

CO2 debate heats up

Climate change authority calls for compulsory CO2 laws as FCAI slams report

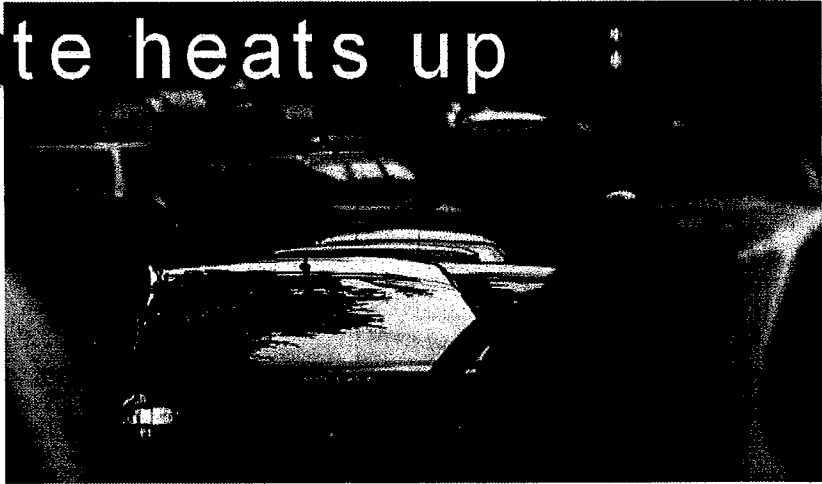
By TERRY MARTIN

AUSTRALIA'S independent climate change agency and federal government policy advisor has recommended mandatory emissions standards be introduced for all new light vehicles, claiming fuel efficiency across the industry could be almost doubled by 2025.

In a research report 'Light vehicle emissions standards for Australia' released last week, the Climate Change Authority has proposed that Australia follow other markets such as the European Union, United States, Canada, Japan, South Korea, China and India in developing mandatory standards.

It recommends that the standards be introduced from 2018 – after the three remaining Australian car-makers, Ford, Holden and Toyota, have closed their manufacturing operations – and that the standards progressively reduce carbon dioxide emissions from new light vehicles to 105 grams per kilometre, almost half the current level of 192g/km.

According to the agency's chairman Bernie Fraser, this would broadly bring Australia into line with the US, but still trail the tighter EU targets by several years.



"Australia could almost double the fuel efficiency of its new-vehicle fleet by 2025, save motorists thousands of dollars over the life of their vehicles and significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions – all by introducing mandatory emissions standards for light vehicles," Mr Fraser said.



Bernie Fraser

In response, the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries (FCAI) has hit out at the report, arguing that CO2 from new light vehicles accounted for only a fraction of the total emissions from the road transport sector.

FCAI chief executive Tony Weber also said the targets were unrealistic because of the less stringent fuel quality standards in Australia, such as the current unavailability of 95 RON unleaded petrol with 10ppm or less of sulphur.

"The road transport sector accounts for eight per cent of all CO2 emissions in Australia, and of that eight per cent new motor vehicles account for just

one sixteenth of the emissions, or around half of one per cent of total CO2 emissions," he said.

"The Climate Change Authority notes that their report demonstrates that mandatory standards are a cost-effective way to reduce Australia's greenhouse gas emissions and light vehicle fuel use. But without having world-quality fuel available in the marketplace, mandatory CO2 targets would impose cost on the community without delivering the expected benefits."

The Climate Change Authority proposes that the targets be set as an average across the entire fleet, rather than be applied to individual vehicles.

It has calculated that the implementation of the mandatory standard would increase the average cost of a new car in 2025 by about \$1500. "This, however, would be offset several times by fuel savings of about \$8500 over the life of the vehicle, leaving motorists better off," Mr Fraser said.

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Holden eco engine wait

Local Cruze to stick with current engines as new units head to China first

By RON HAMMERTON

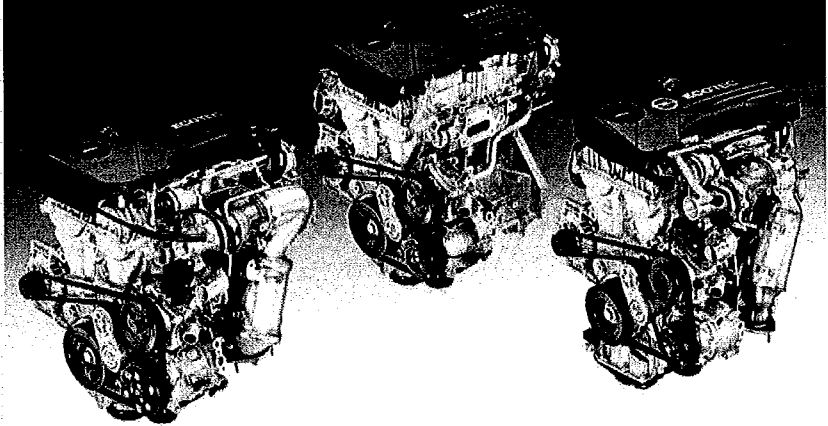
HOLDEN Cruze buyers might have to wait up to three years longer than Chinese customers to experience a planned new generation of small-displacement Ecotec petrol engines in General Motors' top-selling small car.

China is set to get a market-specific new Chevrolet Cruze armed with the new, more fuel-efficient engines and dual-clutch transmission from later this year, while a new model for other markets such as South Korea and North America is due from about 2016-17.

But the current **Holden Cruze sedan and hatch** – built at the company's doomed Elizabeth plant in South Australia – will possibly soldier on alongside the Commodore until the end of local production in late 2017, and is unlikely to get a new Ecotec engine until an all-new import model arrives.

It is unclear when other Holden models, including the Korean-made Barina, Barina Spark and Trax compact SUV, will get the new powerplants that range from a 1.0-litre three-cylinder producing 56kW to a turbocharged 1.4-litre four-cylinder banging out 123kW.

The three-cylinder is set to make its debut in Opel's Adam city car, in which it is said to generate as much power as the 1.6-litre four-cylinder engine it replaces while cutting fuel



From left: Ecotec 1.4 turbo four-cylinder, Ecotec 1.5 four-cylinder, Ecotec 1.0 turbocharged three-cylinder

consumption by about 20 per cent.

The new, clean-sheet modular family of engines – announced in a media release from GM headquarters in Detroit last week – has been designed to streamline the company's powertrain portfolio and reduce manufacturing complexity around the world while improving fuel efficiency, refinement and durability.

Eleven engine variants will be produced in at least five manufacturing plants, in the US, China, Hungary, Mexico and South Korea, and slotting into about 27 new models under five brands as they are released.

Holden executive director of corporate affairs George Svigos told GoAuto he was unable to shed light on when a new Cruze with the new engine range would be offered under Holden badges.

"The first iteration of the next-gen

Cruze will be announced later this year in China," he said. "This all-new 2015 Cruze was developed specifically for consumer tastes and needs in China.

"Differentiated variants will be available in other markets. We have no additional info about those variants to announce today."

The Chinese Chevrolet Cruze will get two of the new four-cylinder engines – a 110kW/235Nm 1.4-litre turbo and 84kW/146Nm 1.5-litre normally aspirated unit.

The current 1.4-litre turbo in Cruze produces 100kW and 200Nm.

Before deciding to quit Australian manufacturing, Holden had planned to introduce a new generation of Cruze into its local plant, presumably armed with one or more of the new engines.

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Xenon returns



Reborn Tata Motors ute reaches market with revised range, from \$22,990 d/a

By BARRY PARK

INDIAN brand Tata Motors has relaunched in Australia, bringing back the Xenon utility range as part of a cut-price assault in one of Australia's most hotly contested sectors.

However, it will face a stiff challenge, with cheap-priced rival Chinese brand Great Wall suffering a sales slump this year – down more than 40 per cent to the end of September compared with last year – suggesting buyers' appetite for budget-oriented workhorses is on the wane.

The Xenon is returning to the marketplace priced from \$22,990 driveaway for the cab chassis version – matching Great Wall's entry pricing.

This starting price represents an almost \$3000 premium over what the Xenon was selling for when it was imported in small numbers by Queensland-based dealership Upton's Motors three years ago.

That said, the heavily upgraded Xenon gains driver and passenger airbags and Bluetooth phone connection – an essential for the well-connected tradie – as standard equipment.

Another big change is the company behind the importation of the new

Xenon, Melbourne-based Fusion Automotive.

Fusion managing director Darren Bowler is a former Walkinshaw Automotive Group director, general manager of sales at HSV and a regional manager for luxury brand Audi Australia.

The company was set up under the Walkinshaw Group umbrella to “redefine vehicle distribution throughout Australasia”.

The importer will vie for sales in the third largest segment of the Australian new-vehicle market, dominated by the Toyota HiLux – a regular top 10 contender on the monthly sales chart.

Toyota recently plumped up the HiLux's appeal to fleet buyers by stepping the ute range up to a top 4-star safety rating.

The Tata Xenon is aimed right at the heartland of ute sales.

Under the bonnet is a 2.2-litre turbo-diesel engine mated to a 6-speed manual gearbox (no auto is available). Rated to the Euro 5 emissions standard, the Xenon's powerplant produces only 110kW of power but a useful 320Nm of torque with a few revs onboard.

Combined-cycle fuel consumption is rated at 7.4 litres per 100 kilometres, while carbon dioxide emissions come in at 198 grams per kilometre.

The Xenon range will be available in cab chassis, single and dual cab variants, and with either a 4x2 or 4x4 driveline.

Gross vehicle mass is about 2950kg, giving the Xenon a 1.0-tonne payload

capacity in aluminium-tray cab chassis guise and 880kg with the dual cab tub.

Fusion Automotive says buyers will be able to accessorise the Xenon with features such as reversing sensors and a reversing camera, and even satellite navigation.

“The light commercial segment is now the third largest segment of the Australian new-car market, with 13 major brands in the 4x2 and 4x4 categories,” Mr Bowler said.

“We believe there is demand in Australia for a utility range of vehicles with the toughness and value-for-money equation that Tata Motors products deliver.”

Fusion says the Xenon was specially configured for the Australian market and was extensively tested in Australia. It will be sold initially through 15 Tata dealers.

So far, the strongest dealer presence is in Victoria and Queensland, with six outlets in Queensland – ranging from the Gold Coast to Townsville – and 4 in Victoria.

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For drive impressions, go to GoAuto.com.au from this afternoon

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|------------------------|----------|
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| 4x2 Single Cab Pick Up | \$24,990 |
| 4x2 Dual Cab | \$26,990 |
| 4x4 Single Cab Chassis | \$25,990 |
| 4x4 Single Cab Pick Up | \$27,990 |
| 4x4 Dual Cab | \$29,990 |

