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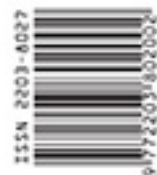


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NSW Minister for Roads Melinda Pavey

REGO RIP OFF: MINISTER SAYS 'I FEEL YOUR PAIN'

NSW Minister for Roads Melinda Pavey says she fully understands the pain of caravan owners paying much higher caravan registration charged compared to other states.

Speaking exclusively to ROAM, Ms Pavey says she's been lobbied personally by caravan owners in her NSW mid north coast electorate about the high cost of charges. The Minister demonstrated she has in depth knowledge not only of the NSW costs, which are the highest in Australia, but also how they compare to other states. Inheriting a commitment from her predecessor to try and bring NSW costs more into line with other states, Ms Pavey says its would be virtually impossible to match the prices set in places like Victoria, where users pay less than \$60 per year, regardless of the size of their van.

"Other states don't even make allowances for annual increases in CPI, which is not ideal policy and would be irresponsible for me as Minister to advocate," Ms Pavey says. — Rod Bruem

Would you like to see a reduction in the NSW caravan rego cost?

Let us know at editor@timetoroam.com.au

Call for safety rating system for caravans

WA's Road Safety Commissioner is calling for a five star rating system for caravans in a bid to improve standards and get dangerous RVs off the road. The call follows a fatal accident in WA where a caravan exploded and killed a Singaporean tourist. Road Safety Commissioner Kim Papalia says there needs to be an overhaul of import and manufacturing standards of RVs. "I believe this death was due to a lack of industry safety standards for caravans," Mr Papalia says. His call is backed by industry standards lobby group, the Caravan Council of

Australia. Chairman Colin Young is lobbying the Federal Government to change laws that allow manufacturers to "self certify" caravans and trailers weighing under 4500kgs. Mr Papalia has suggested a five-star rating system similar to one already applied to passenger vehicles. "Star safety rating stickers would allow purchasers to easily determine a caravan's safety rating at the point of purchase and would become an integral part of the decision-making process by potential caravan buyers," he says.



SMASA Secretary and Treasurer Glenn Stankevicius with Transport and Infrastructure Minister Stephen Mulligan

COLLECTORS CASH IN

While NSW continues to stall on lowering rego costs, South Australia is paving the way. Already SA boasts the second lowest caravan rego costs in Australia and now it has lowered prices further for registering vintage and classic cars. New laws came into effect on July 1 allowing for a fee of \$90 for cars that are seldom used.

Street Machine Association of South Australia's Glenn Stankevicius says he expects to see some cars back out on the road more regularly. "It will also have a flow-on effect to local car businesses such as panel beaters, painters, motor trimmers, car recyclers, engine builders, detailers, tyre shops and many more," he says.



ROAM Associate Editor David Thorndike (left) and Managing Editor Brendan Batty


ROAM expands editorial team

Brendan Batty has joined ROAM as Managing Editor after six years with the NRMA's respected Australian Caravan+RV magazine; the past three years as its editor and senior writer for the flagship Open Road magazine. Outgoing editor and co-founder Rcd Bruem says it's ROAM's second recent high profile

appointment, with Caravan and Camping with Kids magazine Managing Editor and founder David Thorndike joining as Associate Publisher. "Brendan and David will ensure ROAM has the most experienced RV editorial team to bring new and interesting content and features to our readers," Bruem says.



Learning to share

Taxpayers are footing a bill of \$3.9 million to teach caravan owners to stop clogging up roadside rest stops. Truck drivers have complained caravan and motorhome owners, particularly free campers, have been taking over highway stops intended for commercial drivers. Now the Federal Government is launching a "co-exist initiative" in partnership with peak industry groups. Federal Transport Minister Darren Chester says the campaign will educate RV owners on the importance of following signage to ensure trucks can access designated rest stops to allow for breaks and managing fatigue. 

Beware Accident Hotspots


NSW is Australia's most accident-prone state for caravans according to claims data released by insurer CIL. CIL accepted a total of 4009 caravan accident claims from NSW in 2016, followed by 3279 from Queensland, 2759 from Victoria, 1588 from WA, 1198 from SA 367 from the NT and 134 from the ACT.

While no data on actual caravan hotspots is available from insurers, overall motor vehicle accident statistics unsurprisingly show busy inner-city roads are most dangerous.

Springvale Road in Glen Waverly, Melbourne is Australia's most treacherous hotspot for motor vehicle accidents according to insurer AAMI. It has topped the list for past four years.

NSW's worst black spot is Hume Highway in Liverpool. In SA it is Adelaide's North Terrace. Queensland's worst place for accidents is Logan Road Mt Gravatt and in the ACT it's Canberra Avenue in Fyshwick.

Topping the list in WA is the Albany Highway in Cannington, in Tasmania it's the Brooker Highway in Hobart and in the NT, the Stuart Highway in Darwin.


AAMI says there are a number of commonalities with all the black spots including a large number of traffic lights, busy intersections and constantly changing driver conditions. 

AIRSTREAM AUSTRALIA IN LIMBO

Sales of the luxury US caravan brand Airstream have been put on hold. Importer Alan Imrie says he tried to sell the business, but the deal fell through.

Mr Imrie has been importing new Airstreams since September 2012, selling through dealerships in NSW, Victoria and Queensland. He says the vans were targeted towards wealthy buyers, with prices starting at around \$175,000.

"They were aimed at a particular demographic, the doctors and architects and anyone of the like who wanted a design-orientated caravan," he says.

Airstreams have been manufactured in California since the 1920s, with the rounded polished silver aircraft style design first introduced in the 1930s. 



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Evans Head caravan park upgrade underway

There have been mixed emotions on the NSW far North Coast as the state's biggest holiday park readies for a three year upgrade costing \$14.5 million. Evans Head Caravan Park is the latest waterfront site in the NSW Crown Trust holiday chain of 36 properties to be given a makeover. As with previous park re-builds, it has meant long-term park tenants have been forced to remove their vans to make way for more cabins and casual holiday spaces. Parks Trust CEO Steve Edmonds offered a last minute compromise to allay concerns, including giving priority bookings to some of the long-term tenants. Mr Edmonds says instead of a small group of people occupying the Evans Head site for 25 per cent of the time, it will now be open to the general public who will populate the area 80 per cent of the time. "Based on what we know from our previous park upgrades, this will have a significant impact on the community with shops reopening in the area and millions of dollars going back into the local economy," Mr Edmonds says. 

NOMADS GO FOR LONGER


Latest visitor information shows continuing unprecedented growth in caravan and camping holidays. Tourism Research Australia says overnight bookings for 2016 were up 13 per cent on the previous year. It was the highest year for overall trips since it started collecting data in 1998.

The research found grey nomads travel for longer periods of time and account for 43 per cent of stays. Interestingly, the data shows southern states actually experienced increases in visitation during colder months. 



Kimberley Kampers expedition vehicle unveiled

Kimberley Kampers has confirmed it will be building a range Mercedes-Benz Unimog based expedition vehicles, after it hinted the same on its Instagram feed back in April. The Unimog Kruser is expected to sell for \$220,000, well under the "sub \$250k" promise the company made on social media. ROAM was given advance copies of the specification list and brochure which outlines a partnership between the Ballina based off-road camper and caravan manufacturer and Unimog refurbishing specialist, Unidan Engineering. Kimberley boss, Bruce Loxton, told us the quality of Unidan's work is so good, a second-hand "mog" from the company is as good as, if not better than new, but at a fraction of the price. The partnership will see Unidan supplying the vehicle, and Kimberley fitting it with an E-Class Karavan that's had some of the front nose-cone cut off. Loxton say, "It's incredible just how good a fit the E-Class is on the back of these vehicles. We've only had to move the wheel arches a tiny bit." Each of the Unimogs undergo a significant rebuild. This will include removal of the cab for sand-blasting, rust repair and repaint. All parts viable for powder-coating will be powder-coated. Insulation and marine carpet are added inside, while all fabric parts are re-trimmed or replaced. The engine is given all new fluids and any mechanical faults are rectified, while the complete chassis is steam cleaned and painted in three coats of industrial black enamel.

The cut-down E-Class will feature all the self-sufficiency features and technology the Kimberley has built its reputation on. This includes A 180-litre water tank, a 100ah battery and 275kW of solar capacity on the roof. The electrically operated island bed converts into a lounge, while the kitchen features a 130L upright fridge, hot and cold running water and induction cooktop. – Brendan Batty 




THE OUTBACK TOWN WITH A NAME WORTH FIGHTING FOR

It's famous as the birthplace of Qantas and the airline once used the town's name to brand its 747 fleet. Now Longreach has become caught up in a trademark dispute in the caravan industry.

Caboolture manufacturer Sunland says it was the first to use Longreach as a trademark. Owner Roy Wyss Jnr says he's been in business for 13 years and he'll challenge any other RV company that tries to use the Longreach brand.

"It just causes confusion in the marketplace when others try and use the same name," Mr Wyss says. He says his most recent legal battle to protect the trademark cost tens of thousands of dollars.


Longreach Mayor Ed Warren says he can understand why companies want to associate their brand with his home town. "Because of its history, tradition and the beauty of the outback. It's a unique place," he says.

A number of caravan, motorhome and camper trailer manufacturers have employed the Longreach name in Australia. This includes the Millard Longreach, the Winnebago/Avida Longreach and the Pioneer Campers Longreach. 



HONOUR FOR JAYCO'S GERRY RYAN

Jayco Australia founder Gerry Ryan has been highly acknowledged by the caravan industry's peak body. He's received the Richard Davis Award for Outstanding Service from the Caravan Industry Association of Australia (CIAA) for his extraordinary contribution to the industry.

"It's a great honour to receive an award named after Richard Davis," he says. "I worked with him many years ago and he taught me there's more fun in giving than receiving." The CIAA commended Mr Ryan's great entrepreneurial mind and selfless generosity. 

Happy campers really are happier

A new caravan industry survey has found the term "happy campers" is an accurate description of how campers really feel. While it's a term embraced worldwide, the survey by Australia's peak industry body found people traveling here are generally happier and more optimistic than those who don't camp.

The survey included people using cabins, caravans, camper trailers, swags and tents. Campers feel closer to their partners, children, grandchildren and their parents.. Over the last 7.1 million Australians have embarked on a camping trip. 



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FRANKLIN'S NEW HOME OPENS

Iconic brand, Franklin Caravans has moved into a brand new, purpose built factory. The project, costing \$3.1 million dollars was co-funded by the Victorian Government as part of its package to recreate jobs after the closure of Ford's manufacturing plant. Franklin's National Dealer Manager, Conrad D'Cunha says the government tipped in around \$770,000.

With capacity to build up to 12 Franklin caravans a week from the new facility, D'Cunha say it's already getting through seven to 10 a week, despite winter being a slower time for caravan manufacture. Prior to this, Franklin Caravans were built in a factory shared by sister brands, Concept and Newlands.

With environmental concerns and sustainability at the forefront, the factory generates up to 66 percent of its own electricity from solar, while 70 per cent of its production waste is expected to be recycled.

Franklin Caravans was first established by George Robertson who built a caravan in his backyard in 1947. In it's current iteration it has been running since 2004. 




Winnebago goes off road

Winnebago Australia continues to expand its line-up with the launch of a new off road option across its caravan range.

The X-Country caravan pack marks the first Winnebago Caravan designed for rugged Australian terrain with AL-KO Enduro independent suspension, an off-road tow hitch and an array of additional upgrades

The Brisbane-based manufacturer, part of Apollo Tourism & Leisure Ltd has also launched three brand new motorhome models.

The four berth additions of the Coogee, Kirra and Jervis are built on an IVECO chassis.

Winnebago has continued to go from strength to strength since its official Australian launch in 2014, with no signs of slowing down. 

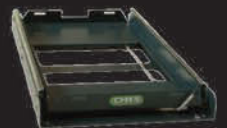
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ISSUE#27

YOUR LETTERS



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MY CARAVAN – 1953 Harris

EDITORS PICK

Our caravan is called Norma – Rei. Norma is named in honour of Katrina's mum who passed away shortly after we bought the van. The Rei (say Ray), being the start of our surname.

We found her in a scrap recycle yard, looking pretty forlorn to say the least. Never the less we decided to buy it and we're glad we did. We've had oodles of fun and interaction with other like- minded caravanners. It's such a joy and a wonderful pastime.

We love the caravan and how it has opened up in life for us.

Since buying Norma-Rei, we've acquired another three caravans. The second is registered and on the road, number three is halfway to being finished, and number four is waiting patiently for work to start.

If you meet us road, sit down and have a chat and maybe a beer or two.

Yours in classic caravanning,

Richard and Katrina Reihana
Nurioopta, SA



Norma-Rei interior

THE LEMON DEBATE

I have been following Ms. Leigh's ongoing problems with a lemon caravan and the need for "Lemon Laws". My response is in three parts.

Firstly, I wholeheartedly agree with the need for these laws, but suggest that it should be across the board, including cars, houses, consumer goods and services, amongst others. They also need to be uniform across the country.

Secondly, I have read Ms. Leigh's redacted account of her troubles. From her account, I would agree the product has some serious issues. However, it is possible that Ms.

Leigh's initial actions may have set the tone for all future dealings with the dealership? She allowed the dealership to have full control of the delivery process, whereby the dealer had them on their way before inspecting the van. The first rule of any transaction is that the customer satisfies themselves that what they are buying

is safe, sound, and all it is touted to be, before handing over any cash or signing any paperwork. The moment you do, you close any avenue of legal escape. Anytime you feel pressured, bullied or compelled to accept a sale you are not comfortable with, walk away or delay the process and seek legal advice.

Thirdly, I have also had issues with caravan purchases. Late 2015 I purchased a 2008 model van, inspected it, tested all the systems. The dealer did two services on it as well. Six months later, while preparing to go on our first trip in this van we discovered an ammonia leak from the fridge. The dealer was notified, they promptly arranged for a service agent to visit my home and assess the problem. The service rep confirmed the problem and noted that it took up to two hours to manifest itself. At this point you should know, the dealer was under no obligation to do anything. The

stated warranty period had elapsed and the fault was such that all but the most rigorous test would have missed it.

But I spoke to them about the problem and they offered to pay for half the total repair cost of \$1600, which they did after arranging for all the work to be done at my home. There are plenty of good dealers and manufacturers supplying caravans and competition for your business is very fierce. Social media reaches a lot of people very quickly and we've all seen bad news go viral. Bad products or services do not last in this environment.

One of the best places to go is a caravan club or brand user group if you want feedback on what to avoid. Preventing a problem is better than fixing one.

Pete Neumann
Springfield Lakes QLD



Richard and Katrina inside Norma-Pet



Norma-Pet Interior

WE LOVE THE LEYLANDS

Mal and Laraine are nothing less than living legends and their continued travelling stories are intriguing and entertaining, as well as quite memorable to many of us who remember crowding around the black and white telly back in the 1970s to watch the original series of Ask The Leylands. It's wonderful to see them back in ROAM and we wish them well.

ROAM offers a mix of quality stories and sensible advertisements which makes for a very easy read to a wide range of people. Actually having it in print is a definite advantage as many of us love to sit down with a cuppa and hold it in our hands rather than a tablet.

On a personal note we would like to thank Rod Bruem for all his hard work bringing 27 issues to the Australian public and we would like to say, well done, thank you and we wish you all the best into the future.

Allan Stevenson – OzGlide
ozglide.com.au



Mal and Lara with Jeep

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