



MEDIA RELEASE

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NEW LEADERSHIP TAKES *WOMEN IN AUTOMOTIVE* ORGANISATION NATIONAL IN THE FIGHT FOR GENDER EQUALITY

5 March 2024 – *Women in Automotive*, an organisation promoting and supporting female and non-binary participation in the automotive industry, is embarking on an exciting new era of growth under new leadership and immediate national expansion.

The now independently-run *Women in Automotive* will completely overhaul its corporate identity and membership offering as it supercharges its campaign to combat inequalities and lack of opportunity for women and non-binary individuals in one of Australia's largest industries.

"Women continue to be underpaid and underrepresented in the Australian Automotive Industry, from apprenticeships to boardrooms," said *Women in Automotive* spokesperson, and one of its new Directors, Rachel Reed-Butler.

"When women do find a place, studies by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency have shown that the gender gap on total remuneration is still around 19 percent".

Rachel Reed-Butler acknowledged that the Automotive Industry has improved in recent years, but more work needed to be done to make it truly inclusive.

"The Australian Automotive Industry has taken great strides in transitioning from its male-dominated roots into a more inclusive and supportive career choice for all Australians, but we've really only seen the first steps."

Rachel is part of a three-strong leadership team that have taken up the reins of *Women in Automotive* from the Victorian Automotive Chamber of Commerce (VACC) on March 1, 2024. The leadership team includes nationally recognised motoring journalist Nadine Armstrong and highly-experienced TV and motorsport presenter Kate Peck.

2024 celebrates the 25th anniversary of *Women in Automotive*, established by the VACC in 1999. *Women in Automotive* reaches 10,500 people through its various platforms and touchpoints, and has plans to grow this number considerably, starting with a national expansion of its membership base and events calendar.

The decision to take over *Women in Automotive* was a natural one, said Reed-Butler. Rachel and Nadine have been integral contributors for the last seven years under VACC stewardship, and together with Kate, have decades of Automotive Industry experience across the Media, Retail, Manufacturing and Insurance sectors.

"We know first-hand the challenges that women face in this vibrant and growing industry, and we've seen how fostering collaboration, education and networking can provide the support necessary to overcome these challenges," said Reed-Butler.

Reed-Butler said *Women in Automotive* would not be ready for expansion without the VACC's unwavering backing over the last 25 years.

"Without the VACC's steadfast commitment to date, *Women in Automotive* would not be where we are today, and we thank them for their efforts. We also thank them for entrusting us with the future of *Women in Automotive*.

Reed-Butler says the leadership team is committed to growing *Women in Automotive's* reach and influence as it transitions from a Victorian-focused organisation into a true national body supporting female and non-binary individuals working, or seeking work, in the automotive industry.

"We're going to accelerate everything: more networking, more educational events and seminars, more member collaboration, and more industry and expert guidance so that Australia's Automotive Industry becomes a beacon of inclusivity on a national scale."

Women in Automotive's updated 2024 events calendar and member benefits expansion will be released in the second quarter of 2024.

Individuals can sign up for free to be a member of *Women in Automotive* by clicking through the [Womeninautomotive.com.au](https://womeninautomotive.com.au) website. Companies or organisations wishing to partner with *Women in Automotive* should email hello@womeninautomotive.com.au

Women In Automotive

[Womeninautomotive.com.au](https://womeninautomotive.com.au)

[Instagram](#) @womeninautomotive

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Please find a link to a selection of imagery [here](#).

More images available upon request.

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ABOUT WOMEN IN AUTOMOTIVE

Women in Automotive has been empowering female participation in all levels of the Australian motoring industry since its inception in 1999. Its 25th anniversary coincides with a new leadership team and ambitious growth plans as it pushes for equality for females and non-binary people in one of Australia's biggest industries.

Under the VACC stewardship, Women in Automotive has assisted and supported females into automotive trades as well as hosting networking and motivational events and seminars.

One of its recent programs was a joint initiative with the State Government funded grant program, titled Accelerating Women into Automotive. This 5-week program placed successful female applicants into a short and intensive introduction to the automotive industry through customised training and work placement at a registered training organisation, with training covering everything from mechanics, to engineering, sales and repairs.

Women in Automotive is trusted by thousands of women working in all aspects of the automotive industry throughout Australia from panel-beaters to dealer principals, apprentice mechanics to marketing managers, CEOs to rally champs.

Now independently run for the first time, Women in Automotive is pleased to continue to have the support of the VACC as a founding sponsor.

ABOUT THE NEW LEADERSHIP TEAM

Rachel Reed Butler has over 20+ years' experience predominantly in the automotive industry, spanning the automotive insurance sector and the national operations of some of Australia's most successful premium car brands, including BMW Group Australia, Fiat Chrysler (now Stellantis) and Mercedes-Benz Australia. She has held senior management roles focussing on lifestyle media relations, partnerships, sponsorships, brand communications and events.

As a freelancer operating her own communications agency for the past 6 years, she has applied these skills to clients in the luxury real estate, mass media and hospitality industries. Including freelance presenting on Whichcar TV and Project Managing The Australian Motoring Awards for the then named Bauer Media group.

Rachel sat on the steering committee for Women in Automotive since 2020 and worked for the program managing the marketing and communications for a term as well as care-taking the entire program during 2023. Residing in Geelong, Victoria, with her motoring journalist husband and two toddler boys, their lives are very much filled up with a passion for all things with wheels!

Nadine Armstrong carved a career as a motoring journalist before the online revolution, when print media was king and new-car buyers turned pages to make well-informed buying decisions. Nearly two decades later, Nadine has held positions with various major media players, including the then Fairfax Drive team and CarAdvice before joining carsales.com.au in 2013. She is now the Consumer Editor of carsales.com.au where she draws on a wealth of experience behind the wheel as an auto expert and new car road tester.

She can regularly be seen and heard on television and radio bringing consumer-focused opinions, news and reviews to the mainstream chat. A fan of two- and four-wheeled machines, it was riding dirt bikes through the Wombat State Forest in Melbourne's west from a young age that paved the way for a Suzuki RGV and a Harley-Davidson early on in life, but these days she can be found behind the wheel of a 'work in progress' 1977 Porsche 911.

Nadine was a member of the VACC's Women in Automotive Steering Committee since 2016, she is a FIA Motorsport Australia Girls on Track Ambassador, a judge for Women's Worldwide Car of the Year and the Co-Host of Watts Under the Bonnet: the electric vehicle podcast by carsales.com.au. Nadine lives in Melbourne with her husband, two young children, two cats and more shoes than she's willing to admit.

Kate Peck emerged onto the scene at 16 through Channel Ten's Search for a Supermodel, embarking on an unexpected career trajectory. Following international modelling gigs, she shifted to online studies before transitioning from the catwalk to TV.

A three-month motorcycle journey across Africa changed her life, leading to roles like Formula 1 Australian Grand Prix 2012 ambassador and MTV Australia's VJ. Collaborating with Nat Geo People, Kate co-produced 'A Model Adventure,' tackling iconic Australian challenges partially from the back of a motorbike and part navigating in a truck in the Kalgoorlie desert race.

From here Kate spent five years at Channel 10 co-hosting the popular weekly motoring program RPM and broadened her skills by spending two years as a Director on the Board of Motorcycling NSW. Currently the host of The Aus Moto Show, the live broadcast of ProMX on SBS and Stan, and as a senior journalist at Torquecafe.com, she ferociously promotes women in all areas of motoring. Since 2018 she has also been a FIA Motorsport Australia Girls on Track Ambassador. Based in Sydney NSW with her auto loving partner and budding biker toddler, you will generally find her at a racetrack or a wine bar.