



## **Auto Show Consumer Survey**

17 May, 2007

## **Good News, Bad News**

Motor Vehicle Sales Authority (VSA) staff working in the Authority's booth at the recent Vancouver International Auto Show conducted 307 interviews of consumers visiting the show, and found that the overwhelming majority said that they were satisfied the last time they bought a car.

Only 12 per cent said they were unhappy. A significant number reported that they were extremely pleased.

How good is this good news?

Consider that 12 per cent of vehicle sales by dealers in B.C. each year would be about 50,000 transactions and considerably more than \$1 billion in business. The survey also indicated that a high percentage of these unhappy people were first time car buyers, hardly a pleasant introduction to an industry that wants to earn more public confidence.

The result was not rosy for VSA either. Our records show that currently fewer than one per cent of purchasers phone or email the VSA (formerly the MDC) enquiry officer with questions, or to report an unsatisfactory purchasing experience. In contrast, all survey respondents who said their experience was unsatisfactory indicated they would have contacted the VSA if they had known the service existed. We need to do a better job of providing consumer information to meet this need.

Other considerations:

- The auto show location obviously meant that the audience sample was specialized and interested in discussing their experience, not a random sample of the general vehicle-buying public.
- 307 interviews is not statistically significant.

- Unsatisfactory transactions reported at new and used vehicle dealers roughly in proportion to their sales activity.
- The unsatisfied buyer was slightly more likely to be female, 80 per cent were under 45 and had slightly lower incomes than the group as a whole.

"This was our first effort to collect data about how satisfied consumers are about a recent vehicle sales transaction in B.C. and whether those who had poor experiences fall into any identifiable category," said Doug Longhurst, VSA's Manager, Projects and Research. "Even though the auto show allowed us to talk only with a select group of people, the results were interesting. They will serve as a basis for future survey work to reach less selective samples - such as at retail stores, shopping malls, random phone surveys and so on."

### **4,382 salesperson licences must be renewed by June 1**

The count is in. The MDC/VSA mailed out 4,382 salesperson licence renewals in late April.

Dealers and salespeople should visit the VSA web site ([www.vehiclesalesauthority.com](http://www.vehiclesalesauthority.com)) and make sure that everybody working in their dealership is properly licensed. Any salesperson who has not yet received their renewal notice, and whose licence expires on June 1 (or any date in the near future), can simply renew on line through the VSA web site, or contact us for information. Address changes not reported to VSA (formerly MDC) could be the source of any renewal notices that fail to reach their destinations.

Individual salespeople - as well as the employing dealers - are held responsible when people are found to be working without a valid licence.