

REPAIRCERT NZ UPDATE

Supporting New Zealand's Repair Certification Industry



UPDATE No.1 | 08/03/2022

NZ Hot Rod Magazine Article on Repair Certification

from Tony Johnson, CEO RepairCert NZ



I'd like to provide some clarification about a repair certification system-related article which was published in January's 2022 issue of NZ Hot Rod Magazine, which may have frustrated some people within the industry.

The background to this article is that the editor of the NZ Hot Rod Magazine asked my permission to republish the 'From the CEO' section of Issue 60 of the LVVTA Newsletter July-September 2021, where I talked about becoming involved in the repair certification system. I was entirely happy for this to occur, and he printed the article – no problem there. My original article that he republished starts with "You're a tiger for punishment..." and occupies the second and third columns of the page shown here.

What the editor also did was to precede my article with his own opinion piece about the state of the repair certification system, and this filled the first column (shown inside the red box). This is also fine, because, as a magazine editor he's entitled to voice his opinions. The problem is, however, that he headed up his own editorial about it (in the red box) with 'LVVTA News' and the LVVTA logo, so everyone has (quite reasonably) assumed that this first column of text – which is quite critical of the system, and the decisions of the Repair Certifiers associated with the vehicles mentioned – was written by us. ►



➤ **LVVTA News**

It's no secret that the structural body repair certification side of our industry has been a train wreck for some time now. A culture of fear within the repair certification system has seen rulings handed out which are way over the top. Sure there are those who transgress, but sadly the waves created by them have washed onto our beach and for no good reason. If you've forgotten just how arduous and stressful it's been for owners and certifiers, here's a couple of examples.

A fully restored Falcon GT was imported from Australia; it's a very high dollar car, mint in every respect. At some point in its restoration, the two rear fenders were replaced, and from a visual inspection of the welds from the interior, it all looked okay. However, the repair certifier wasn't sure and requested the rear of the car be stripped and sandblasted so he could complete a more thorough inspection. The request was ridiculous.

Another example is a '56 Ford Thunderbird which is a mint original car. The floor pans have the factory paint with no pitting, but on the passenger side, there's a hole the size of a 50-cent piece. The owner has been instructed to replace both the floor pans—another ridiculous request.

BUT, we're pleased to say there's good news ahead, so read on:

From Tony Johnson

"You're a tiger for punishment," one of the LVV Certifiers said to me recently, as we talked about LVVTA's new set of responsibilities to the Government. The notion of LVVTA looking after the Repair Certification system is something that's been touched on casually for 18 months or so, but the conversation shifted into high gear in April this year. Just four months later, we'd negotiated a Contract for Service between LVVTA and Waka Kotahi (that's NZTA's new name) and signed on the dotted line. Eight weeks later, we've undertaken all of the logistics associated with setting up a new company, preparing office space and equipment, had in-depth one-on-one conversations with every one of the 46 Repair Certifiers throughout the country, developed the new branding, sent out the first Repair Industry Newsletter, and found and appointed two fantastic technical gurus who are on the job already? I certainly wouldn't say that the LVV challenge is finished - that will never happen - or even that the day-to-day business of maintaining the LVV system is under control. Far from it. But it's been 32 years since I first knocked on the door of the Ministry of Transport as an unshaven long-haired hot rodder and began this LVV certification journey. There's something a bit refreshing and interesting about this idea of a new challenge. It would be wrong not to try to help when there's so much that works well in the LVV space, which will work equally well

in the repair space. I've spoken to all of the Repair Certifiers, and met many of them face-to-face, and they're a bunch of thoroughly good normal blokes; essentially a bunch of clever hands-on panel beaters, just like the LVV Certifiers are essentially a bunch of clever hands-on motor mechanics, and the two groups really are kindred spirits. Same as LVV Certifiers, they're blokes who can't be bothered with playing games; but instead just want to get on with it and do it well. "Just tell us what we should be doing, give us some support, help us instead of caning us, and we'll do a great job," one Repair Certifier said to me. Exactly. It's not by accident that Waka Kotahi came to LVVTA to ask if we'd take over the management of the repair certification system for them. They want to get a sound specialist certification management system in place as quickly as possible. They want the best bang for buck they can get, and they want to see some pragmatism injected into the system to ensure sensible safety-based outcomes for everyone. Good on them for using the expertise that already exists instead of trying to reinvent the wheel. That LVV Certifier was probably right. I am a tiger for punishment. But to be honest, I'm quite excited by it all, and I think Ken, our Operations Manager, is really looking forward to the challenge too. It's a neat thing to be in a position to help the repair certification industry, and it's great to be able to resolve a big problem for Waka Kotahi.

Tony Johnson, CEO.

I've raised this with the editor, and he has clarified the mistake in the latest issue, as shown right in the yellow shaded box. My apologies to anyone who felt annoyed at the text in the first column (in particular the Repair Certifiers involved in the vehicles he's referred to), and for the confusion this has caused. It certainly annoyed me! Please rest assured that these comments in the first column were not mine, nor anyone else's at RepairCert NZ. ■

➤ **Clarification**

IN the last issue, In Passing Editor, Paul Grace's comments on structural certification were wrongly titled LVVTA News. That title should have been positioned 1 column to the right and headed Tony Johnson's editorial content on behalf of LVVTA. NZHRM apologises for any confusion in this matter.