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MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW GOVERNMENT DRIVES NEW SMASH REPAIR CODE

The NSW Government has championed the cause of up to 5 million licensed drivers across the State by overseeing the implementation of a new mandatory Code of Conduct, signed off by the motor vehicle insurance and repair industry.

NSW Deputy Premier and Minister for Small Business, John Barilaro, said the Code would lift industry standards by helping to reduce disputes between insurers and repairers and lead to more transparency of insurance assessments and repair work.

“We’ve all heard the horror stories about car owners losing out in long drawn-out disputes between insurers and repairers following an accident or, in some cases, finding themselves at the mercy of a minority of rogue operators in the industry who have delivered little more than shoddy repairs,” said Mr Barilaro.

“This new Code of Conduct aims to change all and rebuild confidence in this multi-billion dollar industry.”

The Office of the NSW Small Business Commissioner (OSBC), with support from the Motor Traders Association of Australia, the Insurance Council of Australia and NSW Fair Trading, jointly developed the Code.

The main points of the amended code, which come into effect from 1 May, are:

- Mandated compliance of the code in NSW
- NSW Government to appoint neutral parties to conduct mediation and determinations of disputes
- Minimum training and experience requirements for estimators and assessors
- Mandatory reporting requirement of any unsafe repairs

“This is another example of this Government reducing red tape and will help consumers avoid getting caught in the middle of disputes between insurers and vehicle repairers,” said Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation, Matt Kean.

“This initiative will also help consumers by improving the dispute-resolution process, which means car owners will get their vehicles back sooner.”

The changes aim to help 4,200 repair and maintenance small businesses in NSW build better relationships with insurers.

The industry’s Code Administration Committee (CAC), comprising three members from the MTAA and three from ICA, will administer the Code.

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