



# Association of Caravan Clubs Victoria and Their Members Inc.

## Presidents Report:-

President:-

Robert Taylor

Secretary:-

Jen Lowe

Treasurer & Newsletter:-

Allan Davis

Association web site:-

[www.accvic.org.au](http://www.accvic.org.au)

Hello everyone and a big thanks to those delegates who have been attending our Zoom meetings.

So far 2021 is proving to be better with Clubs out doing their thing with the COVID sign in being the new norm. I am not sure if it's just me or if it really is happening but there seems to be a lot more caravans travelling around the state than what I recall seeing in previous years.

For the latest State Government directions regarding COVID, check their website:- <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus>

**The AGM will be held  
on Saturday the 23rd  
of October 2021.**

**This meeting will be  
held via ZOOM with at  
least one delegate  
from each club  
expected to  
participate.**

**If the nominated  
delegate cannot attend  
please arrange for  
another club member  
to participate.**

ACCVic is communicating with the Caravan Industry Association with the hope they will continue to support us at Caravan Shows. Once we have confirmation we will be looking for volunteers to attend the show and staff the stands.

The 18<sup>th</sup> National Caravan Clubs Rally 2022 at Barmera SA is commencing the 28<sup>th</sup> March 2022. It's about 10 months off so if you haven't registered, now is the time to do it. They have some great activities planned. There is a special offer for Singles, \$100 fuel voucher. Clubs that get their members to register and attend will receive a \$5 payment for each van.

The SA National Rally Committee has contingencies in place in the event COVID causes lock downs. The event will be deferred for 12 months; if members are prevented from attending due to Hot Spots they will be refunded their money less a \$50.00 administration fee.

The last time I checked there were 331 members registered of which 35 are Victorians, 19 from one club!

To register or read up on more about the event go to their web page at: - <https://www.18thnationalcaravanrally.org.au/>

### **DISCLAIMER**

The material in this Newsletter is in the nature of general comment only and neither purports, nor is intended to be advice on any particular matter. No person should act on the basis of any matter contained in the Newsletter without considering and, if necessary, taking appropriate professional advice upon their own particular circumstances. The Association of Caravan Clubs Victoria Inc, the authors and editors, expressly disclaim all and any liability in respect of anything done or omitted to be done, any such person in reliance, whether whole or partial, upon the whole or part of the contents of the Newsletter.



## Presidents Report continued:-

### Wanted:-

An Assistant Secretary, to work in association with Jenny Lowe and an Assistant Treasurer to work with Allan Davis. There is nothing difficult about the tasks; you will be guided by Jenny or Allan. You will be part of the 'Executive Team' who meets a couple of times a year, either via Zoom or at a location that suits us all. You will be taking some of the work load off the Secretary and Treasurer, meeting new like-minded people and getting a different view on how this all works. Most importantly you will be there representing your club. Our next delegates' meeting is our AGM. Please talk to Jenny, Allan or myself about taking on a position.

Rob Taylor  
President  
Association of Caravan Clubs of Vic & their members inc.

### Hahndorf Caravan Park in South Australia.

Cost for one night in a powered site last week.

**\$55.00**

Is this the new norm? Certainly Caravan Park prices have gone up but I hadn't realised to what extent.



The 18<sup>th</sup> National Caravan Clubs Rally 2022 – 10<sup>th</sup> eNewsletter  
April 2021 has been uploaded to our website at:-



## 18<sup>th</sup> National Caravan Clubs Rally 2022

Riverland Events Centre

Barmera, South Australia

28<sup>th</sup> March to 6<sup>th</sup> April 2022 (10 nights)

[www.18thnationalcaravanrally.org.au](http://www.18thnationalcaravanrally.org.au)



## Warning for Potential-Buyers of New Caravans

Potential buyers of caravans need to be extremely careful to ensure that their proposed caravan is in fact fully-compliant with Australia's vehicle safety Regulations, as stated in the national **Australian Design Rules**.

The Federal government's **Vehicle Safety Standards** branch has recognised the problems in the caravan industry, and is introducing a new **Road Vehicle Standards Act** in July this year. This replaces the **Motor Vehicle Standards Act**, which has been in force since 1989.

Caravan industry veterans have warned potential buyers to be well aware that there are currently *many non-compliant* caravans on our roads, and that the new regulations will **not** guarantee that **all** future caravans will be fully-compliant.

The new safety and quality regulations will **not** apply to **all** manufacturers and importers. This is of *serious concern* as **some** companies that produce caravans in *small* numbers will be **exempt** from having to meet the requirements of the new laws. These companies that will **not** be subject to the same level of government scrutiny of the new laws, are usually *new-comers* to the market, and often *lack* the necessary *resources* and *experience* that are *essential* to manufacture **safe** and **high-quality** caravans. They also lack the expected professional after-sales service and repair facilities across the country.

Industry insiders have long been worried that there are *too many new* manufacturers and importers competing in a very **limited**, and **highly-competitive**, market.

**Vehicle Safety Standards** will allow larger caravan companies a lengthy "*phase-in*" period to "get up to speed" with the new requirements, so it may well be that the *intended* benefits of the new laws will **not** become apparent for up to one year after their introduction.

Unfortunately for the many owners of defective *non-compliant* caravans, there are **no retrospective** provisions in the new **Act**, hence they are being forced to continue to pursue *rectification* action against the Dealers who sold them their vehicles. Despite the good *intentions* of the **Australian Consumer Law** to protect customers who bought *unsatisfactory* – or even *unsafe* – products, it is well known that getting the Dealers to honour their responsibilities, is often very difficult.

With "**Self-Certification**" permitted – combined with the lack of acceptable **Regulatory** auditing of *businesses*, and auditing of *vehicles* – it is **not** possible for prospective buyers to have sufficient **confidence** in the Design / Manufacturing / Compliance / Safety / Quality of all new caravans.

It is **vital** that potential-buyers "do their home-work" *thoroughly*, before deciding on a particular Make and Model - rather than being "*persuaded*" by a sales-person to buy a "*better*" (higher priced) caravan, which *may*, or may **not**, live up to the promises made.

They **must** decide beforehand, **precisely** what *type* of caravan they really *need* that will suit their *intended* travel *plans*, and what they can *afford*.

There are **free** detailed independent **Check-Lists** available for potential-buyers of caravans, where:

- (a) An **Evaluation** can be determined of what they need / want / prefer in a new 'van, and
- (b) A **Comparison** can be made of what Makes and Models come the *closest* to matching the required and preferred *criteria*.

This will be a *major* investment, and as such, the purchase **must** be made on a **practical** basis... and **not** on an **emotional** basis.

Sales-personnel are professionally trained to **sell**. Caravan buyers are **not** trained to **buy**, and as a result, they will very often suffer severe "**buyer remorse**", when they realise that what they have purchased is **not** up to their expectations.

Sadly, there are currently too many serious **Non-compliance**, **Safety** and **Quality** problems with subsequent **complaints** and **litigation**.

When someone buys a new **car** or **truck**, there is **no** need for them to know all about the **Australian Design Rules** (ADR's) and other **regulatory** requirements, because **Vehicle Safety Standards** (VSS) would have **approved** the Manufacturer's **Compliance** submission and **Quality** program.

However, because of the permitted "**Self-Certification**", caravan buyers are **not** afforded any where *near* the same degree of *assurance*.

Obviously, caravan buyers are certainly **not** expected to be experts on all applicable **Regulatory** requirements, hence a very high level of **confidence** in the Manufacturer and Dealer is required.

There are freely-available "**Buyer-Assist**" **Check-Lists** that include important **Questions** that potential-buyers need to ask the Dealer. It is *most* prudent to obtain the answers in *writing*.

All too often, caravanners who have purchased a new 'van, some time later conduct a fine-tooth inspection of their new pride-and-joy, and pedantically note every *minor* blemish. These annoying imperfections should *clearly* have been detected during the **Pre-Delivery Inspection** and advised to the Dealer.



## Ballarat and Moorabool Police

Police from Victoria's Ballarat Service Area issued a warning to caravanners heading away for Easter holidays. They focused on caravan safety.

According to their Facebook page Ballarat Police are aware that caravan parks and accommodation were well-booked over the Easter weekend. Ballarat and Moorabool Highway Patrol officers ensured people towing caravans, trailers and camper trailers were doing so safely.

"They stated they would be intercepting vehicles to check caravans and if necessary weigh them to ensure compliance." Most caravanners I talk to appear confident that they will never be pulled over and have their tow vehicle and caravan checked. (Stats suggest that 50% of caravans are overweight)

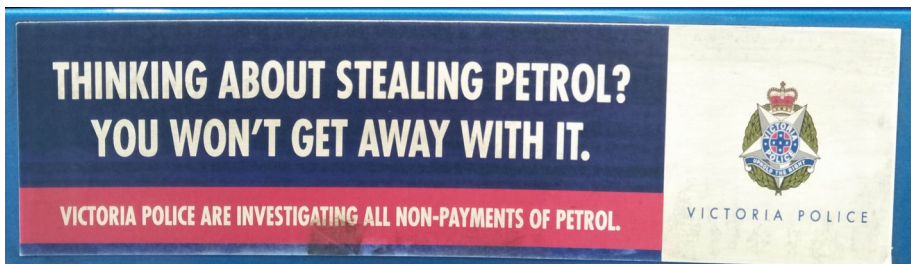
The Police said they wanted people to ensure they were prepared for their trips by checking their vehicle is capable of towing a caravan or camping trailer before departing, and that everything is roadworthy – from chains to brakes and lights and that tyres and suspension are in a good condition.

"Having good rear vision while driving with the caravan attached and that weight is distributed safely is also vital to prevent an accident," police said indicating his team may be looking to make sure extension mirrors were fitted where required.

Also make sure your vehicle and the trailer, camper or caravan is roadworthy. "With everything full, people will be travelling off the grid more and looking at free camping sites and carrying more to do that."

"My concern is that if people are going off the grid to camp, (as Caravan Parks are expected to be full) they will be carrying more weight because they still want all the creature comforts.

There will be many newcomers to the caravanning lifestyle most having never towed anything bigger than a trailer.



Seen at an APCO Service Station in Mildura.



Always read the fine print, which in this case says:- "Also the bridge is out ahead".

George, who lived in Oregon USA, loved his RV, but he also dreamed of going to Hawaii. One day, while walking along the beach, George stumbled over a genie in a magic lamp who granted him a single wish. "I've always wanted to explore the island of Maui in my motorhome, but I can't afford to ship it there. I wish for you to build a bridge from Oregon to Hawaii so I can fulfill my dream." The genie replied, "That's impossible. The ocean is far too deep to build a bridge across. Even a genie such as I can't do it. You have to wish for something else."

George thought for a moment, then he said, "I don't understand women. I wish to understand how they think and what they want." The genie paused, then said, "Do you want two lanes or four on that bridge?"





## Mobile Phone Detection Cameras



The Victorian Government plans to spend \$33.7 million to roll out new road-safety cameras capable of detecting drivers using their mobile phones behind the wheel. A trial of the technology using high-resolution cameras was conducted over a 3 month period last year, assessing almost 680,000 vehicles.

This trial was conducted during the COVID lockdown from July to October 2020 when roads traffic was lower than in normal years. Therefore the following figures are lower than what was expected.

It found one in 42 drivers using their mobile phones while behind the wheel. (That's 16,190 drivers who could have been fined \$496.00 and four demerit points each giving a total of \$8,030,240.00).

Cameras located in Craigieburn Road East caught One in 18 drivers.

Also these mobile phone detection cameras caught 667 drivers not wearing their seatbelts. This is a fine of \$330.00 each giving a total of \$220,110.00.

Other drivers were spotted driving without hands on the wheel and with pets on their laps. NB—Police can fine you \$425.00 and issue demerit points if an animal is causing the driver to be not in full control.

## Give your caravan a birthday present



When I first started caravanning I was told that I should replace the tow ball about every two years because they do break, usually at the top of the thread, see the picture above. You can then carry the old one and use it as a replacement if you break one out in the middle of Australia. It is worth paying a few dollars more to buy a quality replacement.

Just flipped our microwave on it's side, and he absolutely loves it



**So.....you've been eating hotdogs and McChickens all your life, but don't want the vaccine, because, " you don't know what's in it"?**



## How to make sure your home is still insured while you're on holiday

If you're not upfront with your insurer, you could end up voiding your home and contents policy. What you need to know

- 'Extended leave' is generally defined as leaving your home unoccupied for at least 60 days
- If you don't inform your insurer, you may not be covered, or may have to pay an excess if something happens
- Even if you have a house-sitter or Airbnb guests, you may still need to tell your insurer

If you're planning an extended trip away from home, perhaps another lap around Australia or an overseas adventure, then the issue of home insurance is something to add to your to-do list before you go.

Choice Australia took a look at what insurers mean by 'extended leave', what happens if you have a house sitter or Airbnb guest, and what the risks are of not telling your insurer you're away.

Should I tell my insurer I'm going on an extended holiday?

"Most definitely yes," says CHOICE home insurance expert Daniel Graham.

"Almost all insurance product disclosure statements (PDS) will include the requirement that you inform them if your home will be unoccupied, typically, for 60 or more days," "They will then either say, 'We won't cover you for that time' or 'We'll make you pay an additional premium or excess if something happens to your home during that time.'"

Most of the policies in our home and contents review require you to tell your insurer if you're away for 60 days or more, a few give you 90 days away without having to let them know, and one gives you 180 days where you're still covered by your regular policy.

### How does extended leave affect the conditions of your policy?

Companies that cover extended leave generally require customers to pay either a higher premium or a higher excess for that period, according to Lisa Kable, spokesperson for the Insurance Council of Australia.

Depending on which company you're with, she says, you may also need to meet other requirements, such as having someone to mow your lawn, collect your mail and regularly check in on the house.

And it's not just people travelling overseas who may need extended leave on their insurance. It can also apply to retirees taking long trips around Australia, renovators, people receiving long-term medical care in a hospital or a rehab centre, and people who've moved out while trying to sell or rent their property.

An empty house isn't just a bigger risk for insurance companies, but also for owners.

There are three main risks an unoccupied house presents: vandalism; theft; and damage from weather-related events such as storms, floods, cyclones and bushfires.

**Remember, a house that looks empty is tempting to thieves.**



# Caravan Payload

Payload includes any item added to the caravan, that is not part of the Tare weight. This includes – water, food, clothes, annex equipment...etc etc. Caravan manufacturers are required by law to provide a maximum permissible payload, that must be clearly stamped on the VIN plate of the caravan. The Caravan Industry Association of Australia recommends a minimum payload of 300kg for single axle, and 400kg for tandem axle caravans.

Some manufacturers will provide a 600kg payload, and in extremely rare cases even more.



For example this Roadstar Caravan can carry a payload of 720kg. The ATM is 3500kg.



And my new Avan Motorhome can carry a payload of 1,230kg bearing in mind that it is registered to carry 4 passengers.

Sunseeker Caravans are another example of a manufacturer who state the industry standard payload of 300kg for single axle caravans and 400kg for tandem axle caravans, is not enough. Therefore most Sunseeker models have a minimum payload of 500kg and they aim to achieve up to 800kg on tandem axle caravans.

So if you are looking to buy that new caravan make sure you look into the payload.



**REMINDER:-** Victorian motorists are required to allow a minimum one metre distance when passing a cyclist. This law came into effect from Monday 26 April 2021. The new law, requires drivers to leave at least one metre when passing a cyclist in speed zones 60kmph or lower, and 1.5 metres when passing at speed limits over 60kmph.

The law will attract maximum court penalties of up to \$1652.00 and on-the-spot fines of \$330.00. Improper overtaking or passing offences incur two demerit points. Motorists are required by law to slow down and give way to avoid a crash. “If a driver comes across a bike rider and there’s no safe way to overtake they should be patient and follow the cyclist until they can pass safely.” Under the new law, drivers and motorcyclists can briefly cross painted lines to give bike riders the space they need – including solid lines, **double lines**, painted tram-lane lines and painted islands – but only when they have a clear view ahead and it’s safe to do so.