



News Release

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## **INDEPENDENT WORKSHOPS READY FOR RIGHT TO REPAIR**

The Motor Industry Workshop Association (MIWA) representing over 2 500 accredited and graded general repair, auto electrical workshops; air conditioning and accessories establishments; transmission and driveline and fitment centres across the country says the new Competition Commission draft guidelines will, if published in its current form, open up the market substantially and see some meaningful cost savings for consumers, without compromising on quality and service.

In 2010 MIWA announced their intention to initiate the Right to Repair Campaign in South Africa after garnering first-hand knowledge from their European and North American counterparts where the campaign was already written into law in these regions. At the time MIWA approached representatives from all the major vehicle manufacturers in South Africa, but their muted responses resulted in MIWA creating the Right to Repair South Africa (R2RSA) non-profit company to include the whole of the aftermarket in South Africa.

“For the past six years we have supported the Right to Repair campaign in lobbying for an environment where consumers can select where their vehicles are serviced, maintained and repaired during the currency of manufacturers’ warranties, at competitive prices and in the workshop of their choice, and one which gives aftermarket Small Medium Enterprises a chance to stay in business. This is a big win for all parties and the Commission should be commended on following the international Right to Repair trend, which promotes South Africa’s existing consumer and competition laws,” says Dewald Ranft, Chairman of MIWA.

Ranft says there is no doubt that growth in the automotive sector is going to come from the small to medium sized players in the aftermarket automotive sector and the

new guidelines will now potentially open up the market. “In readiness for this day MIWA has been upskilling all of its workshops and has implemented stringent grading and accreditation guidelines. Our accredited workshops have to meet and comply with industry-set criteria and standards.”

The graded workshops are run by highly-skilled mechanics, with excellent service-levels, administrative support and quality parts and equipment. “During the accreditation and grading processes a workshop undergoes a thorough assessment. Aspects including the health and safety operating procedures are scrutinised as are the premises, equipment, administration, waste removal, staffing and so on. “Even aspects of the business such as parking facilities, lighting, ventilation and uniforms are inspected. The MIWA accreditation and grading process includes a document of proof of compliance to Health and Safety policies that members have to adhere to before they receive their accreditation. It is a rigorous process that we believe is essential to ensure customers know they are dealing with professionals and feel protected. It provides for consumer peace of mind” he says.

Accreditation criteria also includes standards for tools and diagnostic equipment required to correctly perform the repairs as well as having insurance, such as defective workmanship insurance in the unlikely event of an incorrect repair, in place. “Workshops have to have guarantees and warranties in place before accreditation can be achieved.” Once accredited, a workshop can then enter into the grading process. Just like the hospitality industry, workshops receive a star-rating based on a specific list of criteria. “Many of our workshops are graded as five-star but we also have four- and three- star workshops that offer excellent service too,” explains Ranft.

“This decision has been a long time coming and will finally provide motorists with freedom of choice and control over their motor repairs. From our part we are confident our industry has sufficiently upskilled its staff and our accredited workshops can deliver on the high standard of repair required,” concludes Ranft.

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COMPILED ON BEHALF OF MIWA BY CATHY FINDLEY PUBLIC RELATIONS.

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