



Victorian Election Platform 2022

Getting Victorians back on the road quickly: A Motor Vehicle Ombudsman

For many Victorians, a safe and reliable car is essential

We rely on our cars for daily life: to get to work, school and the shops. Cars are a way to flee family violence or to evacuate during bushfires and extreme weather events. In Victoria's regional and rural areas without public transportation, including our rural Koori communities, cars are essential.

Lemon cars are ruining lives and livelihoods

The Australian Consumer Law guarantees that we have a right to safe, durable, and fit-for-purpose car that is free from major and minor failures. But far too often accessing justice through the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) is expensive, slow and inaccessible without a lawyer.

This is a big problem

Approximately 25-30% of calls to Consumer Action's legal advice lines about consumer guarantees relate to defective cars. Consumer Affairs Victoria receives more than 3000 vehicle consumer guarantee complaints per year.¹ Thousands of Victorian lives and livelihoods are shattered because we don't have a fast and accessible way to resolve lemon car disputes and get Victorians moving again.



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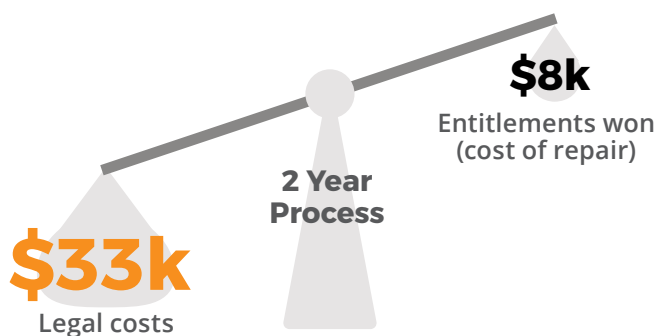
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¹ Productivity Commission, *Inquiry into the Right to Repair 'Draft Report'* (2021) 94, available at: <https://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/current/repair/draft>; data provided by Consumer Affairs Victoria.

“ It didn't just happen to me, I know at least nine people who are on the VCAT list... other friends of mine have called, and they know someone else too... ”

Sue Meadows
Lemon car victim

VCAT legal costs* versus consumer benefit



* Based on actual cost for a legal case at VCAT represented by Consumer Action

▶▶▶ The solution is a motor vehicle ombudsman for Victoria

We're calling on the Victorian Government to establish an ombudsman that is:

ACCESSIBLE

so that all Victorians can access justice, no matter their background or circumstances

AFFORDABLE

so that people don't need to find up to \$2000 for an expert report, which is beyond the means of most and a major barrier to seeking justice

TIMELY

so that people can access justice, recover financially and get back on the road in weeks, not years

Similar ombudsman schemes already exist for utilities providers, telcos, lenders and insurers. This recommendation will level the playing field, making it easier for Victorian to access justice when sold a lemon car and get back on the road quickly.

It's time we had an ombudsman for lemon cars - NOW!