

# Consumers' Perceptions of Vehicle Safety

Summary Report-November 2024

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<b>Author:</b>	Research and Evaluation- Data, Advice, Research and Testing
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# 1 Summary

Transport for NSW, in collaboration with Fiftyfive5 undertook research to understand consumer behaviour and vehicle safety awareness in New South Wales (NSW). The research aims to inform strategies that can shift consumer preferences towards purchasing newer and safer vehicles, ultimately contributing to a reduction in road fatalities and injuries.

The research used a two-stage methodological approach comprising:

- A survey of 2008 NSW residents who had recently purchased/ were intending to purchase a vehicle. This was conducted from 27 February to 13 March 2024.
- Qualitative research, including a 5-day online group discussion and 12 in-depth interviews with vehicle purchasers/ intenders conducted in April 2024.

The research found that vehicle purchases are influenced by a combination of financial, functional, emotional, and aesthetic factors, with safety often playing a secondary role. Cost is a dominant concern, with 66% of consumers delaying their vehicle purchase due to financial constraints. Price is also the top consideration for vehicle choice for 38% of consumers, followed by running costs (29%), fuel type and brand (22% each). For 76% of used car buyers, affordability is the main driver, particularly for younger buyers, women, and those on lower incomes.

Beyond cost, functional and emotional needs significantly impact vehicle choices. Some consumers view cars purely as transportation, while others are influenced by emotional factors like reliability, comfort, and prestige. Aesthetics, particularly the "look and feel" of a car play a major role, often more important to consumers than performance or features.

In relation to safety, consumers have varied perceptions and knowledge. Two-thirds (64%) believe newer cars are safer, while 39% associate larger vehicles with better safety. Awareness is generally higher for passive safety features like airbags (95%) and seatbelts (94%) compared to active features such as blind spot monitoring (56%) and speed assist systems (35%).

Safety is not a top priority for most buyers, with only 20% ranking it as a primary factor in their decision, behind price, running costs, and aesthetics. The prioritisation of safety appears to be compromised by a number of beliefs and attitudes, including the assumption that cars are generally safe, that driving skills are a more significant protective factor for crash avoidance, and distrust of safety features. Safety becomes more important for buyers with personal crash experiences or higher budgets, especially for those purchasing new or electric vehicles.

Safety considerations tend to gain salience during the shortlisting phase of the buying journey, but are less emphasised in earlier stages when consumers focus more on aesthetics and brand. Personal experiences with safety features during test drives can positively or negatively influence final decisions. However, safety is often overshadowed by financial and emotional factors, and safety ratings are rarely considered in the purchase decision (7% of consumers rank ANCAP ratings as a top 3 priority), suggesting that increased promotion of safety features and ratings could strengthen their role in vehicle purchase decisions.

Drawing on research findings, a number of suggestions for encouraging the uptake of safer vehicles are presented in this report. This includes promoting safety features as value-added benefits, with discounts or government incentives to address cost barriers and encourage greater consideration of safety. Additional measures could include developing a communications campaign to raise awareness and understanding of safety features and promoting safety related information and resources like [howsafeisyourcar.com](https://www.howsafeisyourcar.com), along with dealership training. Offering trial programs for advanced safety features may further boost safer vehicle adoption.

## 2 Introduction

In recent years, shortages in new car availability due to the impact of COVID-19, disruptions in the global car market, and concerns about the cost of living have led to increased demand for used vehicles among Australians seeking more affordable options. The average age of vehicles registered in New South Wales (NSW) increased from 9.9 years in 2021 to 10.2 years in 2022<sup>1</sup>. Research indicates that vehicle fleet age is a significant factor influencing the rate of vehicle crashes, with older vehicles being four times more likely to be involved in fatal crashes compared to newer vehicles<sup>2</sup>.

This finding is supported by the Monash University Accident Research Centre's 2021 Used Car Safety Ratings (UCSR) report<sup>3</sup>, which analysed data from over 8.8 million vehicles involved in police-reported crashes across Australia and New Zealand. The report reveals that older vehicles are disproportionately represented in fatal crashes, with certain categories of used cars, such as the "light car" category, failing to receive any five-star safety ratings.

Public awareness of vehicle safety remains limited. A 2021 study by the NSW Centre for Road Safety found that unsafe vehicles rank as the least concerning road safety issue for the NSW community, with only 4% of respondents identifying unsafe vehicles as their primary concern, compared to unsafe roads (12%), drink driving (24%), and speeding (18%).

Transport for NSW's (TfNSW) 2026 Road Safety Action Plan<sup>4</sup> (RSAP) sets ambitious goals aiming to halve deaths and reduce serious injuries by 30% on NSW roads by 2030. A key pillar of the RSAP centres on increasing the safety of vehicles driven in NSW. By 2030, it is anticipated that at least 25% of the light vehicle fleet will have a 5-star safety rating from the ANCAP with a date stamp 6-years-old at maximum, and the average age of the light vehicle fleet less than nine years<sup>5</sup>.

The critical importance of this strategic priority, along with the evidence linking safer vehicles to reduced fatalities and the widespread lack of awareness regarding vehicle safety, highlights the need for further research in this area. TfNSW commissioned research to further the understanding of consumer perceptions of vehicle safety and the factors underpinning its priority in purchase decisions. Findings will be used to inform initiatives that can reshape consumer purchasing behaviour toward newer and safer vehicles.

### 2.1 Research objectives

The aim of this research is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the decision-making processes involved in light vehicle purchases, exploring the range of factors that influence vehicle choices and the prominence of safety considerations. More specifically, the research sought to assess:

- **Drivers and barriers to vehicle purchasing:** What prompts consumers to consider replacing their vehicles, and why do some choose older, used cars over new ones?
- **Factors influencing vehicle selection:** How salient is safety in the vehicle purchase decision-making process, and what role do factors like budget, demographics, and vehicle type play?

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<sup>1</sup> Vehicle age report. <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au>

<sup>2</sup> ANCAP safety ratings and the risk of fatal crashes. <https://www.ancap.com.au>

<sup>3</sup> Used car safety ratings: Analysis of police-reported crashes. <https://www.monash.edu/muarc>

<sup>4</sup> 2026 road safety action plan. <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au>

<sup>5</sup> National Road Safety Strategy 2021–30. <https://www.roadsafety.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/National-Road-Safety-Strategy-2021-30.pdf>

- **Awareness and perceptions of safety features:** What is the level of awareness, knowledge, and perceptions of the range of safety features available in new vehicles?
- **Sources of information for vehicle purchases:** What resources do consumers access when researching or buying vehicles? Are these sources different for different vehicle type?

The findings of the research are intended to inform the development or enhancement of interventions and initiatives aiming to increase the uptake of safer vehicles in NSW.

## 2.2 Methodology

The research was conducted over two stages, and involved both quantitative and qualitative research methods. It comprised:

1. A survey of 2008 NSW residents who had either purchased a new or used vehicle in the last 12 months or were intending to purchase a vehicle in the next 2 years. This was conducted from 27 February to 13 March 2024.
2. A 5-day online group discussion and 12 in-depth interviews with vehicle purchasers/intenders conducted in April 2024.

## 2.3 About this report

This report provides a snapshot of key insights from the research, drawing on both quantitative and qualitative findings. The implications of the research are also presented in summary form.

## 3 Findings

### 3.1 What influences vehicle choice?

The choice of a vehicle is influenced by a combination of financial, functional, emotional, and aesthetic factors, with cost emerging as a significant consideration for many. While safety may be implied through performance and driving experience, it is rarely a priority or a conscious choice.

#### Most people replace their cars every 5 to 10 years, with cost a key influence

Most consumers (55%) reported replacing their car around every 5-10 years, with a third (36%) replacing sooner than that, and around one in ten (13%) delaying the purchase for over ten years. The main barrier to replacing a vehicle relates to the cost– identified by two-thirds of respondents (66%), skewing towards younger groups and those in low income households.

#### Cost pressure also has significance in purchasing decisions, particularly for used car buyers

The costs of purchasing and running a vehicle remain a significant driver of vehicle choice. As illustrated in Figure 1, price was considered the strongest influence on the selection of a vehicle for 2 in 5 consumers (38%), followed by running costs (29%). Around a fifth of respondents identified fuel type and the vehicle brand or manufacturer (22% each) as having an important influence on their purchase decision, with a similar proportion nominating vehicle safety (20%) – the fifth most important purchase influence overall.

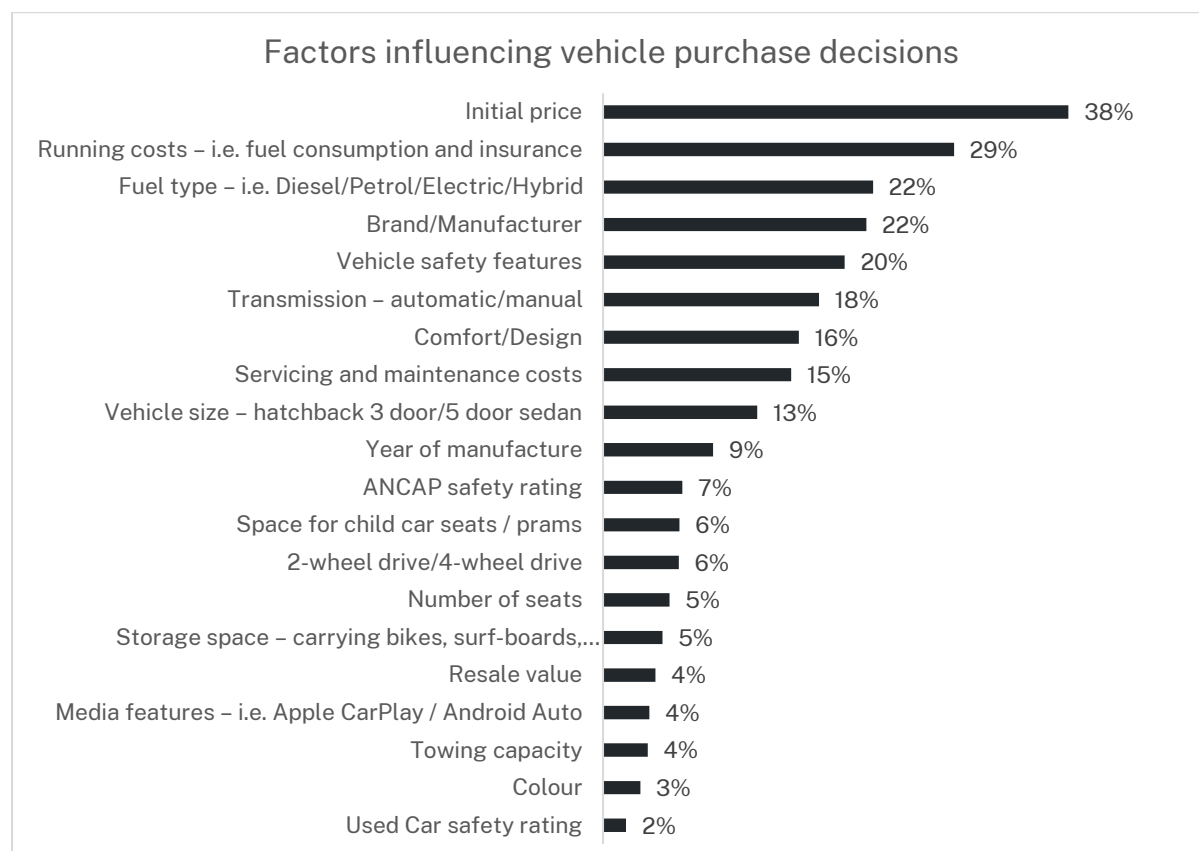


Figure 1. Factors influencing vehicle purchase decisions

Survey question: B2 'Thinking about the most recent car you purchased or intend to purchase which 3 of these have the greatest influence on your decision?'

Base: n=2008 vehicle consumers

Concern around the cost of new vehicles also underpins the appeal of used cars, with three quarters of those who had purchased a used vehicle in the study saying that this was due to the cheaper purchase price and/or a desire to save money (76%). The cohort of used car buyers also skews towards younger groups and low income households, together with women and those living in regional NSW.

*“New cars depreciate too quickly - it was important to us to buy a car that was up to 4 years old with low kms, so we got the benefit of current features without the cost.” Female, 45-54, buyer (used)*

### Emotional needs also guide purchase decisions

While cost serves as the most significant driver of car choice for most consumers, an interplay of functional and emotional needs also influence vehicle selection. The research highlights the varying relationships that consumers have with cars and different personal contexts that influence their motivations and barriers to purchasing a vehicle. For some buyers, their relationship with their car is primarily functional, serving simply to get them from point A to point B.

*“My car to me is like a tool because it performs a function, and it makes me feel useful.” Male, 25-34, buyer (used)*

Emotional needs are also important in guiding the selection of vehicles however. These can encompass internal needs – such as reliability, comfort, and autonomy or external needs – such as prestige, innovation, and nostalgia. Reliability builds confidence, comfort enhances satisfaction, and autonomy empowers drivers. Prestige motivates luxury purchases, innovation aligns with eco-values, particularly with EVs, while nostalgia fosters emotional connections to past memories. A big influencer for car purchasing is “the look and feel” which comprises many of the preferences that matter to buyers, including design, style, colour and detailing.

*“My car to me is like a piece of me, because my own transport enables me to be connected in the world and it makes me feel empowered and free.” Female, 55-64, intender (new)*

## 3.2 What is the role of safety in the purchase decision?

Safety is a secondary consideration in vehicle purchases, often overshadowed by price and aesthetic. Only 20% of consumers selected vehicle safety features as one of their top three priorities for car purchase (after price, running costs, fuel type and brand). The research suggests that this may reflect a number of factors, including assumptions about the safety of all vehicles, cognitive biases that minimise the perceived importance of vehicle safety, as well as a lack of awareness and understanding of safety features. Safety becomes more important for those with personal experiences of crashes or near-misses, buyers of new or electric vehicles, SUV buyers and young families.

### 3.2.1 ‘Safety assumptions’ negate the need for critical assessment of vehicle safety

Consumers often appear to make ‘safety assumptions’ about cars rather than assessing safety in a more considered or critical way. Safety assumptions act as mental shortcuts for safety, and

relate to beliefs around the brand, size, age, and type of vehicle. This is reinforced by a lack of awareness and explicit consideration of safety features, which are typically seen as 'embedded' within the features of a car (see Section 3.4 below).

*"I didn't look at any safety ratings of the particular car I purchased. I did to some extent rely on Toyota being a trusted and reliable brand of car... I purchased the Toyota with my head not my heart". Female, 35-44, buyer (new)*

### 3.2.2 Driver skills are considered a more significant protective factor

The research also suggests that consumers often see drivers' ability as most significant in crash avoidance. Some 3 in 5 (59%) consumers agreed that the skills of drivers are more important for avoiding crashes than the safety features of the vehicle they drive. This stems from a tendency for drivers to overestimate their ability to manage situations on the road (the 'illusion of control'). This mindset often leads to optimism bias, where individuals overrate their driving competency.

*"While safety is definitely important, I am confident that I can overcome the lack of advanced safety features with driving skills (and basic safety features), if the decision ever came to price vs safety." Female, 25-34, intender (used)*

*"It does not have to be the safest car in the world for me to avoid collisions. I think a lot more of the safety goes into the skill of the driver." Male, 65+, intender (used)*

### 3.2.3 A lack of trust in safety features

The research also revealed considerable distrust in vehicle safety features. One in 2 consumers (51%) agreed they would find it difficult to trust crash avoidance technologies that take control of the vehicle, and 4 in 10 (39%) agreed that safety features are made to sound a lot more effective than they really would be in a crash.

*"Over reliance on these features which can fail, and not developing your own road skills when driving which should be a priority rather than relying on electronic technology." Male, 65+, intender (used)*

### 3.2.4 Safety is a greater priority for those with crash experience, those purchasing new vehicles and young families

The research suggests that vehicle safety may hold greater salience for a number of consumer cohorts:

- Those with personal experiences of crashes or near-misses appeared more likely to consider vehicle safety in the selection of a vehicle. These participants recognised the value of active safety features in protecting against the potential for human error when fatigued or distracted.
- Those purchasing newer vehicles were also more likely to prioritise safety. While just under one-quarter (23%) of those purchasing a new vehicle listed safety in their top 3 priorities, this was significantly higher than those purchasing used vehicles (15% of used car buyers consider safety within top 3 priorities).
- Consumers of electric vehicles, SUVs, and young families were also significantly more likely to consider a higher number of active safety features in their decisions and to rank safety features as one of the top three factors influencing their purchase.



### 3.3 When does safety gain salience in the vehicle purchase journey?

Consumers typically go through four distinct stages when making car-buying decisions. While safety is not usually the primary factor, it is considered at each stage of the process, with the most emphasis placed on safety during the shortlisting stage.

#### 3.3.1 Realisation/desire phase: Safety is not a primary concern

This phase begins when the consumer makes the initial decision to purchase a car. This may be triggered by various factors, such as changes in lifestyle, uncertainty about their current vehicle (e.g. rising maintenance costs), or simply an interest in new car models.

At this stage, safety is often not a primary concern, the reliability of different car brands is more salient. A strong preference for brand and aesthetics (e.g., size, appearance), driven by emotional desires for reliability, comfort, luxury, or nostalgia often overshadows considerations of safety.

#### 3.3.2 Browsing/research phase: Safety information may be referenced, but not a key factor

Consumers begin exploring options and gathering information about brands, models, features, and pricing through online research, word of mouth, and dealers. They assess these features against their personal wants and needs. While safety information, such as star ratings, may be referenced, these tend not to be a key factor, as many assume that cars are generally safe. The decision to purchase a used versus new vehicle may shift based on cost and availability at this stage.

Those with a specific car brand in mind assess whether their preferred vehicle is fit-for-purpose, available and attainable within a reasonable price range. Expectations regarding safety are often low, with features like seatbelts and airbags viewed as standard safety features.

*"It was a bit confusing as there were so many options and opinions. The reviews were confusing, some good, some bad. We were not sure whom to follow or what to believe." Male, 35-44, influencer*

#### 3.3.3 Shortlisting phase: Safety features are learned or experienced

Consumers will visit dealerships or car lots to learn more about the vehicles they are considering, helping to narrow down their choices or validate their purchase decision. They start focusing on a few options and may want to experience these cars firsthand by booking a test drive or renting one to try it out.

At this phase, consumers may learn about safety features or experience them directly, which can positively or negatively influence their perceptions and motivation.

*"The car helps me tackling blind spots. The car helps me against obstacles, especially when I am in parking lot and kerb sides." Male 55-64, intender (used)*

#### 3.3.4 Value analysis: Role of safety features may be considered

At this near-final stage of the decision-making process, consumers compare their shortlist of cars based on cost, brand, features, condition, and other personal preferences. Consumers typically evaluate the overall value of the vehicle based on their priorities. For some, this includes revisiting safety features as part of their final decision, especially when comparing new versus used vehicles. At this point, safety features might be scrutinised, especially if they help

justify a higher price tag, provide a perceived long-term benefit, or address any specific concerns (e.g., for buyers of new cars, young families, or those with crash experiences).

For example, electric vehicle (EV) consumers might weigh safety features more heavily, especially if they align with the innovation and eco-values often associated with these vehicles. Similarly, consumers looking to save on long-term costs may view safety features as a form of investment, potentially reducing future risks and repair costs.

### 3.4 What is the level of awareness of vehicle safety features?

#### 3.4.1 Knowledge of many active safety features is relatively low

The research assessed awareness and understanding of 18 specific car safety features. These features were categorised as either active or passive, where active features intervene to prevent a crash, and passive features minimise the impact of a crash.

Airbags and seatbelts have the highest awareness and understanding among consumers, with over 94% aware of these and 90% claiming that they understood what they do to protect road users. Anti-lock braking systems (ABS) show a high level of awareness (82%), but only 53% claimed to understand what they do. Electronic stability control (ESC) and speed assist systems have the lowest levels of awareness and understanding among consumers. Only 38% were aware of ESC with 27% understanding what it does, while speed assist systems fare slightly worse, with 35% aware of this feature and just 26% understanding what it does.

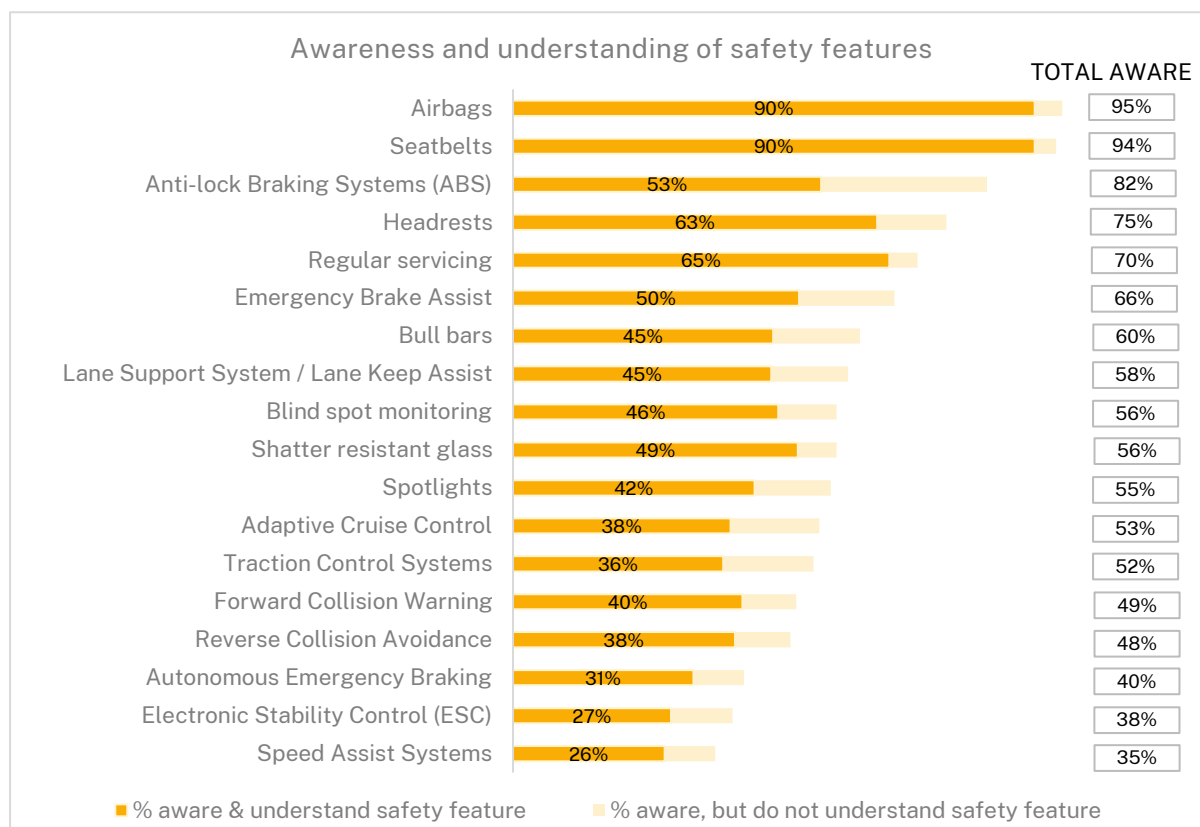


Figure 2. Awareness and understanding of safety features

Survey question: C4 'Looking at the following list, which of these vehicle safety features, if any, had you heard of before today?' C5 'And, to what extent do you feel you understand what each of these vehicle safety features do to protect road users?'

Base: n=2008 vehicle consumers

The research showed considerable variation in awareness of car safety features across different consumer cohorts. For instance, used car owners, women, and consumers under 34 years are significantly less knowledgeable about car safety features. Conversely, new car owners, men and consumers aged 55+ years are significantly more knowledgeable.

### 3.4.2 Perceptions of the importance of safety features varied

The perceived importance of individual safety features varied, largely reflecting consumers' understanding of and familiarity with car safety features. Passive safety features, such as seatbelts and airbags, were considered essential by most consumers (91% and 87%, respectively) when purchasing their next car. Active safety features, such as ABS brakes, blind spot monitoring, and emergency braking, were rated as essential by a smaller proportion (74%, 57%, and 57%, respectively). By contrast, features like lane support systems, adaptive cruise control, autonomous emergency braking, and speed assist systems were deemed essential by a minority consumers overall (42%, 42%, 41%, and 37%, respectively).

*"There are few features that make a vehicle safe. First a strong body structure, advanced safety systems, good set of airbags." Male, 25-34, buyer (new)*

*"Personally, I would deem a vehicle to be safe if it has ABS brakes, airbags, lane detection warning systems, parking sensors and reversing cameras. Based on what I have read in the past, these kinds of features have helped to prevent issues like bumping into other cars while parking or reversing, crashes, slippage etc." Male, 25-34, intender (new)*

## 3.5 What sources inform vehicle purchase?

Vehicle purchases are mainly informed by online sources, with 55% of consumers relying on car review and listing websites. Industry professionals and personal contacts also influence decisions. Safety ratings like ANCAP are less influential, with many consumers unaware of these or prioritising them lower in their decisions. Websites like *howsafeisyourcar.com* are considered useful but need more promotion to impact buying choices.

### 3.5.1 Consumers access various sources but online resources are most common

Consumers access a variety of sources of information when researching or buying a vehicle. The most influential include online sources (55% rated as influential), such as car review websites (16%), car listing websites (9%), car manufacturer websites (7%), comparison/review websites (5%), and watching car videos (4%). Industry professionals such as dealerships are also key sources of information (19% for car dealerships in person, 3% for car dealerships online).

Consumers are also likely to rely on the opinions of their spouse (40%), friends (25%) and other family members (23%) to establish their criteria of importance and identifying vehicles for consideration against these criteria. One-fifth will rely on their mechanic especially when looking to purchase a used vehicle. Women are more likely than men to be influenced by the opinions and advice given by others.

### 3.5.2 Consumers have limited knowledge of car safety ratings

The research points to relatively low engagement with vehicle safety information, resulting from limited awareness and/ or a perceived lack of relevance against personal needs and competing priorities.

Half of all consumers (52%) were aware of ANCAP while just under one-fifth had heard of the Used Car Safety Rating (17%). Half of new car buyers were not aware of their car's ANCAP rating and three in five used car buyers were not aware of their car's UCSR rating.

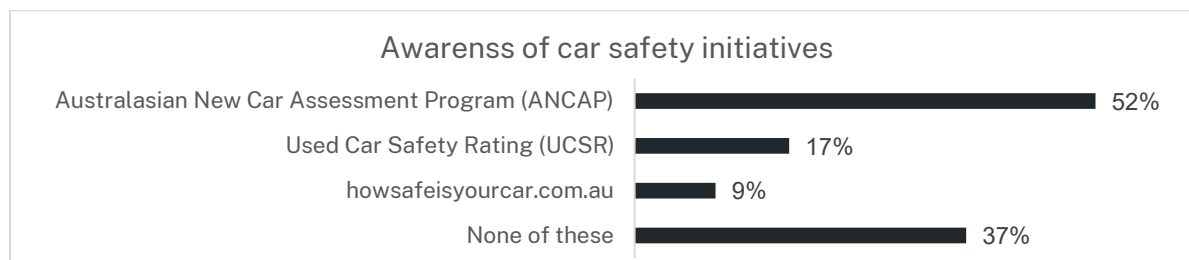


Figure 3. Awareness of car safety initiatives  
Survey question: C8 'Before today had you heard of any of the following?'  
Base: n=2008 vehicle consumers

Around a third of consumers had heard of the ANCAP Datestamp (31%). Of these, just over two-fifths (46%) understood that it represents the date or year that the safety test was conducted. Other interpretations of the ANCAP Datestamp included that it was a car safety rating or standard, a testing system for vehicles, or an indicator of product quality.

The research suggests that ANCAP ratings tend not to be prioritised in vehicle choice. For instance, ANCAP safety rating was ranked 10<sup>th</sup> in terms of priorities among consumers (7% list it as one of their top 3 influences).

*"I know of ANCAP...from the ads throughout the years. When I bought the Cleo, the negatives were that it was 4 stars. Whereas the Corolla is advertised as 5-star. Whatever comes up as reviews, but I don't seek it out. Modern safety features are good but sometimes it's too much and make people lazy." Male, 25-34, Influencer*

*"Vehicle safety rating info is typically not something that is readily available when looking at car sales apps, so I do tend to look at price and other aspects primarily." Male, 25-34, buyer (used)*

*"I was actually surprised when I read my car is only 1 star, this was alarming. It made me think that I did not do much research when I was looking at buying my first car. I totally went on price." Female, 18-24, buyer (used)*

### 3.5.3 Despite low awareness of howsafeisyourcar.com, perceptions are positive

While there was limited awareness of howsafeisyourcar.com (9%), the website was viewed favourably when presented to consumers. The website was particularly praised for offering a good level of detail, while using a clean and simple interface that was easy to use.

*"I only scored a 3/10 which felt disappointing. It showed that my car is quite behind on safety features." Female, 35-44, buyer (new)*

*"The recommended safety features score makes me happy, because I spent the extra money on one of the top models of RAV 4, so I feel like the purchase price has been somewhat justified." Female, 35-44, buyer (new)*

## 4 Implications

Overall, the research points to a clear need to raise the salience of safety in vehicle purchase decisions. Vehicle safety tends not to be prioritised in the context of other purchase considerations, as a result of competing consumer needs and limited understanding of the effectiveness of vehicle safety features. The findings have a number of important implications for the development of interventions aiming to encourage the uptake of safer vehicles.

These are set out below.

### **4.1 Raising awareness of active safety features is key to shifting consumer priorities**

Currently, consumers appear to have low personal expectations and desire for active safety features as a result of limited awareness and understanding of safety features and the progress in vehicle safety technology.

This calls for consumer targeted communications to build an understanding of why safety matters and why it needs to be a consideration in vehicle purchasing decisions. Better consumer education on newer active safety features could help to improve understanding of their value.

### **4.2 Integrating safety communications early in the car buying journey is essential**

Safety is not top-of-mind in purchasing conversations, and not present (or overlooked) during critical moments in the journey when potential buyers are exploring, researching, and gathering information.

Safety communications can be targeted online for consumers who are early in the purchasing journey, gathering information, exploring options, and learning about cars and their features through trusted sources. This approach would help to position safety as a core part of the decision-making process, alongside factors like price.

### **4.3 Reframing vehicle safety to fulfil consumer needs enhances engagement and understanding**

Safety information, such as star ratings, is often overlooked due to a lack of understanding or perceived irrelevance to specific car needs. Without prior experience, consumers may struggle to recognise the value of safety features, especially when these don't align with their immediate priorities.

To engage consumers, consideration could be given to reframing safety as a pathway to fulfilling other priorities, such as reliability or comfort. Positioning safety features in terms of what matters most may help to engage consumers and better highlight their true value.

#### **4.4 Combating cognitive biases is crucial to elevating the salience of vehicle safety features**

There are cognitive biases at play that hinder consumers' motivation to prioritise safety. People underestimate their personal risk of crashes or overestimate their control over incidents, believing that safety depends primarily on drivers' skill- both can lead to downplaying the need for safety features.

To counter this, consider highlighting relatable real-world examples of road risks and how safety features save lives. Demonstrate how these features empower drivers in situations beyond their control, such as unforeseen circumstances or the actions of other drivers. This approach could help to reduce overconfidence and reinforce the importance of safety features.

#### **4.5 Enhancing collaboration between manufacturers and dealers promotes vehicle safety information**

Manufacturer's websites and dealerships play a crucial role in influencing consumers throughout the purchasing journey. However, safety information is often underemphasised at key touchpoints.

To address this, manufacturers, dealers, and regulatory bodies should consider collaboration to prominently promote vehicle safety standards and features in brochures, promotional materials, and websites. Additionally, requirements to display the safety ratings at critical points, such as online listings and dealerships, would further enhance visibility and encourage consideration of safety during the buying process.

#### **4.6 Improving consumer knowledge and access to tools and services is essential for informed purchases**

There would be considerable benefit in raising awareness and engagement in vehicle safety information and advice.

To enhance consumer awareness and understanding of vehicle safety and features, websites like [howsafeisyourcar.com](https://www.how-safe-is-your-car.com) are valuable, especially when integrated early in the purchasing process.

Increasing the availability of user-friendly tools and support services such as trialling safety features in newer vehicles may encourage adoption among consumers. Offering upskilling training to dealerships on these resources could further support such an initiative.

#### **4.7 Encouraging safety-focused purchases through financial incentives and reframing cost perceptions**

The assumption that safer vehicles are more expensive is a significant barrier to consideration, alongside preferences for other features, such as brand, that often overshadow safety.

Since cost is a primary factor in purchase decisions, promoting safety as a value-added benefit could help shift perceptions. Offering discounts on safety feature packages or government incentives, such as reduced registration and licensing fees for consumers of safer vehicles, could further encourage safety-focused purchasing.