

香港汽車修理同業商會有限公司的信頭  
Letterhead of HONG KONG VEHICLE REPAIR MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION  
LTD

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AUTOMOTIVE SERVICE AND TROUBLE DIAGNOSIS/  
INSPECTION TECHNIQUE

**Registered Vehicle Mechanics - Awareness of Environmental Protection**  
**- Technical Training and Free Access to Technical Data/Information**

Hong Kong's vehicle repairs/maintenance industry has been already over 40 years of history. In the early days, due to insufficient supply of auto parts, accessories, and expensive imported British cars such as Austin, Mini and Cooper etc. most of the people in this industry had to recondition/repair the damaged parts and accessories manually and then re-used them. This is called the stage of "pure vehicle repair & maintenance". Later in the middle stage, the import of Benz, BMW etc. from Germany were most welcomed by the local customers. The manufacturer provided sufficient parts and accessories with reasonable pricing. In case the vehicle parts were damaged, they would be reconditioned if they could; otherwise they would be replaced by the new spare parts. Until 1970s-1980s, there was a great leap of the Japanese automobile industry. Japan-made cars were sold in a great amount around the world. Brand-new and second-hand auto parts accessories had sufficient supplies, so few technicians would spend time in repairing the damaged parts/accessories for the re-use, and the stage of "pure vehicle repair & maintenance" was changed into the stage of "assembling/disassembling/replacing auto parts/accessories". As far as the vehicle construction is concerned, during the 1990s the vehicle have been developed from the early fully mechanical fabrication to the electromechanical integration, i.e. the main control elements of the vehicles are most replaced with electronic components, computer, Electronic Control Unit (ECU) and sensors except the mechanical structure. So for the automotive service, the early trouble shootings method of relying on experienced mechanic's eyes and judgement by have not already been able to meet the modern requirements. Now, the vehicle service personnel must have computer and electronic knowledge. In addition equipped with advanced vehicle diagnostic instruments e.g. specialized tester/apparatus supplied by manufacturer (normally called "Hand Help"), the

technicians are able to detect vehicle failure before replacing the damaged components. Therefore, the recent vehicle service industry has developed from the previous stage of “pure vehicle repair & maintenance” into the preventive maintenance/repairs of electromechanical vehicle with the application of advanced diagnostic instruments. A high-quality service plant depends on the good managers. What’s more, it needs to have technicians having the relevant electronic, computer and hi-tech knowledge, advanced test instruments and technical information data, such as CD-ROM and specifications etc. The excellent customer service is essential too. Only in this way can it keep survival?

In 1997, affected by the financial crisis in Asia, Hong Kong’s various industries have undergone a period of adjustments. The Auto Service trade was also badly affected. As the new car’s sales greatly dropped, the sales prices were lowered continuously, so the new car’s sales and profit were dissatisfactory. The sizable motor car dealers and large vehicle service plants also reduce their charges competing with medium and small competitors to seize the market. As a result, those small-scale and unqualified garages got bankrupt one after another. Today, the vehicle maintenance trade’s survival depends not only on the technical skills/experience.

In this year’s Policy Address Mr. Tung Chee Hwa, the Chief Executive of HKSAR, emphasized the importance of the environmental protection in Hong Kong, while the air pollution resulting from the vehicle exhaust emission are being focused. Thus, the people engaged in the sector of vehicle maintenance are playing an important role. The vehicle mechanics must take good care of the vehicle operational safety and performance. What’s more, they have to ensure the local vehicle exhaust emission to meet the world-wide standard of environmental protection.

To improve auto technician’s quality, training is very important. The vehicle mechanics are the main work forces of all the automotive service depots. By taking this opportunity, we would like to ask the government to establish the relevant

regulations for licensing all vehicle mechanics so as to improve their quality which in turn enhances the environmental protection and road safety. This year we already have contracted actively with the government authorities concerned to propose licensed mechanics system. **Besides, proper manpower training, free access to vehicle technical data/information and setting up of equipment centre.** Would enable those medium and small size service depots to compete with their counter parts on a fair basis.

At the moment, Hong Kong's vehicle service industry is undergoing a period of adjustment. Therefore, in our opinion, more emphasis should be put on vehicle maintenance management, manpower training, equipment and customer services. In addition, greater effort should be devoted to the consciousness of environmental protection and license-issuing system to the vehicle mechanics. Only in this way, Hong Kong's vehicle maintenance trade may further develop flourish and bloom.

Chairman

RINGO LEE