

5.

Selling the warranty leaves a perception that the workshop is not

confident that a professional job has been carried out and that the workshop is looking to cover their backsides. This perception is totally opposed to all of the work of VASA in trying to present to the consumer and the industry that auto airconditioning requires repair and systems management by competent and professional workshops. This is the cornerstone of VASA's very existence.

TAKES THE MYSTERY OUT OF WARRANTY

6.

The VASA warranty is simple and plain. It takes all the mystery out of warranty and through the good management of FD & W Holdings, there will no longer be any conflict between customer and workshop.

7.

It is further considered by the committee that if the customer is faced with paying an additional fee for a warranty, they will demand a great deal more time and information before agreeing to the purchase. During this explanation of the warranty's benefits, it is extremely likely that the customer will balk at the cumulative funding he/she has to meet to protect the workshop's workmanship ie an up front fee to purchase the warranty and then three more charged warranty inspections.

8.

It is considered that if the warranty is issued free, the customer is much more likely to feel better disposed towards bringing the vehicle back to the workshop for the three charged warranty inspections.

9.

If VASA had chosen not to develop a warranty scheme, all workshops would face the growing backlash of consumer protection in which they could very conceivably find the often quoted 12 month or 20,000 km warranty blowing out to more like FIVE YEARS in the eyes of the ACCC.

10.

By the ACCC definition, there is no such thing as a 12 month warranty. Future reactions to this kind of warranty are likely to be very negative and costly for the workshop. By comparison, the VASA warranty, which has been checked and cleared by the ACCC is seen as a positive, realistic, easy to understand step by the automotive air-conditioning industry to protect its customers to a reasonable limit (three years), and clearly spells out the obligations on both parties. In addition, it offers a professional mediation service to resolve problems quickly and effectively, retain the customer support for the workshop and avoid long, costly and acrimonious delays in payments and repairs for both workshops and customers.

11.

The committee and the directors of VASA trust these points will more clearly explain the need for the warranty to remain as a free service to customers and that in the long run, it will result in a much more loyal customer base and savings for the workshop through the elimination of all grey areas which normally plague all warranty questions.

The VASA website
www.vasa.org.au
contains a wealth of information about membership, together with a complete state by state listing of all members. It is a great resource. Use it.



ON THE PRESIDENT'S MIND



VASA's mono refrigerant stand, especially in relation to hydrocarbon refrigerants, caused a member to resign. This is regrettable, but I felt obliged to send this letter by way of explanation. All should read it.

"We are sorry you have taken the decision to depart VASA on such an issue as hydrocarbon refrigerants and their ability to be used in motor vehicles.

We don't deny it has become an emotive issue lately and we could only wish that the Government authorities around Australia would take the initiative and uniformly legislate, instead of sitting on fences and taking advice from those who really don't have all the answers.

Despite what your government authorities may tell you, we know from vast experience on this issue that EPA's will only ever sit in judgement on a product from an environmental perspective and not a safety perspective.

This is where we have considerable conflict with many government departments who look at these issues with a narrow vision. We find it astounding that when products like this are reviewed, they can't seem to look at the bigger picture to see how they are used and the technical environment in which they are used.

Let me say quite clearly, that VASA's stance is motivated solely by the safety issue of hydrocarbons in motor vehicles.

It is not an elitist point of view. Many of our senior members have researched the subject closely and reached the conclusion that until a vehicle or component manufacture comes up with a system specifically designed for hydrocarbons, we have a moral responsibility to reject hydrocarbon refrigerants in vehicles for the safety of both motorists and our members.

One member who will be staying on VASA's books is the workshop at Noosa, where the technician escaped possible death or severe burns after receiving a spray of gas from a system which had been done at home from a barbecue gas bottle. A wayward spark from the engine set him alight and if it had not been for the nearby radiator test tank, it might have been a different ending.

That's just one of the stories which are being documented by VASA members here and in New Zealand.

This story and a great deal of other information on flammable gasses is on the VASA website for all to read.

While the OEM's continue to make equipment specifically for the non-flammable gasses, we are duty bound to support this technology.

We can't really accept that price of gas is an issue when it comes to human life.

I trust this information is helpful and that it may cause you to reconsider your stance.

Yours sincerely
MARK MITCHELL PRESIDENT"

The National Training Agenda

By Grant Hand



Some members will be aware of changes within the motor repair industry with regard to apprentice and advance trade training and certification.

In brief there is a new Competency Based National Training Agenda formulated by industry to replace the previous "apprenticeship" type system.

As a part of this new training system:

- assessment can be done on or off the job
- contracts of training outline the depth and breadth of training
- technicians are certified in "levels" with progression from level to level as part of that framework
- RCC (Recognition of Current Competency) forms a large part of the new training agenda
- the introduction of Technical and Management Diploma level certification for technicians, of which RCC forms a part. i.e. you will not have to attend a train-

ing institution for hundreds of hours – in fact a large majority or all of it can be done privately or you will simply be recognised for what you have already done

Level 4 certification replaces the post trade certificate or advanced certificate

VASA is currently negotiating – and the outcome looks extremely positive – to offer this training/certification across its membership platform.

What does this mean for the VASA workshop members?

In an increasingly competitive, professional industry you have the opportunity to gain certification as a "High Level" business in both or either technical or management streams. It is, in essence, a tool in gaining a competitive edge over the competition and lifting the profile of your business – all of which can be gained from your workplace and home.

Want to know more?

At the Auckland 2000 Conference there will be a presentation outlining the full framework of training and those educational advisers from Australia and New Zealand who can advise on employing "trainees" and "apprentices" contracts of training, level 4 and Diploma certification.

This is an exciting opportunity for all VASA members to gain recognition as a professional repair establishment and gain a valuable competitive edge. It is another part of the work VASA has been doing behind the scenes to help you maintain your business. Come to Auckland and find out

Refer your customers to the VASA website to help sell VASA's brand of service. This is how you build customer loyalty.

2000 European Automotive Airconditioning Convention 11-12 September 2000 Frankfurt, Germany

The global automotive a/c market is in the middle of a process of significant changes. The European market place is no exception to this. The changes not only involve technical issues such as the ongoing penetration of electronic control devices and discussions on future refrigerants but are also of commercial nature. For example, the OEM component manufacturers have discovered the future aftermarket as a potential source to strengthen their position in the market.

The mobile a/c service industry will face dramatic changes with one of the positive aspects in this respect being the expected growth of the total size of the mobile a/c service market.

Automotive Airconditioning Reporter offers a rare opportunity to address these questions, during the 2nd European Automotive A/C Convention and Tradeshow.

The 2000 EAAC takes place on September 11 and 12 in the Sheraton Frankfurt Hotel and Conference Centre, Frankfurt, Germany.

For VASA members interested in attending, here are the details:

Price for subscribers of Automotive Airconditioning Reporter is Euro 265

Price for non-subscribers is Euro 305.

The fee includes access to speaker sessions, trade show, evening reception including buffet, two lunches and coffee breaks.

Registration closes on 11 August 2000.

Registration forms are available by faxing the convention office at +31 413 255406 or email at aar@capitolonline.nl

VASA's position clear at UN level



VASA's Chris Lindeman MIAME recently presented a paper on VASA's behalf to the United Nations special committee of environmental personnel from the member countries of the Montreal Protocol. It is a succinct portrayal of VASA's position on flammables.

The committee's function is to advise individual governments on the most technically correct and environmentally acceptable alternatives to ozone depleting substances which involves CFC and HCFC refrigerants.

Chris's paper was well received as Australia is considered to be in the forefront of CFC and HCFC containment and phase out programs. VASA's efforts as an industry body to work towards achieving this were well understood and appreciated.

Here are the main points of the paper.

The vehicle airconditioning specialists of Australasia (VASA) represents 85% of specialist manufacturers, installers and service businesses involved in vehicle airconditioning.

Since formation in 1993, VASA has insisted on members being pro-active in improving technician's work skills and taking an environmentally responsible position on the phasing out of refrigerants containing chlorine.

A VASA member must commit to this policy before acceptance into the association.

VASA has been responsible for one of the most thorough technician training programs on vehicle airconditioning ever undertaken by an independent organisation.

This program has as its basis a philosophy that well trained technicians are an asset to a business by their professional approach, their ability to accept responsibility and to cope with and work within environmental, social and economic boundaries.

VASA has a policy that all refrigerants must be recovered and either recycled or returned for disposal or reclamation.

To this end we make a plea to every organisation including refrigerant manufacturers, refrigerant suppliers, end users and environmental agencies to commit to supporting mandatory recovery and containment programs for all refrigerants, particularly R134a.

VASA has also adopted a policy of one replacement refrigerant, R134a. The reason for this policy is straightforward.

It is the refrigerant of choice for all vehicle airconditioning manufacturers worldwide and therefore fully supported by system suppliers and manufacturers.

It avoids the expensive, potentially dangerous and environmentally damaging concerns of cross-contamination. It is non-flammable, of exceptionally low toxicity and if supported with a responsible containment program is an environmentally acceptable product.

Today's world unfortunately is a highly litigious world where practicality and common sense are often overridden by commercial interest, often disguised as "good for the environment".

I refer particularly to the insistence by proponents of hydrocarbon refrigerants that it is an acceptable

practice to use a highly flammable, potentially explosive product in current vehicle airconditioning systems.

VASA does not object to hydrocarbon refrigerants being used in systems and equipment designed for their use.

VASA does object to the use of this product in vehicles that are currently not designed to accept flammable products.

VASA believes that a responsible approach to refrigerant use has the benefits of satisfying environmental, economic and practical considerations during this transition period and beyond.



IMACA
International Mobile Air
Conditioning Association

The final chapter in the fascinating story of the development of the vehicle airconditioning industry in the USA will be run in the next issue and will also be on the VASA website soon.

It was written by IMACA CEO Frank Allison, who is a special guest at Auckland 2000.

The importation of non-refillable containers containing hydrofluorocarbons HFCs is prohibited from 1 July 2000. The Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations 1956, will be amended prohibiting the importation of non-refillable containers containing HFCs designed for use in the maintenance of refrigerative units (including air conditioning units).



Ban on Disposables



HFCs are potent greenhouse gases and Australia is aiming to minimise emissions from their use as an alternative refrigerant.

Non-refillable containers are specifically manufactured single use containers that are charged with refrigerant and sold and used for servicing or commissioning equipment.

After use the containers are sent for disposal and deliberately punc-

tured, in accordance with pressure vessel regulations, allowing the residual amount of refrigerant to be emitted to the atmosphere.

Disposable, non-refillable containers are also environmentally undesirable on the grounds that their single use operation is a wasteful form of packaging and contributes to the volume of waste going to landfill.

The Commonwealth Government

looks forward to continuing to work with industry and the community to protect the atmosphere.

For further information, contact:
Ozone Protection Section
Environment Australia
Canberra
Ph: + 61 2 6274 1641
Fax: + 61 2 6274 1172
e-mail: ozone@ea.gov.au
website: www.ea.gov.au/ozone

EXHIBITORS AT AUCKLAND 2000



Cooltemp

One of the largest automotive airconditioning component manufacturers in Australia. Universal products include systems, condensers, fan assemblies, evaporator coils and evaporator boxes.

OEX

Wholesalers of automotive air-conditioning components and products including brand names, Atco, Fasco, Red Dot, Delphi, Sanden, Eaton, Mastercool, Fluoro-dye, Tripac, Idemitsu and Goodyear. Also distributes a large range of workshop equipment.

SCA Australia

New products from Uniclac and Yokogawa. Uniclac have released a new range of accessories for their compressors used in heavy duty and refrigeration applications. The New Uniclac TC170 replacement for the FS10 com-

pressor will be displayed. The Yokogawa equipment will include a new pistol grip leak detector H10 Xpro plus the GA500 analyser and other quality test instruments.

Jayair

Introduction and demonstrations of Jayair On-Line, exciting new web page where customers can search the extensive database for latest product information. New product releases.

Melbourne Auto Air

Large range of airconditioning components for the aftermarket and announcement of groundbreaking new products.

Ingram

Out of our range of more than 8000 different products, display will include new range of Delphi compressors, Ingram rebuilt com-

pressors, Fluoro Dye leak detection products, laminate type evaporators.

Freeze Dry Systems/JAVAC

The Javac Xtract-R refrigerant recovery unit is now available in New Zealand, featuring compact DC motor and the oil-free compressor ensures no cross contamination of refrigerants or oils. Freeze Dry Systems are now exclusive NZ distributors for all JAVAC refrigeration products including vacuum pumps, leak detectors, gauges, scales and charging systems.

NZ Auto Air Distributors

NZ distributors for Sanden, Diavia, OEX, Johnson products, Robinair and Mastercool service tools and equipment. Complete car and truck A/C kits and spare parts for the aftermarket. On display will be the new Speedflush Auto Air Flush machines.

...MORE ON PAGE 9

Main convention sponsor spells it out clearly:

Industry leader JAYAIR forecasts big changes in every sector



automotive air conditioning parts

The Melbourne based component supplier to the automotive air-conditioning industry, JAYAIR is the major name sponsor for the annual VASA convention, Auckland 2000.

"We see New Zealand as an extremely important market for our future growth," said John Blanchard, Melbourne Auto Air CEO.



"It seemed an ideal opportunity to strengthen our brand presence and launch some of the innovations that we have planned for next season. At Auckland 2000 we will make two major announcements that we are sure will surprise everyone and will indicate what we believe are future trends for the industry," John added.

JAYAIR is a relatively new name in the Australian A/C aftermarket, but there are some experienced names behind the name.

The brand JAYAIR is a trademark of Melbourne Auto Air and was introduced to specifically identify their premium brand products and to enable them to provide marketing support to their Australasian distributor network.

John Blanchard sees every area of the industry undergoing change, affecting the suppliers they deal with, the products they sell, or the customers themselves.

"Some of these changes are market driven and others are driven by technology.

There is no doubt that the products we sell are becoming more and more technologically advanced, whether it be sub-cooled condensers, clutchless compressors or plastic receiver driers. Increasingly, the A/C components we sell are becoming vehicle specific. This has many implications for the aftermarket," John said.

"Firstly, the supplier base we rely on is being reduced, as only manufacturers with OE connections have the capacity to produce these products. At the same time, many of these suppliers are

entering the aftermarket for the first time, introducing many new names.

"An example of this is Delphi, which supplies many products to GM, Daewoo, Audi, SAAB and others from their world-wide facilities.

"The JAYAIR distributor network is a 'Partner of Choice' with Delphi for the distribution of A/C product, such as the V5 and V7 compressors rapidly becoming commonplace on our vehicles.

"Secondly, the increase in vehicle specific parts poses many new problems for the aftermarket, which in the past has often survived by using ingenuity to adapt components from one vehicle to the next to turn around jobs on time.

"The increased importance of correctly identifying and supplying the right part places new pressures on suppliers such as JAYAIR. The cost today of incorrectly supplied parts is high, not only for the supplier and repairer, but especially for the customer.

"In today's competitive market, none of us can afford it. At Auckland 2000, we will be demonstrating an industry first for the distribution of information to help repairers correctly identify the parts they are ordering.

"Thirdly, the increase of vehicle specific parts is placing enormous logistical problems on suppliers. Over the last few years we have doubled the number of people in our product sourcing department. We are having to track thousands of different parts, many of which require more warehouse space, further increasing costs.

"Many repairers cannot predict what parts will be required from one day to the next, placing more pressure on suppliers to have the part in stock, ready for prompt delivery. At MAA we have invested heavily in improved computer systems to track orders and despatch details as well as predicting future demand.



"Finally, we see many general repairers performing A/C service in-house rather than referring it to their local specialist. We believe this is because many younger repairers who grew up with air-con as part of their apprenticeship training are now managing or owning their workshops and they are quite happy and capable to perform routine a/c service work.

"They need to do this to keep customers who expect them to perform all their routine service work, whether it be brakes, engine tuning, exhausts or whatever. No longer does the vehicle owner consider having air in their vehicle as being anything special, requiring specialist service. It is no longer a luxury item.

"However, this trend does not really explain the proliferation of brake, exhaust and tuning specialists, even though replacing an exhaust is hardly rocket science. They continue to exist because they have the training and expertise to do the job faster and better and to handle anything that comes their way.

"The thing about general repairers is that there are so many of them and consumers today are so fickle and demanding, that it is very competitive out there. The general repairer cannot afford to spend too much time on complicated or unusual jobs.

"All this means two things. One - training and knowledge are going to be more and more important to any a/c specialist who wants to survive. They need to train themselves and their staff and make sure that they protect this investment by looking after staff, by recognising their value.

"Second, a/c specialists need to be just that. They must recognise the opportunities that exist and

make sure that they promote their areas of specialist knowledge. For example, some specialists may concentrate on a particular brand of imported vehicles by carrying typically hard to get parts for those vehicles and offering prompt diagnosis of problems and repairs.

"They also need to market these skills to vehicle owners, franchise dealers and general repairers in their area.

"On 1 July Melbourne Auto Air will open its first interstate warehouse, following our acquisition of Car Air Systems in Brisbane. Coupled with the completion of our new warehouse and office complex due in October, we will have over 100,000 square feet of facilities and 60 full time staff dedicated to providing the very best range of product and knowledge to the a/c aftermarket.

"We see our sponsorship of VASA's Auckland 2000 as confirmation of our commitment to the industry on which we all depend for our livelihood. We certainly aim to protect our position as Australia and New Zealand's largest independent A/C specialist supplier."

BOC

A leading supplier of auto refrigerants charging and recovery systems. Simple and effective solutions for a/c service and retrofits from R12 to an alternative.

J&N Bish

Genuine national Red Dot distributor since 1982, with full range of parts, equipment and units. The latest catalogue, and also MPS 12v 180* UV lamp with high concentrate economy sized UV dye packs on display.

AUTOTEMP NZ

Midget racecar which has performed with great success, winning the world 50 lap derby in NZ and Christchurch grand prix.. Plus an exciting range of A/C tools and equipment.

...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

Auckland Auto Air

Demonstrating the Yokogawa GA500 refrigerant identifier. Introducing HWA SUNG THERMO truck refrigeration units for all size trucks and trailers and our own engineering department's remanufactured compressors from small car to large bus. NZ's leading distributor for Unicla compressors and Jayair componentry and tools, car and bus parts.

AUTOKOOL NZ LIMITED

Specialists and franchise operators currently expanding throughout New Zealand. Specialising in airconditioning compressors, systems and associated parts. Opportunities currently available range from full franchises through to authorised distributors.

Announcement involving a joint venture with one of Australia's leading automotive air conditioning specialist companies.

SAM Computers

Major supplier of computer systems and software specifically written for NZ automotive workshops. Total workshop management solutions with leading hardware, software, communication, dedicated help desk support and training. Expertise includes building a database of client information, financial reporting and stock control.

Castrol

The Castrol Icematic SW Series is a range of synthetic refrigeration lubricants formulated from a new type of polyol ester base stock and blended with a unique additive package to enhance corrosion resistance, oxidation stability and load carrying ability.

Tridon NZ Ltd

As distributors of Robinair/SPX Corporation in NZ, will display range of service equipment, including latest models from USA.

VASA membership renewals, sent out every April, always bring the usual round of questions and complaints from a small number of members about the value of membership.

There are also queries about why the membership fee comprises two payments – the subscription and the training levy.

As in all democratic organisations, VASA respects every person's right to retain membership or leave. However, it is up to VASA to keep the membership informed of its work and to be prepared to explain its relevance in today's world.

Membership is of course a two-way street. The organisation must communicate and the membership must take an interest. Apathy of the membership is usually the biggest killer of any organisation. What is to blame? - the members' apathy, or did the organisation not sell itself well enough.

VASA comprises a relatively small number of professionals in the automotive and mobile airconditioning areas. The small numbers are largely due to the entry standards.

Unless 50% of a prospective member's income is derived directly from airconditioning work, or they can pass an entry examination, produce proof of a mandatory minimum equipment list and agree to abide by the ethical and technical rules of the association, they cannot be a VASA member. The rules of the association are formulated primarily to ensure that members maintain a professional profile within the industry and the greater community.

A small annual membership fee is levied to run the association. This is used in two distinct areas – corporate services and technical services.

The corporate service funding is used for the day to day running of the association including:

What do I get for my money?

Correspondence and liaison with OEM's, equipment suppliers, manufacturers, government policy makers, associated industry bodies, refrigerant supply companies and many others.

Correspondence which comes in the form of letters, faxes and emails from members and others.

Management of the VASA web site.

Liaison with sponsors

Minutes of all meetings

Management of membership files and data base

Crisis management

Media management

All communication content through Hot Air, conventions, website and correspondence

Conflict resolution between members and clients

Accounting and auditing

A great deal of this work is done by volunteers.

The technical service funding is devoted to professional improvement programs and helping members reach a level of proficiency which provides them with a competitive edge in the market place.

Many members are under the misunderstanding that technical funds are spent only for the RTP. The RTP is but a small part of the technical services sector. A large portion of the \$107.50 in this year's membership subscription will be used for technical guidance of members, including the handling of requests by phone, fax and email.

In addition, the funding is used for:
Liaison with OEM's, equipment and gas suppliers

Liaison with MACS and IMACA in the USA

Sourcing of information and

sending information to members (ie wiring diagrams)

Acting as a link between members (ie referring members to other members who have resolved similar problems)

Maintenance of the VASA technical library

Formulation of technical policy

To be honest – the expenditure of this association far outstrips the funds raised through membership subs. Complaints about subs are therefore very hard to swallow. Without valuable volunteer work and large donations from various industry bodies, VASA would not exist.

That does not mean VASA intends to dramatically increase subscriptions. We are simply trying to highlight the enormous amount of support and volunteer work done by volunteers to help VASA maintain its high profile through government and the industry.

If members can't see the value of membership then we can only surmise that they don't read Hot Air, don't visit the website, don't go to meetings, ignore the RTP and don't take advantage of our technical services or members network. We don't know what else we can do for you.

While membership is optional, the payment of the technical services fee is mandatory for those who choose to be VASA members.

This is as good a platform as any to say a big "thank you" to all those members who have contributed in the running of the association during the past year. Your contribution is appreciated.

Every member can now be a sponsor of VASA and get something worthwhile in return. Check out the website at www.vasa.org.au.

If you have something important to say to the key professionals in Australia and NZ, here's how to say it.

VASA's Mono Refrigerant Policy

Bu Grand Hand

VASA's mono-refrigerant policy has caused some angst among some members, leading to the odd resignation from VASA by one workshop owner who believed VASA did not have the power to determine what sort of gas consumers should put in their vehicles.

At this point in time the only OEM endorsed refrigerant worldwide is R134a. But yes, there is testing being conducted by companies worldwide on alternatives – some of which you may have never heard of.

That is part of evolutionary change in an industry. The reality is that if any company "stands still" another company will bowl them over.

And yes, there is an increasing awareness of environmental issues worldwide which is applying pressure on manufacturers to develop and use new substances.

But one point remains.

At this point in time vehicle manufacturers worldwide endorse 134a as their refrigerant of choice. Why? Because as a part of ensuring a future they all have a name to protect, principally controlled by the reliability and cost effectiveness of their product. Why don't they endorse every product that comes on the market?

No warranty

They won't offer warranty unless the approved product (refrigerant) is used in their systems.

VASA does not have the facilities, the money or the time to test products. So we follow OEM guidelines – because after all they are the only people who have substantiated reliability of product through testing.

Next year, if an OEM brings out a new system with a new refrigerant VASA can endorse it. It is simply the professional thing to do.

Likewise, if any manufacturer can supply us with independent documented evidence with testing done through an approved agency (i.e. Milspec, underwriters, laboratories, etc.) to validate the reliability of product then it will be taken on board.

Where are the test results?

At this point in time, no single company or organisation has furnished us with any such information.

Considering the amount of pressure VASA applies to governments and others on the mono-refrigerant question, don't you think it would be good business practice if anyone had the evidence, that VASA would be the first organisation they would lobby to have their product approved?

So where are they?

Sorry. In house testing does not count! After all, what is it really worth? Think about it! And with alternative warranty programs, how are you going to prove it was the refrigerant or oil that caused the problem.

Service Standards

Our big problem is the marketing of refrigerants along the lost cost guidelines. Some of our members have attended seminars where the philosophy is "Do nothing in retrofit".

Just drop out the old gas – put in the new – it's cheap and easy – don't even worry about the drier. From a professional viewpoint – what a ridiculous philosophy.

How do we even know the dessicant is compatible? What about moisture levels? What about acid formation? Why do you really think condensers/evaporators fail? It's not that they suddenly

have a flaw in the aluminium. And don't be conned into thinking you have to remove every last drop of mineral oil. Denso don't recommend removing any old oil provided it is clean. Larger volume oil systems should have some oil removed (depending on accessibility) to prevent oil flooding of the head exchangers and to maximise efficiency. But that is a professional service practice.

Cost is the same!!

If you sit down and think about it, the cost of a "professional" retrofit is approximately the same irrespective of the refrigerant used.

The only economical advantage we can find is from substandard work practices associated with a cheap retrofit. And sorry again, VASA is not in the game of cheap and nasty work. We do have a reputation for professionalism, and a damn good one at that.

To conclude we would like to relate to you a few ideas on cost effective retrofits.

It leaves VASA members bewildered when they read or hear in marketing propaganda the following statement "Some systems use a valve in the low side. It will be necessary to bypass the evaporator on these systems". The question is if you bypass the evaporator how do you produce cold air for the cabin occupants (The valve they are referring to is of course the EPR/STV/Poast valve).

And it gets even better.

"Recalibration of the TX valve is recommended, which in most automotive applications is a simple 15 minute procedure"

I am sure VASA members would employ anyone who, on average, can adjust a TX valve to recommended superheat settings in 15 minutes. It takes 15 minutes to work out how to gain access on many modern systems.

VASA READY REFERENCE DIRECTORY 1999/2000

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