



International sector associations call for independent operators' 'Right to Repair' at their Global Meeting during Automechanika 2024

Frankfurt, 11 September. Thirty associations representing the multi-brand vehicle aftermarket in Australia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, India, South Africa, the USA, and from almost twenty European countries, as well as European associations representing their sectors at European Union's level, have gathered in Frankfurt during Automechanika 2024, for the Right to Repair Global meeting (R2RG).

Over the years, the R2RG meeting has increasingly become a crucial platform for dialogue and collaboration among the associations representing the multi-brand automotive aftermarket worldwide. More than just a gathering, this forum actively shapes the future of the industry. A central focus includes addressing common challenges, particularly those arising from unclear practices by vehicle manufacturers.

A significant challenge facing repairers, parts distributors, and suppliers is the need to maintain unrestricted access to Repair and Maintenance Information (RMI), technical information, and the freedom to use tools and spare parts. With the advent of digitalisation and the emergence of software-defined vehicle, new concerns have arisen, including access to in-vehicle generated data, the vehicle's operational functions and resources, the growing absence of repair information for electric vehicle batteries, and the increasing issue of parts captivity.

In this context, vehicle manufacturers gain a competitive advantage by controlling the data generated by vehicles. This control impacts the volume and quality of information available to independent service providers, ultimately limiting digital opportunities for the businesses and restricting the freedom of choice for the consumers.

The participants agreed on the **urgent need for a fair playing and robust legislative backing to address these challenges across various regions of the world**. Effective enforcement measures are essential to ensure that vehicle manufacturers adhere more closely to automotive regulations.

Below are quotes from representatives of the Right to Repair Global, (listed in alphabetical order by country):

Australia

Stuart Charity, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Automotive Aftermarket Association (AAAA)

“Associations representing independent repairers around the world face powerful and well-funded adversaries in the form of global car makers who seek to maximize profits by using their technological advantage and market power to direct consumers into their authorised dealership networks. It is therefore vital that the global aftermarket community gather together to share their experiences and best practice under the Right to Repair Global banner to assist them to advocate for sector specific Right to Repair legislation to level the playing field and ensure all car owners have the right to choose their preferred repairer.”

Canada

Jean-François Champagne, President and CEO, Automotive Industries Association Canada (AIA)

“Right to Repair Global is a valuable opportunity for key industry representatives to come together and take action on some of the biggest issues facing the automotive aftermarket worldwide.

In Canada, much like in the European Union, there is growing recognition of the need for legislative frameworks that support data accessibility. We are working with government and key industry stakeholders to implement sector-specific automotive legislation to ensure a level playing field for independent repairers. This will empower Canadian consumers with the choice and control over their vehicle data, fostering innovation and competition that benefits both our industry and society as a whole.”

European Union

Sylvia Gotzen, Chief Executive, International federation of independent automotive aftermarket distributors (FIGIEFA)

“Over the years, the Right to Repair Global has proven its ability to evolve and keep up with the times and changes in our society, each time addressing the latest issues and opportunities regarding the Independent Automotive Aftermarket presented by participants from all over the world.

In the European Union, recent legislation such as the Data Act has put a basis for the sharing of basic data generated by the vehicle. However, only a sector-specific automotive legislation and a more bespoke access to in-vehicle data, functions and resources can allow our business, the consumers and the society to flourish with innovative digital services and ideas.”

Pierre Thibaudat, Director General, Automotive Data Publishers' Association (ADPA)

“Worldwide, consumers and businesses alike are facing the same challenges to fair competition in the automotive aftermarket, endangering the safety, the sustainability and the affordability of road mobility. A holistic approach and the exchange of good practices enabled by the Right to Repair Global Meeting are paramount to making sure that these legislative challenges transform into business opportunities benefiting society at large.”

Marcin Barankiewicz, Secretary General, European Garage and test Equipment Association (EGEA)

“The Right to Repair Global Meeting was a great opportunity to exchange experiences across associations worldwide on how to put this idea into force. EGEA fully supports freedom of choice in vehicle maintenance and does various activities in these matters on the European level, also as a part of AFCAR (The Alliance for the Freedom of Car Repair).”

India

Vinnie Mehta, Director General, Automotive Component Manufacturers Association of India (ACMA)

“The Right to Repair initiative is essential for fostering a fair and competitive automotive ecosystem. As the auto components industry in India evolves alongside advancements in technology and sustainability, it is crucial to ensure that independent operators have access to critical repair and maintenance data. This not only empowers consumers with more choices but also promotes innovation and growth across the value chain. ACMA fully supports global efforts to create a level playing field that benefits both manufacturers and independent service providers.”

South Africa

Kate Elliot, CEO, Right to Repair South Africa

“With car brands extending their reach to all corners of the globe, it is not surprising that many territories have experienced the same OEM tactics to corner the automotive aftermarket. The coming together of the global Right to Repair community has been a vital tool for our organisation to fight for the Right to Repair in South Africa.”

USA

Bill Hanvey, President and CEO, Auto Care Association

“Our global aftermarket associations are aligned to support regional legislation that ensures our industry has access to real-time repair and maintenance data. While many regions have Right To Repair initiatives at different stages of execution and development, our global symposium offers an opportunity to share best practices and to ensure a collective voice around the world on this issue that threatens consumer choice.”