

# MEDIA RELEASE



**FEDERAL CHAMBER  
OF AUTOMOTIVE  
INDUSTRIES**

ABN 53 008 550 347

23<sup>rd</sup> October 2019

For immediate release

59 WENTWORTH AVENUE

KINGSTON ACT 2604

AUSTRALIA

TELEPHONE 02 6247 3811

FACSIMILE 02 6248 7673

## **CLICK CAUTIOUSLY OR COP A COUNTERFEIT**

The Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries is urging Australians to click cautiously following the release of research showing up to 60 per cent of online search results connect consumers with retailers selling counterfeits<sup>1</sup>.

A quarter of search engine queries in automotive parts and four other sectors returned potentially harmful sites in the first three results, according to research by intellectual property protection firm Incopro.

More than one in three websites returned in search engine results for researched sectors, including automotive parts, were for sites offering counterfeit products or products that infringe intellectual property.

FCAI Chief Executive Tony Weber said counterfeit car parts endangered everyone.

"The advice of the industry is that customers should only trust vehicle parts acquired through the authorised dealer network.

"Through our Genuine is Best initiative we have seen counterfeit brake pads, wheels, steering parts, oil filters, air filters, spark plugs and bonnets. They fail, they shatter, they catch fire or they snap in half.

"They put road users in harm's way.

"We aren't talking about clothing or handbags here. Counterfeit automotive parts directly endanger lives," he said.

"People are trusting of search engine results. They click what is returned on the first page.

"That trust comes with an obligation for search engine operators. If any business is made aware the products on display may be dangerous, they should remove them. Failing to do this could cost lives." said Mr Weber.

The automotive industry has previously worked with online trading platforms to remove listings and ban sellers of the illegal counterfeits from their sites.

In September, the discovery of counterfeit spark plugs capable of causing massive engine damage were added the list of fakes encountered by FCAI initiative Genuine is Best. Other dangerous fakes include counterfeit oil filters that do not filter oil, wheels that shatter in low speed pothole impacts, brake components containing asbestos and in one case, brake pads made of compressed grass clippings.

Genuine is Best offers a reporting hub for drivers, mechanics and any consumer who believes they may have been sold a dodgy vehicle part. Reports can be made at <https://genuineisbest.com.au/suspicious-part-report/>. All reports are taken seriously and followed up by both the relevant vehicle maker and the Department of Home Affairs.

1. <https://www.incoproip.com/reports/how-and-why-search-engines-must-take-responsibility-for-tackling-counterfeiters>
2. <https://www.accc.gov.au/system/files/ACCC%20Digital%20Platforms%20Inquiry%20-%20Preliminary%20Report.pdf>

The FCAI's **Genuine is Best** initiative focuses on the safety, performance and durability benefits delivered by genuine replacement parts.

Genuine parts are made or selected by the vehicle's maker and rigorously tested by that maker as an integral component of the vehicle to meet high quality, safety and performance standards.

This ensures a vehicle will drive, function and protect in the way it was intended.

Find out more at [www.genuineisbest.com.au](http://www.genuineisbest.com.au)

**For more information contact:**

Lenore Fletcher  
Director Communications and Emerging Technologies  
FCAI  
0408 320 797  
lenore.fletcher@fcai.com.au  
[www.fcai.com.au](http://www.fcai.com.au)