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Our ref: #11,649,270
Your ref: COR 2019 006974
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20 November 2020

Coroner Caitlin English
Coroners Court of Victoria
65 Kavanagh Street
SOUTHBANK VIC 3006
PDF via email: cpuresponses@coronerscourt.vic.gov.au

Dear Coroner English

Investigation into the death of [REDACTED]

Thank you for your correspondence of 21 September 2020 to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC). I have read through your finding without inquest into the death of [REDACTED] and note your recommendation to the ACCC, to:

- consider renewing its national 'Safe Summer' campaign with a view to including DIY motor vehicle repairs and maintenance, and reviewing its strategies for disseminating information in the campaign, and
- collaborate with WorkSafe Victoria to promote safety precautions for DIY vehicle maintenance.

The ACCC regrets the sad circumstances of [REDACTED] death and the loss to his family.

The ACCC's product safety role is focused on the safe supply and use of consumer products. Requirements for the supply of vehicle support stands are set out in the [Consumer Goods \(Vehicle Support Stands\) Safety Standard 2017](#). This mandatory safety standard was reviewed and strengthened in 2017 along with the mandatory safety standards for [trolley jacks](#) and [portable ramps for vehicles](#). This suite of mandatory standards draws on relevant voluntary standards developed by Standards Australia. All three of these products are commonly used in the home DIY vehicle maintenance setting.

The mandatory safety standard for vehicle support stands applies to products with a capacity of 1,500 kg or less and sets certain requirements around design, construction, performance, warnings and instructions. These regulated products must have a warning notice stating that death or injury could result from incorrect use, and that support stands must only be used on flat hard level surfaces (e.g. concrete). The standard also requires the provision of instructions explaining the safe use of support stands. The instructions must cover a range of recommendations which includes using support stands on a hard level surface, such as concrete.

From my review of the findings, I understand that the support stand used by [REDACTED] had a capacity of 3,000 kg, was clearly marked with an appropriate warning label, and that there is no evidence the support stand had any defect. I also note the support stand was used on an unsuitable dirt surface causing two of its feet to sink into the ground. This ultimately led to the disengagement of the vehicle from the stand.

The ACCC undertakes a number of activities to best ensure the safety of do-it-yourself vehicle maintenance activities, including the use of support stands. The ACCC regularly performs market surveillance and testing of products to ensure their compliance with mandatory safety standards, administers voluntary recalls to retrieve unsafe or non-compliant products from users, promotes the voluntary recalls via social media and the Product Safety Australia website, and communicates with consumers about safe ways to undertake vehicle maintenance.

The ACCC included DIY vehicle maintenance as part of the 2018 Safe Summer campaign. The campaign included the publication of a unique web page as well as a range of supporting social media posts. Specific items on vehicle jacks and vehicle support stands were included in the campaign.

Following on from the Safe Summer campaign, the ACCC developed a new campaign in 2019 which focussed exclusively on DIY car maintenance safety. The campaign was launched on 21 June 2019 and was headlined by two short videos to promote the safety of consumers performing DIY car repairs at home.

The [first video](#) is instructional, and informs consumers on the correct use of tools used in the DIY setting including support stands, trolley jacks and vehicle ramps. The [second video](#) is an interview with the wife of a man who was killed under his vehicle while carrying out DIY car maintenance in his home garage. The aim of this video is to appeal to persons undertaking DIY work and their families to promote discussion and behavioural change to encourage adoption of safe practices when working on their vehicles.

The videos were supported by a [new webpage](#), media release, social media campaign, digital advertising campaign, a Product Safety Matters newsletter, and by disseminating information through motoring clubs.

The ACCC will continue to promote this campaign through routine safety messaging via social media, coordinated campaign work with state and territory consumer safety regulators and other opportunities as they arise. The ACCC has also invited WorkSafe Victoria to cooperate with future messaging on social media channels to maximise reach.

While the ACCC hopes that there will be no further loss of life associated with home vehicle maintenance, we would be interested to receive additional information that might be forthcoming in any future investigation.

Thank you for giving the ACCC the opportunity to consider this matter.

Yours sincerely



Neville Matthew
General Manager
Consumer Product Safety