

2017 KINSEY REPORT

The 28th edition of the Kinsey Report reflects the considerable turmoil affecting the motor industry in South Africa. Some manufacturers are withdrawing from the country, old established brands are no longer being imported and many dealer networks are negotiating for new vehicles to replace their old products. One of the early brands to exodus the country was Citroen. Peugeot SA decided to concentrate on the Peugeot range and stop importing the sister vehicles. Peugeot then acquired the Vauxhall and Opel brands from General Motors worldwide.

The shock waves had barely subsided by the time General Motors announced that they were withdrawing from South Africa – curtailing the importing of mainly Korean-assembled Chevrolet and closing down their manufacturing facility in Port Elizabeth.

Despite the gloom and doom generated by all these upheavals there are some important facts to bear in mind. No customers will be left in the lurch by these developments – Citroen customers will still be able to have their vehicles serviced by Peugeot SA and buy parts from Peugeot outlets.

Opel owners will still have a network of service centres throughout the country to care for their needs. Steinhoff, which owns Unitrans, including the Williams Hunt Group. Williams Hunt will in future handle new Opel sales and will be responsible for importing vehicles, parts and servicing. In 2018 they will begin to roll out a series of pure service centres to facilitate the work required.

These momentous developments have impacted on this year's Kinsey Report, which has been reduced to 62 vehicles. There are no Citroens, Opels or Chevrolets – hopefully once the dust has cleared we might be able to include an Opel or two next year.

I have added an additional piece on the cost of battery power for the first time, since we are headed into the era of hybrids and electric cars. The battery packs for 8 of these vehicles and the 220v mains charger, where applicable, have been shown separately.

Hybrid cars do not require a charger as the charge is done whilst driving, whereas pure electric cars must be fully charged by the charger. Prices seem very high, and doubtless will come down in time. The warranty on some of these packs seem generous - 10 years for the Toyotas and 8 years for BMW - and the packs can only be bought from the dealer network. The old battery pack is retained by the dealer and its disposal is rigorously controlled.

As ever we have 9 categories and have chosen vehicles with reasonable to good sales figures volumes and of similar types.

CITY CARS: Overall winner here is the Datsun Go - best in all 3 sections – service, repair and crash parts. Second spot goes to the Polo Vivo which boasts the lowest percentage of parts cost to price of vehicle and second lowest crash parts cost. Third is the Hyundai i10, scoring well on crash parts. The Tata Bolt, which we have included for the first time, fared well in the repair costs category (2nd) and service costs (3rd) but was knocked back by the price of the rear fender which includes the whole side of the vehicle from the front door.

SUPER MINI: Top spot goes to the VW Polo 1.2 TSi with both the most economical basket and best basket to purchase price of the car – a good indication of all round value for money. It also scores first in repair and crash parts and 2nd in service. Second overall goes to the Renault Sandero which scores well in all three sections. Third is the Renault Clio which just edges out the Ford Fiesta 1.0T by R191.

FAMILY FAVOURITES: For the third straight year this category is won by Toyota Corolla – the 1.6 Quest just pipping the 1.6 Prestige by a few thousand on the overall parts basket and also the percentage value for money. The Quest lowest parts basket cost includes the least expensive crash parts. The Corolla Prestige in second place has the 3rd least expensive service price and the 2nd best crash parts prices. Third is the Nissan Almera 1.5 with competitive prices in each section. The VW Golf GTi, comparatively expensive as a package, scores well in repair parts, - in 2nd place.

COMPACT CROSSOVER: Winner here is the Mahindra KUV 100, followed in second

place by the Peugeot 2008, ahead of the Ford Ecosport 1.0T by a mere R23.. Mahindra is lowest in the both the service and repair section with the Peugeot best in the crash parts section.

CROSSOVER: This category is again won by the Toyota Fortuner- convincingly in both least expensive parts basket and percentage calculation. Second goes to the RAV 4 2.0 – up 7 places from last year, - and third the Ford Kuga1.5T, - also very much improved this year. All 3 have the least pricey crash parts and it is interesting to note that all three have managed to beat inflation with their overall baskets being lower than in 2016 !

EXECUTIVE CROSSOVER: More Toyota strength in both overall parts basket price and percentage. All the vehicles in this section have automatic transmissions – the manual options not being as popular. Winner is the Toyota Prado 3.0 VX followed by the Volvo with good prices in service (1st), repair (2nd) and crash (2nd) parts. The Range Rover Evoque holds on to the third place which achieved last year. In 4th is the Grand Cherokee 3.0 CRD which is a welcome newcomer and has the 3rd least expensive crash parts basket.

DOUBLE CABS: Toyota adds another win with their Hilux 2.8 GD, clinching best basket price and affordability percentage. Second is the Nissan Navara and third the Isuzu KB 300, all tried and tested favourites. GWM Steed 6 gets a look-in with impressively low servicing parts costs. The first three are in that order, are the most competitive for crash parts prices.

SINGLE CABS: A Nissan first and second , the NP 200 (half tonne) and NP 300 (1 tonne) take honours here. These are genuine workhorses may lack a creature comfort or two but know their value in the work place. The winning NP 200 is currently the only small bakkie available in SA(but I have heard that the Chev UTE will be produced in Port Elizabeth by Isuzu next year, which is good news). The NP200 features well in all departments, service, repair and crash parts. The larger NP300 is 2nd in service parts and third for both repair and crash parts. Toyota's Hilux 2.4 scores third overall and best for crash parts pricing while Mahindra Scorpio takes third place for service parts prices.

EXECUTIVE SALOONS: These are once more all automatic transmission vehicles, - like the executive crossovers, the demand in this luxury category is almost exclusively for automatics. Volvo clinches first spot again with the S60 with the BMW 320i close behind. The BMW score a first for percentage value for money. The Jaguar XE comes an impressive third, not too far behind. The Jag has four items – front and rear discs and the 2 shock absorbers which make its repair parts the most expensive, while the Mercedes C200 is second in servicing parts and best in repair parts.

BATTERIES FOR ELECTRIC AND HYBRID CARS

As already mentioned, I have added an additional piece on battery power for the first time, since we are headed into the era of hybrids and electric cars. The battery packs for 8 of these vehicles and the 220v mains charger, where applicable, have been shown separately. The battery packs are just that, - dozens of small lithium ion or nickel-metal hydride batteries connected together to form a module – with up to 8 modules required (BMW i3).

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All these battery packs still give fairly limited range on electric power only and there is still some way to go before batteries reach efficiencies of 35 – 45% are achieved. The internal combustion / electric route is for now probably the most practicable since the batteries can be recharged while the car is driving, braking, decelerating and holding speed down a hill. We have done 2 1,000km trips in 2 Prius's, - both returned consumption figures of around 4,5 l/100km at normal freeway and game viewing speeds. Battery replacement costs are high so to buy an electric car near the end of its battery life will incur steep replacement costs and may not be cost efficient. We are living in interesting times in the development of the automotive industry and the next few years will certainly see some challenging changes.

View the full charts on the website www.kinseyreport.co.za