

# THE ROAD AHEAD

WINTER 2023



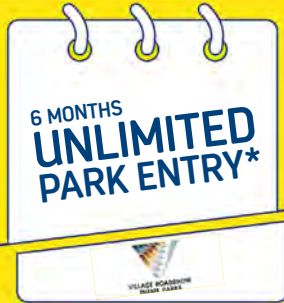
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Scan the code for more offers or visit [racq.com/benefits](https://racq.com/benefits)

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our business operates and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. We also

acknowledge the important role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within RACQ and the communities in which we live and work.



# VIEWPOINT

## THE PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

**RACQ HAS UNDERGONE** significant change since it began as the Automobile Club of Queensland in 1905.

One constant over that time has been the Club's commitment to supporting and advocating for our members across Queensland.

This edition features a new column, Rear View (page 29), in which we will revisit RACQ's rich and fascinating history through past editions of *The Road Ahead* and its predecessors, *The Queensland Motorist* and *The RACQ Journal*.

And there is no better place to start than at the beginning, with the first edition of RACQ's monthly journal, *The Queensland Motorist* which launched on 15 April 1926 and sold for nine pence

(about \$3.40 in today's money).

That first edition included a story marking 12 months since the introduction of RACQ road patrols.

The Patrol Corps, as it was known, consisted of three "thoroughly efficient mechanics" on motorcycles with sidecars.

They patrolled "a popular route every Sunday and holiday" and conducted roadside repairs, gave road advice and directions to motorists, and cleared roads of potentially dangerous debris.

The service grew quickly and by late 1927, a state-wide 24-hour roadside breakdown service was introduced.

Today, we have nearly 500 Roadside Assistance officers helping members right across our vast state.

From those humble beginnings, RACQ's commitment to supporting Queenslanders on the road has remained strong and our roadside service offering is second to none.

We now offer cover to support owners of e-scooters, personal mobility devices, motorbikes, cars, electric cars, RVs and more.

You can read more about the changes on pages 8–9.

We have come a long way since the Patrol Corps travelled roads to Caboolture in the north, Southport in the south and west to Ipswich, helping motorists.

Members can rest assured that our Roadside Assistance team will continue to evolve to meet their rapidly changing needs, as we have done for nearly 100 years.

I hope you enjoy reminiscing on how your Club has evolved.

Keep safe everyone.

**LEONA MURPHY**  
RACQ PRESIDENT

### EVENT CINEMAS DOUBLE PASS

**THE ROAD AHEAD** and Event Cinemas are giving readers the chance to win one of 10 Event Cinemas double passes. The prize includes one Event Cinemas double pass per winner, valued at \$42. Visit [racq.com/blockbusters](http://racq.com/blockbusters) to enter the competition which closes at 5pm on 31 August.

WIN!

**ROAD AHEAD** is giving readers the chance to win a \$250 EFTPOS gift card. To enter, tell us what you think about this edition of the magazine at [racq.com/TRAsurvey](http://racq.com/TRAsurvey).



For general enquiries visit [racq.com](http://racq.com) or call RACQ on **13 1905**.



TTY (Impaired hearing) – SMS **0428 131111** (Brisbane, Gold Coast, Cairns, Townsville) **0427 131111** (all other areas).



To request Roadside Assistance log a job via our **Roadside Assistance App** (downloadable from Google Play or the App Store), or call **13 1111**.

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# RACQ PRICING PROMISES REFUNDS

**RACQ HAS MADE** errors when calculating discounts for some insurance policies and we have begun issuing refunds to some current and former eligible members to make things right.

If you are impacted, we will be in touch in the coming months to let you know and provide a refund.

We are proceeding carefully to ensure we get this right for our members and it will take some time to complete the entire remediation program.

## WHAT TO DO IF RACQ HAS CONTACTED YOU ABOUT A REFUND

If we sent you a letter or email saying we've paid your refund directly into your bank account, you don't need to do anything. Genuine refunds made to

member bank accounts will show the description 'RACQ Ins Refund'.

If we sent you a letter or email requesting your bank details, please submit them using the secure refund form available on **racq.com/pricingpromises**.

Your refund will be paid to the bank account you nominate within 15 days.

## HOW CAN I STAY SECURE WHEN CLAIMING MY REFUND?

If we request your payment details, please use our secure portal on **racq.com/pricingpromises** or call us on **1800 637 013**.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please visit **racq.com/pricingpromises**.

# MAKE THE SWITCH TO WIN A LAPTOP

**THE ROAD AHEAD** is offering readers the chance to win one of 15 laptop computers simply by switching their preference for the magazine from print to digital.

Anyone making the switch between 1 June and 31 August will automatically go into the draw to win one of 15 Lenovo IdeaPad Slim laptops.

See page 30 for more details.

## HOW TO SWITCH

- Go to **racq.com** and log in to 'My RACQ'.
- Click on 'Account Preferences'.
- Select the 'Electronic' option for *The Road Ahead*.



RACQ Technical Training Specialist Warren St Johnwood.

## RACQ HELPS YOUNG DRIVERS LEARN SKILLS

**HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS** had the opportunity to practise their driving skills and gain valuable car safety knowledge

at the RACQ Mobility Centre.

The ARTIE Academy Driver Licensing Program, which RACQ supports, assists Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who are achieving attendance, behavioural and performance targets to complete their required 100 hours of supervised driving.

ARTIE Academy Drivers Licence Program Coordinator Georgia Clark said students from Beenleigh, Marsden and Redbank Plains state high schools participated in driving training with a mentor around the Mobility Centre's circuit and received vehicle maintenance

tips from an RACQ mechanic.

Beenleigh State High School student Tim Avery described the experience as "fantastic".

"I've been learning to drive for a few months and this day has been a really good experience," Tim said.

"I found the road safety information about reaction times and stop times the most valuable, as that could save lives when you're driving.

"The ARTIE Academy Drivers Licence Program has really helped me and my family, as I gain my 100 hours of driving experience." ■

## Ray's note

**LIKE MANY QUEENSLANDERS**, you could be wondering if your next car should be an EV.

New car sales figures released in early May showed full-battery EVs are gaining significant momentum. They accounted for 8 percent of new vehicles sold in April compared with 1.1 percent market share in the same month last year.

Many potential buyers still have concerns, particularly with price,

range and recharging infrastructure when away from home.

Making the switch to an EV is a difficult decision, with a lot to consider. However, RACQ is committed to giving you the information you need to make an informed choice.

The Club sponsored EV test drive days at its Mobility Centre in May (see page 10) and more opportunities for members to get behind the wheel are planned.

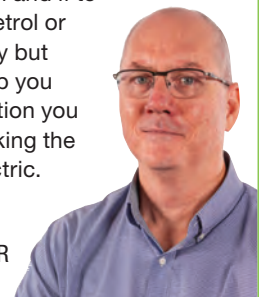
In our Mobility section, Motoring Editor Ged Bulmer answers some of your most common EV questions (pages 48–49). We also feature a new Queensland

business converting utes to EVs (pages 50–51) and review an exciting new electric car from Hyundai (page 56).

You can keep updated on EV trends and new models at **racq.com/ev**.

Deciding when and if to move on from petrol or diesel is not easy but we hope to equip you with the information you need before making the transition to electric.

**RAY ANDERSEN**,  
MANAGING EDITOR



# YOUR SAY

GIVING MEMBERS A VOICE



**RACQ CLUBHOUSE: EMAIL** ROADAHHEAD@RACQ.COM.AU. **MAIL** THE ROAD AHEAD, P.O. BOX 4, SPRINGWOOD, QLD 4127.

PLEASE INCLUDE NAME AND ADDRESS. **LETTERS WILL NOT RECEIVE AN INDIVIDUAL REPLY AND SHOULD BE NO MORE THAN 120 WORDS.**

## MT WALSH ADVENTURE RECALLED

**LIVING IN BIGGENDEN** during the '60s and '70s, I twice climbed the eastern side of Mt Walsh (locally known as The Bluff) to its summit at 700m. Later, I was asked to accompany a church group of about 40 people from Bundaberg to do the climb. They arrived by bus on a Monday morning (Anzac Day 1974), and after a short discussion their young leader decided to attempt the climb from Waterfall Creek on the western side, then descend the eastern side to their waiting bus. At that point, I thought it was possible. The group included several school kids, my two young sons and a mature woman. Progress along the rocky

and scrubby banks of the waterholes was unexpectedly plodding and, as a result, we were still 50m short of the summit approaching sunset. We would never make it over the top and down to the bus before dark. Two older lads volunteered to scale the steep 50m to the summit, descend the eastern side, and alert the bus driver and families in Biggenden and Bundaberg of our situation. There were no mobile phones in those days. The rest of us endured an uncomfortable and mostly sleepless night before safely making it back down the creek at first light. We were met by the search party of one (the shire chairman on horseback), the bus and my very relieved wife. Somehow, we

made the morning news bulletin on ABC regional radio. On departure, the team from Bundaberg bade me farewell with three unexpected cheers before settling down for some much-needed sleep on the way home.

**CEC TURNER, REDLYNCH**

*EDITOR'S NOTE: The autumn edition of The Road Ahead said the hike to Mt Walsh's summit was 4,662m. Bundaberg Tourism has since corrected the information provided and advised the summit is 703m above sea level and the ascent to the summit is 462m. Visit [parks.des.qld.gov.au/parks/mount-walsh](https://parks.des.qld.gov.au/parks/mount-walsh) for more information.*

## BRIGHT LIGHTS ARE A TURNOFF

**I AGREE WITH** and applaud Ron Owen's piece 'Dim view of bright lights' (Autumn TRA 2023). For many years I have been privately muttering about too-bright and too-high lights on vehicles coming toward and behind and noticing that the situation has become more and more ridiculous. I'm grateful for the 'night' option of my rear-view mirror, but helpless with the 'Christmas lights' of vehicles in front of me. Mr Owen rightly stated that manufacturers should consider road safety more broadly to include the effect of lighting on other road users. This perhaps should be prompted by regulators through a petition by more of those affected and organisations like RACQ on our behalf.

**JANNETTE CHAPMAN, TOOWOOMBA**



## POTHOLES BLAMED FOR DAMAGE

**THERE'S NO DOUBT** that a lot of work is needed to improve the Bruce Highway. Safety initiatives like extra overtaking lanes definitely help, but there is much

more to do. Some sections need priority to widen or floodproof. Then there is the routine maintenance. Last year I required a wheel alignment after a trip south from Cairns. There were too many potholes.

**KEN BISSETT, CAIRNS**



## ROUNDAABOUT RULES IGNORED

**MANY MOTORISTS DO** not adhere to roundabout rules. For example, when exiting a roundabout, they either do not indicate using the left indicator, indicate too late, or worse, they indicate with the

right indicator. Motorists approaching must have no idea what their intentions are – I know I don't. Some motorists approach from the left of the roundabout and fail to give way to vehicles on the roundabout. Instead, they travel through at speed, even though the motorist on the roundabout plans to exit and has engaged their left indicator. It's hard for me to believe these motorists don't know the roundabout rules but are in such a big hurry they don't care and take risks that could endanger other people's lives. I hope those motorists are RACQ members and after reading this will go and Google 'roundabout rules'.

**JOE DAGG, THORNLANDS**



## MOVE OVER, SLOW DOWN

**I WAS SURPRISED** to receive in the mail an infringement notice for \$431 for breaching the new 'mover over, slow

down' law introduced in September last year. We had driven past a tow truck parked on the side of the highway without moving over. I can't remember seeing the tow truck and the offence was dated two and a half months previous. Any service vehicle on the side of the road must be given a clear lane between your car and the vehicle if safe to do so. I had a perfect driving record and this came with three demerit points to boot. Please be aware.

**JOHN FRASER, GOLD COAST**

*EDITOR'S NOTE: To find out more information on the new law visit [streetsmarts.initiatives.qld.gov.au/move-over-and-slow-down](https://streetsmarts.initiatives.qld.gov.au/move-over-and-slow-down).*

## KANGAROO ISLAND EV ROAD TRIP

**WE HAVE RETURNED** from a drive to Kangaroo Island (South Australia) and back in our electric car, a Tesla Model 3. We did 5,000km and spent \$129.11 on charging because most NRMA chargers were free. We borrowed a special adapter from a member of the Tesla Club and used all the chargers on Kangaroo Island for free. We did 775km on the island. We only struck one broken charger, at Narrandera (NSW), and had to top up with a three-phase plug at an electrician's shed as we needed to get to Hay that night. On the way home it had been fixed. It was a truly enjoyable holiday.

**JENNY AND DUDLEY YOUNG, TOOWONG**



# ROADSIDE REIMAGINED

RACQ HAS TAKEN A FRESH LOOK AT ITS ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE OPTIONS, UNVEILING A NEW SUITE OF PRODUCTS TO REFLECT THE CHANGING WAYS WE MOVE. **STORY** ASHLEIGH PATERSON

RACQ Chief Executive Assistance Glenn Toms and Roadside Patrols and Fleet Operations Technical Training Officer Daniel Catsoulis.



RACQ Roadside Assistance caters for everything from bicycles and motorbikes to RVs, caravans and larger vehicles. Photos Dave Pattinson.





**T**HE SUNSHINE STATE has experienced a rapid rise in recreational vehicle (RV) ownership in recent years with more and more Queenslanders enjoying road trips and holidays in their own backyard.

According to Caravanning Queensland, we now have the highest number of registered recreational vehicles in Australia (201,477).

The most recent National Visitor Survey data from Tourism Research Australia also revealed a 32.2 percent increase in the number of visitors opting for a motorhome or campervan holiday, compared with the previous three-year average.

RACQ Chief Executive Assistance Glenn Toms said these trends and changes in the way people moved closer to home encouraged the Club to rethink how it supported members.

“Since the pandemic, we’ve seen a real explosion in camper trailers and motorhomes as our members right across the State get out and about to explore Queensland with their families,” Mr Toms said.

“At the same time, the electrification of mobility, changing attitudes towards more sustainable ways of living and cost-of-living pressures have seen a significant uptake in personal mobility devices such as e-scooters, not just in Brisbane but in regional areas right across the State.

“Our recent inaugural public transport survey found that Townsville topped the list when it comes to electric scooters.

“This revolution has provided an opportunity for RACQ to reimagine the products and services we provide to our 1.8 million members, which has led to the launch of our new Roadside Assistance services.”

In a first for Australia, RACQ Roadside Assistance now supports everything from e-scooters, e-bikes, bicycles and mobility scooters, right through to motor vehicles, motorbikes, large RVs and eight-tonne vehicles.

“This means if you break down driving your RV or towing your caravan to your destination or riding your e-scooter or e-bike while on holidays, you can take comfort in knowing RACQ’s yellow truck is only a phone call away and ready to help you get back to enjoying your holiday,” Mr Toms said.

“We know breakdowns can be inconvenient and stressful, especially when you’re rightfully wanting to enjoy your holiday.

**...RACQ ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE NOW SUPPORTS EVERYTHING FROM E-SCOOTERS, E-BIKES, BICYCLES AND MOBILITY SCOOTERS, RIGHT THROUGH TO MOTOR VEHICLES, MOTORBIKES, LARGE RVS AND EIGHT-TONNE VEHICLES.**

“Our top priority will always be trying to get members’ vehicles back on the road and in the event we can’t, we will arrange appropriate transportation for you and your vehicle.”

Mr Toms said the winter months saw a surge in people heading north to escape the cooler weather and drivers, particularly those new to operating larger vehicles, needed to ensure safety remained the top priority.

“Caravanning is a great way to travel and to see all the incredible places Queensland has on offer,” he said.

“With the growing popularity of motorhomes and recreational vehicles, it’s important for drivers who are inexperienced in operating large vehicles to be extra cautious behind the wheel and seek the support and information they need to enjoy their road trip, confidently.

“Additionally, it’s important to look after your campervan and motorhome in the same way you would your car. This means getting it serviced regularly and checking the oil and water before any long trip.

“With caravans, the most common callouts we receive are from members with damaged tyres or experiencing issues with their wheels, hubs or axels.

“Before any road trip, it’s important to check your tyres, wheel and brakes to ensure everything is in good working order.”

Caravanning Queensland, in partnership with the Queensland Government, launched VANSafe Queensland, an educational program which aims to support recreational vehicle owners with the information they need to tow confidently, safely, and compliantly.

The free program is open to all owners of caravans, campers and motorhomes and includes workshops, displays and masterclasses.

CEO of Caravan Trade and Industries Association of Queensland Jason Plant said while all RV owners and drivers had a responsibility to educate themselves, the more support they could provide on safe caravanning practices the more confident and compliant drivers would become.

“We are proud to kick off this exciting program in partnership with the Queensland Government which will see an additional 14 events added to Caravanning Queensland’s existing safety program and provide the opportunity for regional Queenslanders to attend,” Mr Plant said.

“Attendees also have the option to register for a safety and compliance inspection of their RV combination in a designated safe zone, where no penalties will be imposed.

“This program means we’ll be able to provide support and educate more drivers, in more regional locations across the State, and promote safe caravan practices in a highly engaged and interactive way right throughout Queensland.” ■

Learn more about RACQ Roadside Assistance at [racq.com/roadside](http://racq.com/roadside).

**ROAD TRIP IDEAS**

**PLANNING A WINTER road trip and looking for some inspiration? Check out these suggestions from Tourism and Events Queensland:**

- ▶ Capricorn Way
- ▶ Savannah Way
- ▶ Matilda Way
- ▶ Pacific Coast Way
- ▶ Fraser Coast

For more information visit [queensland.com](http://queensland.com).





# EV TEST DRIVES LAUNCHED

RACQ HAS INTRODUCED ELECTRIC CAR TEST DRIVE DAYS FOR MEMBERS.

**S**TILL ON THE fence about EVs? RACQ has launched a series of free electric car experience days to help you decide.

Members now have the opportunity to drive various electric and hybrid cars around the state-of-the-art 1.8km test track at RACQ's Mobility Centre in Logan.

Part of the experience includes a 101 in electric cars, with experts on hand to answer questions.

"There's a lot of talk about EVs, including plenty of myths, and the best way to find out what EVs are all about is to experience one firsthand and speak directly with the experts," RACQ's Head of Public Policy Dr Michael Kane said.

Dr Kane said the concept comes as global and local trends reveal a significant shift towards electric cars.

"According to the Australian Automotive Association's (AAA) EV Index, electric car sales surged from 3.84 percent of all new car sales in Queensland to 6.9 percent in the first three months of this year," Dr Kane said.

"For the first time, more pure electric vehicles are being sold than hybrids in Queensland, indicating the push to fully electric is gaining momentum."

RACQ member Peter McCarthy, from Gladstone, was in Brisbane on holidays and jumped at the chance to drive an electric car for the first time.

"Getting to do it in a controlled environment here is good," Mr McCarthy said.

"We're from the country, so driving unfamiliar cars in city traffic isn't ideal, so this is really good. It was so smooth and quiet and pretty roomy inside as well, which I was really impressed by. It gives me a lot to think about."

The first set of test drive days were held in May, with more planned later this year. ■



SCAN THE CODE TO  
REGISTER YOUR INTEREST  
FOR FUTURE EV TEST  
DRIVE DAYS.



Dr Michael Kane talking with members about EVs. Photos Jake Ryan.



RACQ member Helen Johnsen behind the wheel of an electric car with RACQ's Jaimee Austin.

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# A VOICE FOR GOOD

## RACQ'S BLAKE STOCKTON BELIEVES THE CLUB CAN BE A FORCE FOR RECONCILIATION ACROSS QUEENSLAND.

STORY TORI MAYNE

**W**IRADJURI MAN BLAKE Stockton believes a word from his native language best captures the essence of First Nations Peoples.

The word, yindyamarra, translates to being respectful, humble and treading lightly.

Blake, who has taken on the new role of RACQ's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Program Specialist, said the word took on even more relevance amid the increasing public debate around this year's Voice to Parliament referendum.

"This word, and other similar words across different mobs, sums up our cultural heritage and is crucial to remember when we get lost in politics and movements," Blake said.

"I believe it encapsulates where RACQ is heading with the current RAP, which is towards a humble and respectful approach."

Before joining RACQ, Blake successfully implemented and taught Indigenous cultures and history subjects at four high schools over a decade.

"Having to move from school to school to make a difference in a small community, to now working for an organisation with the largest member base in Queensland, feels really empowering," Blake said.

"I think the greatest role RACQ can play is to be that connecting force for good."

Blake is a part of the Nation of Three Rivers mob located in western NSW and links his heritage through his father who was born and raised on Country.

He is married to Chenoa, a proud Wakka Wakka and Kalkadoon woman whose mobs occupy the areas around Cherbourg and Mount Isa.

Chenoa works in a similar role for Brisbane Catholic Education and the influence they can both have on helping voice First Nations Peoples' experiences is not lost on Blake.

"We're able to make an extensive contribution across the State and to do what we do really is a privilege," he said.

Only a few weeks into his new role, Blake saw the opportunity to empower employees who are First Nations Peoples to feel confident sharing their stories.

**BLAKE IS A PART OF THE NATION OF THREE RIVERS MOB LOCATED IN WESTERN NSW AND LINKS HIS HERITAGE THROUGH HIS FATHER WHO WAS BORN AND RAISED ON COUNTRY.**

"I get the feeling there are First Nations Peoples in the organisation who don't feel as empowered or publicly proud as they could be," he said.

"It's really important that we give people the confidence and the capacity to be able to share their story, especially in a time of truth-telling with the Voice to Parliament referendum."

With a focus on truth-telling, cultural awareness training and building connections, Blake said it was important to see RACQ's RAP initiatives implemented throughout Queensland, stretching to the Torres Strait Islands.

"It's important to show Queenslanders that while we work for the community, we are with the community too," he said. ■

Visit [racq.com/diversity](https://racq.com/diversity) to learn more about RACQ's RAP.

Blake Stockton. Photo Jake Ryan.





## A super-super fund for all Australians

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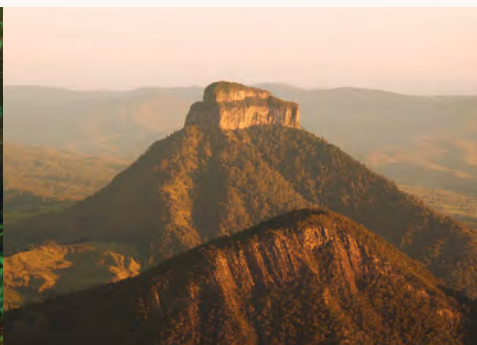
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## Destination Scenic Rim



The Scenic Rim, home to Australia's most accessible World Heritage listed rainforest's (Gondwana) and six national parks, is just 80 km or an hour's drive from Brisbane or the Gold Coast. This special part of the world was listed as one of Lonely Planet's Top 10 regions to visit in their Best in Travel 2022.

The Scenic Rim is a year round destination brimming with foodie experiences, outdoor activities, water sports, cultural pursuits, eco escapes and tourist attractions.

Framed by impressive volcanic peaks dating back millions of years, rivers are born, fertile lands bring agricultural riches and verdant rainforest's are home to some very special wildlife.

Try and buy award winning produce and beverages from our farm gates, farm shops, breweries, wineries and distilleries. Don't just go for a day trip, there's plenty of accommodation from luxury resorts to farm stays, cabins, caravan and camping to slow you down and enjoy the countryside.

Places such as Tamborine Mountain, Lost World, Canungra, Beechmont, Lamington National Park, Christmas Creek, Rathdownie, Mt Alford, Boonah, Kalbar, Beaudesert, Harrisville, Kooralbyn, Mt Barney, Mt French, Aratula and Kerry all have their special reasons to visit with local characters ready to welcome you.

Images courtesy of Tourism and Events Queensland

[destination scenicrim.com](http://destination scenicrim.com)

Destination Scenic Rim

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STORY LAUREN COONEY

# FOCUSING ON DRIVER DISTRACTION

**D**ISTRACTION IS ONE of the biggest killers on our roads. Last year it was to blame for almost 10 percent of deaths on Queensland roads\*.

One of the most common distractions is the mobile phone, with young drivers often at fault.

RACQ's Education Team examines the psychology behind distraction and what causes us to reach for our mobile phones when we shouldn't in a new program, Driver Distraction.

RACQ Education Coaching and Development Specialist Melissa Johnson said the program was being taught to Year 11 and 12 students across the State and took a different approach to driver distraction.

"We really go beyond just 'don't talk to your mates, don't touch your phone', we really want to unpack what distraction is all about," Ms Johnson said.

"We explore the concepts of feelings, friends and phones and how they all relate to distracted driving.

"We want young people to not underestimate the power of their feelings and to understand how they impact them when they're behind the wheel.

"For example, if we feel angry, we are more likely to overtake and weave in and

out of traffic. If we feel anxious or left out, we may be more likely to pick up the phone."

The program teaches students how to recognise when distractions are overwhelming and impacting their ability to drive safely.

"It's all about checking in with the body – 'how's my heart rate, has my breathing quickened, are my muscles clenched?'" Ms Johnson said.

**...WE WANT PEOPLE TO TAKE CONTROL OF THEIR SAFETY AND THE SAFETY OF THEIR PASSENGERS AND MINIMISE THE LIKELIHOOD OF FINDING THEMSELVES IN A CRASH.**

"When young people recognise the signs and symptoms of becoming overwhelmed and distracted, they can implement strategies to manage that.

"We help students design proactive and reactive strategies, such as thinking about the settings and location of their phone, being well rested and fed and

**LIFE IS FULL OF DISTRACTIONS AND THEY DON'T DISAPPEAR WHEN WE ARE DRIVING.**

letting passengers know how they can be supportive.

"More reactive strategies include pulling over when it's safe to do so, taking some deep breaths, engaging in commentary driving – a variety of things to help them refocus their mind back to the important driving tasks."

These strategies don't just apply to young drivers. All motorists can adopt them when their attention is diverting.

"Unfortunately, young people are overrepresented in crash statistics and have been for many decades now, but everyone can benefit from learning to recognise when it just might be getting a little bit much for them behind the wheel," Ms Johnson said.

"We want people to take control of their safety and the safety of their passengers and minimise the likelihood of being involved in a crash." ■

*\*Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads data 1 January to 31 October 2022.*



**SCAN THE CODE TO WATCH A VIDEO ON THE PROGRAM.**



Phones are a major distraction for drivers.



RACQ Education Officer Kristy Jones talks to Craigslea State High School students.

# We're committed to being a force for good

For today, and the future



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and are taking steps to reduce our environmental impact.

Find out more at [racq.com/sustainability](https://racq.com/sustainability)





Juniors from the Highfields Lions Australian Football Club have benefitted from a Local Giving grant.

# MAKING A DIFFERENCE

## RACQ STORES GIVE VALUABLE SUPPORT TO GRASSROOTS ORGANISATIONS.

**S**INCE THE BEGINNING of RACQ's Local Giving program in 2021, our stores have contributed to more than 90 initiatives in Queensland communities.

The program allows RACQ stores to give back to organisations that support diversity and inclusion in their communities with grants up to \$500.

Recently, the Toowoomba Clifford Gardens store presented a grant to Highfields Lions Australian Football Club which used the money to implement a training program for children of all ages and abilities.

Coordinator of Highfields Lions AFC Stephen Wren said the program had grown from strength to strength and, with the help of RACQ, provided a place for everyone to feel they belonged.

"This program, with the help of

RACQ's Local Giving grant, has given us the opportunity to welcome new families into our club community in a fun and inclusive way," Mr Wren said.

Toowoomba store Member Engagement Specialist Amanda Edwards said she loved being a part of the Local Giving program and seeing how these grants benefitted communities.

"Seeing how it benefits a range of organisations is the greatest gift for me," Ms Edwards said.

"You can genuinely feel the gratitude and know the funding is of great assistance to the community."

Inaugural Chair of RACQ's Disability Inclusion Employee Resource Group, EnAble, Karen Wynn, said she hoped to create an inclusive future for all Queenslanders through her role and

applauded the work RACQ was doing through initiatives like the Local Giving program to support a diverse range of communities.

"As the Chair of EnAble, and a person with lived experience with a physical disability, I'm passionate about creating an accessible and inclusive future where all Queenslanders feel they belong," Ms Wynn said.

"It makes me proud to work here, where advocating for inclusive infrastructure and systems of mobility is an important part of delivering on RACQ's vision.

"So, it's great to see other initiatives in the business, like the Local Giving program, providing the same accessibility in local communities." ■

Go to [racq.com/localgiving](https://racq.com/localgiving) to learn more about the program.



**Asbestos Disease Support Society**

The **Asbestos Disease Support Society** was founded in 1992 and continues to provide information and much needed support to those diagnosed with an asbestos related disease.

**PLUS** we have now launched **The Silicosis Support Network** to assist workers who have been diagnosed with silicosis.

### Call to become a member and receive:

- Information on asbestos and silicosis related diseases
- Support from our social worker and registered nurse
- Registration of asbestos and silica exposure
- Access to free legal advice and compensation
- Social support for sufferers, their families and carers




**Silicosis**  
Support Network

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



**Toll Free 1800 776 412**



# The New TV Speech Clarifying Soundbar Surpassing Costly Hearing Aids as a Must-Have Alternative



**Frustrated television listeners are now putting their hearing aids to the side for TV viewing, with the release of Australia's first TV hearing-aid soundbar speaker by TV Voice Pro. The soundbar automatically clarifies hard-to-hear TV speech and dialogue, with no need for the use of a traditional hearing aid, or even the need for a hearing test.**

Hearing specialist Don Hudson says up to 70% of hearing aid wearers, including those with sets of hearing aids worth thousands of dollars, still report significant difficulty hearing TV dialogue, and are regularly missing out on much of their favourite TV programs, or attempting to solve the problem by increasing the TV volume to loud levels, to the detriment of others in the home.

Unlike traditional hearing aids, the *TV Voice Pro Soundbar* accesses the TV audio directly, and automatically reconfigures the TV audio to a speech enhanced sound quality, suitable for those with mild to severe hearing loss. The *TV Voice Pro Soundbar* then works in a reverse manner to regular TV speakers and soundbars. Don Hudson says,

"While regular TV speakers and soundbars emphasise TV surround sound effects, which often mask out the TV dialogue for the listener, the *TV Voice Pro Soundbar* instead prioritises dialogue for all TV audio and solves this issue."

Users of the *TV Voice Pro Soundbar* can select from three speech clarifying sound settings via the soundbar remote control, and have further access to clarify TV dialogue to suit their hearing needs if they wish, by simply increasing or decreasing the treble or bass. The soundbar will automatically remember the user's preference for TV sound clarity.

The *TV Voice Pro Soundbar* has been designed as a sleek 80cm-long audio speaker which can sit below your TV on any hard surface, or be mounted. What's truly exceptional is that customers can even order the new *TV Voice Pro Soundbar* as a package with the already well-known TV Voice Pro wireless earphones. Hearing specialist Don Hudson says,

"A really unique benefit is that the new *TV Voice Pro Soundbar* can operate in unison with any of the TV Voice Pro wireless earphone options. This offers TV listeners the best of both worlds, allowing them to either listen to TV in private with lightweight earphones that clarify TV dialogue, or instead with the soundbar turned on when others are in the room. We have designed the products so that they can be used in unison on the same TV, or alternatively, many of our customers choose to use the *TV Voice Pro Soundbar* in their main living room for TV listening, and the TV Voice Pro wireless earphones on a separate TV in the household, such as in the bedroom. This guarantees they will hear TV speech and dialogue clearly no matter which TV they are using."

The *TV Voice Pro Soundbar* and the TV Voice Pro wireless earphones are simple to use and can be connected to any TV in under 2 minutes.

**The soundbar can be purchased on its own for \$549, or as a package with a set of TV Voice Pro wireless earphones for \$879. All TV Voice Pro products are guaranteed to connect to any TV, new or old.**

**TV Voice Pro products come with a 30-day money back guarantee and free express delivery anywhere in Australia. To order call 1300 300 446 or order online at [www.TvVoicePro.com.au](http://www.TvVoicePro.com.au)**

## MOST RECENT REVIEWS

"The TV Voice Pro Soundbar makes the dialogue "pop out". I no longer use the captions, even for watching movies, it's fantastic." – JULIETTE, SA

"The quality of the new soundbar is extremely good, I can now take out my hearing aids and listen to any program with my natural hearing, without having to increase the volume and I can hear everything that is being said. Excellent product." – DANNY, SA

"Now I can hear what they are saying on the TV! ...and I was able to set it up myself whereas I usually need help from my grandchildren for anything electronic." – PAM, NSW

"Excellent clarity of speech with reduced background noise and music. It looks good under my TV." – MONICA, NSW

"My hearing is challenged due to exposure to loud tractor noise in a farming context when I was a teenager. I have quite good hearing aids but still struggle when there is background sound during a conversation. The Voice pro has made a very big difference by apparently reducing the relative volume of background sound. It is well worth the investment." – MIKE, QLD

"This TV dialogue specific soundbar is a revelation for my industrial deafness problem. Can now hear clearly what is being said, even with background music. Great product." – ROBERT, NSW

"I love my new soundbar now I can hear every word that is said on TV. Movies are great to watch now." – SANDRA, SA

"I can recommend the soundbar to anyone with hearing difficulties. We always had to have the TV so loud for my husband, now we can all enjoy the audio in comfort." – CHRISTINE, NSW

"I can now take the text off the screen and hear the words which are being spoken." – ALAN, QLD

"We noticed a huge difference from the minute we plugged it in. The clarity of the dialogue is amazing." – LEE, NSW

"I have virtually no hearing in my left ear and poor in my right ear. Subtitles were an absolute must. Even with hearing aids. The TV Voice Pro has changed all that and I can now effectively hear clearly most programs with my normal hearing aids." – JOHN, SA

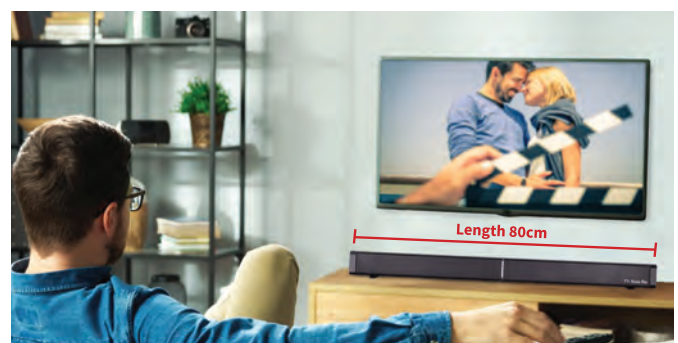
"We have tried, Wi-Fi, Blue Tooth, Extra Speakers, Headphones Etc, Etc, and still couldn't hear what the people were saying on the TV. BUT WE CAN NOW!" – MICHAEL, QLD

"We had a top of the range commercial soundbar and were missing a lot. The TV Voice Pro changed that immediately. Very simple to set up. Thank you, we are delighted to recommend this product." – RON, VIC

"I am 85 years old with mild hearing loss. I have been having difficulty hearing the dialogue on both TV programs and movies where the background music often drowns it out. I was amazed when I installed my soundbar and adjusted it to my circumstances how clearly I could hear the dialogue. It has certainly made my TV viewing much more enjoyable. I was so impressed that I immediately ordered another for my bedroom TV. I would also like to add that the service was very efficient with the Soundbar arriving just a few days after ordering and the lady who took the order was very helpful and knowledgeable regarding all my questions about the product." – ROD, NSW

"The soundbar is as good as advertised. The clarity is amazing and has made a huge difference to the TV sound for my husband." – MELINDA, QLD

"A breeze to connect. Instant sound clarity and I have been able to reduce the volume level way down. Very happy with the results." – RUSS, ACT





STORY TORI MAYNE

## 30 YEARS OF HELPING QUEENSLANDERS

THIS YEAR MARKS 30 YEARS OF RACQ SUPPORTING THE LIFEFLIGHT RESCUE SERVICE, WHICH IS A LIFE-SAVER FOR QUEENSLANDERS ACROSS THE STATE.

**R**ACQ LIFEFLIGHT RESCUE crews have been angels in Queensland skies for more than four decades, responding to car crashes, rescuing patients stranded at sea and every type of hospital transfer imaginable.

Since its inception in 1979, RACQ LifeFlight Rescue (formerly CareFlight Rescue Service) has delivered rapid-response aeromedical care to more than 77,000 people.

Recognising the vital importance of the service to Queenslanders, RACQ officially became the naming rights sponsor of what we now know as RACQ LifeFlight Rescue in 1993.

In the 30 years since, the relationship has strengthened and the Club is now

also the major sponsor for the RACQ Capricorn Rescue Service and the RACQ CQ Rescue Service.

RACQ Community and Sponsorship Manager Melanie Calzavara said 30 years of RACQ LifeFlight Rescue was a significant milestone.

"The service they provide to Queenslanders is invaluable and I feel incredibly proud to be honouring our 30th anniversary with RACQ LifeFlight Rescue this year and I know our members feel proud too," Mrs Calzavara said.

"Seeing the statistics of how many people the rescue crews are helping – sometimes close to 7,000 people a year – really solidifies why we have continued our support for so long."

The desire to help people in need

motivated Peter Marris during his time as an RACQ LifeFlight Rescue Pilot and Base Lead in Bundaberg.

When he joined RACQ LifeFlight Rescue in 1998, Mr Marris was passionate about flying but it was the ability to make a tangible difference in people's lives that kept him with the service.

"Being able to make a difference in the outcome for people in distress adds a totally different dimension to job satisfaction," Mr Marris said.

"To be able to do that while doing something that I am passionate about makes me feel very lucky."

RACQ LifeFlight Rescue crews are often thrown into the most chaotic and challenging situations. It is their confidence



LifeFlight crew in training.

and skill amid times of stress and uncertainty that makes people feel safe.

Throughout his time, Mr Marris has performed rescues in three of the State's worst flood emergencies and said the dedication to training ensured crews were prepared for any scenario.

"We constantly practise for a whole range of tasks to be prepared for all possible scenarios," he said.

"Each time I've responded to a flood emergency, whether in 2010, 2013 or 2022, it was always different.

"No matter the flood event, it was

always mind-boggling and sad to see the amount of water, devastation, loss of property and sometimes loss of life."

Mr Marris said he hoped people would continue to appreciate the life-saving service RACQ LifeFlight provided for Queenslanders.

"There is no doubt that RACQ LifeFlight Rescue will continue to be a valued service to the community for years to come, something people hopefully appreciate and will continue to support," he said. ■

### BY THE NUMBERS

Since RACQ LifeFlight Rescue was founded in 1979, crews have helped more than 77,500 people across the State.

In the past 10 years, RACQ LifeFlight Rescue helicopters helped 22,092 people – 2,245 of those were people involved in motor vehicle incidents (including on and off-road, motorbikes and quad bikes).

While it's difficult to fathom the incredible reach to Queensland communities, the numbers from last year paint a picture of the demand for this life-saving service.

**303** responses to cardiac and chest pain – the number one reason for callouts.

**261** medical and illness missions – the second most common reason for callouts.

**242** car crash responses across Queensland.

RACQ is proud to also be the naming sponsor of RACQ CQ Rescue, servicing communities from Bowen to St Lawrence, and RACQ Capricorn Rescue, covering St Lawrence to Agnes Water.

### OUR COVER PHOTO

**THE DIGITAL IMAGE** on the cover of this edition, featuring a LifeFlight Rescue service helicopter above an RACQ Roadside Assistance patrol vehicle, was inspired by a photo taken 30 years ago to mark the start of the relationship between the two organisations.

The original photo was taken at John Flynn Private Hospital at Tugun on the Gold Coast in 1993. The new image was created by combining photos of a patrol vehicle at RACQ's Mobility Centre and a LifeFlight Rescue helicopter from its Toowoomba base.

To learn more or to make a donation, visit [lifeflight.org.au](http://lifeflight.org.au).

**6,978** people helped by RACQ LifeFlight crews.

**3,406** hours of helicopter missions.



1993

2023

DIGITAL IMAGE JAKE RYAN

# UNKNOWN FIRE DANGER PUTTING QUEENSLAND HOMES AT RISK

AS THE USE OF LITHIUM-ION BATTERIES CONTINUES TO GROW, QUEENSLANDERS ARE BEING URGED TO BE AWARE OF FIRE RISKS WITHIN THEIR HOME.

STORY ASHLEIGH PATERSON

**R**ACQ AND QUEENSLAND Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) are warning Queenslanders to be alert to the potential fire dangers of lithium-ion batteries in their homes.

Despite many of today's commonly used portable devices containing lithium-ion batteries – including mobile phones, tablets, toys and e-scooters – more than half of Queenslanders can't tell the difference between them and traditional batteries.

New RACQ research found two-thirds of respondents would not know what to do if a lithium-ion battery caught fire and a similar number did not know if their charger met Australian standards.

The research found more than half of people turned off their chargers when their battery was full, but more than a quarter admitted to leaving the charger on, which QFES Fire Safety Executive Manager Mark Halverson said posed a significant risk.

"QFES crews have attended more than 40 structure fires so far this financial year, which were caused by lithium-ion

batteries," Mr Halverson said.

"It's important residents are aware of the risks of these fires occurring year-round.

"Rechargeable lithium-ion batteries store a large amount of energy in a small amount of space which means fires are often intense, likely to spread rapidly and can burn for an extended period of time as they are self-sustaining.

"To reduce the risk of a fire starting, avoid leaving batteries or devices unattended while being charged and

increased potential for fires during the cooler months.

"Over the past three years, RACQ Insurance has received 1,419 insurance claims for fire damage, with a large portion of claims being made during the cooler months," Mr Sayers said.

"House fires can happen to anyone and most are caused by everyday items like cooking equipment, faulty or poorly maintained appliances and flammable materials placed too close to heat sources.

"As the temperature drops, it's crucial to check your winter warmers, such as heaters and electric blankets, for a buildup of dust, loose or damaged cords and rust before you plug them in. If you're unsure, have a qualified electrician check them out."

The research found that nearly two-thirds of Queenslanders have had their smoke alarms tested in the past six months and close to three in four in the past 12 months.

"Only working smoke alarms save lives, so check yours is operating as it should," Mr Halverson said. ■

**...AVOID LEAVING BATTERIES OR DEVICES UNATTENDED WHILE BEING CHARGED AND ENSURE THAT ONCE THE BATTERY IS FULLY CHARGED, IT IS DISCONNECTED FROM THE CHARGER.**

ensure that once the battery is fully charged, it is disconnected from the charger.

"You should also avoid charging devices in living spaces or near flammable materials. Most importantly, ensure your charging location doesn't impede your evacuation route should a fire occur."

RACQ Insurance Chief Executive Trent Sayers also urged Queenslanders to be alert to this growing risk and the

**MOST LI-ION BATTERIES WILL HAVE SOME FORM OF MARKING ON THE DEVICE CONTAINING ONE OF THE FOLLOWING DESCRIPTIONS: LITHIUM-ION, LI-ION, LI-PO, LITHIUM-POLYMER OR LI+.**

## SAFETY ADVICE

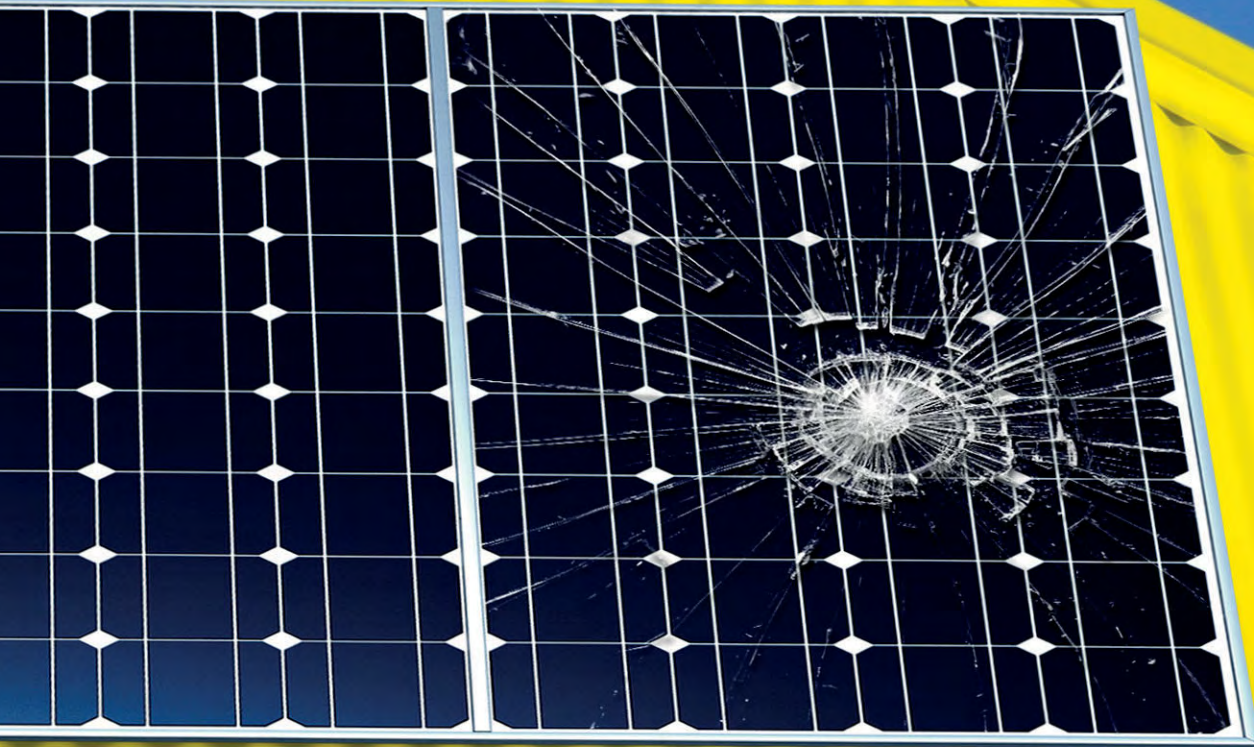
**WARNING SIGNS OF a damaged device or battery include excessive heat production, significant change in colour, battery swelling or leaking and odd noises.**

If it is not on fire or smoking and displays any of these warning signs, you should, if safe to do so, disconnect the device from the power supply and move it outside away from any other combustible items.

Importantly, lithium-ion battery fires are likely to emit a highly toxic vapour cloud. If a fire occurs, people should evacuate immediately and call triple zero (000).

An e-scooter destroyed by a battery fire.





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# BUILDING A BETTER TOMORROW, TODAY

STORY ASHLEIGH PATERSON

RACQ Head of Sustainability, Will Soutar. Photo Dave Pattinson.

## SUPPORTING QUEENSLANDERS TO LIVE MORE SUSTAINABLY IS MORE THAN JUST A JOB FOR RACQ'S WILL SOUTAR.

**S**OCIAL SUSTAINABILITY HAS been a natural passion for Will Soutar since a young age. But having children was the real catalyst for RACQ's Head of Sustainability wanting to positively support the liveability of Queensland for future generations.

Born and raised in the Sunshine State, Will is the father of three young boys who are already starting to embrace sustainable practices at home.

"As a family, we spend a lot of time in the garden, teaching the kids about biodiversity, where our food comes from and the benefits of buying local produce," Will said.

"My wife and I speak openly about how we are reducing our environmental footprint and encourage the boys to support and give back to our local community.

"This has started with them passing on their pre-loved toys and books to others to enjoy. We are a one-car household, so

the boys are well versed in the benefits of public and active transport and I often share stories from the organisations I work with about what we're doing to support vulnerable communities."

Beyond the home, Will has established a career focused on roles and opportunities that make a positive difference.

From working in strategy and innovation for a multi-national financial services company, Will moved to work for a start-up focused on social impact and unlocking access for underserved markets.

As his passion for the environment grew, he joined not-for-profit group



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Climate-KIC where he piloted new solutions and worked with a broad network of organisations to support Australia’s climate change response.

From there, Will was appointed RACQ’s Head of Sustainability, responsible for driving the Club’s ‘force for good’ agenda.

While creating a dedicated sustainability function is a testament to RACQ’s focus on the future, Will said driving positive change for Queensland was nothing new for the State’s largest club.

“RACQ has and always will be a force for good – standing behind initiatives and programs to address some of the biggest sustainability risks and opportunities facing Queenslanders,” he said.

“The role of the sustainability team is to bring together all the great work we do in the community and across our organisation to maximise the positive impact for our members, communities, people and business.

“At the same time, it’s also about holding a mirror up to our organisation, ensuring we proactively report our

non-financial impact, both adverse and positive, and be transparent about what we do and how we run our business.

“Our members rightfully expect RACQ to play a leading role in addressing sustainability issues for Queensland –

**RACQ HAS AND ALWAYS WILL BE A FORCE FOR GOOD – STANDING BEHIND INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS SOME OF THE BIGGEST SUSTAINABILITY RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES FACING QUEENSLANDERS...**

such as the growing impact from climate risks, affordability and cost of living, diversity and inclusion and road safety.

“They also expect RACQ to walk the talk in our operations and operate our business in an environmentally and socially responsible way.”

To help guide the Club’s environmental, social and governance activities, RACQ has launched its Sustainability Framework – Force for Good, which builds on the Club’s 2032 vision.

“The framework outlines the outcomes we want to achieve, how we align to global sustainable development goals, how we are and will make progress, and how we will measure and report on our performance each year,” Will said.

“It’s a commitment to collective action that will help enhance the liveability of Queensland for future generations.”

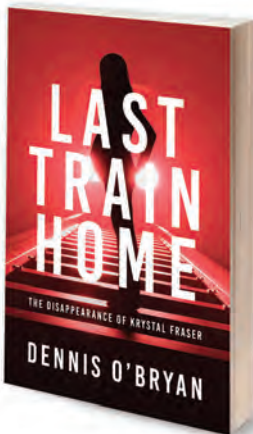
Will hopes he can one day look back and tell his adult children about the impact the Club made in reducing Queensland’s biggest risks – climate change, a just transition to renewable energy, road safety and cost of living. ■

Learn more at [racq.com/sustainability](http://racq.com/sustainability).



SCAN THE CODE TO SEE HOW WE’RE A ‘FORCE FOR GOOD’.

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Caring for our environment and engaging young Australians is a focus for Lions.

# LION-HEARTED *Aussies*

LIONS AUSTRALIA HAS UNDERGONE SIGNIFICANT EVOLUTION IN ITS 75 YEARS, BUT SUPPORTING LOCAL COMMUNITIES REMAINS AT ITS HEART.

STORY RAY ANDERSEN

**S**EVENTY-FIVE YEARS after forming in Australia, Lions continues to play an important role in supporting communities across the country.

With more than 1,200 clubs, Lions has grown to be Australia's largest service organisation and is much-admired for its charity and community work.

Last year, Lions volunteers were a welcome presence in flood-ravaged Lismore, the birthplace of the organisation in Australia.

In 1946, William R Tresise, the president

of Apex Australia, met with the founder of the Lions Association Melvin Jones, in Chicago, and was granted the power to establish clubs here.

At the age of 40, Tresise was required to step down from his Apex role, and he saw an opportunity to redirect his community spirit with Lions.

In 1947 he formed a club in his home town, Lismore, and Australia became the 18th country to enter the International Association of Lions Clubs.

The following year a second club was formed in nearby Murwillumbah and by

1976 there were 1,000 clubs across the country.

Lions Australia CEO Rob Oerlemans said clubs had responded to the changing needs and values of their communities.

"We are known for building community parks when they were a scarce public amenity and now, we are restoring wetlands, planting trees and engaging in recycling initiatives," Mr Oerlemans said.

"Local clubs reach out to help the needy in their community and nationally and internationally we are responding to

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significant disasters and displacement of populations due to conflict and environmental disasters.”

With the frequency and severity of weather emergencies increasing, Lions volunteers are spending more time assisting people affected by natural disasters than ever before.

“Evidence shows that government support is not enough during significant disasters,” Mr Oerlemans said.

“Communities need committed, skilled and organised volunteers to help. That space will always be led by Lions and similar organisations.”

When Lions was formed it was strictly for men only but has evolved into one of Australia’s most diverse service organisations.

“Our goal is that the demographic makeup of our clubs matches the

## COMMUNITIES NEED COMMITTED, SKILLED AND ORGANISED VOLUNTEERS TO HELP. THAT SPACE WILL ALWAYS BE LED BY LIONS AND SIMILAR ORGANISATIONS.

demography of the community in which they operate,” Mr Oerlemans said.

“We’re so proud to have a growing number of specialty clubs across Australia ranging from young Leo clubs, virtual clubs, ethnic clubs, special interest clubs and autism clubs.

“Whatever your interest, chances are there is a Lions club that can help or others in the community who would be interested in starting one with you.”

The membership is varied and ranges from full-time professionals, balancing work with part-time volunteering, to young people looking to make a difference in the world and retirees who dedicate their free time to making their communities better.

Lions has more than 22,000 members in Australia and the aim is to have 30,000 members by 2030 with a focus on attracting younger volunteers to join its youth programs.

“It is important to teach younger generations about the value of community service and volunteer work, while in turn, they teach us about what matters to them,” Mr Oerlemans said.

“Feedback from our younger volunteers means Lions has become more involved in issues important to youth, including mental health and wellbeing.



Lions Australia celebrated 75 years with tree and garden plantings around Australia.

“Lions has established a number of foundations and projects to specifically make an impact in these areas.”

A social media campaign by Lions asked members what they thought it meant to be a Lion.

The answers ranged from friendship and fellowship, to feeling a sense of purpose when giving back to the community and the ability to help others.

“Being a Lion provides an opportunity to help others, the environment, our local community and the wider world we live in,” Mr Oerlemans said.

“You can make new friends, broaden your skills and expand your experiences with like-minded people from all walks of life.” ■

Visit [lionsclubs.org.au](http://lionsclubs.org.au) for more information and to connect with your nearest club.



Lions Australia volunteers are often among the first to offer support to communities affected by natural disasters.

**Always.**  
lionsaustralia  
75 years and counting

• EMERGENCY & DISASTER RELIEF • CHILDHOOD CANCER • HUNGER • VISION • HEARING DOGS • ENVIRONMENT • DIABETES PREVENTION • COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS

**Lions - Always there for the community.** Interested in joining Lions?  
For more information visit [lionsclubs.org.au](http://lionsclubs.org.au)  
[www.facebook.com/Lionsaustralia](https://www.facebook.com/Lionsaustralia)

### LIONS AUSTRALIA HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ **2022/23:** Lions provided disaster relief and supported recovery efforts during floods across Australia.
- ▶ **2022:** Lions celebrated its 75th anniversary in Australia last September and marked the occasion by planting hundreds of trees and more than 75 gardens around Australia.
- ▶ **2019/20:** Lions volunteers were some of the first responders and the first to provide emergency support to affected communities during the Black Summer bushfires. More than \$4.6 million was raised and distributed to communities as part of the Australian Lions Foundation’s National Bushfire Appeal.

# IS AN EXTENDED HOME LOAN RIGHT FOR YOU?

TAKING A LONGER-TERM HOME LOAN IS AN OPTION FOR FIRST HOME BUYERS STRUGGLING TO ENTER THE PROPERTY MARKET.



**F**IRST HOME BUYERS are facing many hurdles when it comes to home ownership in today's market.

High cost-of-living pressures and interest rates at levels not seen in 12 years have resulted in affordability and accessibility issues for many.

Longer loan terms are one option helping buyers get into the property market.

RACQ Bank's Head of Lending Product, Operations and Distribution Medina Cicak said there were several things people needed to know about extended loan terms.

## WHAT IS AN EXTENDED LOAN TERM?

"An extended home loan is essentially the same as other home loans," Ms Cicak said.

"You borrow an agreed amount and pay it back with interest.

"The difference is most loan terms are a maximum of 30 years. However, if you're a first home buyer you may be eligible for a loan term up to 40 years."

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF AN EXTENDED LOAN TERM?

Ms Cicak said extending the length of the loan made repayments more affordable for first home buyers, as the debt was structured over a longer period.

"Affordability is very important in the current market, particularly with the rate increases and cost-of-living pressures we've had in the past 12 months," she said.

"This option also increases the borrowing capacity for members, as stretching the loan out over more time means lower monthly repayments.

"An extended loan term could be the difference between buying your own home or still having to rent."

## WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A LOAN TERM?

Ms Cicak said buyers must consider the amount of interest they would pay over the life of the loan.

"While your repayments will be smaller, if you choose to repay your loan over an extended period (more than 30 years) you will pay more in the long run," she said.

"You will also want to consider how close to retirement you will be when you finish paying off the loan and if that solution fits with your goals.

"However, just because you enter the property market with a longer loan, that doesn't mean you're locked into this arrangement. You always have the option to make additional repayments or adjust the loan term length.

"At RACQ Bank, our lenders and brokers complete comparison calculations of

interest payable and discuss options of how to pay the loan down sooner, to ensure our members are choosing the right option for their personal circumstances."

## WHAT ELSE SHOULD YOU CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A LOAN?

**Interest rate:** How much will you pay in interest? How does the interest rate compare with other products in the market?

**Fixed or variable:** Do you want the certainty of a rate that stays the same for a set period or a variable interest rate that can go up or down with the market?

Do you want to split your loan – lock in half with a fixed rate with the remainder on a variable loan?

**Fees, terms, and conditions:** Make sure you check what fees are applicable, as a lower interest rate might have other fees associated with it. You may also want to consider what penalties there are for breaking the loan or paying the loan off early.

**Facilities:** What features do you need in your loan? Home loans with more options like redraw or offset facilities can come at a higher cost. So, weigh up if you will use these features. ■

Learn more at [racq.com/home-loans](https://racq.com/home-loans)

Banking and loan products issued by Members Banking Group Limited ABN 83 087 651 054 AFSL/Australian credit licence 241195 trading as RACQ Bank. Terms, conditions, fees, charges and lending policies apply. This information does not take your personal objectives, circumstances or needs into account. Read the disclosure documents ([racq.com.au/banking/forms-and-documents](https://racq.com.au/banking/forms-and-documents)) for your selected product or service, including the Financial Services Guide and the Terms and Conditions, before deciding.

# Reach your savings goals faster with a Bonus Saver account



Apply online at [racq.com/bonussaver](https://racq.com/bonussaver)

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Banking and Loan products issued by Members Banking Group Limited ABN 83 087 651 054 AFSL/Australian credit licence 241195 trading as RACQ Bank. Fees, charges, terms and conditions apply. Contact us for a copy. This information does not take into account your personal situation. Consider if appropriate for your situation before acting.

STORY LAUREN COONEY

# SETTING OUT ON THE ROAD AHEAD

**T**HE ROAD AHEAD has held a special place in the homes of Queenslanders for decades and just like the Club itself, RACQ's publications have a fascinating and long history.

It all began in 1914 with *The Steering Wheel* – a monthly newspaper that the founders of RACQ supported with

Club news, car tips and details of newly discovered road trips.

Just over a decade later, on 15 April 1926, the first edition of *The Queensland Motorist* – a dedicated member journal – made its way into the homes of RACQ members.

In 1934 *The Queensland Motorist* was renamed *The RACQ Journal* and almost

30 years later, on 1 January 1940, the popular publication was reborn as *The Road Ahead*.

From this edition we are going to look in the 'rear view' at how the history of motoring has evolved through the pages of RACQ's publications, starting with Volume 1 – Issue 1 of *The Queensland Motorist*.

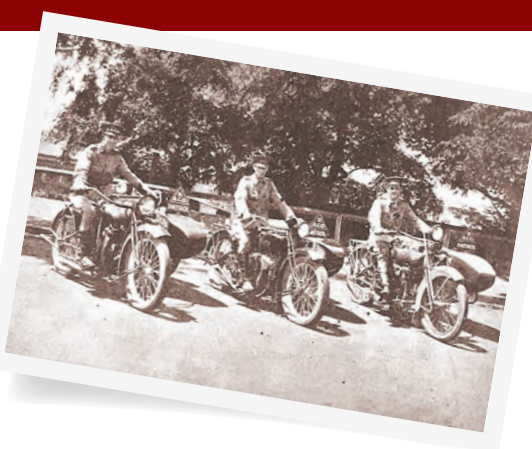


## THE QUEENSLAND MOTORIST LAUNCHES

Rewind to 15 April 1926 and the "official organ" of the Royal Automobile Club of Queensland was launched – guaranteeing the distribution of 4,000 copies to members across the State.

According to that first edition, its policy was to "advocate for the betterment of motoring conditions throughout Queensland" with the ambitious goal to have 5,000 members by June.

The journal promised to be "devoted to the interests of the Club and its Members, and eventually create greater unity throughout the motoring public of Queensland".



## RACQ PATROLS

The first edition of *The Queensland Motorist* celebrated one year of RACQ road patrols.

The launch of RACQ's Patrol Corps was dubbed "one of the most important of its undertakings" and, in that sense, very little has changed but operations did look quite different.

The Patrol Corps consisted of three "thoroughly efficient mechanics" who patrolled popular tourist routes throughout south east Queensland on their motorcycles with sidecars every Sunday and public holiday.

The magazine described the chief duties of the trio as being to "assist members by carrying out roadside repairs, giving timely warning of any dangerous roads, furnishing members with the latest road reports, directing members who are in doubt as to any particular route, clearing the roads of large stones, horseshoes, or any other matter likely to cause injury to tyres and generally doing everything possible to assist members".



## SPORTS SUITS FOR MOTORISTS

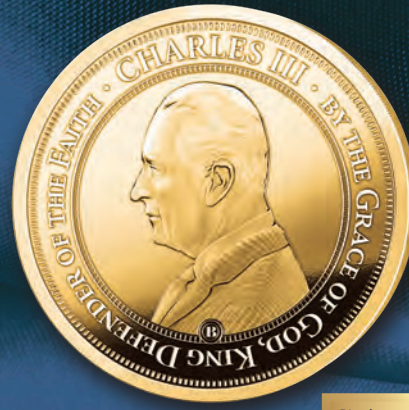
That first edition not only advised on how and where to drive, it also featured advice for the motorist wanting to look the part when behind the wheel.

A Rothwell's Ltd advertisement promoted "Sports Suits for Motorists" which stated the "correct and economical attire for motorists is a Sports' Coat and Trousers".

The combination was described as supplying "all the smartness of the ordinary Sac Suit", but giving all the "freedom and comfort of lounge attire". It would have been perfect for a Sunday road trip to the north, south or west of Brisbane, avoiding those large stones and horseshoes!

INTERNATIONAL GOLDEN COMMEMORATIVE ANNOUNCEMENT

Layered in Pure Gold



A ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME ROYAL TRIBUTE  
HONOURS THE HISTORIC ACCESSION OF  
**HIS MAJESTY KING CHARLES III**

**SAVE \$50.00**  
Yours for just  
**\$39.99<sup>+</sup> P&H**

*Limitation: Strictly limited release | Finish: Layered in Pure Gold | Quality: Proof | Diameter: 38.6mm*

On September 8, 2022, with the passing of his beloved mother, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Britain's Prince Charles became King Charles III. Yet, for much of his life, he has been "Charles the first." He was the first heir to the throne not educated at home, and the first to earn a university degree. And he is his nation's first King in 70 years. The longest-serving heir apparent in British history, King Charles III has pledged to continue Her Late Majesty's shining example of service to the nation. The Bradford Exchange Mint is pleased to mark this historic event with the exclusive *King Charles III Proof Coin*. Richly layered with 24K gold, the front showcases His Majesty in vivid colour. His fully-sculpted profile faces left, the opposite of his predecessor on the back. Proof-quality coining dies create its mirror-like fields and raised, frosted imagery. It arrives secured for posterity in a crystal-clear capsule.

**Limited Time Release: Applications will be processed first-come, first-served**

For this reason applications will be processed on a strictly first-come, first-served basis and are limited to one per Australian household. Order the "God Save The King" now for just \$39.99 (plus \$9.99 postage and handling). By ordering now, you will have priority access to further coins in *The King Charles III Royal Accession Proof Coin Collection* through our Risk-Free Subscription Plan. It's easy and convenient. For your convenience, the second and subsequent coins in the collection will be sent to you automatically at regular intervals for just \$89.99 plus p+h per coin. You get to see each coin before you pay for it. Our Risk-Free Subscription Plan means you don't have to worry about missing out on each new coin as they're released. Even better, you're never under any obligation to keep any coin you don't love. Collect as many as you like and if you're not entirely happy you can cancel your collection at any time by calling 02 9841 3311 (Mon - Fri, 8.00am - 5pm).

This fine collectable is not legal tender and bears no monetary face value. Design subject to change.



**Limited Time Release**

Due to the extremely low quantity available, only the earliest responders will successfully secure this officially licensed commemorative.



**Fully layered with Pure 24-Carat Gold**

As befitting an event of such importance, the coin is fully layered with pure 24-carat gold.



**Struck to match highest quality Proof finish**

Expertly struck not once but twice onto a specially prepared mirrored surface reserved only for the most important commemorative issues.

An elegant case to house the golden crowns will accompany a future delivery and is also supplied to you free of charge, as part of your collection.



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Lines open 8.00am-5.00pm AEST Mon-Fri Quote reference 130867

**YES,** Please reserve *The King Charles III Royal Accession Proof Coin Collection* for me through the Risk-Free Subscription Plan described in this announcement, beginning with Issue One "God Save The King" I understand I need pay nothing now.

Order reference:  
**130867**

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# SWITCH TO DIGITAL FOR A CHANCE TO WIN A LENOVO IDEAPAD



**\$10,455**  
TOTAL PRIZE VALUE

**RACQ IS GIVING MEMBERS THE CHANCE TO WIN ONE OF 15 LENOVO IDEAPAD SLIM LAPTOPS WHEN THEY SWITCH TO DIGITAL PREFERENCE FOR THE ROAD AHEAD.**

**RACQ MEMBERS CAN** switch to the digital *Road Ahead* magazine for bonus content, competitions, access to back issues to February 2019 and other features not available in the print version.

Members who switch by changing their preference on their online My RACQ profile will receive emails directly

to their inbox monthly with links to bonus content and the current edition of *The Road Ahead*.

By switching between 1 June and 31 August, members will automatically go into the draw to win one of 15 Lenovo IdeaPad Slim laptops valued at \$697.

With its 15.6 inch LCD display and a resolution of 1920 x 1080, this laptop's

design is optimised for preventing eye strain and promoting better posture, alongside an 11th Generation Intel Core i3 processor and FHD display.

The prize includes one Lenovo IdeaPad Slim laptop (3i 15.6" Core i3 8/256GB Grey) per winner.

To enter, visit [racq.com/switch-to-digital-winter](http://racq.com/switch-to-digital-winter).

**THE COMPETITION ENDS AT 11:59PM THURSDAY 31 AUGUST 2023.**

PRIZE VALUE UP TO **\$2,500**

## WIN A SEVEN-DAY EV RENTAL WITH SIXT

**THE ROAD AHEAD AND SIXT ARE GIVING READERS THE CHANCE TO WIN A SEVEN-DAY ELECTRIC VEHICLE RENTAL.**

**MOST AUSTRALIANS ARE** new to the electric vehicle world and are yet to experience driving an electric vehicle (EV).

Renting is a great way to get an in-depth experience of an EV for longer than a test drive to truly immerse yourself into the EV world.

SIXT are giving one lucky person the chance to win a seven-day EV rental to experience electric.

All SIXT EV rentals enjoy free charging at Chargefox stations and the ability to bring back the EV without 100 percent charge at no extra cost.

To enter, visit [racq.com/sixt-ev](http://racq.com/sixt-ev).

RACQ members enjoy 15 percent off daily rental rates\* at SIXT branches in Australia and New Zealand plus \$5 off protection options and no additional driver fees.

\*T&Cs apply ([racq.com/sixt](http://racq.com/sixt))



**THE COMPETITION CLOSES AT 5PM 31 AUGUST 2023.**

**\$2,680**  
TOTAL PRIZE VALUE



## WIN A FAMILY TRIP TO ENJOY THE BEST OF BRISBANE

**THERE IS SO** much to see and do in Brisbane for the family which is why RACQ has teamed up with accommodation and attractions featured in the 'Brisbane with a tinge of green' article in this edition of *The Road Ahead*.

One lucky reader will win two nights' accommodation at Novotel South Bank for two adults and two children, a family pass to Lone Pine Sanctuary, and a day cruise to Tangalooma Island Resort which includes wild dolphin feeding, the choice of a signature island tour, lunch and much more.

For your chance to win, head to [racq.com/brisbane-sights](http://racq.com/brisbane-sights).

**THE COMPETITION CLOSES 5PM 31 AUGUST 2023.**

2 FOR 1 RAIL DEAL ON OUR

# Legendary Longreach & Winton Summer Tour

RACQ MEMBERS

2 for 1  
RAIL DEAL

\$3,858pp\*

Departs: 31 October, 14 November, 5 December 2023, 27 February and 12 March 2024.

### Tour highlights:

- 2 for 1 Return First Class Sleeper Rail ex Brisbane on the Spirit of the Outback
- Rosebank Station Tour and Smoko
- Qantas Founders Museum Entry and Airpark Tour
- Smithy's Sunset Cruise
- Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame Entry
- Camden Park Station Tours
- Waltzing Matilda Centre Entry
- Australian Age of Dinosaurs Tour including Dinosaur Canyon and Deluxe Sunset Barbecue

WHILE SEATS LAST



**Outback Aussie Tours**  
~ Celebrating 35 years ~

\*Rate includes 2 for 1 rail on Spirit of the Outback Brisbane to Longreach return rail at senior rate. Subject to availability. Advertised price is for listed departure dates of the 8 Day Legendary Longreach & Winton Summer 2023/2024 Tour only. Refer to outbackaussietours.com.au for full terms & conditions. Limited sale seats available.



## ESCORTED LUXURY EXPEDITION TO MELANESIA

Join your RACQ Travel host on this Fully Inclusive Luxury Expedition of Melanesia to discover the hidden treasures of Papua New Guinea.

This 10 night voyage embarks from Cairns on 2 November 2023 and returns on 12 November 2023.

### ISLANDS AND CULTURES OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Cairns to Cairns - 10 nights

2 November 2023

Aboard *Le Soléal*

From \$9750 per person

- RACQ Host onboard
- Balcony Stateroom
- All Meals & Open bar
- Guided Excursions



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WORLD RENOWNED EXPERT GUIDES



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ALL-INCLUSIVE ONBOARD LUXURY\*



INCLUDED EXCURSIONS



\* Price is per person twin/double share with Welcome Offer (past guests enjoy alternative savings. Prices include current PONANT Bonus; correct at 26 April 2023 and subject to change without notice. See your RACQ Advisor for full booking conditions or [au.ponant.com](http://au.ponant.com)

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\*Terms and conditions apply. Prices correct as at time of publication. Prices are per person, twin share and include GST. Prices are subject to fluctuation due to changes in surcharges, fees and taxes. A limited number of offers are available on selected departure dates and are subject to availability at the time of booking. Once sold out, prices may revert to higher rates but may also be further discounted. Offers valid for new bookings only and can be withdrawn at any time. Savings offers have already been incorporated into the advertised prices. Further conditions apply, visit [racq.com/travel](http://racq.com/travel) for more information. Members Travel Group Pty Ltd trading as RACQ Travel | ABN 45 144 538 803 | A11470e

The Ghan at sunset.

STORY FIONA HARPER

# Rail adventure

## AN AUSSIE ICON

THE GHAN REMAINS AN ICONIC RAIL JOURNEY BETWEEN ADELAIDE AND DARWIN LURING TRAVELLERS TO OUTBACK AUSTRALIA.

**STANDING BEFORE STANDLEY** Chasm, our guide Johnson Maloney explained that this was much more than a geological wonder to his people.

“For white fellas, this is just a chasm,” Johnson, an Arrente man, said.

“For our mob it is everything. All our stories are here – in the land, the trees, the people and with our ancestors.”

“It’s easy to talk about sacred sites, but that’s not entirely correct.”

Spreading his arms to take in the striking red-hued cliffs of Standley Chasm (known as Angkerle Atwatye),

Johnson explained how “the sacredness is in the stories that place holds for our people”.

We were standing alongside a dry riverbed that wound its way through the chasm pierced by shards of sunlight when Johnson asked us to rest our ears against the trunk of the red river gums (known in his language as apar).

As I leaned into the trunk, I felt slightly foolish. But soon I heard what amounted to the sound of the trees’ lifeforce surging through its trunk as its roots reached deep into the earth seeking nourishment.

Bizarrely, I heard an almost musical, guttural beat as the wind brushed through the upper branches, sending vibrations into the ground beneath my feet.

We were midway through a four-day-long rail journey known as the Ghan Expedition through the heart of Australia’s Red Centre from Darwin to Adelaide with stops at Katherine, Alice Springs and Coober Pedy.

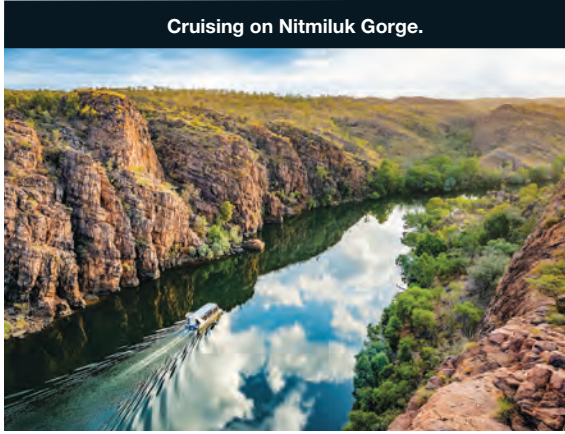
Though, in truth, this adventure started three days earlier when our small aircraft touched down on to a far-flung dirt airstrip in remote Arnhem Land.

A scenic 40-minute flight from Darwin dropped us into Garig Gunak Barlu National Park (pronounced gah-rig goon-uck-bar-loo), which casts a protective blanket across the Coburg Peninsula.

Checking into Seven Spirit Bay, which sits on the shores of the Arafura Sea, the lodge provided a welcome retreat from the Top End heat.

The Main Lodge, with its lofty ceiling, walls of glass and timber floor, is centred





Telegraph Station dinner, Alice Springs.

Relaxing at Seven Spirit Bay lodge.

soil provides natural insulation against daytime temperatures that can reach as high as 50°C in summer.

Single-digit winter temperatures are also made easier with the earth retaining the heat from sun-kissed skies.

Everywhere you look, air vents dot the hills providing ventilation to the homes and hotels, shops and galleries concealed beneath the earth.

It's this opportunity to visit such unique outback towns that lures travellers to The Ghan expedition experience.

On a cross-country journey bookended by the tropical charm of Darwin and the cosmopolitan beachside suburbs of Adelaide, ensconced in a compact cabin we were immersed into the cultural melting pot of outback Australia where the characters are as big as the landscape they call home.

Characters like opal miner Clint who escorted us down a mine shaft for lunch at Opal Quest Mine where we dined beneath a roof chiselled out of rock, the dirt floor beneath our feet strewn with undiscovered opals. Or Train Manager Bruce, for whom the Ghan is like his second home after almost 30 years crisscrossing the country by rail and who can pinpoint our position just from a glance out the window.

Arrente man Johnson Maloney summed up this connection to Country best as the wind whipped through the Standley Chasm tree canopy, creating a soothing soundtrack scented with eucalyptus.

"We're not standing on a sacred site. We're in a site of sacredness," he said.

"This is not a place that is exclusive to our mob. Anyone can come here. We want people to come here. We simply ask that the sacredness of our stories is respected." ■

around a lagoon-style swimming pool while louvre window-lined Habitat Suites nestle discreetly among the native forest.

Daily adventures include 4WD explorations in a safari-style open-sided vehicle from which we saw buffalo and wild banteng cattle foraging near lily-lined billabongs.

Later, on a sea voyage that took us deep into Port Essington to visit the ruins of Victoria Settlement we're greeted on arrival by a triumvirate of manta rays cruising the shallow waters as we stepped ashore on the beach.

Rich earthy tones of laterite cliffs cast their ochre hue across the aqua sea. Weathered trees cling grimly to cliffs eroded by tumultuous seas whipped up by tropical storms that barrel across the peninsula like roiling puffballs of cumulonimbus.

Later, we left Darwin and the Coburg Peninsula behind, boarding the southbound Ghan for a four-day journey through Australia's heart.

Our first stop was Katherine where we cruised the reflective waters of Nitmiluk

Gorge, where a bumper wet season was evident in riverside trees leaning to the rush of a formerly raging torrent.

After the stop at Alice Springs came our final stop at Coober Pedy, a quirky town that arose from the desert's painted sands after precious opals were found

**FOR WHITE FELLAS, THIS IS JUST A CHASM. FOR OUR MOB IT IS EVERYTHING. ALL OUR STORIES ARE HERE – IN THE LAND, THE TREES, THE PEOPLE AND WITH OUR ANCESTORS...**

in 1915. The ensuing opal rush attracted fortune hunters who established shantytown shacks beside their mines which soon grew into a flourishing town fed by opal fever.

Almost the entire town is concealed underground where the sandstone

# FIVE FARM TOURS

## THAT WILL SATISFY EVERY FOODIE

EXPERIENCE LIFE ON THE LAND AND TASTE DELICIOUS FOOD.

**H**ERE ARE SOME of our favourite farm tours that will be a treat for every foodie's taste buds.



### TOWRI SHEEP CHEESES—ALLENVIEW, SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND

**TOWRI SHEEP CHEESES** is a hidden oasis and features ever-expanding French-style gardens, jumping Jack Russells, an old kelpie named Abby, sheep that love a good cuddle, a farm shop with incredible local produce, and of course, cheese.

Farm tours on the first Saturday of each month start with a milking demonstration, a cheese tasting and lots of cuddles with the friendly sheep.

[towrisheepcheeses.com.au](http://towrisheepcheeses.com.au)



### DAINTREE ICE CREAM COMPANY—DAINTREE

**HIDDEN IN THE** beautiful Heritage-listed Daintree Rainforest lies the Daintree Ice Cream Company orchard.

The tropical fruit orchard contains more than 15 species of rare and exotic trees that you can explore on a

self-guided walk, as well as dedicated revegetation and wildlife rehabilitation areas. If you need more than just the untouched and vast landscape to convince you to visit, the chance to taste the lovingly crafted ice cream, gelato and sorbet will do the trick.

[daintreeicecream.com.au](http://daintreeicecream.com.au)



### TRUFFLE DISCOVERY CENTRE—STANTHORPE

**THE TRUFFLE DISCOVERY** Centre in Stanthorpe offers visitors a chance to unearth all that is truffles.

Sample local truffle-infused produce like honey, cheeses, salsa and butter. Visitors can even try the decadent and rare French black Périgord and white Italian truffle. Not only will you be treating your taste buds, you can also see truffle detection dogs in training, get a behind-the-scenes look at the truffle industry and meet the farmers.

[trufflediscoverycentre.com.au](http://trufflediscoverycentre.com.au)



### HIGH VALLEY DAWN PERMACULTURE FARM—YEPPON

HIGH VALLEY DAWN Permaculture

Farm is a self-sufficient community model and education centre, showcasing a range of regenerative farming practices. You can start the day by touring the farm and learning how its range of quality produce is grown.

Finish the day at Beaches, where you can taste the delicious paddock-to-plate menu, which celebrates fresh produce and locally sourced seafood and meat.

Tours for all ages are offered every Sunday at 9am. You can also volunteer to stay and work on the farm.

[highvalleydawn.com.au](http://highvalleydawn.com.au)



### CHARLEY'S CHOCOLATE FACTORY—MISSION BEACH

**EVERYONE LOVES CHOCOLATE**, but very few know how it comes into being.

Charley's is one of the few places in the world where you can take the fascinating journey from baby cocoa tree to chocolate bar on a fully guided tour that concludes with an extensive chocolate tasting.

Charley's combines its chocolate with locally sourced and quintessentially Australian ingredients like macadamia, Davidson's plum and lemon myrtle.

[charleys.com.au](http://charleys.com.au)

**MORE OPTIONS TO EXPLORE:** FIND A RANGE of food and farm experiences and events at [daf.qld.gov.au/tastefarmlife](http://daf.qld.gov.au/tastefarmlife).

Queenland | Good jobs | Better services | Great lifestyle



**TRI STATE SAFARI** 14 DAYS

**DEPARTS > 19 OCT 2023**

Discover the **Great Ocean Road, Adelaide, Barossa Valley, Flinders Ranges, Broken Hill, Wentworth, and Bendigo.** Visit the **Dandenong Ranges** for a **Puffing Billy Steam train** ride. Overnight stays in **Skenes Creek, Warrnambool, Naracoorte, Mildura, Adelaide, the Flinders Ranges and Broken Hill.** Highlights include the **Twelve Apostles** by road and air with a **scenic flight, Hahndorf,** a winery visit in the **Barossa Valley,** scenic flight over **Wilpena Pound, Broken Hill town** tour, the **Living Desert Sculptures** and **Wentworth Gaol.** ★ Return economy airfares from Brisbane and 38 meals included.

Per person twin share

**FROM \$7,365\***

**MELBOURNE CUP CELLAR-BRATION** 8 DAYS

**DEPARTS > 1 NOV 2023**

This food and wine trail departs **Brisbane** travelling via overnight stays in **Armidale, Hunter Valley, Bowral, and Albury.** Sight-seeing along the way includes the **Big Golden Guitar, a thoroughbred stud tour** near **Denman,** the **Bradman Museum** and the re-enactment of **Ned Kelly's last stand** at **Glenrowan.** Stay 3 nights in 5-star luxury in the **Melbourne CBD** in preparation for the race that stops the nation. Celebrate in style at **Flemington Racecourse** with a **full food and beverage package, entertainment** in one of the high-class enclosures.

★ One way economy airfares to Brisbane and 20 meals included.

Per person twin share

**FROM \$6,615\***

**EYRE PENINSULA SEAFOOD TRAIL & BAROSSA VALLEY** 9 DAYS

**DEPARTS > 22 NOV 2023**

**South Australia** dishes up seafood and wine galore. Starting in **Adelaide,** travel to the **Clare Valley** and onto **Port Augusta** to visit the **Wadlata Outback Centre's 'Tunnel of Time'.** Next travel to **Port Lincoln** to tour the **Axel Stenross Maritime Museum, Boston Bay Wines** and take a **2-hour seafood cruise** where you view the local **sea lion colony.** Enjoy **Oyster Bay** with an oyster farm tour before arriving in **Streaky Bay.** Finishing our tour in the **Barossa Valley,** visit **Mengler Hill** and **Seppeltsfield Winery** for a guided tour and tasting. ★ Return economy airfares from Brisbane and 23 meals included.

Per person twin share

**FROM \$5,200\***

**NEW ZEALAND NATURAL WONDERS** 19 DAYS

**DEPARTS > 30 SEP 2023**

Travel the north and south islands to discover New Zealand's highlights. Overnight stays in the **Bay of Islands, Franz Joseph, and Te Anau;** 2 night stays in **Auckland, Rotorua, Wellington, Queenstown, Dunedin;** 3 nights **Christchurch.** Highlights include a visit to **Hobbiton,** the **Skyline luge ride, Te Po cultural experience,** the **Wellington Tramway, Interislander ferry** across the Cook Strait, visit the **International Antarctic Centre,** the **TranzAlpine railway journey,** the vintage **TSS Earnslaw steamship dinner cruise,** overnight stay on the **Milford Mariner** on **Milford Sound, Larnach Castle** and plenty more. ★ Return economy airfares from Brisbane and 52 meals included.

Per person twin share

**FROM \$11,015\***

**NORTH QUEENSLAND KALEIDOSCOPE** 10 DAYS

**DEPARTS > 4 SEP 2023**

Fly into **Townsville** and stay 3 nights, discover the waters of **Cleveland** and **Horseshoe Bays** on **Magnetic Island,** a day trip to **Charters Towers** to learn about the Texas Longhorns. Next, travel through **Bowen** to stay 2-nights at **Airlie Beach,** taking a full day to explore **Hamilton Island.** Stay 2 nights at both **Mackay** and **Yeppoon** experiencing a sunrise visit to see the wallabies of **Cape Hillsborough National Park, Finch Hatton Gorge** waterfalls and boulder formations, lunch and show at the **Footlights Theatre Restaurant** and a full day tour to **Great Keppel Island.** Head home via the **Tilt Train** ★ One way economy airfare and 26 meals included.

Per person twin share

**FROM \$5,140\***

GOLD CLASS - QLD PENSION CARD

**SOUTH WEST QUEENSLAND & LIGHTNING RIDGE ROVER** 8 DAYS

**DEPARTS > 1 JUL 2023**

Head out west to experience the outback way of life. Stay overnight in **Roma, Charleville, and Goondiwindi;** and 2 nights in **St George** and **Lightning Ridge.** Discover the **Roma Cattle Sale Yards,** enjoy a **Bilby encounter** and the **Big Sky Twilight tour** at the **Charleville Cosmos Centre.** Learn about local producers at operational cotton farms, see the **Thallon Silo Mural,** discover opal mining at the **Australian Opal Centre** and **Lunatic Hill Open Cut,** visit the **Chambers of the Black Hand** and take a long soak in **naturally heated thermal baths.** ★ 22 meals included.

Per person twin share


**FROM \$3,675\***

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**DARWIN, KAKADU, KIMBERLEY & BROOME** 13 DAYS



**HORIZONTAL FALLS EXTENDER PACKAGES AVAILABLE**

DEPARTS > 5 JUL, 10, 26 AUG 2023

Stay in **Darwin** for 2 nights, then embark on a **Litchfield National Park** day tour, visiting **Florence Falls**, and **Wangi Falls**. Explore **Kakadu** for 2 nights, including **Burrungkuy rock art site** and a **30-minute scenic flight**. Enjoy a **Yellow Water wetlands cruise**, visit **Edith Falls** before continuing to **Katherine** and **Kununurra** for river cruises and **Bungle Bungles scenic flight**. Visit **Halls Creek**, **Fitzroy Crossing** and **Broome** with a **Willie Creek Pearl Farm tour** and a **camel ride** on **Cable Beach**. ★ Return economy airfares from **Brisbane** and 35 meals included.

Per person twin share

FROM **\$9,375\***

**ULURU & ALICE SPRINGS SPRITZER** 7 DAYS




DEPARTS > 16, 23 JUL 2023

Stay 3 nights in **Uluru** 5-star hotel. Witness the **Field of Light** at sunrise, take the guided **Mala Walk**, a **camel trek** with views of Uluru and Kata Tjuta. Learn about dot painting from a local Indigenous artist before experiencing the iconic **Sounds of Silence** specialty dinner. Making our way to **Alice Springs**, we visit the **Karrke Cultural Experience** in **Kings Canyon**. Alice Springs touring includes the **Outback Telegraph Station**, **RFDS**, **Ellery Creek Big Hole**, **Standley Chasm**, **Ormiston** and **Simpsons Gap**, and an **outdoor bush BBQ dinner** and entertainment. ★ Return economy airfares from **Brisbane** and 16 meals included.

Per person twin share

FROM **\$5,645\***

**HEROES OF LONGREACH, WINTON & SOUTH WEST** 8 DAYS




DEPARTS > DIAMOND: 15 JUL 2023

Take an overnight journey on the iconic **Spirit of the Outback** in sleeper cabins, detraining in **Barcaldine**, before arriving by coach in **Longreach** for 3 nights. Visit **Qantas Founders Museum**, **Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame**, cruise the **Thomson River** at sunset, enjoy dinner and entertainment by the campfire under the stars. Take a day trip to **Winton** to see the **Australian Age of Dinosaurs** and **Waltzing Matilda Centre**. Visit **Camden Park Station**, the **Desert Dreaming Centre**, **Australian Workers Heritage Museum**, **Charleville Cosmos Centre**, and **Bilby encounter** while staying overnight in **Barcaldine**, **Charleville** and **Roma**. ★ 21 meals included.

Per person twin share

FROM **\$4,185\***  
DIAMOND CLASS - QLD PENSION CARD

**BEST OF THE WEST & WILDFLOWERS** 14 DAYS



DEPARTS > 5 OCT 2023

Enjoy 3 nights 5 star in **Perth** visiting **Rottneet Island**. We stay at **Geraldton** for 2 nights then discover **The Pinnacles** and the **Wildflower trail**. Enjoy 2 nights **Hyden** and discover **Wave Rock**. Break for 2 nights in **Albany** taking in **Stirling Ranges**, **The Gap & Natural Bridge**. Visit the **National Anzac Centre & Valley of the Giants Tree Top Walk**. Take in 2 nights at **Pemberton**, cruise the **Donnelly River**, and take in **Cape Leeuwin Lighthouse**. Overnight in **Margaret River** and visit a winery, **Cape Naturaliste**, **Canal Rocks**, **Koomal Dreaming** cultural experience, **Busselton** and **Forest of Tuart**. ★ Return economy class airfares and 38 meals included.

Per person twin share

FROM **\$7,520\***

**TASMANIA GRAND TOUR** 11 DAYS



DEPARTS > 17, 24 OCT, 14 NOV 2023

Discover Tasmania's icons, starting and finishing in **Hobart** with day tour to **Port Arthur Historic Site** and a cruise of **Carnarvon Bay**. Visit **Derwent Valley**, the **Wall in the Wilderness** and **Nelson Falls**, stopping for 2 nights in **Strahan**. Enjoy reserved premium seating on the **Gordon River Cruise** passing Hells Gates and Sarah Island. Travel onboard the **West Coast Wilderness Railway**, before staying nights at **Cradle Mountain**, **Smithton**, and **Launceston**. Glide on the chairlift over **Cataract Gorge**, before taking a scenic flight over **Wineglass Bay** and **Freycinet**. ★ Return economy airfares from **Brisbane** and 28 meals included.

Per person twin share

FROM **\$6,015\***

**VICTORIAN ROVER GRAND TOUR** 11 DAYS



DEPARTS > 16 OCT 2023

Start with 3 nights in **Melbourne** visiting **Werribee Park Mansion**, **Narana Aboriginal Cultural Centre**, **Melbourne Cricket Ground** and **Melbourne Skydeck**. Travel via **Bells Beach** and see the **Great Ocean Road** and **Twelve Apostles** by road and air with a scenic flight. Visit historic **Creswick**, **Ballarat** and **Bendigo** with a **gold mine** and tram tours; discover the river town of **Echuca** with a **paddlesteamer cruise**. Travel Victoria's high country visiting **Bogong**, **Wallace's Hut**, **Falls Creek**, **Mt Beauty**, **Sullivan's Lookout**, **Beechworth**, **Red Stag Deer Farm**, **Bright** and **Glenrowan**. ★ Return economy airfares from **Brisbane** and 28 meals included.

Per person twin share

FROM **\$6,100\***

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**BAROSSA VALLEY & KANGAROO ISLAND FOOD & WINE TRAIL**

8 DAYS

The Barossa Valley serves up plenty of food and wine at **Chateau Tanunda**, the **Maggie Beer Farm Shop** and private cooking demonstration, **Seppeltsfield Winery** and **Barossa Valley Chocolate Company**. Enjoy lunch and apple strudel making at **Hahndorf** followed by 1 night **Victor Harbour**. 2 nights on **Kangaroo Island** including touring of **Australian Birds of Prey Display**, **Seal Bay Conservation Park**, **Flinders Chase National Park**, the seal colony of **Cape du Couedic**, **Emu Bay Lavender Farm** and **False Cape Wines**. Final night in **Adelaide** with city sights tour. ★ Return economy airfares from Brisbane & 20 meals included.

DEPARTS > 13 NOV 2023

Per person twin share

FROM \$5,750\*



**SYDNEY NEW YEAR SPECTACULAR**

5 DAYS

Stay 4 nights in 5 star **Sydney** luxury. Start with lunch at **Sydney Tower** before taking a **guided tour** of the **Sydney Opera House** and visit of **Madame Tussauds**. Day trip to the **Blue Mountains** with a **Scenic World skyway** journey, viewing the **Three Sisters** and **Jamison Valley**. Visit the **Broken Bay Pearl Farm** before ringing in the New Year by **cruising Sydney Harbour** viewing the **Harbour of Light Parade** and famous **Sydney New Year's Eve fireworks**. ★ Return economy flights from Brisbane and 12 meals included.

DEPARTS > 28 DEC 2023

Per person twin share

FROM \$5,375\*



**FESTIVALS OF SPRING**

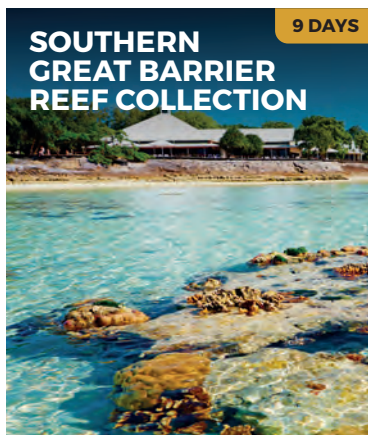
10 DAYS

Offering gardens galore, we start at the **Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers** opening night gala dinner, **Queens Park Botanic Gardens** and view the **Grand Central Parade** in reserved seating. Travel through **Tamworth**, take a guided tour of the **Darley Thoroughbred Stud** and **Hunter wine region** including the **Hunter Valley Gardens**. Tour **Corbett Gardens**, **Tulip Top Gardens** and **Cockington Green** before we visit the main event, **Canberra Floriade**. Visit **Australian National Botanic Gardens**, **Parliament House**, and the **War Memorial**, finishing with a guided tour of the **National Arboretum**. ★ Return economy airfares from Brisbane & 26 meals included.

DEPARTS > 14 SEP 2023

Per person twin share

FROM \$5,805\*



**SOUTHERN GREAT BARRIER REEF COLLECTION**

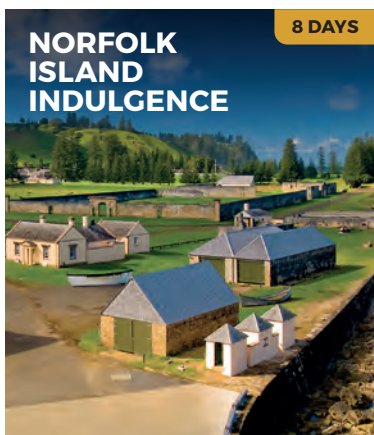
9 DAYS

Travel to Queensland's jewels of the **Southern Great Barrier Reef**. Stay 3 nights **Yeppoon** with full-day tour to **Great Keppel Island** for coral viewing, fish feeding and a glass bottom boat venture. Experience the wonder of the **Capricorn Caves** and be entertained at the **Footlights Theatre Restaurant**. Spent 1 night in **Gladstone**, before travelling to **Heron Island** for 2 nights in reef rooms where you will join a naturalist eco guide for flora, fauna, and reef walks daily. Stay 2 nights at the **Town of 1770** and take a full day paradise tour onboard an **amphibious vehicle**. ★ 25 meals included.

DEPARTS > 8 AUG 2023

Per person twin share

FROM \$4,515\*



**NORFOLK ISLAND INDULGENCE**

8 DAYS

Unpack once as we discover stunning **Norfolk Island** staying 7 nights. Hosted by an experienced Fun Over 50 Holidays host, touring includes a **half day island orientation**, visit to **Kingston**, **Emily Bay**, **Melanesian Chapel**, **4WD adventure tour**, **progressive dinner**, **convict settlement tour**, **night as a convict dinner**, **Emily Bay glass bottom boat cruise**, **sunset fish fry dinner**, **cliff top breakfast bushwalk**, **Hilli Goat tour**, **island culture tour**, **Wonderland by Night**, **Cyclorama** and the **Pitcairn Settlers Village tour**. ★ Return economy airfares from Brisbane and 20 meals included.

DEPARTS > 7 NOV 2023

Per person twin share

FROM \$4,925\*



**INLAND EXPLORER**

11 DAYS

Traverse 3 states, starting in **Brisbane**, travelling to **Melbourne**. Overnight in **St George**, **Dubbo**, **Cobar**, **Mildura**, **Echuca** and **Melbourne**. Enjoy 2 nights in **Lightning Ridge** visiting **Lunatic Hill Open Cut mine**, and the **Chamber of the Black Hand**. Take a **ZooFari** guided tour of **Taronga Western Plains Zoo**, visit the **Great Cobar Heritage Centre** before arriving in **Broken Hill** for 2 nights. Discover the ghost town of **Silverton**, the **Pro Hart Gallery** and watch the sun dip at the **Living Desert Sculptures**. Meander down the might **Murray River** on one of Echuca's paddlesteamer's. ★ One way economy airfare to Brisbane and 30 meals included.

DEPARTS > 3 OCT 2023

Per person twin share

FROM \$5,175\*

North Lakes | Robina | Toowoomba | Townsville

The dust flies at the Julia Creek races. Photo Tourism and Events Queensland.

# FESTIVAL FROLICS

## *in the outback*

WHERE ELSE CAN YOU SPLASH IN AN ARTESIAN BATH, FROCK UP FOR THE RACES, CHAT TO A RODEO COWBOY, RUN THROUGH A MUD BATH AND FOSSICK FOR DINOSAUR BONES?

STORY KERRY HEANEY

**QUEENSLAND'S OUTBACK COMES** alive from April to October as cooler weather brings travellers seeking experiences you can only have far from city lights.

The outback tourist season's opening event is the Dirt n Dust Festival in Julia Creek, 645km west of Townsville along the Overlanders Way, and an adventurous seventeen-and-a-half-hour road trip (1,630km) north west of Brisbane.

April temperatures in this tiny town (population 400) range around 32°C.

Still, the dry heat is surprisingly comfortable for an early morning adventure race, race day, rodeo and dancing under the stars. Add in the Best Butts Competition, which started as a crowd saver in the early 1990s when

the festival lost power, and you have the iconic Dirt n Dust Festival.

It works like this.

You start on Friday night with a few drinks at the rodeo and some outdoor dancing. Depending on how many drinks, you might enter the Best Butt Competition!

On Saturday it's up bright and shiny

**...THE DRY HEAT IS SURPRISINGLY COMFORTABLE FOR AN EARLY MORNING ADVENTURE RACE, RACE DAY, RODEO AND DANCING UNDER THE STARS.**

to run the five, 10 or 15km courses in the DND Adventure Run.

You will climb over hay bales, crawl through tyres and wallow in the mud, and that's the easy part.

By midday, you must remove all mud and get frocked up for the Artesian Express Race Day at Julia Creek Turf Club, one of the richest race meetings in the north west.

Chat with the locals or take your chance in Fashions on the Field. Those with stamina will head afterwards to Dirt n Dust Central for more rodeo, dancing and the Best Butt Competition finals.

Two locals you should meet are Donald and Duncan, rare Julia Creek dunnarts who are fed daily (10am and 2pm) for those visiting At The Creek Visitor

Information Centre. Dunnarts are the same size as a small rat but much cuter.

Stay at Julia Creek Caravan Park, where the award-winning Artesian Bathhouse's mineral waters will soak away your worries while sampling a delicious charcuterie platter as dusk descends.

You will need to drive 273km to Winton to find those dinosaur bones at the Australian Age of Dinosaurs.

First, take a tour of the fossil laboratory to see bones emerging from the dirt, then learn how dinosaurs once roamed this region and see their footprints in the March of the Titanosaurs.

Follow with a scenic helicopter flight with Outback From Above over the plains, rifts and waterfalls of Bladensburg National Park.

Winton's Waltzing Matilda Centre will



Adventure Run fun. Photo Jo Thieme.

tug at your heartstrings with its stories of the outback and leave you with a delightful *Waltzing Matilda* earworm.

Stay at the iconic, art deco North Gregory Hotel, Australia's 'Queen of the Outback'. Established in 1879 and rebuilt several times, it has links to *Waltzing Matilda*, Qantas, and former US president Lyndon B. Johnson. Look out for the glass-etched doors by Daphne Mayo.

Winton to Longreach is a quick (in country terms) 179km drive.

Here, you'll find the Qantas Founders Museum plus a new Pre-Flight Breakfast Tour of the hangar built for Qantas in 1922.

Lachie Cossor's Stockman's Live Show at the Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame is a fun look at a stockman's life with horses, dogs, sheep and a performing bull.

Reconnect with the romance of rail with Outback Aussie Tours' new Outback Rail Adventure.

Stay at Saltbush Retreat, where chic style meets authentic country with three outdoor artesian baths and dine on fine local cuisine at Harry's Restaurant.

Every day is an adventure in the outback. ■

The author travelled as a guest of Tourism & Events Queensland, Queensland Destination Events Program.

## OUTBACK HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ **JULIA CREEK DIRT N DUST FESTIVAL**, April, 2024.
- ▶ **FESTIVAL OF OUTBACK OPERA**, May 2024, Longreach and Winton.
- ▶ **OUTBACK FILM FESTIVAL**, 23 June–1 July 2023, Winton
- ▶ **BIRDSTVILLE BIG RED BASH**, 4–6 July 2023, Birdsville  
Magic happens when John Williamson, Troy Cassar-Daley, Human Nature and Pete Murray sing under the open sky of the Simpson Desert.
- ▶ **BOULIA CAMEL RACES**, 14–16 July 2023, Boulia  
Watch camels hurtle down the track through a plume of red dust.
- ▶ **OUTBACK FESTIVAL**, 19–23 September 2023, Winton.  
There are Outback Ironman and Ironwoman races, bush poets' breakfasts and the Outback Dunny Derby.

Julia Creek's Artesian Bathhouse. Photo TEQ.



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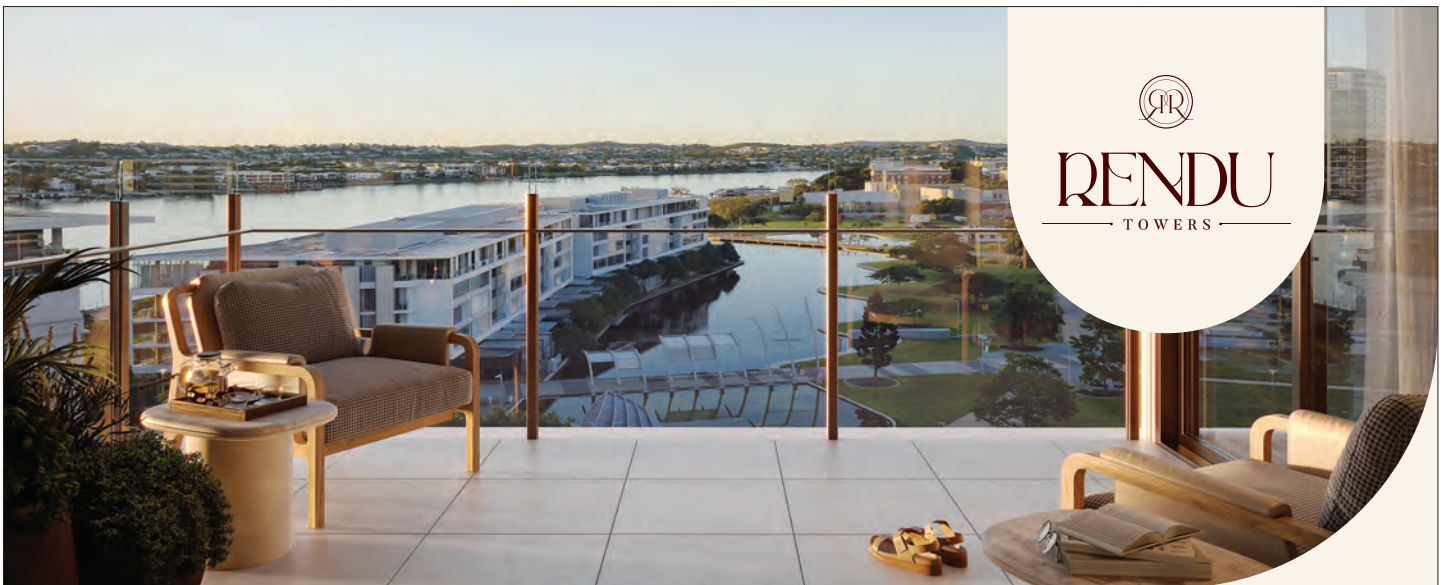
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### Highlights & Inclusions

- 4 days aboard the Indian Pacific from Sydney to Perth in a Gold Twin Cabin
- All inclusive regionally inspired meals and beverages
- Visit the Silver City of Broken Hill and embark on a morning Off Train Experience
- Explore the world-famous Barossa Valley or McLaren Vale<sup>^</sup> wine regions, or a trip into the beautiful Adelaide Hills, featuring the culinary delights of Hahndorf
- Stretch your legs at the once thriving Nullarbor railway community — now ghost town of Cook
- Embrace the Outback and enjoy dinner off the train and under the stars on the fringes of a cattle station at the remote outpost of Rawlinna<sup>^</sup>
- Experience friendly and attentive service throughout your journey
- 3 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 3 dinners

4 Days From **\$2,815\*pp** SAVE up to **\$630** per couple

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The Ghan Expedition | Includes everything



A unique and epic experience, explore the wonders of Australia's vast interior with one of the world's most renowned rail journeys. Beginning in Darwin, this four day, all-inclusive expedition will take you to some of the most remote and captivating parts of Australia in style and comfort. It's the ultimate Australian outback experience.



### Highlights & Inclusions

- 4 days aboard The Ghan Expedition from Darwin to Adelaide in a Gold Twin Cabin
- All inclusive regionally inspired meals and beverages
- Explore Nitmiluk Gorge's natural wonders and rich Indigenous culture on your choice of Off Train Experience
- Embark on a full day of Off Train Experiences in Alice Springs, where you may choose to visit Simpsons Gap, Standley Chasm, or explore Alice Springs
- Be wined, dined and serenaded under a blanket of stars in a spectacular dinner at the Old Telegraph Station in Alice Springs
- Venture into the weird and wonderful opal mining town of Coober Pedy
- 3 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 3 dinners

4 Days From **\$4,245\*pp** SAVE up to **\$900** per couple

## JOURNEY BEYOND

\*Indian Pacific: Advertised prices are per person, based on the Advance Purchase fare in a Gold Twin Cabin in June 2024, from Sydney to Perth. The Ghan: Advertised prices are per person, based on the Advance Purchase fare in a Gold Twin Cabin in October 2024, from Darwin to Adelaide. Advance Purchase are subject to availability and must be booked at least 6 months prior to travel. Save up to prices are per couple, based on the Everyday Fare. <sup>^</sup>Off Train Experiences operate seasonally. Booking and credit card fees may apply. For full terms & conditions visit [www.journeybeyondrail.com.au/terms-conditions/](http://www.journeybeyondrail.com.au/terms-conditions/). Prices correct at 04 May 2023. IMAGES: TOP - The Ghan, Manguri, SA | LEFT - Outback Explorer Lounge | RIGHT - Alice Springs, NT.

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STORY TRISTAN VORIAS

# BRISBANE WITH A TINGE OF GREEN

TRY THIS GUIDE FOR A BRISBANE GETAWAY WHICH IS SURE TO PLEASE CARBON-CONSCIOUS TRAVELLERS.

**T**HE WORD 'SUSTAINABLE' might not spring to mind when you think of Brisbane and its snaking brown river, but it's Australia's most biodiverse capital city with more than 800 animals and 2,500 plant species.

The sprawling city is centred around it's river, entangled with creeks and bordered by bushland and coastline – whichever way you look, nature is never far away.

But natural beauty isn't all Brisbane has to offer. Spend a week here and you will fast realise it has lost its 'big country town' tag, with an impressive array of world-class restaurants, hotels, bars and attractions now calling the city home.

My wheels for this eco-friendly trip was a Tesla Model 3 from SIXT rentals at the Brisbane Airport.

The car felt like a spaceship, but Michael from SIXT made it his mission to cool my concerns and educate me on the car's ins and outs (and Teslas have a lot of ins and outs).

If you want to rent an EV, SIXT has Australia's largest range of electric rental cars. They also offer free charging at Chargefox stations and provide discounts to RACQ members.

If you're on a tighter budget, public transport is a good option with some free ferries and buses in the CBD.

Download the My Translink app to plan your journey.

E-scooters and e-bikes are also dotted around the CBD and available for hire.

My first port of call was The Emporium Hotel at South Bank. This place is luxury defined.

As I entered my room, the curtains

---

**THE SPRAWLING CITY IS CENTRED AROUND IT'S RIVER, ENTANGLED WITH CREEKS AND BORDERED BY BUSHLAND AND COASTLINE – WHICHEVER WAY YOU LOOK, NATURE IS NEVER FAR AWAY.**

---

automatically opened to reveal Brisbane's shimmering skyline. I felt like I was in a James Bond movie.

With 143 luxury suites, a rooftop bar and pool, beehives and vegetable gardens, the Emporium Hotel was the first in Australia to be EarthCheck Design Certified, meaning it adhered to high sustainability standards.

A little later in the week, I stayed at

Crystalbrook Vincent, nestled under the Story Bridge at the Howard Smith Wharves precinct. This hotel is loud and proud of its sustainable practices.

I first noticed the recycled wooden swipe access cards and absence of single-use plastics.

Even if you don't stay here, try one of the signature Brisbane-themed cocktails at the hotel's rooftop bar, Fiume.

I sipped on the Brisbane in Bloom cocktail – a nod to the city's iconic purple jacaranda trees.

The Howard Smith Wharves precinct is home to more than a dozen restaurants, breweries and bars and has a dedicated sustainability team.

"We now have 22 people who work in that team – they are going into kitchens and taking all of the waste and recycling to the extent where we hit 95 percent diversion from landfill," Howard Smith Wharves CEO Luke Fraser said.

Ovolo The Valley is another great accommodation option in Brisbane's live-music district.

It's also home to ZA ZA TA, Queensland's best vegetarian restaurant as rated in the 2022 Delicious 100 list. Make sure you try the halloumi donuts with chilli jam.

The Gin School at Brisbane Distillery is a real treat if you're a spirit drinker.

Over a few hours, I was taught to distil my very own bottle of gin, selecting from more than 180 botanicals, while sipping on four delicious gin cocktails and munching on an antipasto platter.

I attempted an apple-pie-flavoured gin which, surprisingly, turned out drinkable.

Founder and Master Distiller Jon Atherton said his distillery was powered almost exclusively by solar.

It also composts spent botanicals in the community garden across the street, uses recycled ocean plastics for bottles, and sources local ingredients.

“Our rum is made from sugarcane juice that is harvested around 40 minutes south from here,” Mr Atherton said.

If you’re travelling with kids or love wildlife, visit Flirt the sheepdog at Lone Pine Koala Sanctuary (about a 15-minute drive from the CBD), home to 70 native Australian species.

The sanctuary has been open for almost 100 years, giving locals and tourists a snapshot of native ecosystems

and playing a crucial role in koala conservation.

RACQ members can save on tickets ([racq.com/lonepine](http://racq.com/lonepine)).

If you prefer air-conditioning, head to Queensland’s Gallery of Modern Art (GOMA) in South Bank; where you can easily spend hours getting lost in the stunning artworks and displays.

The food at the GOMA Restaurant is exquisite, too. Stop for lunch and try the

yellowfin tuna. While you’re in the area, book a free guided tour of the South Bank Parklands.

The space encapsulates south east Queensland, featuring swimming lagoons and snippets of native rainforest, all backdropped by Brisbane’s glittering skyline.

If you’re after island vibes, but don’t want to stray far from the city, head to Tangalooma Island Resort to enjoy scenic helicopter flights, quad biking and snorkelling around shipwrecks.

The Gold EarthCheck-accredited resort operates its own ferry service from Holt Street Wharf in Pinkenba (about a 20-minute drive from the CBD).

I spent my afternoon on the island snorkelling with green sea turtles, a wobbegong shark, and fish in nearly every colour of the rainbow.

Maybe the omnipresence of nature in Brisbane drives its people to be so sustainably minded; whatever it is, it’s infectious. ■

**IF YOU’RE AFTER ISLAND VIBES, BUT DON’T WANT TO STRAY FAR FROM THE CITY, HEAD TO TANGALOOMA ISLAND RESORT TO ENJOY SCENIC HELICOPTER FLIGHTS, QUAD BIKING AND SNORKELLING AROUND SHIPWRECKS.**

Birdlife going for a paddle off Tangalooma, Moreton Island.



Goanna at Lone Pine Koala Sanctuary.



Yellowfin tuna at GOMA Restaurant.



Brisbane in Bloom at Fiume Rooftop Bar.



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STORY MEAGHAN BRIGHTWELL

The Brightwell family – Jason, Lewis, Alexis and Meaghan.

# FAMILY FUN ON ROADS LESS TRAVELLED

A 90-DAY ROAD TRIP TAUGHT A BRISBANE FAMILY HOW TO BETTER CONNECT WITH EACH OTHER AND THEIR DESTINATIONS.

**F**ORTY-THREE DIFFERENT beds, 8,500 photos, 30 fuel stops and countless memories – that’s what our 13,000km Australian road trip looked like.

If the pandemic taught us anything it’s that life is precious and travel is a luxury we should not take for granted.

With that at the forefront of our minds, my family of four decided to embark on a three-month road trip around the east coast of Australia to fill our ‘travel cup’.

Upon announcing our ambitious travel plans to family and friends, many questioned why we were travelling in the middle of winter.

Quite simply, as Queenslanders, we were looking for a change of weather and hopefully the first taste of snow for the kids.

While there was a raft of potential

problems when travelling by road, a positive mindset and a great deal of preparation helped us avoid any major disasters.

The only casualty was a pair of kitchen tongs left behind in Stanthorpe.

Beginning in Brisbane, we headed west with the city rapidly disappearing

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**WE BUMPED ALONG DUSTY, DIRT TRACKS IN OUTBACK QUEENSLAND, WOUND OUR WAY DOWN SNAKING HIGHWAYS IN VICTORIA AND SIDLED ALONG SNOWY ROADS IN TASMANIA.**

---

in the rear-view mirror. Bucking the caravanning trend, we opted to pack our 4WD and roof pod, took the kids out of school and hit the road.

We bumped along dusty, dirt tracks in outback Queensland, wound our way down snaking highways in Victoria and sidled along snowy roads in Tasmania.

When it came to accommodation, rather than just think of it as a place to rest our weary heads and do a load of washing, we decided to make it a focal part of our trip, an experience within itself.

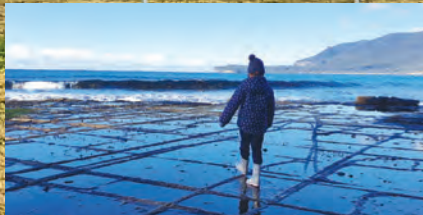
While we mostly stayed in affordable cabins in caravan parks, every now and then we splurged.

One of our most memorable stays was in the coastal town of Bicheno, Tasmania, at the heritage-listed Gaol House Cottages.

Built in 1861, the former gaol exuded



Once Upon A Time street art on the Cunningham Highway, Goondiwindi.



Tassie's Tessellated Pavement.

character while boasting modern conveniences. We even got to shower in one of the original cells and toilet in the other.

The next unique lodging was a boutique 1920s converted church in the Tasmanian town of Orford.

It was here a stunning stained-glass window, church bell and pews complemented the striking architecture of The Church at Orford and left us feeling spiritually connected to our surroundings.

To remain connected to each other and our journey, we decided to ban using electronic devices in the car.

Besides occasionally accessing our mobile phones to make calls, we kept devices stowed away.

Yes, that's right, even the children, aged seven and nine, did not use electronic devices in the car, not even once!

Without the distraction of screens, we channelled family road trips from the '80s and listened to music, played word games and looked out the window.

While gazing at the ever-changing Australian landscape, we discovered the journey really was just as important as the destination.

We often detoured off main roads to



Giant cricket wickets in Westbury.

visit lesser-known towns and attractions such as painted silos in a field, a lazy river meandering between trees, or a giant set of cricket wickets in Westbury.

We awkwardly scaled a 2m northern-hairy nosed wombat statue in Thallon, sampled award-winning vanilla slices (the best are at Sharp's Bakery in Birchip), found elusive platypus lolling in Tasmanian rivers and got snowed in at Cradle Mountain.

It was here, in picturesque Cradle

Mountain, the children giggled with delight as they caught falling snowflakes in their mouths, watched in amazement as furry wombats waddled in the snow and witnessed the unusual and disturbing squeals of Tasmanian devils.

Fun was had as we tobogganed down icy slopes, hiked to waterfalls, got lost in mazes and devoured way too many pastries, pies and sweet treats.

Experiences like these made travelling together as a family for 90 days memorable. We laughed a lot, sang a lot and ate a lot.

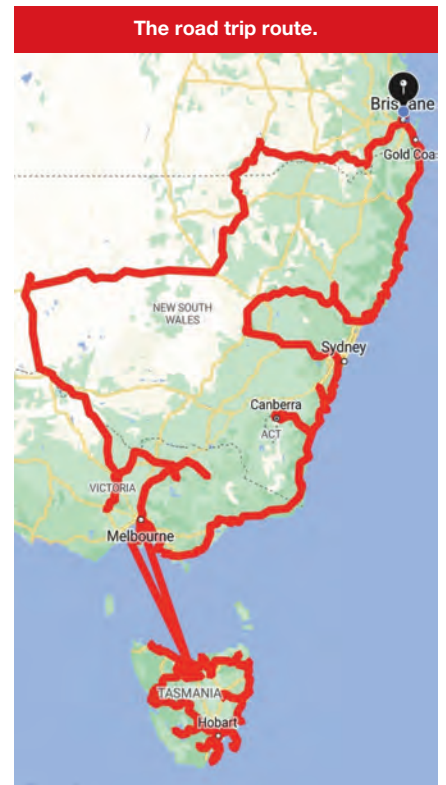
Every shared activity brought us closer together and we committed another event to our family memory bank.

It also afforded us new skills.

We learnt to read maps, adapted to new and unfamiliar situations and searched for answers when we unearthed something we knew little about.

We also discovered what a truly remarkable country we are fortunate to live in. From opal mines in Lightning Ridge, towering forests in Mount Field National Park, salty Lake Tyrell and sandy beaches in Jervis Bay, spectacular scenery beckoned down every road we travelled.

Our trip ignited a vim and vigour for road travel and has encouraged us to look closer to home for future holidays. ■





STORY GED BULMER

# COMMON EV QUESTIONS ANSWERED

AS THE TRANSITION FROM INTERNAL COMBUSTION TO ELECTRIC VEHICLES GATHERS PACE, WE ANSWER SOME OF YOUR EV QUESTIONS.

**EARLIER THIS YEAR** RACQ reached out to its members and staff to find out the big questions they have about electric vehicles (EVs).

From the more than 1,000 online responses, our panel of experts set out to answer some of those questions, including this selection from Motoring Editor Ged Bulmer.

A video of the panel was recorded and has answers to more of your EV questions.



SCAN THE CODE TO WATCH  
THE EV PANEL VIDEO



**1**  
**Q: I CURRENTLY DRIVE A V6 COMMODORE. WHAT EV WOULD REPLACE ITS PERFORMANCE AND COMFORT?**

**A:** There are currently about 65 different electric vehicles including plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs) on the market with more arriving on an almost monthly basis. Most EVs currently available are SUVs, but there's a small selection of sedans, coupes, people movers, hatchbacks and even utes in the mix.

Assuming the Holden Commodore referred to is the volume-selling sedan, then the closest thing to it in size and body style would be the Genesis G80 Electrified (pictured). The Genesis is closer to a long wheelbase Holden

Caprice in dimensions, so has even more generous interior accommodation and its 272kW/700Nm electric powertrain easily eclipses the Commodore V6's 210kW/350Nm. The G80 boasts a very comfortable and well-appointed interior, excellent safety features, and is quieter and more technically sophisticated than the Commodore. The biggest disadvantage the Genesis has over the now-discontinued Commodore is its purchase price, which at \$145,000 asks a good chunk more change than the Holden's modest \$38,190 when new.



**2**  
**Q: WHAT DOES IT FEEL LIKE TO DRIVE AN EV – DOES IT STRUGGLE TO GET UP TO SPEED?**

**A:** Electric motors deliver their maximum torque instantly, so when you put your

foot down in an EV there is an instant surge of strong acceleration that comes as quite a shock the first time you experience it. Many EVs deliver acceleration that is akin to that of a performance car. For instance, versions of the Hyundai Kona (pictured) that are equipped with the standard 2.0-litre four-cylinder petrol engine produce 110kW/180Nm and accelerate from 0–100km/h in an estimated 9.7 seconds, where the Hyundai Kona Extended Range EV produces 150kW/395Nm and accelerates from 0–100km/h in a claimed 7.9 seconds. Car makers are increasingly

positioning dual-motor EVs as the performance variants in their range, much as they have done previously with V8 or turbocharged variants. Take the example of the dual-motor Tesla Model 3 Performance, which costs \$87,500, has outputs of 353kW/639Nm and accelerates from 0–100km/h in a claimed 3.3 seconds, which is about as fast as the \$335,000 Porsche Carrera GT, powered by a 3.0-litre twin-turbocharged six-cylinder. In addition to their strong acceleration, EVs are very quiet, due to the absence of combustion engine intake and exhaust sounds.





3

**Q: CAN AN EV TOW MY CARAVAN, BOAT OR TRAILER?**

**A:** There's no technical reason why an EV can't tow, provided they are properly equipped. And therein lies the problem, because in Australia most of the EVs currently on sale can't tow, either

because they haven't been engineered to, or because a suitable tow kit hasn't been certified to meet Australian design rules. Of the EVs that can tow a decent weight, the BMW iX SUV has the highest tow rating of 2,500kg, with other models including the Tesla Model X (2,250kg), Audi e-Tron (1,800kg), Hyundai Ioniq 5 (1,600kg), Polestar 2 (1,500kg) and Volvo XC40 Pure Electric (1,500kg). Most of these EVs have plenty of power and torque, with the dual-motor BMW iX XDrive 50 Sport producing 385kW/765Nm, which compares favourably with the 227kW/700Nm outputs of the 3.3-litre twin-turbo diesel-powered Toyota LandCruiser 300 Series,

which has a 3,500kg braked towing capacity. The extra weight and the aerodynamic drag of trailers drastically reduces their already limited range, in some cases by 50 percent or more. The LandCruiser 300 Series starts with an unladen range of about 1,200km, where the BMW starts with 620km (ADR), meaning when towing with the BMW you may need to be thinking about recharging in as little as 250km. Having more public fast charging facilities will be essential to making EV towing more viable. Ford recently began selling its battery electric F-150 Lightning pickup (pictured) in the US with a braked tow capacity of 4.5 tonnes.



4

**Q: WHAT EV IS BEST FOR A TYPICAL AUSSIE ROAD TRIP?**

**A:** Most EVs at present are SUVs, which should come as no great surprise, given

that the versatile body style and high seating position has long resonated with new car buyers, particularly families. While an EV's drivetrain might be different, people are by and large looking for them to have the same practicality and utility as an ICE vehicle. One of the advantages of purpose-built EVs is that they don't have a transmission tunnel, so the rear floor is flat, which makes for a more comfortable passenger environment. For road trips we recommend any large, roomy SUV body style with good passenger

accommodation, decent range, generous boot space, large glasshouse to ensure rear seat passengers are comfortable, and dual rear-seat USBs to power devices. There are several premium electric SUVs on the market that fit this bill from the likes of Audi, BMW (pictured), Mercedes-Benz and Tesla which are all priced north of \$100k. For EV buyers looking for something more affordable, check out Korean siblings the Hyundai Ioniq 5 and Kia EV6, which offer entry-level pricing starting in the early \$70,000s.



5

**Q: HOW FAR CAN AN EV 4X4 GO IN THE BUSH, ON ROUGH TRACKS OR ON THE BEACH?**

**A:** Right now, there are no factory-manufactured EVs on the Australian

market that are genuine 4x4s. There are some EV conversion specialists – such as Roev (HiLux), SAE-Electric (HiLux and LandCruiser), Fellten (Land Rovers), Voltra (LandCruiser ute), and others – who convert existing 4x4 models from ICE to EV, but their focus is largely on the mining and B2B sectors. However, in the US there is an emerging segment known as 'rugged electrics', as exemplified by the Rivian R1T ute (pictured) and R1S wagon, GMC Hummer EV, Ford F-150 Lightning, Tesla Cybertruck and others, which have all the off-road prowess and load-

hauling ability of more traditional ICE-powered 4x4 utes and wagons. Rivian specifically designed its full-size truck to include off-road oriented attributes like a 35.5-degree approach angle, 91cm wading depth, 38cm of ground clearance, and 33cm of suspension travel, so it's highly capable in the rough. Driving in tough terrain often demands more motor torque than regular driving, so while they may be capable of handling the terrain, having somewhere suitable to recharge them is a likely impediment to taking these vehicles far off-road in the Australian context.

# EV OPTION FOR POPULAR UTES

WITH AUSTRALIAN CONSUMERS' UNRELENTING PASSION FOR UTES AND FEW ELECTRIC OPTIONS, ROEV PROVIDES A SOLUTION BY CONVERTING EXISTING UTE BRANDS TO ELECTRIC. **STORY** GED BULMER

**N**OT MANY MODERN CEOs could claim to have had the makings of their new business ingrained in the dirt beneath their fingernails, but Noah Wasmer can.

It was while converting his own ex-Australian Defence Force Land Rover Perentie 4x4 to battery electric that the Sunshine Coast-based founder and CEO of electric ute conversion specialist Roev recognised the opportunity to build an enterprise based on converting Australia's most popular new vehicle type.

"I have a deep history in automotive through my family, who come from Detroit, Michigan, so we've always had cars in our blood," Noah said.

Initially lured Down Under as a software developer with Australian tech titan Atlassian in 2021, Noah said the shift to remote working during Covid saw his family relocate from Sydney to Buderim, where he began the passion project of converting his diesel-powered Perentie 4x4 to battery electric.

"But I also really wanted to figure out a way to have a meaningful impact on climate," Noah, who has since also converted a Volkswagen Kombi and a Beetle from his own car collection, said.

Roev grew out of the realisation that most of the best-selling vehicles in Australia were utes and that governments, councils and other businesses were looking for ways to reduce the carbon footprint of their fleets, with few options available, he said.

"We purchase 250,000 utes annually in Australia, but we see for the next decade no means of really satisfying the demand for electrified utes through traditional OEMs (original equipment manufacturers). So, we think there's a need to accelerate that," Noah said.

The 'we' in that statement is Roev co-founders Paul Slade and Robert Dietz, who along with Noah oversaw completion of the company's first Toyota HiLux conversion prototype in 2022, with the trio since setting

the ambitious target of converting 1,000 HiLux and Ford Rangers in Roev's first 12 months of full production.

Noah said Roev had been engineering and designing its final production vehicles for close to a year, working with third-party partners to ensure the vehicles met or surpassed all relevant safety requirements.

"We're taking safety very seriously," he said.

"None of us want to put anything on the road that isn't fully safe and compliant. Obviously, when you get into government and councils, they expect the highest bar.

"We start with five-star ANCAP-rated vehicles but any time you make a

A RedSands camper EV conversion by Roev.





A Toyota HiLux EV conversion.



Roev CEO Noah Wasmer.



The conversion of an ICE ute to an EV costs about \$60,000.

modification to a vehicle, be it a bullbar or any other modification, you've got to go through a process to validate that modification, which is exactly what we're doing."

Roev's initial conversions of Toyota HiLux and Ford Ranger 4x4 and 4x2 models dating back to 2016 will be available to fleets only, but the company hopes to eventually broaden its offering.

"One of the things we are trying to do is move to volume production, and the key here is to change the economics," Noah said.

"We've been public with our pricing of between \$50-\$60,000 per conversion but our aim is to reduce that over time. And the way we do that is through standardisation and repeatability.

"So, if we can produce kits very quickly, we think we can cut some of those costs.

"We're working towards getting our first production vehicles to customers later this year. These will be the first real-world tested vehicles that will start going through the rigours of customers driving them in their habitat and using them as they expect."

In terms of the conversion, Noah said donor vehicles had their combustion engine, gearbox, fuel tank, exhaust systems and other components removed, and the electric motor, battery and other electrical components added.

### THESE WILL BE THE FIRST REAL-WORLD TESTED VEHICLES THAT WILL START GOING THROUGH THE RIGOURS OF CUSTOMERS DRIVING THEM IN THEIR HABITAT AND USING THEM AS THEY EXPECT.

The original components are then either resold into the used-car market or recycled as scrap.

While a purely economic model to justify a conversion starting from \$47,990 on top of the price of the vehicle purchase price was not yet viable, Noah said as the price of fuel increased and Roev's economies of scale improved, the pay-off horizon may not be too distant, particularly for vehicles charging on solar or other renewables.

"For many of our customers today the sustainability benefit is one of the key drivers, but in the future, it has to be viable on economic benefits alone, with the added benefit of the environment," he said. ■

### TRANSFORMERS ON WHEELS

ROEV CONVERSIONS ARE currently available for the Toyota HiLux and Ford Ranger at a cost of between \$45-\$60,000, plus the donor vehicle.

There are two battery options available – the standard 64kWh unit which delivers a claimed driving range of 240km and the extended range 96kWh battery with a claimed range of 360km.

The vehicles feature 240v 20A V2L ports for powering tools, smart charging capability, a claimed 15 percent increase in torque over the standard diesel, a CCS Type 2 charging port, 11kW onboard charging capability, an Integrated CAN bus for safety, and regenerative braking.

Charging times vary according to the charging device with an 11kW AC charger adding 45.8km of range every hour, a 25kW DC fast charger adding 81.5km per hour and an 100kW DC adding 260km per hour.

The modified vehicles come with a five-year battery warranty, and 24/7 roadside assistance.

6

OF THE BEST  
LARGE SUVs

**Ford**  
Everest Sport 4WD

**WITH SEVEN SEATS**, all-new styling and a turbo-diesel V6 option under its bonnet, Ford's Everest was one of the most significant releases of 2022. The second model to be spun off the Australian designed and engineered Global T6 body-on-frame architecture, it's available with either 2WD or 4WD drivetrains, making this the only off-roader in our selection. Engines include the new 184kW/600Nm 3.0-litre V6 or a carryover 2.0L biturbo diesel, both hitched to a 10-speed automatic. The V6's muscular 600Nm between 1750 and 2,250rpm makes it an ideal candidate for towing duties, as does the 3,500kg braked tow capacity. Pricing starts at \$53,290 for the Ambiente 4x2 with 2.0-litre biturbo diesel and tops out at \$76,880.90 for the Platinum 4WD. We're partial to the Everest Sport V6 4WD which sits one grade below the Platinum and gets less fruit but is still well kitted and priced \$8,000 lower. In addition to excellent active and passive safety systems, standard features include heated and ventilated front seats, 20-inch alloy wheels, a hands-free power tailgate, and a portrait-oriented central touchscreen. ■

**Price:** \$69,590 (MRLP)

**Engine:** 3.0L V6 turbo diesel

**Power/torque:** 184kW/600Nm

**Warranty:** Five years/unlimited kilometres

**Fuel consumption:** 8.5L/100km

**Safety rating:** ★★★★★ (2022)



**Hyundai**  
Santa Fe Highlander Hybrid AWD

**PRICING FOR HYUNDAI'S** seven-seater starts at \$46,050 for the petrol V6-powered base 2WD, but the hybrid powertrain comes only in Elite and Highlander AWD variants, costing \$63,000 and \$69,550. That's a \$3,000 premium over the same model grade with 2.2-litre diesel, but the hybrid promises the efficiency of a diesel, with petrol-like refinement. The roomy SUV has features like heated outer second-row seats, panoramic sunroof, 10-speaker Harmon Kardon sound, power tailgate, dual-zone climate control, and third-row air vents. The interior is well designed and nicely finished with Nappa leather seats, black suede headliner and pillar trims, plus the option of second-row captain's chairs. The 12.3-inch digital instrument cluster and 10.25-inch touchscreen boast crisp graphics and a logical interface. The turbo-petrol engine and electric motor work seamlessly together, delivering brisk acceleration and impressive efficiency, while the suspension strikes a nice balance between disciplined handling and comfortable ride quality. ■

**Price:** \$69,550 (MRLP)

**Engine:** 1.6-litre turbo-petrol, 44.2kW electric motor, six-speed automatic

**Power/torque:** 169kW/350Nm

**Warranty:** Five years/unlimited kilometres

**Fuel consumption:** 6.0L/100km

**Safety rating:** Not rated



**Kia**  
Sorento GT-Line PHEV AWD

**KIA'S ADDITION LAST** year of a plug-in hybrid electric Sorento alongside established four-cylinder petrol hybrid, V6 petrol and turbo-diesel models enabled it to claim this as the most diverse powertrain choice in a local model. The plug-in Sorento comes only in a top-shelf GT-Line AWD trim, which ensures a generous array of creature comforts and safety features but pushes pricing \$11,000 higher than the hybrid and \$15,000 more than the turbo diesel. A 14kWh lithium-ion battery pack enables up to 68km of electric motoring, making this the most fuel-efficient and lowest-emitting Sorento. The PHEV retains the family-sized space of its petrol and diesel siblings, with plenty of well-considered, practical touches. The interior features powered USB ports in all rows, five child-restraint points, pull-up sunblinds for row two and climate control for all rows. Ambient interior lighting, quilted Nappa leather seat coverings, soft-touch trims and piano-black highlights ensure this roomy family wagon rocks a premium look and feel. ■

**Price:** \$81,080 (MRLP)

**Engine:** 1.6-litre turbo petrol, 67kW electric motor, 13.8kWh lithium-ion battery

**Power/torque:** 195kW/350Nm

**Warranty:** Seven years/unlimited kilometres

**Fuel consumption:** 1.6L/100km

**Safety rating:** ★★★★★ (2020)

**FAMILY BUYERS LOOKING FOR A SEVEN-SEAT SUV HAVE NEVER HAD MORE POWERTRAIN CHOICES, RANGING FROM FOUR-CYLINDER TURBO DIESELS TO PETROL V6S AND HYBRID ELECTRICS.**



**Mazda**  
CX-9 Azami AWD

**MAZDA'S SECOND-GENERATION** CX-9 turns six this year but shows no signs of a midlife crisis thanks to regular updates that have kept the big seven-seater thoroughly competitive. Despite this, it's soon to be discontinued thanks to the arrival of the more luxurious and expensive CX-90. Chief among the CX-9's attributes are voluminous interior dimensions, above-average handling and the spirited performance of its turbocharged 2.5-litre four-cylinder Skyactiv-G petrol engine, hitched to a responsive six-speed automatic. As with most rivals, the Mazda can be had in either front or all-wheel drive across a six-variant line-up, with the extra driven wheels adding about \$4,000 to the price. The range starts with the front-drive CX-9 Sport costing \$47,600 and goes up to the opulent Azami LE AWD with its swish-looking second-row captain's chairs, priced at \$75,165. Family-friendly features of the luxuriously appointed Azami AWD include three-zone climate control with rear vents, rear window sunshades and USB charging ports in all three rows. ■



**Nissan**  
Pathfinder Ti 4WD

**NISSAN LAUNCHED ITS** fifth-generation Pathfinder SUV in late 2022 with new styling, eight-seat capacity and a hi-tech interior with digital dash on high-grade variants. Pricing starts at \$54,190 for the ST 2WD, rising through five variants to the luxurious Ti-L 4WD at \$80,227. All models get a responsive 3.5-litre petrol V6 engine, nine-speed automatic, nine airbags, and comprehensive Intelligent Mobility safety suite. You need to step up to ST-L or above to get the ProPilot semi-autonomous driving assistance system with digital around-view monitor. The Pathfinder Ti is the only variant to offer 2WD and 4WD, the latter for a \$4,129 premium. Family-friendly features include heated rear seats, leather accented trims, rear window sunshades, wireless smartphone charging, a 13-speaker Bose audio system and an additional USB charging outlet for the third row. Along with generous interior space, power tailgate operation and remote engine start for cabin pre-cooling or heating, the Ti stands out as a safe, refined and generously appointed SUV for buyers wanting some luxe without paying the 'full fruit' premium. ■



**Toyota**  
Kluger Grande

**BIG CARS AND SUVs** have long been associated with big engines but that's changing as carmakers downsize engine capacity and improve efficiency through turbocharging and/or hybridisation. Case in point, Toyota's family-favourite seven-seater Kluger, which has ditched its petrol V6 a smaller 2.4L turbocharged four-cylinder. The Kluger's established petrol hybrid combination remains available, but with the new turbo petrol boasting more torque and lower fuel consumption than the old V6, and priced \$2,500 to \$3,440 below the hybrid equivalent, it's a tempting option. The turbo engine develops its peak torque 3,000rpm lower than the old V6 and hitches to a smooth eight-speed auto for impressively responsive performance. It's available in GX, GXL and Grande trim levels with either front or all-wheel drive, the latter adding \$3,120-\$4,000, depending on the variant. We like the look of the Kluger Grande which delivers brisk performance and sips fuel at a slightly lower 8.3L/100km than the AWD's 8.5L/100km, although the hybrid is thrifter again at 5.6L/100km. ■

**Price: \$71,915 (MRLP)**  
**Engine: 2.5-litre four-cylinder petrol turbo, six-speed automatic**  
**Power/torque: 170kW/420Nm**  
**Warranty: Five years/unlimited kilometres**  
**Fuel consumption: 9.0L/100km**  
**Safety rating: ★★★★★ (2016)**

**Price: \$70,030 (MRLP)**  
**Engine: 3.5-litre V6 petrol, nine-speed automatic**  
**Power/torque: 202kW/340Nm**  
**Warranty: Five years/unlimited kilometres**  
**Fuel consumption: 10.5L/100km**  
**Safety rating: ★★★★★ (2022)**

**Price: \$73,010 (MRLP)**  
**Engine: 2.4-litre turbocharged four-cylinder petrol, eight-speed automatic**  
**Power/torque: 198kW/420Nm**  
**Warranty: Five years/unlimited kilometres**  
**Fuel consumption: 8.3L/100km**  
**Safety rating: ★★★★★ (2021)**

## Mahindra Scorpio Z8L

**OUTSIDE OF THE** rural sector, most Aussies will likely have only heard of Mahindra through cricketer Matthew Hayden's association with the brand.

But back in its Indian home market, Mahindra is the third largest automaker, the dominant player in its domestic pickup segment and the world's largest tractor company by volume.

Until now, the company's presence here has largely been restricted to the S11 Pickup, a sturdy ladder-frame chassis 4x4 ute, but the new Scorpio 4x4 wagon spearheads Mahindra's ambitious growth plans in the family SUV segment.

Targeting rivals in the sub-\$70,000 body-on-frame 4x4 wagon sector, the Scorpio's competitors include the Isuzu MU-X, Mitsubishi Pajero Sport and Toyota Fortuner.

Like these models the Scorpio features a body-on-frame construction, but its keen pricing – just \$41,990 driveaway for the entry-level Z8, or \$44,990 driveaway for the top-shelf Z8L – dramatically undercuts them.

Despite the low price, both versions are very well specified and attractively designed.

The Scorpio has broadly similar dimensions to its key rivals, although its 2,500kg braked towing capacity trails them by up to 1,000kg.

Power comes from a smooth and responsive all-aluminium 2.2-litre turbo-diesel four-cylinder engine, delivering 129kW/400Nm and driving through a six-speed automatic. That's below the outputs of the MU-X and Fortuner, but the Scorpio weighs a relatively svelte 2,100kg, so its power-

to-weight ratio is competitive. The independent front suspension features double wishbones and torsion bar springs, with coil springs and multilink Watts Link at the rear. Ride and handling are both impressive with four-wheel disc brakes providing capable stopping power. The Scorpio's dual-pinion electronic power steering is well weighted and direct.

With good approach and departure angles, a dual-range transfer case, 227mm of ground clearance, and a standard fitment locking rear differential, the Scorpio boasts genuine off-road ability and comfortably handled a mix of moderately difficult terrain despite road-oriented 255/60R18 tyres.

The part-time shift-on-the-fly 4x4 system enables shifting between 2WD and 4WD high while on the move, with low range available once stopped via a similar switch, or a rotary terrain select dial with four selectable modes.

The second row features individual captain's chairs, reducing seating capacity to six.

The cargo bay is accessed via a single-piece side-hinged door and offers a claimed 756 litres of space with the third row tumbled. A full-size spare wheel is mounted underneath, meaning fuel tank capacity is a modest 57 litres.

The Scorpio's sharp driveaway pricing, extensive features, excellent seven-year/150,000km factory warranty, and good all-round performance are offset by some notable safety omissions including AEB and forward collisions warning. ■

### ▶ KEY STATS



**PRICE:** \$44,990 (driveaway)

**ENGINE:** 2.2-litre 'mHawk' all-aluminium four-cylinder turbo diesel (129kW @ 3,500rpm and 400Nm @ 1750-2,750rpm)

**ANCAP SAFETY RATING:** Not yet rated

**BODY STYLE:** Large SUV

**FUEL CONSUMPTION:** (combined cycle, litres/100km) 7.2L/100km (190g CO<sub>2</sub>/km)

**FOR:** Keenly priced, good on and off-road performance, well appointed, nicely-judged ride and handling balance, excellent warranty.

**AGAINST:** Lacks several key safety features, poorly designed third row, some low-quality materials and finishes, six seat capacity only.

### REVIEW GED BULMER



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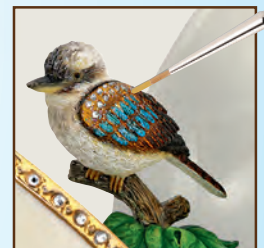


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REVIEW GED BULMER

## Hyundai Ioniq 6

**WHILE SOME CAR** makers, including industry giant Toyota, are yet to land a full battery electric vehicle on Australian shores, others like Hyundai are accelerating and expanding their range into new niches.

The Korean car maker recently launched its latest electric vehicle (EV), the sveltely shaped Ioniq 6, which it's touting as a Tesla Model 3 rival. It's the first sedan built on Hyundai's Electrified-Global Modular Platform (E-GMP), which also underpins the Ioniq 5, Kia EV6, and Genesis GV70.

The car's clean and aerodynamic 'streamliner' styling is inspired by Hyundai's 2020 Prophecy concept, the sleek design creating less wind resistance which equates to more range, always a good thing in an EV.

Regarding range, the headline numbers are impressive, with Hyundai claiming up to 614km for the most efficient single-motor version, or a still-respectable 519km for the two dual-motor models. By way of comparison, the Tesla Model 3 Rear Wheel Drive claims 491km, and the Model 3 Long Range 602km.

All three Ioniq 6 variants feature the same 77.4kWh lithium-ion battery and 800V architecture, enabling the use of super-powerful 350kW DC fast chargers, which can charge the battery from 10–80 percent in as little as 18 minutes.

Range and performance vary depending on whether it's a single or dual-motor model, with the mid-spec Techniq and top-grade Epiq both featuring twin electric motors, delivering 74kW/255Nm to the front wheels and 165kW/350Nm to the rears, for combined outputs of 239kW/605Nm.

Whatever the variant, the interior design is impressively modern and hi-tech with extensive use of sustainable or recycled materials, including the front passenger seats, which are trimmed in eco-processed leather.

At 4,855mm long and riding on a 2,950mm wheelbase the Ioniq 6 offers a roomy, uncluttered interior that is well laid out and easy to navigate.

There's generous legroom front and rear, and the floor is flat thanks to the absence of a transmission tunnel.

However, the swooping roofline compromises rear-seat headroom for taller passengers and there's no room for toes beneath the front seats.

The electronically operated boot offers 401 litres of luggage capacity, which can be extended by dropping the 60/40 split rear seats.

On the safety front, every Ioniq 6 gets seven airbags and a range of driver assistance technologies, including a comprehensive suite of SmartSense driver assistance systems that help achieve the maximum five-star ANCAP safety rating.

On our test loop the twin-motor Epiq delivered the expected silent, strong acceleration we've come to expect from EVs.

Ride and handling are very competent, the sedan cornering with confidence and delivering serious punch out of corners, despite its 2,078kg kerb weight.

Hyundai's launch of the Ioniq 6 Streamliner is a breath of fresh air in an EV category largely dominated by SUV body styles.

It could also be a shrewd one, given that Australia's best-selling EV is the rival Tesla Model 3 sedan. ■

### ▶ KEY STATS



**PRICE:** \$88,000 (MRLP)

**POWERTRAIN:** 77.4kWh Lithium-ion battery, twin electric motors (74kW/255Nm front, 165kW/350Nm rear), single speed reduction gear

**ANCAP SAFETY RATING:** ★★★★★ (2022)

**ENERGY CONSUMPTION:** 16.9kWh/100km

**FOR:** Performance, safety, range, high-speed fast charging, generous safety kit.

**AGAINST:** Priced higher than best-selling rival, dull steering, limited rear-seat toe and headroom, complex electronic mirrors.





STORY JOHN EWING

# VEHICLE IMMOBILISERS

**SOME MOTOR VEHICLES** are more at risk of theft than others.

In general, though, a large proportion of the Australian vehicle fleet offers good security thanks to manufacturers taking increased steps to harden their vehicles against theft.

The use of immobilisers, in particular, has significantly reduced vehicle theft.

All passenger vehicles, forward control passenger vehicles, and off-road passenger vehicles built since 1 July 2001 require an engine immobiliser to comply with the mandatory Australian Design Rule (ADR) 82.

However, some vehicles built before that date had immobilisers fitted voluntarily by the manufacturer.

Some light commercial vehicles and 4WDs built since then may have immobilisers, but many don't as the ADR doesn't apply to them.

So, these vehicles and older vehicles built before the ADR inception are still a potential easy theft target and a candidate for immobiliser installation.

These vehicles are popular with thieves

as not only are they easy to steal, but because they are also easy to dispose of as parts, or re-identify and sell.

They are also attractive as short-term transport or a 'joy ride' – the most common reasons for theft.

If you are fitting an immobiliser to a vehicle, then choose a quality self-arming unit that complies with Australian Standard 4601 or an alarm system with immobiliser compliant with Australian Standard 3749.1.

Accessing vehicle keys is one of the very few methods of theft available for vehicles with modern security features and certainly the most common.

According to the former National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council (NMVTRC), seven out of 10 immobiliser-equipped vehicles are stolen using the keys.

Neither factory-fitted nor aftermarket immobilisers are effective at stopping theft if thieves are able to have access to the keys/remote fob, so key security is vital.

Don't leave keys in the ignition, even

when the car is locked inside the garage, or nearby. Treat the keys like other high-value items and take necessary security measures.

In particular, keys for vehicles with keyless entry/start may have additional vulnerabilities (what's known as 'relay attack') and should be secured well away from entry points to the home.

Consider installing and using a quality home safe to secure car keys along with other valuables. Consult a reliable locksmith for suitable safes.

Vehicles are often stolen from homes during burglaries where car keys are left unsecured and are an extra bonus, being a convenient means of escaping with other stolen items.

The NMVTRC said half of all cars stolen were taken from homes including carports, driveways and garages (a locked garage is still the safest of these storage options). And remember to always lock your car, even if you are only leaving it unattended for a few minutes. It's the smart thing to do, and it's a legal requirement. ■

# SAFE FOLLOWING DISTANCE

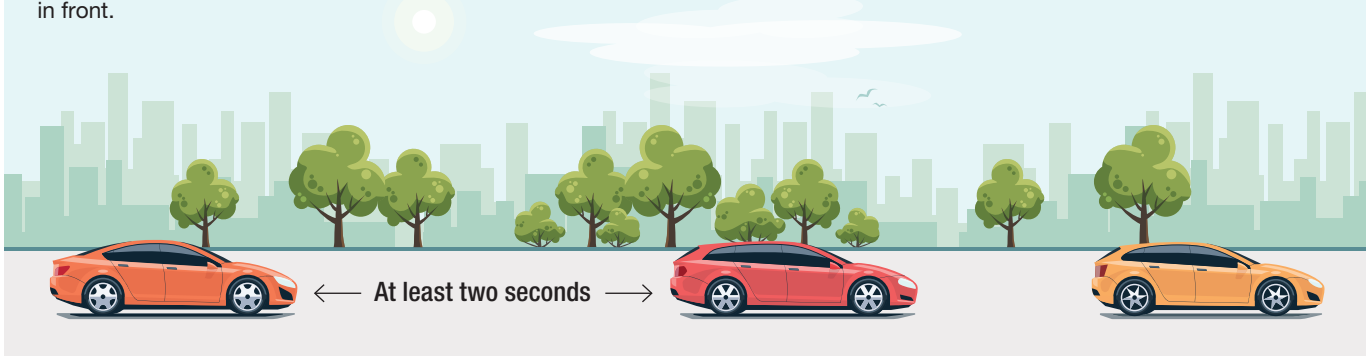
Maintaining a safe following distance and avoiding tailgating is a major concern for Queensland road users and has an associated road rule. For more information about Queensland road rules, contact the Department of Transport and Main Roads at [tmw.qld.gov.au](http://tmw.qld.gov.au) or phone 13 2380.

**A DRIVER MUST** drive a sufficient distance behind a vehicle travelling in front so the driver can, if necessary, stop safely to avoid a collision with that vehicle.

To provide a safe distance and avoid tailgating, we recommend drivers keep at least two, but preferably three or more, seconds between their vehicle and the one travelling in front.

This applies at any speed and is measured by starting to count once the rear of the vehicle in front passes a roadside object (e.g. a tree or signpost) and stopping the count once you reach it.

You're too close if you reach the same object before you get to two seconds.



At least double this to a minimum of four but preferably six seconds if you are towing or driving in wet weather.

A driver of a long vehicle (7.5m or longer with any load or projection) must drive at least the required minimum

distance of 60m behind another long vehicle travelling in front unless the driver is on a multi-lane road, a length of road in a built-up area, or overtaking.

For a road train, this minimum required distance is 200m. ■



By keeping a safe following distance and not tailgating, you will have a greater visual field for observation of traffic situations ahead, signs and road markings. This will improve your ability to plan ahead, assisting you to stop your vehicle safely when necessary and avoid collisions.



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