

The future of vehicle repair depends on access to data

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Modern vehicles are transforming the automotive repair industry. For generations, repair was built on mechanical expertise and customer trust. Today, however, vehicles—particularly electric vehicles—are increasingly powered by software, sensors, telematics and connected diagnostics that continuously generate and transmit data.

That data now influences everything from maintenance alerts and system calibration to repair recommendations and predictive servicing. As a result, access to vehicle-generated data is becoming one of the most important issues facing Canada's auto care sector.

AIA Canada's Consumer Behaviour Series report, *Data and diagnostics: Inside the mind of Canadian electric vehicle owners*, highlights how consumer attitudes are evolving alongside vehicle technology. Nearly half of Canadian electric vehicle (EV) owners surveyed said advanced vehicle systems make repair and maintenance decisions more difficult to understand independently. Many also indicated they are more likely to return to dealerships for service because they believe dealerships have greater access to the tools and information required to properly diagnose and repair their vehicles.

This perception matters because it directly affects competition, affordability and consumer choice. Independent repair facilities across Canada have invested heavily in EV readiness, advanced diagnostics and technician training to meet the demands of a rapidly changing vehicle parc. Consumers continue to value these businesses for their expertise, convenience and long-standing relationships. Data found that 87 per cent of Canadians believe vehicle owners should be free to choose where they service their vehicles, while 82 per cent support requiring automakers to provide independent repair facilities with access to vehicle data.

As vehicles become more connected, maintaining a competitive and accessible repair market will depend on ensuring fair and secure access to the information required to service them. Without it, Canadians could face fewer repair options, higher costs and longer wait times, particularly in smaller communities where independent repair facilities are essential.

This is why the right to repair matters. Vehicle owners should have the freedom to decide where and how their vehicles are repaired, and repair professionals should have secure access to the data and tools necessary to safely service modern vehicles. Canada's transition to connected and electric mobility should strengthen consumer choice, not restrict it. The future of automotive repair must continue to be defined by expertise,

transparency and trust—not by barriers to the information that keeps vehicles safely on the road. To learn more, visit righttorepair.ca