Mining and Automotive Skills Alliance

Driving Industry Conversations – Electric Vehicles and ADAS in Body Repair.

This document summarises discussions from Driving Industry Conversations – Electric Vehicles and ADAS in Body Repair consultation on 22 June 2026. This summary captures the consistent themes raised across these sessions to inform training package reform and broader industry engagement.

Electric Vehicle training

- The AUR64 skill set (Safe Electrical Work on High Voltage Hybrid and Electric Vehicles) was the most common training completed.
- The AUR63 skill set was also referenced as being completed by some participants.
- Depower and re-power (re-initialisation) training for hybrid and full EV systems was completed by most industry participants, often informally within their organisations.
- OEM-based training (e.g., Toyota, Tesla, BMW, BYD, Volkswagen) was completed by some individuals but was generally not widely available outside of dealership networks.
- Some body repair trainers noted they had not personally completed EV training, as their institutions have dedicated EV trainers for that content; however, the expectation is that this will need to change.

ADAS training

- ADAS training was identified as a significant gap across nearly all participants. Most training completed was general awareness-level, not specialist calibration training.
- iCAR Australia (online training) was the most commonly cited ADAS training source across both rooms.
- Hella delivered training to some TAFE campuses and industry workshops; Bosch and Repco AutoTech Masterclass were also mentioned, though primarily as webinar-based content without hands-on components.
- Several participants from TAFE NSW hold ADAS calibration equipment (Bosch, Hunter) but are not yet delivering formal ADAS units due to licensing and regulatory uncertainty, particularly in NSW.
- One industry practitioner noted that ADAS was rare in Toyota's network until 2016–2018, and that on-the-job experience largely substituted formal OEM training.

Barriers to completing EV and ADAS training

OEM gatekeeping

- OEMs were widely criticised for restricting access to technical training and data. Participants consistently noted that OEMs keep ADAS and EV training predominantly within their own dealership networks.
- Even within dealerships, formal OEM ADAS training was sometimes absent.
- Third-party providers (like Hella Goodman) often provide more accessible and broader multi-brand training than OEM-specific programs.

Cost and resource investment

- The cost of ADAS calibration equipment is a major barrier. One TAFE invested approximately $50,000 in a Hunter wheel aligner and ADAS calibration machine and noted this does not include the target boards or additional tooling.
- EV workshop upgrades were estimated at $7,000–8,000 per workshop; adding ADAS capability increases this to approximately $30,000 per workshop.
- For TAFE institutions, the cost of keeping trainers out of delivery while attending professional development is significant.
- Some insurance premiums increase when businesses hold EV batteries off-vehicle or work on full EVs, adding a financial disincentive.

Licensing and regulatory complexity

- Licensing requirements around ADAS work are unclear and inconsistent across states. In NSW, some technicians are uncertain whether they are legally permitted to perform ADAS calibrations without a specific licence.
- Interstate inconsistency is a major productivity barrier: a trade-qualified technician from Queensland may need temporary licensing to legally work in NSW, even for the same tasks.
- NSW requires a licensed tradesperson certificate; Queensland requires only the relevant qualification (Certificate III). This divergence affects workforce mobility.
- Some TAFE campuses hold ADAS equipment but are awaiting regulatory clarity from Fair Trading NSW before beginning delivery.

Workshop space and physical requirements

- ADAS calibration requires a minimum of 14m x 7m of flat, level, LED-lit, metal-free space. Many workshops cannot meet this specification.
- 360-degree camera calibration for some Chinese-brand vehicles requires up to 30 - 40 square metres around the vehicle.

Liability concerns

- Liability concerns were identified as both a barrier and a motivator. Some business owners avoid ADAS work entirely due to fear of being held legally responsible if a calibrated system subsequently fails.
- Even when ADAS work is subcontracted, the original repairer may retain liability. Awareness of this was low among some participants.

Awareness and consumer education gaps

- ADAS calibration requirements are not referenced in any vehicle service logbook or owner's handbook. Consumers have no prompt to seek recalibration after minor repairs or modifications.
- Many consumers do not understand what ADAS is or that it may need recalibration after a panel repair, windscreen replacement, or ride height modification.

Suggestions to make training fit for purpose and increase uptake

Liability awareness as a driver for training uptake

- Several participants suggested that clearly communicating the legal and financial risks of not being trained is one of the most effective levers to drive uptake. Businesses need to understand their liability exposure when vehicles leave their premises uncalibrated or incorrectly repaired.

- One industry participant noted that a large, high-volume shop in their area deliberately subcontracts all ADAS work due to liability concerns yet the original repairer may still carry liability.

Process-based training to build confidence

- Structured, repeatable process training reduces fear and increases willingness to engage. One participant drew a parallel to aircraft technician training in the 1970s – once technicians understood safe processes, the intimidation factor was eliminated.
- Participants noted that women entering the trades often approach process-driven work with effectiveness, with female technicians and windscreen fitters actively seeking ADAS training.

State and Federal funding for VET

- VET funding for EV and ADAS courses is state-based and inconsistently available. Participants called for national funding arrangements that recognise the safety-critical nature of these skills.
- Government-subsidised training was suggested as a mechanism to reduce the cost barrier, particularly given the high-risk classification of EV work.

Simplifying regulatory complexity for business owners

- Industry bodies and training organisations need to translate the complex regulatory environment (Australian Standards, state legislation, federal requirements, ADRs, OEM body builder guides, VSB14) into clear, actionable guidance for business owners.
- A standardised national message about what is required would significantly lower the compliance burden.

Embed ADAS awareness across existing units

- ADAS awareness should not be limited to a single dedicated unit; it should be embedded across multiple units including panel replacement, plastic repair, bumper repair, and paint application.
- One TAFE participant estimated ADAS content is relevant to at least one-third of units currently delivered in auto body programs.

Generic vs OEM-specific training

- Training that is generic across vehicle brands is preferred for TAFE and RTO delivery. OEM-specific training creates unequal access and locks knowledge within proprietary networks.
- Aftermarket multi-brand calibration equipment (e.g., Hella) can often match or exceed OEM-specific tools while following manufacturer specifications. This was highlighted as a valuable alternative to OEM gatekeeping.

Licensing for ADAS

- A strong suggestion emerged that ADAS work should require both a licensed technician and a licensed workshop. Holding a personal qualification is insufficient if the workshop cannot meet the physical, equipment, and standards required.
- Some OEMs (e.g., Jaguar) already require minimum internet speeds for warranty software updates, indicating precedent for facility-level requirements.

Consumer and quoter education

- Training for estimators and customer-facing staff was identified as a priority ADAS calibration requirements need to be communicated clearly at the point of quoting and sale.
- ADAS recalibration should be referenced in vehicle service logbooks and owner handbooks to prompt consumer awareness.
- Car dealerships were criticised for inadequate handover education when selling EVs and vehicles equipped with ADAS.

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Business changes to accommodate EV and ADAS technologies

Specialist facilities and ADAS-ready spaces

- Businesses investing in ADAS have needed to identify and fit out dedicated calibration bays: minimum 14m x 7m, flat floors, LED dimmable lighting, no metallic interference, and adequate Wi-Fi infrastructure.
- 360-degree camera calibrations for some newer Chinese vehicles require up to 30–40 m² of clear space around the vehicle.

EV safety equipment and protocols

- Businesses working on EVs have introduced EV safety kits (insulated gloves, rescue hooks, rubber-coated tooling, milli-ohm metres, balance chargers).
- TAFE campuses working on EVs have installed defibrillators in EV work areas.
- Visual safety protocols such as the Toyota ‘cone on the roof’ system have been adopted as a simple, effective method of signalling an active EV depower state across the workshop team.
- Designated EV bays are being established in some businesses to separate EV work from conventional repair areas.

Subcontracting and specialist partnerships

- Many businesses are currently subcontracting ADAS calibration to third-party specialists. This is seen as a near-term solution while the industry builds internal capability, similar to how auto electricians were historically engaged by mechanical workshops.
- One panel shop actively refuses to work on full EVs due to insurance premium increases and fire liability concerns, redirecting these customers to approved repairers. Hybrids remain acceptable to service.
- One accessories and tray/ute fitment business uses a specialist third-party supplier for ADAS-compatible components rather than manufacturing in-house

Process and workflow changes

- Vehicle key management protocols have been introduced to prevent an uncalibrated vehicle being driven or moved before ADAS calibration is confirmed complete.
- Cascading risk communication between team members, from the technician through to the site manager has been formalised to prevent vehicles leaving workshops in an unvalidated state.
- Spray booth entry protocols have been reviewed to account for EVs (level floor transitions, depower status, battery temperature considerations).

Insurance and storage considerations

- Insurance premiums are impacted by the presence of EV batteries in workshops, whether high-voltage (HV) or, in some cases, lithium 12V batteries. Workcover classifications may also be affected.
- Fire suppression requirements increase significantly when HV batteries are stored off-vehicle. Fireproof cages and upgraded suppression systems may be required.
- Across Australia, fire services are acquiring specialised EV containment trailers, reflecting the scale of the fire risk management challenge for battery fires.

Cost impacts to customers

- One accessories fitment business estimated an additional 2 hours of labour per vehicle to accommodate ADAS sensor mounting, rewiring, and calibration requirements.
- Customers are generally accepting of higher prices, as ADAS work involves systems they do not fully understand. However, cost pressure remains a significant factor for small and medium repairers.

OEM-approved repairer specialisation

- The trend toward OEM-approved repairer networks (Subaru, Mercedes-Benz, etc.) is growing in the collision repair space. European and US markets have developed specialist repairer models that mirror this approach, with technicians emerging from dealer networks to become brand-specific repairers.
- ADAS specialisation may similarly develop as a parallel trade, with dedicated ADAS calibration businesses already operating in some areas (e.g., mobile ADAS calibration operators on the Central Coast and Somersby, NSW).

Productivity impacts of EV and ADAS technologies

Short-term negative impact

- The initial investment in facilities, equipment, and training creates a period of reduced productivity and significant upfront cost. Payback periods are longer than for conventional repairs.
- Adding 2 hours of labour per vehicle for ADAS-related work can reduce throughput, particularly for small workshops with 3 - 4 staff.
- The need to subcontract ADAS work introduces delays, coordination overhead, and third-party dependencies.

Long-term opportunity

- Once processes are established, EV and ADAS capability creates new revenue streams: calibrations, high-voltage work, ADAS-specific components. One participant compared this to the adoption of water-based paints, which initially faced resistance but became a business differentiator.
- For accessories and fitment businesses, each hybrid or electric vehicle now attracts ADAS-related component sales and calibration charges on top of standard fit-out work.
- Businesses that invest early are better positioned as EV volumes increase. Losing a customer who drives an EV, risks also losing that customer's petrol vehicle business.

Workforce and succession challenges

- A skilled labour shortage in the repair industry is compounding the difficulty of introducing new technology requirements. Many businesses are struggling to attract and retain staff at existing skill levels.
- Approximately 38% of surveyed industry businesses reported a negative outlook, with previously 6-week booking lead times now reduced to 2 weeks reflecting the impact of cost-of-living pressures on consumer repair demand.
- Baby boomer business owners are approaching retirement without successors equipped to invest in new technology. The next generation of business owners is better positioned to take on the capital requirements and technology adoption.

RTO and TAFE productivity

- TAFEs and RTOs are experiencing increased demand for EV training, which is a positive productivity indicator. However, gearing up to deliver training (acquiring equipment, qualifying trainers) represents a near-term productivity cost.

- Trainers who upskill in EVs and ADAS are likely to become a valuable conduit for knowledge transfer, as apprentices and trainees often take new skills back into their workplaces.

Summary of key themes

- ADAS training is the most significant and urgent gap in the automotive repair and body industry. EV training is more progressed, but still inconsistently available.
- OEM gatekeeping of technical training and repair data is a systemic barrier that limits the ability of independent repairers and RTOs to deliver competent ADAS and EV work.
- Liability awareness is both a barrier to action and a potential driver of training uptake. The industry needs clearer guidance on legal obligations.
- State-based licensing inconsistencies reduce workforce mobility and create compliance confusion for multi-state businesses and training organisations.
- Consumer awareness is critically lacking, customers do not understand that ADAS systems require recalibration after repairs, modifications, or over time.
- Both the upfront cost and eventual opportunity are significant. Businesses that invest now will be better positioned as EV and ADAS-equipped vehicles become the norm.

The views, claims, and recommendations in this summary are drawn solely from what was discussed during the Driving Industry Conversations consultation and do not necessarily reflect the official position of AUSMASA. They are presented to capture industry feedback and inform further discussion, not as AUSMASA policy or endorsement.