



Annual Report 2013-2014





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MissionStatement

SIMI is the national representative body for the Motor Industry in Ireland and is dedicated to:

Driving a business environment that supports industry growth

Implementing consistently high standards among Members

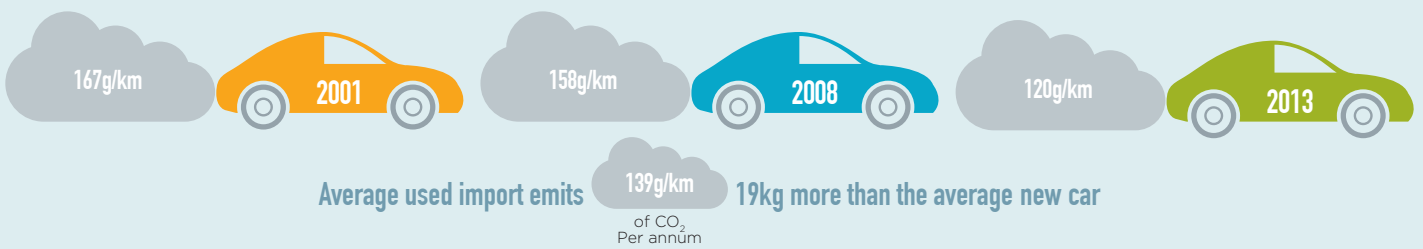
Delivering quality information and added-value services to Members

Communicating effectively with Members and being the voice of the Motor Industry

The Irish Motor Industry: a sustainable pillar of the Irish economy

- The statistics emphasise the importance of the Irish Motor Industry:
- to Employment in cities and towns across the country;
 - to the development of a sustainable Environment; and,
 - to the Exchequer through the generation of more than 13% of all taxes.

THE ENVIRONMENT CO₂ EMISSIONS

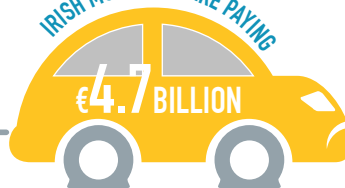


Every additional 10,000 New cars sold will result in a CO₂ saving of 6,700 tonnes per year

TAXATION & THE MOTOR INDUSTRY

MOTOR RELATED TAX ACCOUNTS FOR
27%
OF ALL INDIRECT TAXES

IRISH MOTORISTS ARE PAYING



PER YEAR IN TAXES

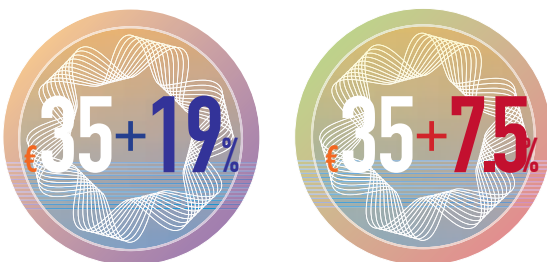
AVERAGE TAX TAKE ON NEW CAR



VAT INCREASE IN JANUARY 2012 AND VRT INCREASE IN JANUARY 2013

EACH OF THESE YEARS SAW A SIGNIFICANT DROP IN NEW CAR SALES
20% CUMULATIVELY

AVERAGE ROAD TAX INCREASED IN 2013 BY



NEW CONTINUOUS ROAD TAX REGIME SHOULD YIELD
€50 MILLION A YEAR FROM 2014 ONWARDS

Q1 2014 STATS



CONSUMER CONFIDENCE REACHED THE HIGHEST LEVEL IN ALMOST SEVEN YEARS IN FEBRUARY.

Q1 2013 v 2014 :	Positive numbers
Showroom enquiries	+37%
Orders	+62%
Total New Car tax take	(€410 million) +28%
New Car Sales	+26%
New Lights Commercial Sales	+42%
New HGV Sales	+42%



» Pictured at the inaugural Women@SIMI event: Emma Mitchell, Operations Manager, SIMI; Mary Kennedy MC for the event; Lynne Cantwell, Ireland's most capped women's rugby player; Nicola Byrne, CEO and Founder of Cloud 90, 11890 and Stenics Media; Toyota Brand Ambassador Katie Taylor, Irish, European, World and Olympic Boxing Champion; Rosemary Smith, Iconic Female Rally Driver; Aifric Campbell, Novelist and former MD, Morgan Stanley Trading Floor; and Teresa Noone, Communications Executive, SIMI.

Women@SIMI

The inaugural Women@SIMI event was hosted by the Society of the Irish Motor Industry in the Gibson Hotel Dublin on Thursday, May 15. The event was sponsored by Bank of Ireland Finance.

The event evolved from a concept developed and realised by the women within SIMI, who wanted to create an event where female business professionals from within the Motor Industry could meet together interact, network and share their experiences.

Having surveyed SIMI members, the feedback on the proposal was overwhelmingly positive, and there was a real sense that an event like this was long overdue. In an Industry that has been, traditionally, predominantly seen as male dominated, it can be difficult to meet other female professionals within similar roles. The main objective of Women@SIMI is to help act as a facilitator to bring female professionals from all sectors within

the Motor Industry together. The Women@SIMI event has provided a significant step in the formal recognition of the dynamic role played by women right across the country in driving our Industry forward. The event proved to be a great success with over 150 female professionals in attendance from a variety of counties and different sectors such as Heavy Goods Vehicles, Vehicle Body Repairers, Franchise Sales, Distributors etc.



SERIOUS CRASH REPAIR NEEDED?



Look for the new Certified Steel Standard (CSS) mark for assurance in vehicle body repair in Ireland.

Vehicle Body Repairers (VBRS)

2013 saw the roll out of the new Certified Steel Standard (CSS) to all vehicle body repairers who undertake structural repairs. From a standing start of zero the standard has been embraced by repairers and has grown to 45 CSS bodyshops achieving

the standard to date, with many more undergoing the process. The standard is well on its way to becoming adopted as the Industry best practice, with a nationwide network of CSS Repairers. 2014 will see the CSS standard promoted to the public, aiming to give

consumers peace of mind that their vehicles have been repaired to a high quality standard. Frank Byrnes Autobody Repairs Ltd in Galway was the winner of the Bodyshop of the Year at the Castrol-sponsored SIMI Motor Industry Awards.



» The winner of the Franchised Sales Operation of the Year 2014: Frank Keane Volkswagen. Pictured are Paul Smith, Head of Castrol in Ireland, Michael Greaney and Donal Geoghegan, Frank Keane Volkswagen, winners of Franchised Sales Operation of the Year; and Paul Linders, SIMI President.

SIMI Irish Motor Industry Awards



» The winner of the Franchised Aftersales Operation of the Year 2014: Holcroft Motors. Pictured are Paul Smith,; Derek Holcroft, Holcroft Motors, winners of Franchised Aftersales Operation of the Year; SIMI President Paul Linders; and SIMI Director General, Alan Nolan.



» The winner of the Bodyshop of the Year 2014: Frank Byrnes Autobody Repairs. Pictured are Paul Smith, Head of Castrol in Ireland; SIMI President Paul Linders; Frank Byrnes, Frank Byrnes Autobody Repairs, winner of Bodyshop of the Year; and SIMI Director General, Alan Nolan



» The winner of the Independent Retailer of the Year Award 2014: Naas Gearbox Centre, Co. Kildare. Pictured are: Paul Smith, Head of Castrol in Ireland; Wayne and Glen Harmon, Naas Gearbox Centre, winners of the Independent Retailer of the Year Award; SIMI President Paul Linders; and SIMI Director General, Alan Nolan.



» The winner of the Outstanding Achievement Award: Rosemary Smyth. Pictured are: Paul Smith, Head of Castrol in Ireland; Rosemary Smyth, winner of the Outstanding Achievement Award; SIMI President Paul Linders; and SIMI Director General, Alan Nolan.



» Adrian Yeates, MD, Volvo; Mike Finlay, SIMI Past President; and Keith Colton, Colton Motors Ltd.



» Simon Elliott, MD, Volkswagen Group and Joe Donnelly, MD, Crofton Motors.

SIMI Annual Dinner

More than 500 guests attended the SIMI Annual Dinner.



» Paul Smith, Country Manager Ireland, Castrol; Paul Flanagan, SIMI Past President; and Gordon Elder, Retail Manager, Castrol.



» RTE Sports Broadcaster Des Cahill with Carina Linders and Paul Linders, SIMI President.



» Des Cannon, MD, Gowan Distributors Ltd; Michel Dwan, MD, Gowan Group; Derek Dunne, ADP Dealer Services Ireland Ltd; and Adrian Cole, MD, Universal Honda Ltd.

Franchise Dealers Conference

Insights from Industry leaders, along with practical and innovative retailing advice were key aspects of the SIMI National Franchise Dealers Conference which focused on business management.



» SIMI Director General Alan Nolan addressing delegates at the Conference.



» Pictured at the Conference: Rowena Dooley, Honorary Treasurer, SIMI and Jonathan Meade, Chairman, Conference Organising Committee.



» Panellists in the discussion of 'The Future Direction of the Motor Industry': Simon Elliott, CEO, Volkswagen Group Ireland; David Shannon, Managing Director, Toyota Ireland; and Eddie Murphy, Managing Director, Henry Ford & Son Ltd.

VTN Conference

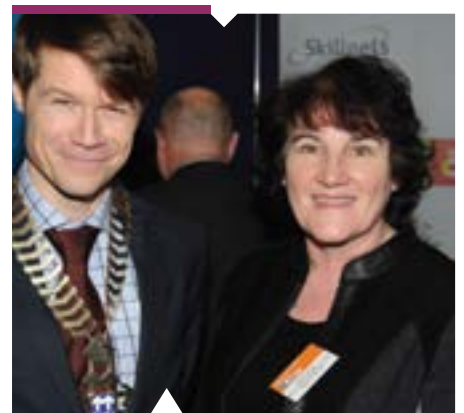
The Vehicle Testers Conference proved a lively and informative event with a strong turnout of RSA personnel who presented on the CoVIS system.



» Charlie Rogers addressing the Conference.



» Ada Mulvihill, RSA and Alan Nolan, Director General, SIMI.



» Paul Linders, President, SIMI and Eileen Molloy, Martin Molloy Commercials, Co Mayo.



» Pictured at the announcement of the initiative are: Rowena Dooley, Honorary Treasurer, SIMI; Margaret O'Shea, HR & Training Manager, SIMI; Mick McHugh, Programme Support Manager at Skillnets; Paul Linders, President, SIMI; Alan Lyons; Past President, SIMI; and Alan Nolan, Director General, SIMI.

SIMI Skillnet

SIMI, in conjunction with Skillnets, the enterprise-led support body dedicated to the promotion of enterprise training which is part-funding the initiative, is offering a series of courses aimed at increasing Motor Industry participation in training and providing workers and job seekers with improved access to motor industry training.



C.A.R.'s annual Christmas lunch

» C.A.R., the Contact After Retirement group, held its annual Christmas lunch in the National Yacht Club, Dun Laoghaire. Pictured at the CAR Christmas lunch were: Paul Linders, President, SIMI; Rosemary Smith and Larry Mooney, President, CAR.



NEC Meetings

» Picture shows the top table at one of the National Executive Council meetings held throughout the year. These meetings focus on issues vital to the future of the Motor Industry.

Financial Position

For the first time since 2008, the Society's Financial Statements indicate a surplus for the year ended December 31, 2013. The Society's balance sheet and reserves also continue to be strong. The Society is grateful for the time and effort committed by Honorary Treasurer, Rowena Dooley, to overseeing the financial position of the Society during the last year.



New Standard for Crash Repairers

» Vehicle Body Repairers from across Ireland were awarded with a new standard called CSS (Certified Steel Standard). CSS is a national accreditation mark which offers consumers assurance that structural vehicle body repairs have been carried out to the highest possible standard. Pictured at the CSS accreditation ceremony are: SIMI President Paul Linders and Joe McDonagh, Senior Vehicle Inspector, RSA.



Wexford Motor Show

» Over 13,500 people visited the Wexford Motor Show. Pictured are: Alan Nolan, Director General of SIMI; Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, Brendan Howlin; and Mayor of Wexford, George Lawlor.



New number plates

» The beginning of Paul Linders' term as SIMI President coincided with the launch of the 132 summer plate.

Management Board 2013-2014



Paul LINDERS
President



James BROOKS
Deputy President



Rowena DOOLEY
Honorary Treasurer



Alan LYONS
Immediate
Past President



Gavin HYDES
Chairman Franchise
Committee



Steve TORMEY
Chairman Importers/
Distributors Committee



Alan GREENE
Chairman
Wholesalers Committee



Chris FLEMING
Chairman, Independent
Retailers Committee



Liam DENNING
Chairman
VBRS Committee



Frank BERGIN
Petrol/Oil
Companies Section



James McCARTHY
Importers/Distributors
Committee



Alan NOLAN
Director
General

SIMI National Executive Council

HONORARY OFFICERS

President

Paul Linders

Linders of Chapelizod
Chapelizod, Dublin 20

Deputy President

James Brooks

Kia Motors Ireland
Unit A8, Calmount Park
Calmount Road
Dublin 12

Honorary Treasurer

Rowena Dooley

Dooley Motors
Sleaty Roundabout
Co Carlow

Immediate Past President SIMI

Alan Lyons

Auto Diesel Electric Ltd
Dartmouth House
Dartmouth Industrial Centre
Kylemore Road, Dublin 10

VEHICLE IMPORTERS'/ DISTRIBUTORS' SECTION

Chairman Vehicle Importers'/ Distributors' Committee

Steve Tormey

Toyota Ireland
Toyota House
Killeen Road
Dublin 12

Des Cannon

Gowan Distributors Ltd
Gowan House
Naas Road
Dublin 12

Eddie Murphy

Henry Ford & Sons Ltd
Elm Court
Boreenmanna Rd
Cork

James McCarthy

Nissan Ireland
Cedar House
Park West Business Park
Nangor Road
Dublin 12

Eamon Farrell

Motor Distributors Ltd
Naas Road
Dublin 12

Simon Elliott

Volkswagen Group Ireland Ltd
Block C, Liffey Valley Office
Campus
Liffey Valley, Dublin 22

Stephen Gleeson

Hyundai Cars Ireland
Hyundai House
John F Kennedy Drive
Naas Road, Dublin 12

John Ives/Michael Nugent

BMW Group Ireland
Swift Square
Santry Demesne
Santry, Dublin 9

Paddy McGee

Renault Ireland
Block 4, Dundrum Town Centre
Sandyford Road
Dundrum
Dublin 16

Adrian Yeates

Volvo Car Ireland Limited
Killakee House
The Square
Tallaght, Dublin 24

Adrian Cole

Universal Honda
302 Brownsbarn Drive
Citywest Business Campus
Naas Road, Dublin 24

WHOLESALE'S SECTION

Chairman Wholesalers' Committee

Alan Greene

Origo
Magna Drive
Magna Business Park
Citywest
Dublin 24

Louis O 'Hanlon

Past President SIMI
National Autoparts
Camac Close
Emmet Road
Inchicore
Dublin 8

Brian Fanning

Serfac Limited
Hilary House
Belgard Road
Dublin 24

Fergus Murphy

Hella Ireland Ltd
Unit 6.1, Woodford Business Park
Santry
Dublin 17

Paul Warren

Strongline Autoparts
Units B9-B11, South City Business
Centre
Whitestown Way
Tallaght
Dublin 24

Greg Howard

B & R Howard Ltd
Unit 2, Abbey Business Park
Baldoyle Industrial Estate
Dublin 13



RETAILERS' SECTION

Chairman Franchise Committee

Gavin Hydes

Joe Duffy Motor Group
Exit 5, M50
North Road
Dublin.

Chairman Independent Retailers' Committee

Chris Fleming

Chris Fleming Cars
Sussex Terrace
Upper Leeson St, Dublin 2

Carlow

Michael Howard

High Precision Motors Products Ltd
Dublin Road, Tullow
Co Carlow

Cavan

Cathal O'Reilly

Auto Tech Bodyshop Ltd
Unit 1, Poles Business Park
Poles, Co Cavan

Padraig Brady

Brady's Arva
Main St, Arva
Co Cavan

Cork

Gerard O'Sullivan

Ardfallen Motor Care
Ballycurreen Industrial Estate
Kinsale Road, Co Cork

Dublin

Jonathan Meade

Hutton & Meade,
Ballycoolin,
Blanchardstown,
Dublin 15

Michael Tynan

Michael Tynan Motors
Newlands Cross, Dublin 22

Tom Murphy

Murphy & Gunn Ltd
Rathgar Ave,
Rathgar
Dublin 6

Joe Clarke

Westbrook Motors
23/24 Parkgate Street
Dublin 8

Donegal

Laurence Harrigan

Highland Motors
Mountain Top
Letterkenny,
Co Donegal

Galway

James McCormack

Western Motors
Ballybrit, Galway

Tony Burke

Tony Burke Motors
Ballybrit, Co Galway

Kildare

Hugh Pitt

Sheehy Motors Naas
Newbridge Road
Naas,
Co Kildare

Kilkenny

Seamus Farrell

Railway Garage
Castlecomer
Co Kilkenny

Laois

Pat Keogh

Pat Keogh Car Sales
Ballybrittas
Portlaoise
Co Laois

Longford/Westmeath

Frank Kane

Longford Motors
Strokestown Road
Longford

Louth

Eamonn McCartan

Rice & Roddy
Newry Road, Dundalk
Co Louth

Meath

Marie Proudfoot

Nobber Motors
Nobber, Co Meath

Monaghan

John Bogue

John Bogue (Monaghan) Ltd
Dublin Road
Monaghan

Gerry Mullin

Gerry Mullin Car & Van Rental
North Road
Monaghan

Mayo

Michelle Rowley

Cassidy Motors
Sligo Road, Charlestown

Co Mayo

Kevin Connolly

Kevin Connolly
Car Sales
Dublin Road
Ballina, Co Mayo

Sligo

Kevin Egan

Kevin Egan Cars Ltd
Carroroe
Sligo

Tipperary

Gerry Pierser

Pierser Motors Ltd
Limerick Road

Tipperary Town

Brian Mordaunt Jnr

Brian Mordaunt & Sons Ltd
Davis Road
Clonmel
Co Tipperary

Wexford

Cormac O'Leary

O'Learys Garage
Dublin Road
Enniscorthy, Co Wexford

Mark Boggan

Hugh Boggan Mortors
Arklow Road
Gorey, Co Wexford

Retailers - Centre Chairmen

Carlow

Ray Flynn
Flynn's Garage
Dublin Road
Tullow, Co Carlow

Frank Hogan

Frank Hogan Ltd
Dublin Road
Limerick

Cork

Robert Cogan
Cogan's Garage Ltd
Cork Road
Carrigaline
Co Cork

Longford/Westmeath

Ed Tyrrell
Grange Motors
(Mullingar) Ltd
Lough Sheever
Corporate Park
Mullingar
Co Westmeath

Sean Browne

Newmarket Motor
Works
Main Street
Newmarket
Co Cork

Louth

Nicky Smith
Smiths of Drogheda
North Road
Drogheda
Co Louth

Bob Clarke

Bandon Motors
Clonakilty
Co Cork

Meath

John Malone
Malones Garage
Whistlemount
Kells Road
Navan
Co Meath

Donegal

Daniel McGinity
DMG Motors
Clan Road
Donegal Town
Co Donegal

Offaly

Keith Colton
Colton Motors
Clara Road
Tullamore
Co Offaly

Galway

Tony Barbour
Higgins Motorpark
Headford Road
Galway

Kerry

David Randles
Manor West Retail
Park
Tralee
Co Kerry

Tipperary

Eugene Ryan
Donal Ryan Motor
Group
Limerick Road
Nenagh
Co Tipperary

Kilkenny

Kevin Morrissey
Kevin Morrissey
Motors
Smithlands Retail
Park
Waterford Road
Co Kilkenny

Waterford

David Dickenson
Daewoo Waterford
t/a Chevrolet
Waterford
Waterford Business
Park
Cork Road
Waterford

Limerick

Noel Kearney
Singland Motors
Dublin Road
Castletroy
Co Limerick

Wicklow

Colin Watchorn
Newcastle
Garage Ltd
Newcastle
Co Wicklow

VEHICLE RECOVERY OPERATORS' SECTION

Chairman VRO Committee

Eamon Kelly
Kelly Towing
Sharavogue, Kilmacanogue
Co Wicklow

PETROL/OIL COMPANIES' SECTION

Frank Bergin
Topaz Energy
Topaz House, Beech Hill
Clonskeagh, Dublin 4

Des Duffy
Maxol Limited
3 Custom House Plaza
IFSC, Dublin 1

CO-OPTED MEMBERS

Paddy Murphy
Advance Tyre Co
Michael Fennell
IMI, Irish Region
Kevin Farrell
ITIA
Paul Redmond
CRCI
Michael Hegarty
VLA
Dermot Eagney
Chairman BEN

TRUSTEES

Eugene Cranley
Brian Murphy
Tom Noonan

VEHICLE BODY REPAIRERS' SECTION

Chairman VBRS Committee

Liam Denning
Dennings Cars
Bellavista, Spawell,
Tallaght
Dublin 24

Nigel Pratt

Pratt's Autobodyshop
Hacketstown Road
Bennekerry, Carlow

HGV DISTRIBUTORS' SECTION

Chairman HGV Distributors' Committee

Bruce Archer
DAF Distributors
Naas Road,
Clondalkin
Dublin 22

VEHICLE TESTERS' COMMITTEE

Chairman Vehicle Testers' Committee

Charlie Rogers
Rolor Commercials
Slieverue, Waterford



Paul LINDERS
President

President's Report

I am probably the first SIMI President in about six years who is able to look back on my year in Office with some satisfaction at the progress of activity in the Industry. And, probably, the first in that time who can confidently say that the Industry at the end of my period as President is in better shape with a better outlook than when I took up the role. I'm obviously not trying to take credit for the recovery that we've been experiencing or for the improved outlook for the future, but I am very happy to be able to experience it and feel good about it. I wouldn't wish to downplay the six years of deep recession that we've just experienced, during which many well-respected members closed their doors but there comes a time when you need to put aside the horrors of that period and focus forward. Those of us who are still in this business will by now have developed a survivor's mentality, and while many lessons learned over the past years will never be forgotten,

I think it is equally clear that the recession will only be over for us when we have decided that it's over. We work in a selling Industry, an emotionally-led Industry, and I truly believe that we need to carry the message very loudly in our own mindset, in our offices and our showrooms - the recession is now over! Although I am by nature an optimist, I'm wary of sounding too positive at this early stage in recovery and, yet, we have to be positive about the future because something unexpected has happened in the market this year; retail customers are back. As a result, all of the registration statistics are significantly better, even taking account of the special promotions and offers. The availability of retail finance, and particularly the new tailored finance options such as PCPs, has had a strong impact and with no VRT, VAT or Road Tax increases the market has been allowed to recover somewhat. I have to admit that I was

disappointed that the Government didn't go with our Swappage proposal in the Budget. It was a creative and very well-costed proposal that was a win for all sectors of the Industry, with the used car being prepared and resold, but the real winner would have been the Government with additional tax revenues of close to €100m. It would also have speeded up the recovery process and helped us return to more normal levels of business all the sooner. During the past year the Management Board that I chair as President has undertaken a Strategic Review of SIMI under a number of headings including Budget Strategy, Communications, Membership Services, Meetings & Events, Sector Structure and Funding & Resources. This was completed and adopted by the National Executive Council and we are already seeing some results in recent months. We have already seen the quality and frequency of communication with members improve significantly, particularly

with the weekly E-zines and we have also seen a more positive focus with the delivery of the first Women@SIMI event, which I am particularly delighted to see. As a Board we are also pleased to be able to report a return to an operating surplus, albeit a small one, for SIMI in 2013 and a stabilisation in membership numbers that had been seriously impacted by the loss of so many businesses in the sector. I am always struck by the extent of SIMI's reach across the Motor Industry and, at meetings, it is great to get feedback from the different sectors. We are all connected by the cycle of business and, usually, if one sector is doing badly, it will impact directly, or indirectly, on everyone else eventually. Trucks, Coaches, Cars, Vans, Hire-drives, Testing, Tyres, Exhausts, Engines, Windscreens, Auto-electrical, Servicing, Body Repairs, Vehicle Recovery, Fuel & Oil Wholesaling and Sales, Vehicle Distribution, Finance, Leasing, IT Systems & Software, Garage Equipment: I may have left some out but it is a very wide constituency for SIMI. We are a substantial Industry in this country and, this is a bugbear of mine, we do not get the recognition for our contribution to this state in both employment and tax contribution. The Motor Industry is one of the most important industries in Ireland. We're one of the biggest employers – still employing almost 40,000 people, even with the recession, and that

compares very favourably to other significant sectors such as the Pharmaceutical Industry at 24,000 or the combined Information Communications and Technology Sector with close to 70,000. In the case of the Motor Industry, these jobs are located in virtually every town in the country. And this is potentially career employment as, even in the years of recession, we have continued to invest in training young people, when many other sectors just stopped. We are, for instance, one of the biggest employers of apprentices with over 2,000 currently in training. Our environmental role is also often overlooked but without the technology of our Industry, the CO₂ reductions required in the Transport Sector would not be possible. Our commitment to the Environment goes beyond that and our Vehicle Distributor Members have recently embarked on a venture in relation to End of Life Vehicles. This is a key challenge for our Industry and for the country and we have already commenced the development of a new project to deliver what is required in consultation with the Department of the Environment. But perhaps the most important contribution of our sector to the State is our significant role in generating various motoring taxes on behalf of the Exchequer. The Motor Industry generates around a quarter of all Indirect Taxes, i.e., 13% of all Taxes collected by the State. Last year, that amounted to €4.7bn in taxes. As part of our Strategic Review we

have moved to produce four Quarterly Economic Reviews of the Motor Industry rather than a single Economist's Report solely for the Pre-Budget Submission. Despite our significant contribution as a sector there are some people, and we hear them too often quoted, who seem to 'love to hate' our Industry and we must counter such negatives by highlighting our contribution to this State. As well as providing a rolling view of the current economic health of our sector, our new Quarterly Economic Reviews will provide us with the opportunity to remind Government, media and the public at least four times per year about how significant an Industry we are and how much tax we generate. Over the past year, the SIMI Management Board has focused on ensuring that the Society continues to provide Members with the best possible service going forward and ensuring that the SIMI Logo is recognised as the symbol of high Standards and Ethics in the Motor Industry. I would like to thank my fellow Board Members, Members of the NEC and the various Committees who gave their time to support their Society and I would thank all our members for their continued support through their membership of SIMI. Our Industry can look forward to many new challenges but hopefully in a more positive business environment. 🇮🇪

Paul Linders
President, SIMI.



Alan NOLAN
Director General

Director General's Report

2013 was perhaps the second worst year for our Industry since the recession started and, yet, the twelve months since our last AGM have been the most positive since 2008. The first six months of 2013 were impacted by a whole list of negative factors: VRT and Road Tax increases implemented in January, on top of the previous year's VAT increase; Residential Property Tax; uncertainty; and, then, reductions in Public Sector pay under the long, drawn-out Haddington Road Agreement negotiations; and, of course, the Number 13 on the Registration Plate. While not quite the combination of negatives that hit us in mid-2008, it certainly produced a difficult, challenging year for the Industry and, by the time of the AGM, new cars were down 13% and LGVs were down 7% with HGVs at similar levels to 2012. But 2013 was the first year of the new dual-plate registration system and it proved to be just as effective as we had predicted in providing


the opportunity for a second selling period in a year which had a bad start. Under the single-plate system, total annual sales for 2013 would have ended down by the numbers indicated in mid-year. Instead, the 132 plate turned out to be hugely successful and by year-end cars were down 6.6% while HGVs were up 26.7% and LGVs up by 2.5%, the latter two statistics suggesting some improvement in the overall Economy. Despite a strong and well-argued campaign by the Industry to convince the Government to include a 'Swappage' Scheme in the Budget, this didn't happen. That said the Budget was neutral, even benign, compared to recent years, containing no significant tax increases and none in relation to motoring or the Motor Industry. From the final Quarter of last year, the Industry has been reporting stronger footfall and more consumer interest in buying for 2014. At the time of this year's AGM, new car sales

are up 26% (9.5% up on 2012) while HGVs (+44%) and LGVs (+40%) are even further ahead. With the 142 Registration still to come, the Industry is in a far more confident mood about the outlook for the future. The improving business environment and the increasing confidence of member companies was also highlighted in the SIMI Members' Survey carried out at the end of March as part of the Quarterly Economic Review of the Industry. The improvement reached across several sectors of the Industry; new vehicle sales, used vehicles, and Servicing and Parts business was reported as being better, both in terms of volume and profitability, compared to 2013. The picture in vehicle body repairs was, as members in the sector are very well aware, far less positive with as many members reporting a decrease in both volume and profitability as were reporting increases. However, the outlook for Members



in relation to sales prospects and forward orders, in relation to the availability of finance and in terms of confidence in business growth for the Industry and for their own businesses is very positive, perhaps for the first time in six years. During the past year, SIMI has delivered on the roll-out of CSS for the Body Repair sector and this has now been established as the Industry Standard. For the VTN Commercial Vehicle Tester Members, additional resources have been put in place to support them in achieving all of the standards required, in this crucial year, to obtain the ten-year licence from the RSA. The Franchise Dealer members have been active in Kilkenny, Drogheda, Wexford and Sligo with successful, low cost, local Motor Shows and the Conferences for Franchise Dealers and for Vehicle Testers were both very strongly attended and well received. The Independent Garages have been focusing on the different

requirements of vehicle sales and service members while their commitment to Autosure has continued. The SIMI Motor Industry Awards at the Annual Dinner in February were again closely contested and continue to highlight the commitment of Members to professional excellence. Even in a depressed market such as 2013, Vehicle Distributor Members had a strong focus on the 132 Plate change, on changes in commercial vehicle definitions and both the Car and Commercial Vehicle Distributors continue to focus on improving the data sources on registrations and sales. In looking to the future, SIMI undertook a strategy review and we are already rolling out some new ideas. Our first SIMI/Done Deal Quarterly Economic Review of the Industry, compiled by economist Jim Power was published recently and also our first Women@SIMI event has taken place. Since just after last year's

AGM, there has been a sense in the Industry that the worst is behind us but also a sense that recovery is so fragile, and at such an early stage, that we are almost afraid to speak confidently about it. The New Year for SIMI starts today as the old one is closed off and it is good to be able to state, without being anyway hesitant, that we look forward with confidence to an improved back-end to this year and to a better year in 2015. 

Alan Nolan
Director General, SIMI

Executives



Alan NOLAN
Director General



Brian COOKE
Deputy Director General



Tom CULLEN
Director



Con DALTON
Manager
Membership & Events



Margaret O'SHEA
HR & Training
Manager



Emma MITCHELL
Operations
Manager



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Maeve DOWDALL
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Manager



Yvonne SLINEY
Careers &
Training Executive



Suzanne SHERIDAN
Press
Officer



Seamus MCCORMACK
Membership
Services Executive



Lisa JOYCE
Statistics Officer



Orfhlaith NOLAN
Customer Services Officer



Jane O'SULLIVAN
Administration

Membership Services

The focus of Membership Services is:

- » to increase awareness and promotion of SIMI services among members;
- » to enhance engagement with our members and strengthen relationships; and,
- » to further develop the SIMI value proposition to members.

Services to members

- ▶ Free tax advice
- ▶ Free legal advice
- ▶ Free HR advice
- ▶ Representation at Labour Court
- ▶ Free access to beepbeep.ie vehicle statistics, regular & ad hoc stats for Members
- ▶ Magazine
- ▶ Newsletter
- ▶ Social media
- ▶ Media representation
- ▶ Free complaints service
- ▶ Order forms
- ▶ Updates on new legislation, data protection etc
- ▶ Garage insurance scheme
- ▶ Credit card scheme
- ▶ Face-to-face contact
- ▶ Local centre meetings
- ▶ Regional meetings
- ▶ Tailored industry courses
- ▶ Awards
- ▶ Annual dinner
- ▶ CSS
- ▶ Autosure
- ▶ Sectoral representation
- ▶ Representation at Government level
- ▶ Representation at European level
- ▶ Car History Check
- ▶ Golf
- ▶ BEN
- ▶ Networking opportunities
- ▶ Women@simi
- ▶ End of Life Vehicles
- ▶ Quarterly Economic Report

Membership by Numbers





Margaret O'SHEA,
HR & Training Manager, SIMI

Training

In July 2013, SIMI was delighted to announce that our application to Skillnets Ltd for funding under the Training Networks Programme (TNP) had been approved. Skillnets Ltd is an enterprise-led support body dedicated to the promotion and facilitation of enterprise training. It aims to increase participation in enterprise training by companies to improve competitiveness and provide improved access for workers and

job-seekers to skills' development. This funding is provided from the National Training Fund through the Department of Education and Skills and in practice provides subsidised sector specific training courses to members companies. The Training Networks Programme also provides for a number of places on Skillnets courses to be made available free of charge to eligible job seekers. The courses run under SIMI

Skillnets programme between July and December 2013 included: Marketing and Management Strategies for Owner Managers and Dealer Principals, Vehicle Sales Management, Aftersales Marketing and Management, Thermal Welding, Upskilling on Electrical Vehicle Technology. 

The SIMI Skillnet programme was supported by over 50 companies and over 120 trainees.



Orfhlaith NOLAN
Customer Services Officer

Consumer Complaints Service

The SIMI Consumer Complaints Service is a free service offered to members and their customers with the objective of resolving complaints without recourse to expensive and time-consuming legal proceedings. While the primary purpose of the service is to help Member companies resolve their customer complaints, it also represents for Members a comparative measurement of customer service.


In 2013, a total of 384 formal complaints were received by the Society which represented a 16% increase from 2012. Of the 384 complaints, 47% were outside the scope of the service. (15% related to new vehicle warranties and 24% were related to non-member garages or lapsed members). The amount of complaints formally registered also saw an 11% increase with a total of 242 compared to 219 in 2012. Of the total for 2013, 43% were resolved through the SIMI Standards Tribunal compared to 48% in 2012. The type of complaints registered

are summarised as follows:

- 58%** related to the condition of the vehicles sold (mechanical and electrical defects), repaired or serviced. This compares to 63% recorded in 2012.
- 30%** related to alleged misrepresentation of pricing, documentation, finance, etc. This compares to 32% recorded in 2012.
- 8%** related to alleged conditions regarding the previous history of vehicles. This compares to 2% recorded in 2012.
- 4%** related to refund of deposits which remained the same as 2012.

The SIMI Standards Tribunal is chaired by an independent Arbitrator and includes industry representatives and a leading Consumer advocate. The Tribunal noted with concern that a high percentage of complaints registered related to 'as is sales', and once again must stress the importance for members to understand that

there is no such thing as the sale of a vehicle to a private customer in which the customer does not have some legal rights. A company does not have to give a guarantee with a vehicle but a customer cannot sign away their legal rights to reasonable value for the money paid.

A low-value, poor quality vehicle can be sold provided it is not unsafe and if there are any necessary repairs, limitations or defects then these should be clearly explained, recorded and outlined on the SIMI Vehicle Sales Order Form. The Tribunal also observed that in many of the cases they dealt with a quick positive reaction or simple explanatory letter from the Garage would often have resolved the customer's complaint without it having to go to Tribunal. Such a straightforward approach can on many occasions save a lot of time and effort for those involved and, in addition, may result in Members retaining more satisfied customers. 

Priorities by Sector

VEHICLE MANUFACTURERS

The continuing low level of new vehicle sales is the primary concern of Vehicle Manufacturers. The Committee gave key input and support in drawing up the Society's proposals on Swappage for inclusion in the Budget Submission.

The lack of detailed statistics in areas such as fleet sales have been looked at and it is hoped to deliver some improved data following discussions with Revenue.

Following the outcome of the Department of the Environment's PRI Review, the ELV Sub-Committee, supported by all the Vehicle Manufacturers, has commenced the process of establishing an Industry Compliance Scheme for End of Life Vehicles, with the aim that, subject to Ministerial approval, it is operational from January 2015. The same Sub-Committee is currently overseeing the running of an ELV Shredder Trial to establish protocols for reporting targets and the establishment of a company to operate the Compliance Scheme.

INDEPENDENT SECTOR

For a number of years, the SIMI Independent Retailers' Committee has been structured as a single Committee, representing both sales and service. Following informal discussions with members from both sales and service businesses, the Independent Sector will continue as a single sector but with two subcommittees, one focused on sales and one on service. The two-tiered Road Tax system remained a big issue for the Independent Sector. The shadow economy continues to have a major impact on legitimate business. The Autosure programme was developed to differentiate the legitimate trade from 'cowboy operators' and those in the shadow economy; it was given the unanimous support of the sector.

WHOLESALE SECTOR

The Wholesaler sector has been impacted by the downturn and also the shadow economy, including illegitimate cross-border trade. The lack of enforcement on selling parts from 'white vans', ex-VAT, is a major issue and is having a serious impact on the sector. With an ageing car parc, it is apparent that less people are servicing and maintaining their vehicles. The Autosure and CSS programmes are of interest to the Wholesaler Sector as they help to raise standards and encourage customers to look after their vehicles and to go to the legitimate trade.

FRANCHISE RETAILERS

The Vehicle Franchise sector is slowly recovering from a hugely challenging six-year period. However, while the recovery is welcome, the sector is still fragile and faces significant challenges over the next few years. The renewed confidence in the economy has led to an upturn in consumer spending and that has been translated into new car sales. Based on this economic growth, together with a rise in the availability of finance, the new car sales market is set to grow by around 15% in 2014. The earlier Budget in October 2013 provided consumers with more certainty regarding disposable income and a number of new entrants in the retail finance market have helped support the improved demand for vehicles. There are also strong indications that aftermarket business in both service and parts has been improving in 2014. The new registration plate helped rescue a year that had started poorly in 2013 and the industry is now gearing up for the introduction of the 142 plate.

COMMERCIAL VEHICLE MARKET

The latest statistical analysis of the commercial vehicle market shows significant growth in each segment. Both light and heavy commercial vehicle sales are achieving growth rates (to date) exceeding 35% for 2014. The factors improving the market demand include economic growth, a necessity to replace the fleet and an improvement in availability of finance. The growth in Light Commercial Vehicles is a key indicator of growth within the economy. The increase in demand is very positive for the sector, even if the growth comes from a very low base. The key issues facing the sector over the coming year will include European Whole Vehicle Type Approval, derogation lists for Euro V vehicles, the introduction of Euro VI sales and post-registration modifications with the RSA.

PETROL/OIL SECTOR

Budget 2014 saw no increases in carbon taxes, fuel duties, or VAT, which came as a relief to the sector. Diesel laundering, which is costing the State tax revenues, hurting legitimate businesses and, at the same time, damaging both vehicles and the environment, continues to be a problem. The joint efforts being made by the Industry and Revenue have yielded some successes, and allied with the new reporting regime to Revenue since 2013, it is hoped that these successes can be built on and improved. The sector also feels strongly about the cost placed on the industry due to the absence of a deferral payment system for paying duties, a system which is enjoyed by other business sectors.

VEHICLE BODY REPAIRERS (VBRS)

2013 saw the roll-out of the new Certified Steel Standard (CSS) which is focused on vehicle body repairers who undertake structural repairs. From a starting point of no national standard, CSS has been embraced by Vehicle Body Repairers and 45 bodyshops have now passed the CSS Audit, and a number of others are, currently, undergoing the process. The standard has now been adopted as Industry best practice, with a nationwide network of CSS Repairers. 2014 will see the CSS standard promoted to the public, so the consumer will have peace of mind that their vehicle has been repaired to a high quality standard.

The collapse of Setanta Insurance Services, based in Malta, to which a receiver has been appointed, was a cause for concern with a number of members potentially impacted in relation to payments due for repair work already carried out. Frank Byrnes Autobody Repairs Ltd in Galway was the winner of the Bodyshop of the Year at the Castrol-sponsored SIMI Motor Industry Awards.

WINDSCREEN REPLACEMENT

The Windscreen Sector is currently focused on the importance of standards and their further development. The issue of training and the potential for the development of specific formal qualifications under the National Qualifications Framework are also key issues. The collapse of Setanta Insurance Services, based in Malta, to which a receiver has been appointed, was also a cause for concern in this sector with a number of members potentially impacted in relation to payments due for repair work already carried out.

COMMERCIAL VEHICLE TESTERS

2013 saw the implementation of the new CoVIS software system in all test centres. The applications for renewal of appointments for all vehicle testing staff and the applications by Test Centre Operators for the new ten-year licence have been progressed. The long process whereby VTN members achieve the benchmarks in premises, equipment and standards is nearing completion, with many members working hard to achieve the set deadlines. The annual VTN AGM was held in November 2013, and, yet again, there were over 150 delegates attending. The attendance unanimously supported the approach taken by the VTN Committee to date and a proposal to engage a full-time VTN Executive, funded by the sector was passed unanimously. Former Chairman Charlie Rogers has now taken up this role.



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AUDITORS

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