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SAE launches new program to retain local talent

The Society of Automotive Engineers Australasia has launched a new online program aimed at keeping engineers in domestic jobs

The Society of Automotive Engineers Australasia, or SAE-A, has introduced CareerDrive, a new plan to help young engineers kick start their career and allow established engineers to further their careers in Australia.

The SAE-A has stated that its goal is to "help keep the nation's high level professional engineering skills employed -- and keep them in Australia."

The new program was announced at the 2010 Change by Design Active Safety Conference in Melbourne yesterday and is supported by the Victorian Government. It will help automotive engineers promote themselves within the industry and partake in special interest discussion forums among other things.

The Executive Director of the SAE-A, Max Chanter, had this to say about the CareerDrive program: "The SAE-A does not employ engineers. But we did design a program to help Australian automotive engineers remain in this exciting industry, or at least transition into secure roles in related industries, such as aerospace, intelligent transport systems technology, rail and other forms of mobility engineering," he said.

CareerDrive is an online program that encourages users to upload their resume and the system is capable of suggesting further coaching or training for engineers looking at transitioning into related industries.

"CareerDrive takes users through a series of key steps, which can be revisited at any time," explained Chanter. "The user can load their resume on the system and change it at any time, they are interviewed about their need for careers coaching or skills training, we offer coaching, training and mentoring, and they can participate in online forums.

"The individual user controls their privacy and progress. They also gain access to positions advertised by relevant industry organisations.

"We are grateful to the Victorian Government for its support. That support enables SAE-A to offer this new service to members free of charge," concluded Chanter.

The SAE-A's initiative is bound to be welcomed by the local engineering community. As recently as last month, during the launch of the Camry Hybrid, Head of Toyota Style Australia, Paul Beranger, admitted with some resignation to the Carsales Network that engineers in Australia are an itinerant lot, frequently pulling up stumps and heading off overseas during periods when there just wasn't work available in the country. This has, according to Beranger, left Aussie engineers and designers with a reputation for being 'flexible' -- but CareerDrive may put an end to that.

Currently though, there's a considerable amount of work on hand in Australia. Beranger has a standing workforce of 25 stylists at TSA and there are engineers operating out of Toyota Technical Centre Australia, working on global projects as well as local ones. Holden has staff working on the locally-manufactured Cruze, E85-compliant engines for Commodore and the US police-spec Caprice. Over at Ford, there are hundreds of staff working on the Indian market Figo, the T6 light commercial, Euro IV compliance for Falcon/Territory and the 2011 upgrade for Territory.

The CareerDrive program pioneered by SAE-A is now live on line at [CareerDrive.com.au](#), and can also be found via the [SAE-A](#) website.

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