



CARAVAN TRADE & INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA
T/A CARAVAN INDUSTRY VICTORIA

Unit 8/88 Dynon Road, West Melbourne Vic 3003
P 03 9372 5388 E info@caravanindustryvictoria.com.au
caravanindustryvictoria.com.au | caravanshow.com.au
ABN: 67 413 472 774



Daniel Sahlberg
CEO
Caravan Industry
Victoria

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State of the Caravanning Heartland – Confidence Through Change

Caravanning remains strong as the industry navigates an economic reset

The Australian caravan industry is continuing to navigate one of the most significant periods of economic and structural change experienced in recent years.

Since Caravan Industry Victoria last provided an industry update in June, further businesses across the Australian recreational vehicle sector have entered administration or ceased trading, most recently Australian Off Road in Queensland on 15 September after more than 25 years in business. Every business affected represents employees, suppliers, customers and families, and the impact should not be understated.

However, it is equally important that the current operating environment is understood in its proper context.

The caravan industry is not alone.

Across Australia, 14,152 companies entered external administration or had a controller appointed during FY2025–26. While slightly below the previous year's 14,722, the figure remains approximately 78 per cent higher than the 7,942 recorded just three years earlier in FY2022–23.

Manufacturing businesses in particular continue to face substantial pressure. In June, the Australian Bureau of Statistics found 55 per cent of manufacturers reported increasing operating expenses, 35 per cent reported declining revenue and 28 per cent were experiencing supply-chain disruptions.

At the same time, Australia's cash rate remains at 4.35 per cent after three increases during 2026, tightening financial conditions for both businesses and households. For consumers considering a major discretionary purchase such as a caravan or recreational vehicle, the cost of finance matters. The competitive environment is changing as well.

In 2025, 23,244 caravan trailers and related components were imported into Australia, an increase of 16 per cent from the previous year, with their value increasing 12.6 per cent to \$619.2 million. Australian Off Road itself pointed to increasing international price competition and changing manufacturing economics when announcing its administration this week. That does not mean those factors explain every business failure, but it demonstrates how rapidly the competitive environment for Australian manufacturers is evolving.

The market is adjusting, but Australians are still caravanning

Importantly, pressure within parts of the manufacturing and retail sector should not be confused with Australians turning away from the caravanning lifestyle.

The latest RV Production IQ data highlights the breadth and evolution of the Australian RV market, with **3,728 new RVs entering the market in July 2026 and rolling 12-month production standing at 47,567 units**. While towable production moderated by 14 per cent year-on-year, **motorised RV production increased by 36 per cent**, demonstrating continued activity and changing dynamics across the market.

There are also signs that the market is moderating, with total RV entries in June 2026 1.8 per cent below June 2025 and towable RV entries down 6.4 per cent. These figures measure vehicles entering the Australian market rather than retail sales, but they demonstrate both the continuing scale of the market and the range of products available to consumers.

For Australians considering entering the caravanning lifestyle, upgrading their RV or preparing for summer travel, this changing market presents significant choice and opportunity – making informed purchasing decisions more important than ever.

Australians have not stopped wanting to get away

The strongest indicator of the industry's future is what Australians are actually doing.

In the year ending March 2026, Australians took **17.7 million caravan and camping trips**, spent **59.5 million nights away** and contributed **\$13.1 billion in visitor expenditure**.

In the first three months of 2026 alone, Australians took 4.7 million caravan and camping trips. This is 9 per cent more than the equivalent period in 2025, while nights increased 10 per cent and expenditure increased 15 per cent.

Caravanning and camping also remain fundamentally connected to regional Australia. In 2025 almost one in every seven domestic overnight trips involved caravan or camping, while 87 per cent of caravan and camping nights occurred in regional Australia.

For regional communities, that matters. Caravan and camping accounted for around one in every three domestic overnight holiday trips and holiday nights in regional Australia, and approximately one in every four dollars spent on regional holiday trips.

Caravanning is more than the purchase of an RV. It gives Australians the ability to get away, spend time with family and friends, reconnect with regional Victoria and Australia, get outdoors and create experiences that can be enjoyed repeatedly for years.

Consumer confidence must now be earned

The current environment also reinforces why Caravan Industry Victoria created **RV Master**.

For many Australians, purchasing a caravan or recreational vehicle is one of the largest discretionary purchases they will make.

Consumers naturally look at price, layout, appearance and features. But in today's environment, there is another question they should increasingly ask:

- **Who is the business standing behind the product?**

RV Master was established to look beyond an individual caravan and independently assess the business behind it.

Accredited RV Master manufacturers are assessed across five whole-of-business pillars –

Business Systems, Quality Management, Human Resources, Customer Service and Compliance.

The assessment considers areas including financial systems and viability, insurance, workplace

practices, warranty systems, quality management, consumer processes and regulatory compliance, with documentation review, onsite assessment and ongoing annual compliance requirements.

No accreditation can guarantee that a business will never experience future financial difficulty. What RV Master does provide is an independent and structured level of scrutiny across the business that consumers ordinarily cannot undertake themselves.

That distinction has never been more important.

Caravan Industry Victoria encourages consumers considering a new RV to research not only the product they are purchasing, but the manufacturer and dealer standing behind it, their history, support networks, warranty arrangements and independent accreditations.

Confidence through change

Daniel Sahlberg, Chief Executive Officer of Caravan Industry Victoria, said:

"We shouldn't pretend the industry isn't under pressure. Businesses are dealing with higher finance costs, higher operating costs, changing supply chains and a much more competitive global market.

"But business pressure and Australians' appetite for caravanning are two different things.

"Australians are still taking millions of caravan and camping trips, spending billions of dollars in regional communities and choosing this lifestyle in enormous numbers.

"The industry is going through an economic reset. Our responsibility is to help businesses navigate that change while also giving consumers the confidence and information they need to make good decisions.

"That is exactly why we created RV Master. Consumers shouldn't only ask what caravan they are buying. They should ask who is standing behind it.

"And most importantly, Australians should keep getting away. Spring is here, summer is approaching, there is enormous choice in the market and there has rarely been a better opportunity to explore Victoria and Australia by caravan and camping."

[Photos](#)

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For more information:

Jamie Williams
Caravan Industry Victoria
Marketing Manager
0406 726 624

E: marketing@caravanindustryvictoria.com.au

W: caravanindustryvictoria.com.au

W: caravanshow.com.au

W: rvmaster.com.au



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Caravan Industry Victoria

Caravan Trades & Industries Association Victoria (T/A Caravan Industry Victoria, CIV) has been the voice of Victoria's caravan and camping industry since 1952, advocating, representing and supporting members to enhance business performance and promote the sector. Originally formed by caravan manufacturers, hirers and enthusiasts of the "family lifestyle" caravanning offers, CIV now represents more than 250 members across manufacturing, retail, supply, servicing and hire, including caravans, motorhomes, fifth wheelers, tent trailers, accessories and relocatable homes.

CIV works on behalf of its members to engage with industry and government, promote businesses, and provide access to research, marketing opportunities, business support and specialist advice. The organisation also leads industry development through accreditation programs, testing and certification, technical and regulatory guidance, legal support and consumer and industry education, helping set standards across a \$3.5 billion Victorian industry that employs more than 12,500 people.

Victoria is the centre of Australia's caravan manufacturing sector, producing around 93 per cent of the nation's caravans and RVs, with much of the industry supply chain also based in the state. CIV operates six major consumer events annually in Victoria, including the Victorian Caravan & Camping Supershow and regional Leisurefests, which collectively attract more than 105,000 attendees, alongside major industry events such as the Hall of Fame and Industry Awards and the Trade Expo, which recognise excellence and support sector growth.

