Pickles

MEDIA RELEASE

Regional EV demand accelerates as used market hits record highs

Regional buyers now account for almost one in three Pickles used EV sales, as Australia's secondary EV market expands beyond the capital cities

8 October 2026: Regional Australia is playing an increasingly significant role in the used electric vehicle market, with new Pickles data showing both buyer and dealer participation rising sharply outside the major cities.

Released today in Issue 11 of the Pickles Quarterly Automotive Report (QAR), the data shows regional buyers accounted for 32 per cent of Pickles used EV purchases in FY26, up from 27 per cent a year earlier.

The increase is not simply a shift in buyer mix: the number of used EVs purchased by regional buyers increased from approximately 120 in FY25 to around 280 in FY26 – growth of 130 per cent. Bidding from regional buyers also increased 124 per cent.

Dealer participation has moved even faster. Regional dealers purchased 26 per cent of Pickles' used EVs in FY26, compared with 17 per cent in FY25, providing a further indication that confidence in local secondary EV demand is growing.

Brendon Green, General Manager, Automotive Solutions at Pickles, said the increase in dealer activity was particularly significant.

"Regional private buyers buying used EVs is one thing, but dealers increasing their participation tells us they're becoming more confident they can put these vehicles on their yards and find a local buyer.

"That gives us a much stronger indication that the secondary EV market is developing beyond the major cities."

The east coast led the shift, with regional participation increasing across Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland. In Queensland, almost half of Pickles used EV sales went to regional buyers in FY26, compared with less than one-fifth the previous year.

The regional growth comes as Pickles records its strongest used EV volumes to date. More than 1,580 used EVs were sold in the 12 months to September, compared with approximately 740 in the previous 12 months. More than 440 were sold during Q3, making it Pickles' largest used EV quarter on record, while September became its biggest single month with more than 200 used EVs sold.

Green said the growing geographic spread of demand was important for the development of the secondary market.

“For residual values, the depth of the buyer pool matters. If more dealers and end-user buyers are prepared to compete for used EVs, regardless of postcode, that is a positive development for the secondary market.”

Used vehicle market begins spring recovery

QAR11 also shows signs of stabilisation across the broader used vehicle market following a sharper-than-usual winter slowdown.

The Datium Insights Used Car Index recovered from 113 per cent in August to 114 per cent in September, while passenger vehicle values increased three per cent during Q3. Pickles expects improved demand and buyer activity to continue through October and November as more traditional seasonal trading patterns become increasingly evident.

Chris Shaw, General Manager, Motor Vehicles at Pickles, said:

“The first half of the year was heavily influenced by fuel prices and broader uncertainty, which changed buying behaviour very quickly. What we’re seeing now is a market starting to settle, with buyers becoming more active again as we move into the traditional spring period.”

QAR11 identifies further shifts across the automotive market

The report also examines the growing pipeline of vehicles reaching the end of novated leases. Pickles’ ex-novated volumes in Q3 were 157 per cent higher than Q1, following a 118 per cent increase in Q2, with relatively young vehicles entering the used market as the first waves of EVs acquired following the introduction of the FBT exemption approach typical replacement periods.

In heavy transport, Pickles’ gross truck sales have grown 20 per cent over two years, from $251 million in FY24 to $301 million in FY26, demonstrating continued buyer demand despite fuel costs, finance costs, competition, and other operating headwinds facing the sector.

QAR11 also reveals an emerging difference in how ageing EVs perform in the salvage market. Among salvage vehicles aged seven to 12 years with pre-accident values up to $40,000, statutory write-off EVs achieved sale results 16 per cent higher than comparable ICE vehicles, while repairable write-off EVs achieved 71 per cent more. Pickles believes the value contained within EV batteries may increasingly influence salvage outcomes as Australia’s EV carpark matures.

Read the latest *Pickles Quarterly Automotive Report* at https://www.pickles.com.au/qar/q3-2026-report.

-ends-

ABOUT PICKLES

Pickles is Australia’s leading marketplace for used motor vehicles, industrial, mining, oil & gas, construction, salvage assets, and general goods, offering thousands of quality items across hundreds of monthly, online auctions. With more than 60 years’ experience selling on behalf of trusted vendors including government departments, major financial institutions, fleet, lease, and insurance companies, and major corporate businesses, Pickles offers customers value, flexibility, and convenience.

For further information or to organise an interview, please contact:
Kelly Drew: 0418 486 959 / kelly.drew@stratcollective.com.au