



2024 - 2025

**SIMI
ANNUAL
REPORT**



Annual Report

2024-2025

CONTENTS

4	SIMI Mission Statement
5	A Review of the Year
10	Membership Services
11	SIMI Management Board
12	SIMI NEC 2024-2025
15	Membership by Numbers
16	President's Report
18	Director General's Report
20	SIMI Executives
21	SIMI Training
22	Apprenticeships & Careers
24	Consumer Complaints Service
25	Human Resource Management Service
26	Priorities by Sector



Mission Statement

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

A Review of the Year

2024 MAY

MOTOR INDUSTRY APPOINTS NEW SIMI PRESIDENT JONATHAN MEADE

Jonathan Meade, Director of Hutton & Meade Dublin, was elected President of the Society of the Irish Motor Industry (SIMI) at the organisation's AGM, held in Killashee Hotel, Naas, Co. Kildare.



JUNE

WOMEN@SIMI EVENT CELEBRATES WOMEN ACROSS THE IRISH MOTOR INDUSTRY

SIMI hosted its 9th Annual Women@SIMI event, in partnership with Bank of Ireland, at the Alex Hotel Dublin. The event brought together more than 170 professional women representing diverse sectors to celebrate the extensive contributions made by women in the Motor Industry in Ireland. Mary Kennedy, Master of Ceremonies, welcomed esteemed guest speakers Sharon O'Buachalla, Managing Director of Ayvens and Aoife O'Grady, Head of Zero Emission Vehicles Ireland (ZEVI). Both speakers shared invaluable insights on leadership and innovation within the industry.



MINISTER O'DONOVAN LAUNCHES WORLDSKILLS IRELAND 2024

Pictured (2nd from left) Sabrina Forsyth, Careers & Data Manager, SIMI, with Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science Patrick O'Donovan, and WorldSkills at the launch of WorldSkills Ireland 2024. WorldSkills Ireland showcases the ever-growing range of skills careers and Apprenticeships in Ireland and inspires today's youth to investigate the multiple career pathways available now through Further Education, Apprenticeships and Higher Education.



JULY

New Vehicle Safety Technologies From July 2024

Learn more at [RSA.ie](https://www.rsa.ie)

The New General Safety Regulation (EU) 2019/2144 safety features apply from 7 July 2024 for newly manufactured vehicles

GENERAL SAFETY REGULATIONS (GSR 2)

The new General Safety Regulations (GSR 2) apply to new vehicles, first registered on or after the 7th of July 2024. The aim of the new regulations is to significantly reduce deaths and serious injuries on EU roads by introducing a range of mandatory advanced vehicle safety systems.

SIMI SUPPORTS APPRENTICE TECHNICIAN COMPETING IN WORLDSKILLS INTERNATIONAL

Sabrina Forsyth of SIMI with Jamie Connick, Apprentice Technician and Michael O'Connor, Assistant Lecturer TU Dublin - Automotive Technology and Management, WorldSkills Ireland Expert. Jamie, the 2023 WorldSkills Ireland Automotive Technology Winner, was selected to represent Team Ireland at the WorldSkills International event, held in Lyon, France.



AUGUST

SIMI SKILLNET AUTOMOTIVE RETAIL MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

2024 graduates of the SIMI Skillnet Automotive Retail Management Programme presented with their QQI Certificates by SIMI President Jonathan Meade, also present Brian Cooke Director General SIMI and Ami Fox Training Manager SIMI.



SEPTEMBER



WORLDSKILLS IRELAND

WorldSkills Ireland 2024 took place in September, drawing an incredible turnout of over 30,000 students, teachers, and parents across three dynamic days. The event showcased exceptional talent, innovation, and opportunities for the future workforce, providing a platform for young people to explore exciting career paths. SIMI was proud to support WorldSkills Ireland for the fourth consecutive year. As our industry continues to evolve with cutting-edge technology, events like WorldSkills Ireland play a vital role in showcasing the opportunities and innovations shaping our sector. They provide students, educators, and industry leaders with a unique insight into the exciting advancements and fantastic career opportunities available to the next generation in our industry.

Pictured (L-R) the SIMI Team at WorldSkills, Megan Hannan, Ami Fox, Sabrina Forsyth and Sophie Mulligan.

WORLDSKILLS LYON

SIMI was proud to support Jamie Connick, one of 17 outstanding apprentices selected to represent Ireland at the WorldSkills International Competition held in Lyon, France, September 2024. Jamie competed in the Automotive Technology category, demonstrating the high-level skills and professionalism nurtured through Ireland's apprenticeship programmes. His participation at this global event highlights not only individual excellence but also the strength of the Irish motor sector in developing world-class talent.



Jamie Connick

Budget 2025

Charge Point

1. The SEAI Grant needs to be reinstated to €5,000 until BEV sales return to 2023 levels.
2. The €10,000 Open Market Value reduction and other Benefit-In-Kind thresholds should be extended until 2027.
3. Committing to no increases in VRT or Road Tax in Budget 2025.
4. Invest in an improved and reliable EV charging infrastructure, to stay ahead of demand.

BUDGET 2025 CAMPAIGN

In September, SIMI hosted Pre-Budget Briefings in Buswells Hotel Dublin, with strong attendance from Ministers, Senators, TDs, and advisors. Discussions emphasised the challenges facing our Industry and the decisive actions Government must take to regain the lost momentum; increase investment in EVs, and don't increase taxes on other vehicles if we want to support consumers in trading up to a newer lower lower-emitting vehicle. The Budget campaign and lobbying efforts are a year-round process, as we continue to ensure that our Industry speaks as one strong united voice. Member support is invaluable as it allows us to build relationships and gain access to politicians from different parties in every constituency in the country.

OCTOBER



SOCIETY OF THE IRISH MOTOR INDUSTRY REACTION TO BUDGET 2025

Brian Cooke Director General SIMI "Budget 2025 includes a number of incentives in relation to Electric Vehicles; a new Benefit-In-Kind (BIK) concession on home charger installations; the change of the definition for light commercial electric vehicles that will allow more vans avail of the lower €200 VRT rate; the previously announced extension of the SEAI purchase grants; and the extension of the €10,000 threshold on BIK for cars for 2025 (€45,000 tax free BIK on EVs). While we welcome these measures, the Motor Industry is disappointed that the BIK relief has not been extended beyond 2025, to encourage more company car purchasers to choose an EV, which in turn would accelerate the creation of an active used EV market."

NOVEMBER

SIMI VTN CONFERENCE/AGM

The SIMI/VTN Annual Conference took place on Thursday 28th November 2024, in the Killashee Hotel Co. Kildare. Brian Cooke, Director General, SIMI, opened the Conference, welcoming guest speakers, the Road Safety Authority (RSA), economist Jim Power, Tony O'Brien from Elite Risk Solutions, and Matthew Austin, partner at Hayes Solicitors, who shared their valuable insights with attendees. Test Sector members had travelled from all over the country to attend this popular event.



(L-R) Michael Nolan, VTN Committee Chairman, Nolan Motors; Jim Power, Jim Power Economics; Yvonne Sliney, VTN & Accounts Manager SIMI; Tony O'Brien, Elite Risk; Charlie Rogers Director Commercial Vehicle Sector & VTN SIMI, Brian Cooke, Director General SIMI.

DECEMBER



SIMI SKILLNET CYBER SECURITY AWARENESS WEBINAR

SIMI Skillnet hosted a free Cyber Security Awareness Webinar, looking at key areas of your business that may be vulnerable to a cyber attack and ways to help prevent this from happening.

2025
JANUARY

START OF THE NEW REGISTRATION PERIOD



MISINFORMATION, MYTHS, AND CONFUSION

Misinformation, myths, and confusion have been circulating due to a lack of understanding of electric vehicles and battery technologies. SIMI's EV Guide 'Everything you always wanted to know about Electric Vehicles' assists readers in understanding more about Battery Electric Vehicles, especially if you are thinking about buying a new or second-hand Electric Vehicle. The guide addresses commonly asked questions, supports, general information, and terminology about electric vehicles.

FEBRUARY

NEW CAR REGISTRATIONS: +7% JANUARY 2025; BATTERY ELECTRIC +20%

SIMI released our official 251 new vehicle registration statistics for January, showcasing a promising start to the year for the Motor Industry.

SIMI AWARDS CELEBRATE EXCELLENCE IN IRISH MOTOR INDUSTRY

The Society hosted the SIMI Annual Dinner and Irish Motor Industry Awards in partnership with Bank of Ireland at the Clayton Hotel in Dublin. Simon Delaney, master of ceremonies, revealed the winners in front of over 700 senior figures in the Motor Industry, with awards presented by Brian Cooke, SIMI Director General, and Derek Kavanagh, Head of Motor Finance, Bank of Ireland. SIMI President Jonathan Meade expressed his pride in the Motor Industry, which remains resilient, forward-thinking, and committed to serving customers, communities, and the country.



NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP WEEK

This week shines a spotlight on our talented industry apprentices. National Apprenticeship Week showcases the dedication, skills, and passion that are driving the future of the motor industry.

MARCH



(L-R) Gillian Fanning, Serfac Limited, Anne Marie Murtagh, MF Autos, Mark Noble, Event MC, Jonathan Meade, SIMI President, Brian Cooke, Director General SIMI, Quentin LeHetet, GiPA UK, Matt Cleevely Cleevely Group, Álvaro de la Cruz, FIGIEFA, Nadia Adan, Ashford Motors, Jim Power, Jim Power Economics.

INDEPENDENT AFTERMARKET CONFERENCE- SHAPING THE FUTURE OF THE INDUSTRY

The Society’s Independent Retailer Committee and Wholesaler Committee held the Independent Aftermarket Conference at Dublin’s Iveagh Gardens Hotel. The conference, hosted by broadcaster Mark Noble and designed for professionals in the Independent Sector, VBRS, Motor Factors, and Vehicle Parts Distribution industries. The event offered a platform for guest speakers, engaging panel discussions, valuable insights, and networking opportunities.

MOTOR INDUSTRY APPRENTICESHIPS

SIMI continues its active engagement in promoting motor industry apprenticeships by participating in key national and regional events. SIMI was an exhibitor at the Apprenticeship Expo 2025. This event, organised by the County Meath Chamber in collaboration with LMETB, brought together over 70 exhibitors from various sectors, providing attendees with opportunities to connect with employers, training providers, and current apprentices. SIMI also took part in the Dublin Northwest Partnership Fair 2025.

APRIL

SIMI SKILLNET AUTO-ENROLMENT PENSIONS WEBINAR

Skillnet presented an exclusive free webinar for members on the Pensions Auto-Enrolment Scheme, which will commence 1st January 2026. The session hosted by Willis Towers Watson (WTW) provided key insights into the scheme’s impact on employers and employees, helping members to prepare for the upcoming changes



#DRIVE SAFE CAMPAIGN

SIMI #DriveSafe campaign dedicated to raising road safety awareness across Ireland for April. With increases in road fatalities, businesses can leverage their social media platforms to help spread crucial road safety messages within our communities. Members helped to amplify these messages by posting campaign messages to their social media platforms, or by directly re-sharing SIMI’s posts.



Membership Services



SIMI provides a wide variety of business services and cost-saving schemes to Members.

Services to Members:

- Information and advice on VAT, VRT and other Motor Industry taxation issues
- Advice on all issues in relation to staff management, recruitment, disciplinary procedures, employee handbooks, safety statements
- Legal advice on issues in relation to the handling and resolving of customer complaints
- Vehicle invoice order form books for retail and trade sales
- Vehicle statistical service
- Regular communication online, by email, weekly e-news, bi-monthly magazine and through our website and our members' portal on issues affecting the Motor Industry
- National and Regional seminars/conferences, which give members the opportunity to network with other Industry professionals
- Motor Industry specific training courses
- Use and promotion of the SIMI logo to enhance the professionalism of the industry

Cost Savings:

- Motor Trade Group Insurance Scheme.
- BeepBeep.ie which also includes the Car History Check programme

SIMI Representing You:

- Access to Government through the Society to voice the opinions of the Industry
- Representing the different sectoral interests through dedicated committees
- Lobbying on behalf of the Industry to create a better economic and legislative climate for Member businesses

SIMI Management Board



JONATHAN MEADE
PRESIDENT



MARK WOODS
DEPUTY-PRESIDENT



RONAN FLOOD
HONORARY TREASURER



PADDY MAGEE
IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT



GILLIAN FANNING
CHAIR
WHOLESALERS COMMITTEE



SÉAMUS MORGAN
CHAIR
VEHICLE DISTRIBUTOR/
IMPORTER COMMITTEE



ENDA CONEFREY
FRANCHISE COMMITTEE



DAVID RANGLES
FRANCHISE COMMITTEE



ANNE MARIE MURTAGH
CHAIR
INDEPENDENT RETAILERS' COMMITTEE



LIAM DENNING
CHAIR
VBRS COMMITTEE



BRIAN COOKE
DIRECTOR GENERAL

SIMI National Executive Council 2024-2025

HONORARY OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Jonathan Meade

DEPUTY PRESIDENT

Mark Woods

HONORARY TREASURER

Ronan Flood

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT SIMI

Paddy Magee

VEHICLE IMPORTERS'/DISTRIBUTORS' SECTION

CHAIR VEHICLE IMPORTERS'/ DISTRIBUTORS' COMMITTEE

Pierre Boutin

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

Steve Tormey

Toyota Ireland
Toyota House,
Killeen Road, Dublin 12

Helen Westby

BMW Group Ireland
Swift Square
Santry Demesne, Dublin 9

Eddie Kavanagh

OHM Group
Baldonnell Business Park, Dublin 22

Stephen Gleeson

Hyundai Cars Ireland
Hyundai House
John F Kennedy Drive
Naas Rd
Dublin 12

James McCarthy/ Seamus Morgan

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

Alan Cowley

Volvo Cars Ireland
Killakee House
The Square
Tallaght
Dublin 24

Siobhan Shaw

Motor Distributors Ltd
Naas Road
Dublin 12

Des Cannon

Gowan Distributors
2007 Orchard Avenue
Citywest Business Campus
D24RW52

John Manning

Ford Ireland
Henry Ford & Son Ltd.
Elm Court, Boreenmanna Road, Cork
T12HHW2

Kieran Campbell

Polestar
37 Heather Road,
Sandyford Business Park,
Dublin 18 EDX4,

Michael McBarron

Suzuki Ireland
57 Broomhill dr
Tallaght Ind Est 24
Co. Dublin

WHOLESALEERS' SECTION

CHAIR WHOLESALEERS' COMMITTEE

Gillian Fanning

Serfac Limited
Hilary House
Belgard Road,
Dublin 24

Brian Dennis

Qualvecom
Unit A1
Knockmitten
Western Industrial Estate
Dublin 12

Sean Holland

Finol Oils Ltd
3 Stannaway Drive
Crumlin, Dublin 12

Niall Murray

Tractamotors Ltd
Dublin Road
Cavan, Co Cavan

Tom Dennigan

Continental Tyre Group Ltd
Clyde Lodge,
15 Clyde Road, Dublin 4

John O'Hanlon

National Autoparts
Camac Close
Emmet Road
Inchicore
Dublin 8

RETAILERS' SECTION

CHAIR FRANCHISE COMMITTEE

Enda Conefrey

Braday's Dublin Ltd
Old Navan Road
Castleknock, Dublin 15

CHAIR INDEPENDENT SALES AND SERVICE COMMITTEE

Annemarie Murtagh

MF Auto Services
Deansgrange Road
Blackrock, Co Dublin

CARLOW

Rowena Dooley

Dooley Motors Ltd
Sleaty Roundabout, Carlow

CAVAN

Cathal O'Reilly

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

Tómas Brady

Brady's Cavan
Dublin Road
Cavan, Co Cavan

Padraig Brady

Brady's Arva Ltd
Arva, Co Cavan

CORK

Gerard O'Sullivan

Ardfallen Motor Care
Ballycurreen Industrial Estate
Kinsale Road, Co Cork

James Foley

Cavanagh's of Charleville
Limerick Road
Charleville, Co Cork

Bob Clarke

Bandon Motors
Clonakilty Road
Bandon
Co Cork

Robert Cogan

Cogans Garage Ltd
Cork Road
Carrigaline, Co Cork

DUBLIN

Ken Carey

Carroll & Kinsella Motors Ltd
Rock Road
Blackrock, Co. Dublin

Gerry Caffrey

Gerry Caffrey Motors Ltd
106/112 Terenure Rd. North
Dublin 6W

Michael Grant

Michael Grant Renault
153-155 Harold's Cross Rd, Rathmines,
Dublin 6W, Co. Dublin, D6W HP44

Andrew Dempsey

Naas Road Autos
Frank Fahy Centre
Nass Road, Dublin 12

Loughlin Murphy

Toyota Sandyford
40 Heather Road
Sandyford Industrial Estate
Dublin 18

Daniel Sheerin
Kingstown Motors
Lower Kilmacud Road
Stillorgan, Co Dublin

DONEGAL

Lawrence Harrigan
Highland Motors
Mountain Top
Letterkenny, Co Donegal

GALWAY

James McCormack
Western Motors
Ballybrit, Galway

Tony Burke

Tony Burke Motors
Ballybrit, Galway

KERRY

David Randles
Randles Bros
Manor West Retail Park
Tralee, Kerry
V92 HH26

KILDARE

Hugh Pitt
Sheehy Motors Naas
Newbridge Road
Naas
Co Kildare

LAOIS/OFFALY

Clive Adams
John Adams Car Sales
Ballymacken
Portlaoise, Co Laois

Keith Colton

Colton Motors Ltd.
Clara Road
Tullamore, Co Offaly

Richard Downey

Downeys Ltd
Dublin Road
Portlaoise
Co Laois

LIMERICK

Noel Kearney
Singland Motors
Dublin Road
Castletroy
Co Limerick

Frank Hogan

Frank Hogan Ltd
Dublin Road
Co Limerick

LONGFORD/WESTMEATH

Frank Kane
Longford Motors
Strokestown Road, Longford

Ed Tyrell

Grange Motors
Lough Sheever Corporate Park
Mullingar
Co Westmeath

LOUTH

Noel Stewart/Donal Waters
Blackstone Motors
New Grange Business Park
Donore Road
Drogheda, Co Louth

Nicky Smith

Smiths of Drogheda
North Road
Drogheda, Co Louth

MAYO

Kevin Connolly
Kevin Connolly Car Sales
Dublin Road
Ballina, Co Mayo

MEATH

Noel Doran
Robertstown Motors
Ashbourne, Co. Meath

Marie Proudfoot

Nobber Motors
Nobber, Co Meath Monaghan

Peter Marron

Marron's Garage
Monaghan Road
Castleblaney, Co Monaghan

ROSCOMMON

Tommie Rafferty
Blueprint Autos
Golf Links Road
Roscommon, Co Roscommon

SLIGO

Kevin Egan
Kevin Egan Cars Ltd
Carrroe, Sligo

TIPPERARY

Gerry Pierse
Pierse Motors Ltd
Limerick Road,
Tipperary Town

Eugene Ryan

Donal Ryan Motor Group
Limerick Road
Nenagh, Co Tipperary

WEXFORD

Mark Boggan
Hugh Boggan Mortors
Carriglaw
Newtown Road, Co Wexford

VEHICLE BODY REPAIRERS' SECTION

CHAIRPERSON VBRS COMMITTEE

Liam Denning

Denning's Cars
Bellavista
Spawell
Tallaght, Dublin 24

Jamie Lawlor

Jamie Lawlor Crash
Repairs Ltd
Unit 3A
Ard Gaoithe Business Park
Clonmel
Co Tipperary

William Whitty

Whitty Autobody Centre
Ballinaboola
Newbawn
Co.Wexford
Y35 P265

VEHICLE RECOVERY OPERATORS' SECTION

Derek Beahan

Derek Beahan Ltd
Rear 90-98 Emmet Road
Inchicore
Dublin 8

Jim O' Sullivan

J&S Motor Repair/ Meath Recovery
Navan
Co. Meath

VEHICLE TESTERS SECTION

CHAIRPERSON VEHICLE TESTERS' COMMITTEE

Michael Nolan,

M & N Nolan Motor Co. Ltd, Newtownforbes, Co. Longford

CO-OPTED MEMBERS

Sue O'Neill, ITIA

Michael Fennell, IMI, Irish Region

Brian Merrigan, IFHA

Peter Boland, CRCI
Dave Kavanagh, VLA1

TRUSTEES

Gaetano Forte

Tom Murphy
Paraic Mooney

PETROL/OIL COMPANIES' SECTION

Jonathan Diver

Circle K Ireland
Beech Hill Office Campus
Clonskeagh,
Dublin 4

HGV DISTRIBUTORS' COMMITTEE

CHAIRPERSON HGV DISTRIBUTORS' COMMITTEE

Bruce Archer

DAF Distributors, Baldonnell Business Park, Dublin 22

SPECIALIST TRADE REPAIRERS' SECTION

Sean Kirwan

Keyvision Security Ltd (T/A Keyfast)
Keltar, Ballynoe
Whitescross, Co Cork

RETAILERS - CENTRE CHAIRPERSONS**CORK**

Bob Clarke
Bandon Motors
Clonakilty
Co Cork

KERRY

David Randles
Manor West Reail Park
Tralee
Co Kerry

LIMERICK

Noel Kearney
Singland Motors
Dublin Road
Castletroy
Co Limerick

Frank Hogan
Frank Hogan Ltd
Dublin Road
Limerick

LOUTH

Nicky Smith
Smiths of Drogheda
North Road
Drogheda
Co Louth

WESTMEATH/LONGFORD

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

MEATH

John Malone
Malones Garage
Whistlemount
Kells Road
Navan
Co Meath

OFFALY

Keith Colton
Colton Motors
Clara Road
Tullamore
Co Offaly

TIPPERARY

Eugene Ryan
Donal Ryan Motor Group
Limerick Road
Nenagh
Co Tipperary

Membership by Numbers in 2025



TOTAL: 1,137

**Please note the membership numbers do not reflect that a company could operate in more than one sector.*

President's Report



JONATHON MEADE
PRESIDENT

Over the years, through active participation at the Committee and Management Board levels, and now as President, I have come to appreciate the true value of our membership.

The strength of our Industry lies in our unity. SIMI represents one strong Industry voice at National and European levels, advocating for policies that support the development of a sustainable and innovative automotive sector in Ireland. By forging key partnerships, making strategic decisions, and supporting members in their day-to-day business, SIMI plays a pivotal role in shaping the future of our industry.

With such a diverse industry, we have learned that collaboration is key. Our Society's collective voice ensures that policymakers understand our sector's vital contributions to the Irish economy, employment, and transport infrastructure. We must never underestimate the power of this unity and the trust that we have built as an industry. I encourage all members to stay actively engaged, contribute their expertise, and help strengthen our Society's influence.

Our Industry continues to face significant challenges — from technological changes and electromobility to geopolitical instability, inflation, increases in the cost of doing business, and a cost-of-living crisis. Yet, we continue to remain resilient, forward-thinking, and committed to serving our customers, communities, and our country.

The new car market has started positively this year, although commercial vehicle sales have been mixed. Despite some loss in momentum last year, electric vehicle sales have made significant progress, with January recording the highest monthly total of EVs sold to date. The EV market

share is up on last year, but still below the 2023 share.

Although battery technology cars now account for over half of the market, thanks to the efforts of manufacturers and retailers. The EV market is heavily dependent on private sales, benefiting from SEAI grants, highlighting the need for continued Government incentives to help stimulate the market. While the trajectory of EV sales is promising so far this year, we must view it with cautious optimism.

In the short-to-medium term EVs alone won't achieve our emissions targets – a balanced approach, incorporating a mix of vehicle technologies, is essential. Consumers will choose a car that best suits their driving needs, which for many is the combustion engine. However, with a greater range of electric and hybrid vehicles coming to market, these are now a more compelling option.

With a new Government now in place, they have a real opportunity to take decisive actions to reinvigorate EV sales by maintaining and expanding incentives. At the same time, if we want to support all consumers in trading up to a newer lower lower-emitting vehicle, they must not increase taxes.

Government policy must support the EV transition, incentivising both private and company car buyers by reinstating supports and extending consumer incentives and Benefit-In-Kind relief. With the incentives in place over the last few years, we are on track to achieve the 2025 interim target of 175,000 electric cars.

This proves incentives do work and highlights the importance of maintaining supports for businesses and consumers to encourage EV

sales. Of equal importance is the investment in charging infrastructure. We need a robust, fast, and reliable charging network to ensure a seamless EV experience.

Our Industry remains committed to decarbonisation, with an ever-expanding range of EV models available in 2025 at various price points. The EV market is still relatively new, and we need to maximize EV sales now to support the creation of a vibrant used EV market. We urge the Government to maintain supports until the market matures.

As our Industry evolves, so does the demand for skilled professionals. Upskilling technicians in EV technology, supported by Skillnet Ireland, is a priority. SIMI remains dedicated to promoting apprenticeships and career development through initiatives such as Worldskills Ireland and school outreach programs. We look forward to continued collaboration with SOLAS and the National Apprentice Office to support their work in further strengthening the Irish apprenticeship system and attracting new talent to our sector.

We all share a responsibility to promote road safety, especially in light of the recent increases in road fatalities. Vehicles today are equipped with advanced safety features, but technology alone is not enough; a behavioural change is required. With over three million drivers in Ireland, social media is a powerful tool to connect directly with motorists. SIMI #DriveSafe campaign for April is dedicated to raising road safety awareness across Ireland, promoting responsible driving, encouraging good behaviour, and sharing valuable safety tips. Our members can leverage their social media platforms to help spread crucial road safety

messages within our communities. Together, we can help make a real difference in advocating for safer roads for everyone.

As we move forward into 2025, let us remain united and determined. We have an incredible industry filled with passionate people who never give up. Together, we will continue to drive positive change, promote road safety, and deliver exceptional service to our customers.

Finally, I extend my sincere thanks to the SIMI Management Board and NEC for their unwavering support and assistance throughout my term. I would also like to acknowledge the dedication and hard work of the SIMI team for their consistent and invaluable contributions to the organisation and its members.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Jonathan Meade'.

Jonathan Meade
SIMI President

Director General's Report



BRIAN COOKE
DIRECTOR GENERAL

Looking back over the twelve months since the last AGM, it was yet another year of challenges for both the Irish economy and the Irish Motor Industry. Global events such as changes in Governments, the ongoing conflicts in Gaza and Ukraine, and now between India and Pakistan, tariffs on electric vehicles imposed by the EU on China, tariffs between the US and seemingly everybody, have all contributed to a highly volatile political and business environment. In the EU, with the election of a new Parliament, we are now seeing a gradual shift towards an Industrial policy, impacting the Climate Change agenda, and the Motor Industry. In the US, the election of President Trump sees the emphasis being placed on energy production, "drill baby drill". We have had our own change of Government, but with the continuity of the two main parties, any changes to policies impacting on our members will not be as dramatic. Economically, interest rates are starting to fall, and while inflation is not the issue it was over the last two years, the persistent cost-of-living crisis has caused prices to remain at a very high level, putting pressure on consumers, businesses, as well as on wage expectations.

With the ongoing economic and political dynamics, 2024 proved to be a difficult year for the Irish Motor Industry. The new car market in 2024 was in line with the previous year. New car registrations finished at 121,195 units, slightly behind 2023 (122,400 units). In contrast, Commercial Vehicles sales, underlining the growth in employment and activity across the Irish economy in 2024, were more positive, with Light Commercial Vehicle (LCVs) registrations finishing 7% ahead of last year and Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) up 8% on 2023. The key feature of the 2024 new car market was the decline in Electric Vehicle sales, a reduction of 24% compared to 2023. Several factors contributed to this decline in EV sales; reductions in Government supports, and lack of clarity over the future of incentives, including Benefit In Kind relief; the move from the early adopter customer to the early majority; misinformation surrounding electric vehicles; all played a part in this downturn.

We do however appear to be turning the corner in Electric Vehicle Sales.

EV sales for the first four months of 2025 are up 25% on the same period last year; this does come with a health warning, as the EV market share is still below 2023 levels. It is important to note that the EV market remains heavily reliant on current incentives, which the Government may reduce or even remove in the short term. The underlying overall new car market appears to be 125,000 per year, 20% below pre-COVID levels, a trend which is, similar to other new car markets. As a result, Ireland's national fleet is aging, with the average age of a car nearly 10 years, making emissions reductions harder to achieve. Also of concern is the commercial vehicle market, which had been robust over the last few years, is now experiencing a downturn, with a 20% reduction in registrations so far this year, perhaps underlining the economic uncertainty impacting the market.

Budget 2025 was broadly neutral for the Motor Industry with an extension of SEAI grants and the BIK thresholds for 2025. There were no VRT increases. A change to the definition for light commercial electric vehicles enabled more electric vans to avail of the lower €200 VRT rate. While the Industry welcomed the Budget adjustments, there needs to be greater longevity and stability for EV supports. In particular, the absence of an extension for BIK relief beyond 2025 is disappointing, as this inhibits the encouragement of more company car purchasers to choose an EV. Extending this relief would, in turn, accelerate the creation of an active used EV market, leading to greater EV adoption.

The success of SIMI's Budget campaign was a result of several key elements. The high quality of both the TSG and Budget Submissions, our year-round lobbying activity, our strategic PR and media approach, all played a pivotal role in convincing both officials and politicians of the merits of the Industry's position, as well as emphasising the SIMI's view that a joint approach is the only way Ireland can optimise reductions from transport emissions. As always the unwavering support of our members, particularly at a local level, proved invaluable. I would like to highlight the PR support during the year from the Vehicle Distributors in

dispelling some of the harmful myths that appeared around the negatives of Electric Vehicles. This input proved invaluable as our Budget campaign progressed. Budget 2026 is in our sights, a detailed TSG Submission has already been submitted to the Department of Finance and there is ongoing engagement with both Government politicians and officials, ensuring our Industry's goals are robustly communicated.

The attraction and retention of talented people into the Irish Motor Industry continues to be a key focus for SIMI. The Management Board over the last year committed more resources to careers, and this has led to an increased presence at Careers Fairs, in schools, and on social media. Motor Apprenticeships increased by 20% in 2024, although we are anticipating some fall back this year. In addition, we have succeeded in removing motor technicians from the Ineligible Occupations List, which has allowed members access to suitably qualified technicians from outside the EU. WorldSkills 2024 proved a real highlight for SIMI. Again, we were proud to be a headline sponsor. The presence of the Vehicle Manufacturer members and the SIMI Independent Retailers' and VBRS Committees further amplified the Motor Industry's impact at the event. This platform provided the Industry with a spotlight to showcase its exciting career paths and opportunities to the 30,000 students who attended Worldskills. The Society's HR service continues to be a key service to members, offering access to expertise and representation, while we are also providing members with detailed information of the forthcoming Auto-enrolment for pensions. In addition, the Society's Training Service provides tailored courses to serve our Industry's needs, plays a vital role in employee development, and is a key tool in enhancing staff retention. We are fortunate to have the support of significant funding from Skillnet Ireland, which allows us to subsidise the cost of training for members, fostering continued development and upskilling.

Meeting with members in person is important for the Society, whether it's in their premises or at one of the Society's major events. The highlight of our events calendar is the SIMI's Annual Dinner and Awards

in partnership with Bank of Ireland, which celebrates the Industry, and attendance in February increased on last year, with the event booked to capacity. The Society's Annual VTN Conference and AGM again had full attendance in November, with the RSA presentations highlighting the upgrade work that needs to be undertaken by VTN members to secure their authorisations out to 2034. Women@SIMI was held in June supported by Bank of Ireland, and later this year will celebrate a milestone, its tenth anniversary. The Independent Aftermarket Seminar, held at the end of March, saw a very strong attendance from the Independent retailer and Wholesaler members and highlighted the importance EVs will hold for them in the years ahead. The Franchise Forum, sponsored by AIB, is scheduled for later in the year in Kilkenny.

Over the past year, SIMI has undertaken various information campaigns on social media. In addition to the Budget campaign and our regular press releases, in April we successfully launched a road safety campaign #DriveSafe with the valuable assistance of our members. We intend to repeat this campaign next year.

The Irish Motor Industry has been operating in a highly volatile and uncertain economic environment over the last few years, and this is going to continue for the foreseeable future. Despite this, SIMI members continue to demonstrate their resilience, providing employment and support to their local communities. I can assure our members that SIMI is here to defend our Industry and support members during these uncertain times.

Brian Cooke

Brian Cooke
Director General, SIMI

SIMI Executives



BRIAN COOKE
DIRECTOR GENERAL



TOM CULLEN
DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL



EMMA MITCHELL
OPERATIONS DIRECTOR
& COMPANY SECRETARY



TERESA NOONE
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR



CHARLIE ROGERS
DIRECTOR, COMMERCIAL
VEHICLE SECTOR & VTN



COLIN WALSH
INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS DIRECTOR



YVONNE SLINEY
ACCOUNTS MANAGER



SEAMUS MCCORMACK
MEMBERSHIP MANAGER



JANE O'SULLIVAN
EVENTS & OFFICE MANAGER



SABRINA FORSYTH
CAREERS & DATA MANAGER



AMI FOX
TRAINING MANAGER



ADLAN CHEBLI
CUSTOMER SERVICES OFFICER



SOPHIE MULLIGAN
HR & TRAINING EXECUTIVE



MEGAN HANNON
ADMINISTRATION EXECUTIVE



AMI FOX
TRAINING MANAGER

SIMI Training



Throughout 2024, it has been a privilege in my role as Training Manager to work closely with SIMI members in supporting and delivering the training needs of the industry. It is both encouraging and inspiring to witness the strong commitment members show toward developing their teams and prioritising continuous learning. Their proactive approach to upskilling — driven by a recognition of the evolving nature of the motor industry — ensures employees remain equipped with the latest knowledge, technologies, and skills required to excel in their roles. This dedication to professional growth plays a vital role in maintaining high standards across the sector.

SIMI has made a strong and sustained commitment to delivering high-quality training through a carefully designed blend of online and classroom-based courses. Developed in direct response to invaluable feedback from our members and training participants, these programs are tailored to meet real-world needs. Our blended learning model not only enhances flexibility but also significantly reduces time away from the workplace — particularly for shorter courses — making it easier for businesses to support continuous learning. As part of our ongoing dedication to professional development, SIMI will continue to expand and enhance this hybrid training offering in the year ahead, ensuring our members have access to the best possible learning opportunities.

In 2024, SIMI was proud to continue its valued partnership with Skillnet Ireland, the business support agency of the Government of Ireland. Thanks to this substantial funding, we are able to offer significantly subsidised training opportunities to our members, making professional development more accessible than ever. Following our successful funding renewal from 2023 through to the end of 2025, SIMI remains committed to maximising this support to deliver high-impact training across the sector. As we progress through 2025, we are also actively preparing for the next phase and are optimistic about the opportunities that the 2026–2028 renewal of funding may bring. We look forward to continuing our collaboration with Skillnet Ireland

to support SIMI Members well into the future.

During 2024, more than 218 Member Companies availed of SIMI Skillnet subsidised courses, with over 400 trainees participating in these training events. Courses included: The Automotive Retail Management Programme, Customer Service Excellence, Improving Customer Retention, Managing the Aftersales Department, Parts Management, Service Advisor Training, Hybrid & Electric Vehicle Systems Training and Other Technical Upskilling programmes, Digital Marketing and Facebook for Beginners and Advanced, to name just a few. New courses in Consumer Law/GDPR and Introduction to Vehicle Sales were also launched last year which received positive feedback leading to their return in the SIMI 2024 Training Calendar.

The SIMI Skillnet Automotive Retail Management programme enjoyed another successful year in 2024 and it was fantastic to see all 10 trainees celebrate the course completion and take part in a Graduation ceremony in Killashee Hotel, Kildare. With the 2025 cohort on their way to completing this year's course we look forward to another fantastic day celebrating them at their Graduation in August.

One of the key advantages of the generous grant SIMI receives from Skillnet Ireland is our ability to offer a wide range of training courses to members at significantly subsidised rates — many of which were delivered free of charge in 2024. This support allows us to make high-quality professional development more accessible across the motor industry. Our 2025 SIMI Skillnet Training Plan is well underway, with an exciting and diverse lineup of courses planned for the second half of the year. Crucially, these offerings are shaped by the valuable feedback we receive directly from our members and through post-training Reaction to Learning forms. Your insights are instrumental in helping us deliver training that is not only relevant and impactful but truly member-led. We deeply appreciate your continued engagement and input, which drives us to evolve and enhance our training programme to meet the ever-changing needs of the Irish Motor Industry.



SABRINA FORSYTH
SIMI CAREERS & DATA MANAGER

Apprenticeship & Careers

The Apprenticeship registration figures indicate strong growth and resilience in the Irish motor apprenticeship sector, supported by promotional efforts from stakeholders. The fluctuations year-on-year highlight the need for sustained outreach and employer engagement to stabilise recruitment levels.

The anticipated drop in 2025 registrations is a warning sign that maintaining momentum will require targeted initiatives, including continued visibility at events, stronger school outreach, and support for employers taking on apprentices.

Key Observations:

- Overall Growth: Total Automotive apprenticeship registrations increased from 591 in 2020 to 920 in 2023, with a projected peak of 1,012 in 2024. This reflects a strong recovery post-COVID and growing interest in skilled trades.

- 2024-2025 Dip: The projected 2025 figure (780) suggests a drop of around 23% from 2024, indicating potential recruitment or retention challenges.
- Top Performing Sectors:
 - Motor Mechanics consistently leads in numbers, peaking at 577 in 2024, a 20% increase from the previous year.
 - Heavy Vehicle Mechanics also show solid growth, especially between 2022 and 2023 (+43%).
- Worth Noting:
 - Vehicle Body Repairs had the most dramatic bounce-back in 2023 and 2024 after sharp declines, suggesting renewed investment or demand in this niche.

Apprenticeship	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025F	2020-2021 (%)	2021-2022 (%)	2022-2023 (%)	2023-2024 (%)
Agricultural Mechanics	52	90	58	65	51	65	73%	-36%	12%	-22%
Construction Plant Fitting	63	81	73	97	98	85	29%	-10%	33%	1%
Heavy Vehicle Mechanics	135	194	162	232	226	170	44%	-16%	43%	-3%
Motor Mechanics	310	502	431	482	577	430	62%	-14%	12%	20%
Vehicle Body Repairs	31	50	28	44	60	30	61%	-44%	57%	36%
Total Motor Apprentices	591	917	752	920	1012	780	55%	-18%	22%	10%

Source: NAO

SIMI Members Survey

In February 2025, SIMI surveyed members to gather updated information on apprentices currently working within the motor industry. The results highlight continued demand for apprentices, with a strong industry-wide commitment to training and development.

Survey responses show that 9.05% of apprentices are female, indicating a significant opportunity to promote diversity and inclusion across the sector further.

Encouragingly, members have committed to recruiting over 250 new apprentices within the next 12 months.

Targeting Apprentices: Opportunities and Strategies

To attract more Apprentices into motor industry apprenticeships, SIMI and its members should focus on the following:

1. **Representation Matters:** Showcase successful female apprentices and technicians through videos and social media to break down stereotypes and show real-world career paths.
2. **School & Career Outreach:** Strengthen our relationships with secondary schools, guidance counsellors, and youth organisations to speak directly with students about automotive apprenticeships as a viable & rewarding career option.

3. **Dedicated Campaigns:** Launch targeted marketing campaigns using social media platforms popular with young people (to highlight the hands-on, high-tech, and evolving nature of automotive careers)
4. **Ambassadors:** Appoint ambassadors within the industry who can attend career fairs, open days, and information events to speak directly to prospective apprentices.
5. **Supportive Work Environments:** Promote inclusive workplaces, mentorship opportunities, and pathways for career progression to reassure prospective apprentices that they will be supported in their training and beyond.
6. **Collaboration:** Work with organisations focused on women in trades or STEM to amplify messaging and build trust.

Last year, SIMI was proud to support WorldSkills Ireland for the fourth consecutive year. Events like WorldSkills Ireland are vital in showcasing the opportunities and innovations shaping our sector. They provide students, educators, and industry leaders with a unique insight into the exciting advancements and fantastic career opportunities available to the next generation in our industry. The Society is actively preparing for WorldSkills 2025, building upon the success of previous engagements.

Additionally, SIMI and its members actively engage in career fairs and school presentations nationwide, and we encourage all members to participate in local school initiatives with the Society's support.



ADLAN CHEBLI
CUSTOMER SERVICES OFFICER

Consumer Complaints Service

The SIMI Consumer Complaints Service is a free service offered to members and their customers to resolve complaints without recourse to expensive and time-consuming legal proceedings. The terms and conditions of the SIMI Order Form advise customers to refer their complaints to the SIMI if the matter cannot be resolved directly with the garage, provided the complaint falls within the scope of the consumer complaints service.

While the primary purpose of the Consumer Complaints Service is to help member companies resolve customer complaints, it also represents for Members a comparative measurement of customer service.

448 formal complaints were received by the Society in 2024, which represented a 5% increase on the 2023 figures of 428. This may be reflective of ongoing uncertainty in the market. Of the 448 complaints, 33% were out of scope of the service, which is a decrease of 3% compared to 2023. Of these outside scope complaints, 31% related to new vehicle warranties, 33% were related to non-member garages or lapsed members and 16% were related to a timeframe. Commercial vehicles made up 12%, and the remaining 8% were miscellaneous (e.g., previously resolved complaints).

The number of complaints formally registered saw a 10% increase, with a total of 301 compared to 273 in 2023. This represents an 18% increase from the 2022 figure of 255.

71% of complaints registered were resolved through the initial mediation process, which is a 2% decrease compared to 2023.

The average length of time to bring a complaint to a resolution was 40 days, as opposed to 44 days the previous year. The figure in 2022 was 53 days. As we can recall, the COVID-19 pandemic caused significant disruption to the operation of the industry, but we maintained a relatively quick time for resolutions.

14% of complaints were closed due to no engagement from the customer following the initial complaint. 25% of complaints were resolved through the Retail Motor Industry Standards Tribunal compared to 21% in 2023, which is an increase of 4%.

The type of complaints registered are summarised as follows:

- 85% related to the condition of the vehicles sold (mechanical and electrical defects), repaired or serviced by members, warranty disputes or customer service issues involving members. This is an increase from the 71% recorded in 2023.
- 11% related to alleged misrepresentation of pricing, documentation, finance, etc. This compares to 22% recorded in 2023.
- Change of ownership (i.e., logbook issues) remains at 2%, as it was in 2023, 2022, and also in 2021. There was a stark increase in 2020, the figure was 7%, which was due to the disruption caused to Revenue services due to the pandemic.
- 2% related to refund of deposits, which is a 5% decrease from the 2023 figure.

The Retail Motor Industry Standards Tribunal noted with concern that a high percentage of complaints registered related to the condition of the vehicle sold and must once again stress the importance for members to understand that you are accountable for anything you say about the condition of the vehicle documentation, its age, number of previous owners, recorded mileage, whether it was involved in a crash, whether it was rented or leased or used for taxi work, etc. Remember your company or firm will be liable for any statement you make. You could also be liable to prosecution in the case of a serious misrepresentation.

As always, the Tribunal encourages members to continue their efforts in approaching complaints with a quick positive reaction, as in many cases a simple explanatory letter from the garage can often bring a complaint to a resolution, removing the need for the matter to go before the 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.



COLIN WALSH
INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS DIRECTOR

Human Resource Management Service

The SIMI HR Management Service plays a crucial role in supporting member companies across the Irish Motor Industry by offering comprehensive assistance in employment law, human resources best practices, representation in employment-related disputes both in the Workplace Relations Commission and Labour Court, as well as assisting with industrial relations representations and negotiations. The service is designed to assist businesses in navigating the often complex and evolving employment landscape, ensuring compliance and reducing legal and operational risks associated with HR management.

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the quantity of employment legislation both National and European. This shift is largely driven by increasing regulatory demands. Employers are legally obliged to implement a wide range of policies and procedures that cover key areas such as disciplinary procedures, dismissals, employee grievances, health and safety protocols, terms and conditions of employment, workplace dignity and respect, pension schemes, whistleblower protections (protected disclosures), and adherence to equality legislation. These growing responsibilities place substantial pressure on small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), many of which operate with limited resources.

For many members, the financial and administrative burden of employing a full-time HR professional is simply not viable. These businesses often lack the scale necessary to justify a dedicated HR department, which makes access to expert HR support critical to maintaining compliance.

As part of SIMI membership, full access to the HR Management Service is provided at no additional cost, and members are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this vital resource. The service is tailored to meet the unique challenges of the motor industry and provides practical, up-to-date guidance to support employers throughout the entire employment lifecycle.

Key functions of the SIMI HR Management Service include:

- **Compliance with Equality Legislation:** The service assists members in meeting equality law obligations, beginning from how job roles are advertised through to the entire recruitment and onboarding process, ensuring that hiring practices are fair, transparent, and compliant.

- **Strategic HR Advisory:** Members receive professional advice on a range of core HR activities, including staff recruitment, induction procedures, performance evaluations, identifying training and development needs, employee retention strategies, succession planning, redundancy processes, and managing grievance or disciplinary issues.
- **Legal Documentation Support:** The service offers sample contracts of employment and staff handbooks, drafted in accordance with the latest legal updates. This ensures that member companies maintain current and legally compliant documentation, reducing the risk of disputes and penalties.
- **Ongoing Review of HR Practices:** HR policies and procedures are not static; they must evolve with legislative changes and industry developments. The SIMI service includes regular reviews of company HR practices to ensure continued compliance and best practice alignment.
- **Expert Guidance on Employment Issues:** Whether dealing with day-to-day HR queries or more complex employment challenges, members have access to expert guidance tailored to the motor sector. This helps employers make informed decisions that protect both their business and their employees.
- **Representation in Employment Disputes:** The service provides representation for members at formal employment forums, including the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) and the Labour Court, ensuring professional support in defending against claims or resolving disputes.
- **Support in Industrial Relations and Union Engagements:** In situations involving union negotiations or trade disputes, the SIMI HR Management Service offers experienced support and strategic advice, helping businesses navigate these sensitive and potentially disruptive scenarios effectively.

By offering these comprehensive services, SIMI aims to alleviate the administrative and legal burden on member companies, enabling them to focus on running their core operations while remaining compliant with the ever-changing demands of employment law. The HR Management Service is a vital tool that empowers members to uphold high standards of employment practice, reduce risk, and build stronger, more sustainable workplaces.

Priorities by Sector

COMMERCIAL VEHICLE TESTING NETWORK (VTN)



The Commercial Vehicle Test Network continues to grow broadly in line with the commercial vehicle parc. Light Commercial Vehicle (LCV) test figures (not including re-tests) came in at 469,485 for 2024, which was a 4.6% increase over 2023 figures. Heavy Commercial Vehicle (HCV) tests came in at 127,908 showing a 2.1% increase on the 2023 figures. The current first time pass rate for LCV's is 62% and for HCV's is 73% for 2024. The level of business for VTN members has increased in recent years, with an increased parc and increased enforcement; a 26% growth in test numbers over the past decade.

For many VTN members, the focus is on upgrading premises and equipment to comply with the latest RSA standards. This is probably the biggest upgrade the system has seen since the RSA took full control of the system and issued their first new authorisations in 2014. The aim of the RSA has been to continually improve the system and ensure that the quality and consistency of testing is at the highest possible standard.

A key part of this update is to require CVR test centres to improve upkeep and standards, and to have a common quality of presentation throughout the country. These upgrades to premises and equipment must be carried out by the deadline date of December 18th 2026. Once a test centre achieves compliance with the latest updates, they can extend their current authorisations out to March 2034.

Given that costs are on an upward trend in recent years, the RSA are encouraging everyone to have this work done as soon as possible and hopefully, many of our members may have their upgrade achieved within the current year. It is important to note that for members who are planning to continue in the sector, applications for extending the current period beyond March 18th 2027 must be in by March 18th 2026.

Again, the VTN Committee organised a hugely successful Conference in November 2024, at which the RSA underlined to test centres the

importance of the timeline and possible time lag between new equipment order and delivery. The RSA confirmed that the timeline for this upgrade plan has been extended already and there will be no further extensions granted. In addition, the RSA also confirmed that the current CoVIS IT contract will move back from FUJITSU to SGS who were the original system managers. New service level agreements will need to come into operation to reflect this change and are expected to be issued to members during Q2 of 2025.

Test charges saw an increase across all vehicles in the past 12 months, which was expected given that there had been no increase for a number of years.

The Technical Inspection contract, which is currently carried out by the AA is also under review and due to be renewed with an appropriate contractor following a tender process in the current year. The supervision structure for test centres is also being reviewed through consultation with SIMI and the VTN Committee to identify improvement opportunities.

In Q4 of 2024, consultancy company Indecon was appointed by the Department of Transport to conduct an independent review of the RSA. The review recommended that the RSA should be split into two new agencies with different areas of responsibility. The Government currently have this review document under consideration, but it is expected that whatever re-structure takes place there will be minimal disruption to test operations as a result of any change.

In relation to further developments of the system at EU level, we are still awaiting the new Commercial Vehicle Roadworthiness package, which is still under review and expected early next year. The current EU roadworthiness directives are being revised, and the challenges of coping with the ongoing advances in vehicle technology are being considered from a vehicle testing perspective. The updated legislation is likely to take account of the growing presence of electric vehicles and needs to adapt testing to emerging technologies. On Board Diagnostics will be starting for LCV's in 2025 and a pilot scheme is underway within the CVRT test system. Access to relevant vehicle data will continue to be an important topic, given the advances in technology and the need to capture data from vehicles to ensure that their safety

and emission systems are continuing to perform correctly as the relevant vehicles get older. We can also expect improvements in emissions testing in the coming years, which will make it easier to detect tampered emissions systems.

The CVRT/VTN sector are looking forward to meeting the challenges ahead and the SIMI-VTN Committee will continue to carry on active dialogue with the RSA in relation to the ongoing development of the system.

COMMERCIAL VEHICLE SECTOR

The Light Commercial Vehicle (LCV) market continued to perform well in 2024, reaching the highest figures in a decade at 30,786 units. Given the very positive figures in recent years, it is probably reasonable to expect some levelling out of demand in 2025, and indeed, figures to April 2025 are showing the market becoming a bit more challenging with a fall (-9.5%) in new registrations, year-to-date. It is worth noting that the 10-year average for this sector is 26,065 units.

The Heavy Commercial Vehicle (HCV) market has followed a somewhat similar pattern, with figures (excluding buses) seeing the highest in a decade at 2,865 units in 2024. Figures to April are showing a (-8%) fall on 2024, and the ten-year average for this sector being 2,324 units, so we can probably anticipate a fall in the market in 2025 back towards more traditional levels.

The Bus market is a very specialised sector and tends to top out at approximately 350 units a year.

The reality of the Commercial Vehicle market in Ireland for 2024 is that diesel vehicles remain dominant, and this trend is expected to continue. In Ireland in 2024, 95% of LCVs purchased were diesel compared with an EU average of 84.5%. LCV manufacturers are fully committed to achieving EU climate neutrality targets, and there is no doubt that we will see them put the products in place in the coming years to facilitate the transition to low and zero-emission mobility.

The total cost of ownership is extremely important to customers in the business-orientated SME sector, into which 99% of Irish businesses fall. Business customers will only consider purchasing Electric LCVs if their cost and productivity are comparable to LCVs with conventional engines. Vehicle Manufacturers

are starting to introduce a wide variety of new models, and the first customers to make the shift are more likely to be operating in an urban environment. It is important to be aware that this transition is likely to happen segment by segment.

In the HCV Market, 97% of new trucks sold in Ireland last year were diesel, against the EU average of 95%.

There is no “one size fits all” solution that is likely to get us to where we want to go in relation to the EU’s Green Deal. There are alternative fuel options available. The Industry needs to engage with Government on the types of vehicles that may be available so that the cost of providing adequate infrastructure can be evaluated for different fuel types. HVO, which can deliver up to a 90% reduction in emissions, is currently more expensive than diesel, but perhaps fuel taxation can be reviewed so that this fuel would be more attractive for businesses.

The Review of the Weights and Dimensions Directive at EU level is another important element of the changes in the regulatory framework to facilitate the market update of zero-emission vehicles. Given the amount of extra regulation that kicks in at the LCV/HCV cut-off point of 3.5 tonnes GVW, it is one of the problematic areas that has the potential to hold back the electrification of some LCVs. We know, for example, that batteries can have a big influence on the kerb weight of N1 LCVs and payload is often a critical factor in the selection of these vehicles where an operator does not wish to transition into the range of requirements that going to the HCV category of vehicle demands. The announcement in Budget 2025 that the weight ratio requirement for battery electric vehicles to qualify for the category C VRT rate of €200 was reduced from 130% to 125% is a positive development, and will help more business consider an electric option.

One of the significant technological advancements in the past year was the introduction of the second main stage of the GSR2 regulations. Discussions with the RSA enabled a smooth transition into GSR2 for the Industry, and the Society supported the RSA’s information campaign on social media on GSR2. We are experiencing unprecedented times, with the introduction of new technologies enhancing both safety and emissions controls in vehicles.

The next key date for GSR 2 will be 6th July 2026, when this regulation will be further updated. Additionally for Cars and LCVs, a significant change in emissions legislation is due to take place at the end of this year as the euro 6e emissions standard transitions to euro 6e-bis.

For the CV sector, the process for obtaining the second stat code in the registration of incomplete vehicles was improved, and we are grateful to Revenue for their assistance. SIMI will continue to work on behalf of this sector with the ever-positive feedback and help from our Commercial Vehicle Distributors Committee in terms of advancing local issues and the wider challenge ahead of the transitioning of the commercial vehicle sector within the Industry to achieving climate neutrality.

SIMI CLIMATE ACTION GROUP

Driving Change, Shaping the Future

The SIMI Climate Action Group was established in 2019 to lead the motor industry’s transition to cleaner, alternative fuel technologies. Since then, the group has worked collaboratively across all sectors—retail and distribution — alongside a panel of consultants and key stakeholders. Their aim: to provide a unified, strategic response to successive Government Climate Action Plans and accelerate the journey to a zero-emissions transport fleet.

Guided by a formal Terms of Reference, the group set out with clear objectives:

1. Deliver a 5-Year Strategic Climate Change Plan.
2. Develop a Climate Change Stakeholder Map identifying interdependencies within the vehicle ecosystem.
3. Build robust Data Tools to inform policy and planning.
4. Conduct in-depth Consumer Insight research.

The result was the SIMI Climate Action Plan, authored by economist Jim Power and internationally recognised transport expert Terry Lee-Williams of ARUP. Launched and received with many plaudits, the Plan remains a benchmark document for how Ireland can meet its transport emissions targets. Widely cited by policymakers, media, and industry experts, it continues to inform national strategy.

In 2024, the Group prepped an updated

edition of the Climate Action Plan, in light of a global slowdown in EV sales. This edition addresses the challenges of moving from the Early Adopters to the Early and Late Majority, referencing the Diffusion of Innovation Theory and Product Life Cycle Curve. This crucial phase of the transition requires not only the right product offering but also meaningful incentives and messaging to build trust and familiarity with EVs among mainstream consumers.

Ireland currently offers some of the most competitive financial and non-financial incentives for Battery Electric Vehicles (BEVs) and hybrid technologies in Europe. However, achieving ambitious fleet electrification targets will require the sustained availability of these supports until Electric Vehicles reach cost parity with internal combustion vehicles.

The Climate Action Group continues to influence national policy, public campaigns, and infrastructure development. Their work includes steering effective advertising and social media strategies to promote alternative fuel technologies and advocating for critical public investments. The Group’s contributions are widely credited with shaping a more progressive, coordinated national transition strategy.

FRANCHISE RETAILERS EXECUTIVE

Adapting to a Changing Landscape

Franchise retailers remain a vital and dynamic part of the SIMI structure, with strong representation at Board level and an active role in shaping policy and advocacy efforts. Despite a challenging macroeconomic and trading environment, the sector delivered solid financial results over the past year.

However, long-term resilience will depend on maintaining a strong new car market. Limited used car imports from the UK and Japan, combined with continued supply chain constraints, have sustained high used car values—but this is not a sustainable model. A healthy new car pipeline is essential to refresh the national fleet and support the transition to low and zero-emission vehicles.

Retailers have shown agility in navigating:

- Market supply issues.
- Misinformation and Disinformation about electric vehicle technology.
- Post-Brexit market fragmentation

- Semi-conductor shortages
- Inflation and energy price volatility
- A broader cost-of-living crisis

Now, the sector enters a new phase of the EV transition: shifting from Early Adopters to the broader Majority Market. This phase brings more complex challenges, requiring strategic investment, consumer engagement, and realignment of sales and service models.

Climate leadership remains central to the motor sector's mission. The Franchise Network plays a key role in delivering cleaner, smarter mobility across Ireland's urban, suburban, and rural communities. While the path forward involves uncertainty, it also presents an unprecedented opportunity: to be the trusted partner in customers' transition to electric mobility.

Franchise retailers are ramping up their EV offering, supported by evolving consumer attitudes and better product availability. SIMI's 2021 and 2024 Climate Action Plans clearly articulate what's needed to hit emissions targets:

- Continuation and evolution of EV incentives
- Scaled-up charging infrastructure
- Removal of high-pollution vehicles
- Public transport investment
- A clear, confident value proposition for EV consumers

The retail landscape is also being reshaped by the growing influence of new distribution models such as agency contracts. These models bring both opportunity and risk, depending on how they are implemented. Leadership will be critical to navigate these shifts effectively and ensure positive outcomes for businesses, employees, and consumers.

A New Era of Collaboration and Innovation

To support this evolution, SIMI launched the Franchise & Stakeholder Forum, in partnership with AIB Finance & Leasing. This high-level platform connects industry experts and key voices across the value chain, addressing critical themes such as:

- Generative AI in automotive
- Future of vehicle distribution
- The next phase of electromobility
- Access to finance and consumer affordability

The project is driven by the Franchise Strategic Group, established in 2024 to represent the needs of the Franchise Network and to plan for the future of Motor Retailing. These

conversations are helping the industry align on practical solutions and future-proof strategies.

As we move through this era of transformational change, the automotive industry must remain focused, innovative, and collaborative. The challenges are significant — but so are the opportunities. With clear direction, strategic leadership, and strong stakeholder alignment, the industry can deliver meaningful progress toward a cleaner, smarter, and more sustainable future for mobility in Ireland.

INDEPENDENT SECTOR

The Independent Retailers Committee work to support the sector, grow considerably, and is strongly represented at Board level. The Committee commenced and continues to work on multiple subjects to tackle obstacles faced by independent members.

Engagement from members of the sector is of crucial importance to the committee. Increased engagement aims to produce the largest cross section of members which will provide representation at committee level. The Independent Retailers Committee in conjunction with the Parts Wholesalers Committee produced the Independent Aftermarket Conferences in March 2025. This took place in the Ivy Gardens Hotel in Dublin. The conference was a huge success, bringing together international speakers alongside speakers from the Irish market, examining subjects such as the economy, consumer outlook and sentiment, EV repair and parts in independent repairers as well as access to vehicle data and the importance of marketing and social media. A networking event followed the conference, which was equally successful in connecting business leaders in the sector to their counterparts.

Expanding on engagement for the sector, the Committee are producing regional roadshows to provide insights, practical training and regional networking. All members are encouraged to attend to explore topics such as delegation, succession, technological change, updates in employment law and the services included in SIMI membership. The roadshows will take place in October 2025 across four regional locations.

Attracting and retaining technicians and apprentice technicians continues to be a key focus for the committee. SIMI is continuously working on ways in which the industry can attract and retain technicians. Training in EV/ Hybrid technology is identified as crucial over the coming years, this is currently being

provided through SIMI Skillnet. SIMI and its members engage with career fairs, guidance counsellors and schools on a constant basis to promote the pathways and benefits of careers in the motor industry and apprenticeships. The Independent sector was represented at Worldskills Ireland 2024 to deliver the message to students, parents and teachers about careers and apprenticeships within the sector. Following the success of the 2024 event, the committee is happy to report that the sector will have a presence at WorldSkills 2025 for a third year in a row.

Access the vehicle data through SERMI, right to repair, NCT delays and the shadow economy remain as priorities for the committee alongside planned examination of workshop standards for EV repair and storage.

The Committee would encourage any independent retailer or repairer to become involved in the committee. It is from independent members issues and experiences that the committee can identify key obstacles in our sector, which allows active members to work towards resolutions to these issues.

PETROL/OIL SECTOR

The Petrol/Oil company sector continues to play a key role in the Irish economy, not just in the product it sells but also in the tax it generates for the Exchequer, *circa* €4 bn in 2024, and in the local employment and economic activity resulting from over 1,800 retail sites in the State, employing in the region of 13,000 people countrywide. Fuel taxation is very high in Ireland, with *circa* 50% of the retail price of fuel returned to Irish Revenue. Further fuel taxation increases via the carbon tax have been signalled between now and 2030. The use of biofuels is highlighted in the Climate Action Plan 2025 as a means to reduce transport emissions. Increasing the blend rate to at least B20 for diesel is one of the climate action plan targets. In addition, Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) can also reduce emissions significantly from the fleet. HVO is a straight replacement for diesel with no investment required for storage infrastructure. The current cost of this fuel is higher than diesel fuel, making it an additional cost to businesses at a time where the cost of doing business is already increasing. It is important that the current Diesel Rebate scheme is not only retained but should be extended to include HVO to reduce the cost and encourage the use of this fuel.

VEHICLE MANUFACTURERS/ DISTRIBUTORS

New car registrations have remained consistent with last year's figures, while the transition to electric vehicles (EVs) continues, marked by a further decline in the number of internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles being registered annually. EVs now account for 30% of the market share, with hybrids making up an additional 24%. The shift toward zero-emission vehicles currently remains the most significant challenge and opportunity facing the new car sector.

New car registrations declined slightly by 1% between 2023 and 2024, but the market is currently tracking 2% ahead of 2024 levels. Registrations are forecast to reach 124,867 this year. The lingering impact of inflation continues to weigh on consumers, who are still feeling the effects of the rising cost of living. The 'new normal' for annual car registrations has fallen from around 140,000 to approximately 120,000. This decline is driven partly by constrained household budgets and also by the rising cost of new vehicles. With incomes under pressure, consumer spending remains challenged, affecting demand in the new car market.

In 2023, BEV market share reached 18.7%, its peak market share so far since the introduction of BEVs, comfortably exceeding the European average of 14.6% that year. Unfortunately, this momentum was not sustained, and in 2024, the BEV market share fell to 14%. While there has been marginal growth so far this year – rising to 15.4% – however, headline growth can mask deeper shortcomings. BEV registrations remain well below where they need to be to meet national climate and transport targets, which should be closer to at least 25% market share.

The Light Commercial Vehicles tell a different story, 2024 finished 7% up on the previous year, however the market has decreased currently by almost 10%. Many SMEs, particularly those in sectors like hospitality and retail, are currently facing a more difficult operating environment.

Budget 2025, saw no changes to the structure of VRT, and included a number of incentives in relation to Electric Vehicles; a new Benefit-In-Kind (BIK) concession on home charger installations; the change of the definition for light commercial electric vehicles that will allow more vans avail of the lower €200 VRT rate; the previously announced extension of

the SEAL purchase grants; and the extension of the €10,000 threshold on BIK for cars for 2025 (€45,000 tax free BIK on EVs). While these measures were welcome it was disappointing that the BIK relief had not been extended beyond 2025, to encourage more company car purchasers to choose an EV.

Positive Government support is needed to extend the BIK thresholds which will help both BEV and high mileage drivers. In addition to extending current supports, additional measures targeting the second-hand market and businesses should be considered to broaden the pool of consumers purchasing BEVs, including a scrappage scheme, social leasing scheme, and VAT reduction for businesses, which will reduce the upfront cost of purchasing a new BEV.

VEHICLE RECOVERY OPERATORS SECTOR



The Vehicle Recovery Sector has seen over the last 12 months significant challenges with the continued rising cost of fuel which has been very challenging for members to deal with. There have also been insurance premium increases, surge on wage demands from staff and also attracting and retaining staff into the industry has contributed in making the sector a challenging period for all Recovery Operators. However, traffic volumes for both commercial and private journeys has seen a general steady business volume for Recovery members. The sector is facing issues and challenges with regards to the insurance companies and motoring clubs for the work carried out by our members.

The SIMI VRO sector members continue to promote the competency and professionalism of the sector to the other SIMI member businesses and to the motoring public both private and commercial. The SIMI VRO logo is continuously promoted and used by VRO members for use on their various company vehicles, websites and social media platforms. The logo was advertised and continues to be promoted to the general SIMI membership through the various SIMI communication portals.

VEHICLE BODY REPAIRERS SECTOR



Vehicle Body Repair Sector (VBRS) members have been reporting that there are at capacity, and in many cases workshops now have waiting lists to access repairs.

Like many sectors in the motor industry, the VBRS sector is facing significant challenges due to the increasing complexity of modern vehicles, particularly with ADAS systems and electric vehicle technology.

In general, there needs to be a better understanding of the "electronic" requirement of programming and calibrating ADAS systems, the various electronic components in modern vehicles, and returning a vehicle to its pre-accident original condition. SIMI will continue to run training courses for the sector. EV training has been in demand in recent years and will now become a mandatory requirement for the CSS Standard. SIMI developed the CSS standard over a decade ago and it continues to be the mark for premium crash repairers who wish to demonstrate that they operate to the highest standards.

What must we continue to do as a sector to meet the enormous challenges ahead and take advantage of the real opportunities that will present themselves for quality work providers. Key to this will be taking on more apprentices. Sourcing, retaining, and training staff is an ongoing challenge as is attracting "new blood" into the sector. Over the past six years, the number of apprentices has averaged out at only approx. 40 new applicants per year entering the system. We simply must attract more applicants, to ensure the continued support of SOLAS.

Much of the aftermarket services part of the motor industry, of which the VBRS Sector is a crucial part, and are only at the start of their journey in the motor industry's move towards zero-emission vehicles. Huge challenges are coming down the line, and with significant differences between repairing EVs and conventional ICEs.

Supply of parts is still a major issue since post-pandemic period. Crash repairers may need to source parts that are not the usual

parts used in a traditional service, and it is vital that Vehicle Manufacturers continue to offer sufficient access to these parts on a timely basis.

Finally, our VBRS members who are well known throughout the country and have built substantial successful businesses on the back of quality work and excellent customer service. They deserve to be supported by the greater motor Industry for the essential service that they provide.

WHOLESALE SECTOR

Wholesalers throughout the year and the sector has been well represented at Management Board level by Chairperson and SIMI Past President, Gillian Fanning. SIMI, along with Gillian, have participated in a number of FIGIEFA meetings throughout the year, representing the Irish sector at a European level and engaging with ITGs and aftermarket organisations across different countries. Together with FIGIEFA, there has also been ongoing engagement with Irish and EU politicians, and the Road Safety Authority, to promote the interests of the Irish aftermarket. The key issues for the sector are: Remote access to data, fair competition, cybersecurity, and sustainability.

Bankers

Allied Irish Banks,
1-3 Lwr Baggot St, Dublin 2

Auditors

Grant Thornton,
13 - 18 City Quay, Dublin 2

Solicitors

Hayes Solicitors,
Lavery House, Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2

Insurance Brokers

Willis Risk Services (Ireland) Limited
Willis Towers Watson House,
Elm Park, Merrion Road,
Dublin 4

Publishers

IFP Media Ltd,
Castlecourt,
Monkstown Farm,
Glenageary, Co Dublin

Website

www.simi.ie



The Society of the Irish Motor Industry
is a Registered Friendly Society
Registration Number 374T
VAT Registration Number – IE 0656762 N



The Society of the Irish Motor Industry
5 Upper Pembroke Street, Dublin 2

info@simi.ie | www.simi.ie | [x](https://www.instagram.com/SIMI_ie)@SIMI_ie