

QUO VADIS QVR ?

This country never ceases to amaze. What is happening with the Quality Vehicle repair scheme is a case in point. The initiative was and still is open to all motor insurers in Malta but to date the four major players on the market, namely Mapfre Middlesea, GasanMamo insurance, Elmo insurance and Atlas insurance are the ones who have financed and supported the scheme.

The scope of QVR is to improve the quality of vehicle repair in Malta. When consumers spend thousands of euros on a new vehicle, the least they can expect is that if they are involved in an accident, their vehicle is repaired professionally.

The repercussions of incorrect repair methods will result in excessive loss in the residual or resale value of the vehicle, disappointing performance and reliability and most of all, a compromise on the levels of safety that the car is meant to offer.

Car production is changing at a very fast pace and this includes production methods, materials and the increasing use of sophisticated electronics. As a result, the repairs of these vehicles is becoming much more complicated and specialised and it is these developments that brought about the necessity for a scheme like QVR.

After thorough consideration, the supporting insurers selected an international professional organisation to oversee the process. Cevimap operates in a number of different countries and has, for many years, been at the forefront of helping motor vehicle repairers keep up with the developments in the industry.

The scheme was and is open to every repairer in Malta. The idea is that once a garage signs up, paying a minimal fee a large proportion of which is subsidised by the supporting companies, their operation is inspected by Cevimap's technical experts. The inspection looks into every aspect of the repairer's operation, from tooling to techniques and also methods of work. The ultimate scope is to ensure that repairs on vehicles are carried to manufacturers' standards and that the correct materials and methods are used. A detailed report with recommendations is issued to each garage and this will include tips on how to operate more efficiently and therefore more profitably.

The majority of repairers, over 200 so far, understood the importance and relevance of such a scheme and signed up, underwent the inspection, implemented the recommendations and are now certified quality vehicle repairers. Insurers cannot and will not impose on customers where they repair their vehicles. The only distinction that has been made is that if customers use QVR approved repairers, bills will be settled directly with garages, if not the customer presents the bill to insurers and is reimbursed.

Very little was said in the media about the scheme and its benefits but a couple of garages that do not wish to participate in the scheme managed to get an amazing amount of sensational coverage and prominence in the media.

Why do we have all our priorities completely warped? In my view, the supporting insurers should be lauded by the authorities and the media. The participating garages should be applauded and their commitment to offer customers a better service should be amply communicated. The authorities should take stock of the situation and rather than offer refuge to those who do not want to improve, find every way to support those who do.

This is a serious initiative financed by the industry with the clear aim of offering better all-round service to the customer. Appeal to the authorities to take stock of the situation and offer support to all concerned so that our country can register a tangible improvement in such an important sector.

This editorial is being posted on Facebook – Tonio Darmanin Paqpaq – where we invite you to comment on the issues raised. Also feel free to e-mail us your thoughts and opinions on tonio@paqpaq.tv o