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## **TIME TO ACT ON FUEL PRICES**

RACT is calling for legislation to make it compulsory for fuel retailers to report their prices at the bowser in an effort to fight rising costs that are heavily impacting Tasmanian households.

‘Tasmanians have been paying too much for fuel for too long,’ RACT Executive General Manager, Membership and Community, Stacey Pennicott said. ‘We have been lobbying the State Government for some time to take action on fuel, but to date the measures put in place – such as the GasBuddy app – have been ineffective.

‘It is time for government-led, centralised real-time fuel price information to be made available to the public.

‘This would involve retailers being required to share their pricing, as well as all levels of government actively monitoring prices to address unjustifiable and excessive differences.’

Ms Pennicott said RACT had written multiple times to the government in relation to fuel prices, but action to date had been insufficient.

The call comes as the Australian Automobile Association (AAA) today releases its quarterly [Affordability Index](#), which shows Hobart is again the least affordable city when transport costs are considered as a percentage of the average income.

The report also shows that the annual cost of transport in Launceston increased by \$422 per year compared to the previous quarter – a massive increase.

For both cities, the rise was mainly attributed to car loan repayments and the cost of fuel.

The report shows that Hobart households were paying an extra \$199 per year for fuel, while Launceston residents were paying \$264 more per household each year.

‘In terms of fuel costs, Hobart has recorded the most expensive weekly fuel prices of all Australian capitals,’ Ms Pennicott said. ‘Launceston has been ranked in the top three highest weekly fuel prices of all regional cities since regional monitoring started in the second quarter of 2017.’

According to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) [latest report](#) on the Australian petroleum market for the June quarter (released on 23 August 2019), Hobart's average unleaded petrol price was 153.3cpl, 9.4cpl higher than the previous quarter and higher than Darwin (142.9cpl) and Canberra (146.4cpl). It was also 8cpl higher than the average for the five largest cities (Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth). Regionally, Launceston averaged 156.1cpl (compared to 147.7cpl for the March quarter), which was 10.8cpl higher than the five largest cities.

The monthly average price in Hobart was higher than the regional average for the rest of the state.

**Monthly average fuel prices in regional Tasmania in March and June 2019 quarters:**

Location	March 2019 monthly avg	June 2019 monthly avg	Change March to June 2019
Tasmania			
Burnie	142.6	149.9	7.3
Campbell Town	145.4	152.1	6.7
Devonport	145.0	152.8	7.8
Huonville	142.7	148.8	6.1
Launceston	147.7	156.5	8.8
New Norfolk	148.8	154.9	6.1
Queenstown	148.4	155.2	6.8
Smithton	143.9	148.3	4.4
Sorell	142.9	150.8	7.9
Ulverstone	143.0	152.1	9.1
Wynyard	144.6	144.8	0.2

(source: [ACCC Report on the Australian petroleum market, June quarter 2019](#))

Ms Pennicott said RACT was calling on the Tasmanian Government to look at the New South Wales model of fuel price monitoring.

The NSW Government has implemented a Fuel Check Order under the Fair Trading Act that makes it compulsory for fuel retailers to report their retail prices at the petrol pump. The legislation states that:

- Operators of service stations must ensure that the government is notified, by means of the website ([www.fuelcheck.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fuelcheck.nsw.gov.au)), of the standard retail price and the date and time this price was offered.
- The standard retail price is defined as the price per litre at which the fuel is available to retail customers without any discounts or special offers.

- Failure to register or notify current fuel prices in compliance with this Order is an offence under the Act.

FuelCheck allows motorists to:

- Find and get directions to the cheapest fuel in their area.
- Find and get directions to the nearest service station of their preferred brand.
- Compare fuel and petrol prices according to type, such as E10, Unleaded, Premium Unleaded, Diesel, LPG, and more.
- Advise NSW Fair Trading if the price displayed in FuelCheck doesn't match the price at the pump.

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