

AUTO GLASS ASSOCIATION (AGA)

If you cracked your windscreen 20 years ago an auto glass technician would match the glass, replace it, the adhesive would cure and you'd drive away. These days it's not so simple. Advances in late model vehicles have transformed the windscreen from a simple piece of curved safety glass into a complex grid of technologies.

Murray McGrath, president of the Auto Glass Association, said: "As well as being central to a vehicle's safety restraint system, modern windscreens can control cabin temperatures, prevent accidents, protect visibility, provide directions and tune radios. These developments have irrevocably changed the role of the auto-gazier and the face of our industry."

Some of the latest developments in windscreens include:

Low E – Arguably the most significant development in windscreens of the past decade. As well as controlling heat in summer, Low E coatings improve the insulating properties of glass to offset the loss of free solar heat during winter, so providing both cooling and heating savings in all climates. It also reduces night glare, influencing the comfort and safety of the driver and passengers.

HUD – New advances in head-up display (HUD) technology are announced almost daily in the auto world as manufacturers strive to dominate the high-tech field. A small square depression on the dashboard contains a projector and mirror system that beams a clear, high-contrast image onto the windscreen, directly in the driver's line of sight. According to BMW, positioning data in the driver's sight line allows it to be processed up to 50 per cent

faster. The screen displays data such as directions, speed limits, pedestrian alerts and urgent warning signals.

Rain Sensors – Infrared technology is used to detect the presence of rain, snow or debris on the windscreen, triggering the wipers to keep visibility unobstructed at all times without driver intervention. The wiper speed adjusts automatically according to the intensity of the rain or speed of the vehicle.

Light Sensors – Changes in external lighting conditions can be detected by light sensors, e.g. at dusk or when entering a tunnel, to automatically turn on the headlights.

Humidity Sensors (Condensation Sensors) – Humidity levels and surface temperatures are continually monitored to prevent misting of the windscreen and maintain a comfortable interior for passengers.

Lane-departure Warning – A warning sound is emitted from the speaker when the vehicle moves outside of the lane without the indicator. A camera mounted at the top centre of the windscreen monitors the vehicle's proximity to lane markings and determines whether it's about to stray from its lane.

Antenna – Wire antennas are now combined into the laminated glass or printed onto the glass, replacing the old telescopic pole or shark-fin antenna.

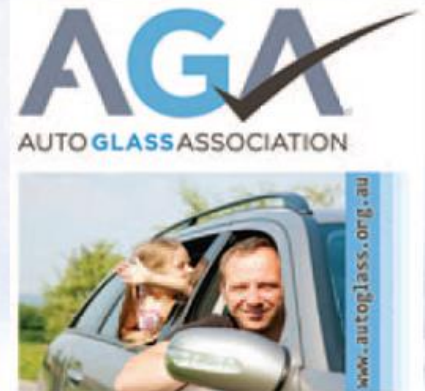
Acoustic – The engine, road rumble, wind noise and resonant vibration all contribute to noise within the vehicle. Superior acoustic performance is achieved with acoustic laminated glass, which contains a special deadening layer to significantly reduce the transmission of high and low frequency noise.

Full-wire Heater – To ensure the visibility zone directly in front of the driver remains clear, wire heating lines are applied to the PVB before the windscreen is laminated. These lines remove ice, frost and fog by generating heat.

Wiper-park Heater – In cold climates, wipers can stick to the windscreen when they are in rest. A wiper de-icer or wiper

park heater frees the wipers and keeps them pliable to ensure they cover the full wiper arc. Some models are activated by a button and others work automatically.

Each of these windscreen features plays a vital role in the performance, comfort and safety of a vehicle. As new developments hit our roads it becomes imperative for the auto glass technician to receive regular training and updates as to their implications.



The Australian automotive glass wholesalers, manufacturers of ancillary products, suppliers and technicians, have joined forces to launch Australia's only independent association for the industry: the Auto Glass Association (AGA).

National franchises and suppliers through to individual contractors will be represented by the new association, which will give all sides of the auto glass industry a unified voice and act as a central hub for communication and training.

McGrath said: "The AGA takes its independence seriously. We represent all sides of the industry equally, the large and small players and have set corporate interests aside to work together toward common goals of maintaining high standards and consumer safety.

"Australia's automotive manufacturing industry is not what it once was, making it all the more important to establish an industry body, devoid of corporate agenda, to protect the future of the auto glass sector in Australia and the safety of everyone on the road," McGrath said.

Members will have an exclusive suite of materials and information at their disposal, with training programmes, technical bulletins and standard updates keeping them abreast of industry developments. Drivers now have a reliable resource to turn to for information and advice about their car windows or windscreen, or to find a glass technician nearby who abides by a strict code of practice.

"Providing reliable, trustworthy and current information to car owners and industry members is one of the AGA's most important mandates," McGrath said.

Australian auto glass businesses interested in becoming an AGA member can visit the new website at: www.autoglass.org.au.

Founding members of the AGA include:

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| Alpha Bus Glass | Instant Windscreens |
| Bostik Australia Pty Ltd | National Auto Glass Supplies |
| BTB Auto Glass & Body Shop Tools | O'Brien Glass Industries |
| Club Assist | Oz Auto Moulds And Rubbers |
| Glass Assist | The National Windscreen Group |
| Henkel Technologies (Teroson) | |