



DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS



BUREAU OF AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR STRATEGIC PLAN

2018–2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF	1
ABOUT THE BUREAU OF AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR	2
HISTORY	3
MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES	4
STRATEGIC GOAL AREAS	6
GOAL 1: COMMUNICATION	7
GOAL 2: ENFORCEMENT	8
GOAL 3: EMISSIONS	9
GOAL 4: LICENSING	10
GOAL 5: ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS	11
2013–2017 ACCOMPLISHMENTS	12



MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

It's my pleasure to present the Bureau of Automotive Repair's (Bureau's) 2018–2022 Strategic Plan.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the individuals who participated in the Bureau's strategic planning process. Your input was invaluable. Your voices influenced the goals and objectives outlined in this plan that will direct our activities over the course of the next four years.

Protecting consumers from unethical and unlawful business practices in the automotive repair industry remains our top priority. Reducing vehicle emissions and safeguarding the environment is equally important. These priorities will be fostered by increasing our efforts to educate the public and licensees, and continuing to enhance the California Smog Check Program.

This strategic plan sets forth a vision that provides direction for future decision-making that will have a positive impact on Bureau programs and the services we provide. We look forward to collaboratively working with staff and stakeholders to develop new ideas that build upon already successful endeavors to strengthen regulatory functions, increase consumer protection, and help clean California's air.

Respectfully,

Patrick Dorais

Chief, Bureau of Automotive Repair



ABOUT THE BUREAU OF AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR

The Bureau of Automotive Repair (BAR) is part of the California Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA), whose mission is to promote and protect the interests of California consumers. BAR provides a wide range of consumer protection services, including:

- Registers and regulates approximately 36,000 California automotive repair dealers.
- Licenses Smog Check stations, technicians, and inspectors.
- Licenses brake and lamp stations and adjusters.
- Mediates automotive repair complaints, saving California consumers millions of dollars each year in the form of direct refunds, rework, and bill adjustments.
- Investigates and takes disciplinary action against licensees who violate the law.
- Administers and enforces the Smog Check Program.
- Helps to keep California's air clean by reducing air pollution produced by motor vehicles.



HISTORY

BAR was established within DCA in 1972 following enactment of the Automotive Repair Act (Act) (Senate Bill [SB] 51 [Beilenson, Chapter 1578, Statutes of 1971]). In response to consumer and industry concerns about fraud and incompetence in the auto repair industry, the Act established BAR as the licensing and regulating authority over automotive repair dealers. The Act also gave BAR authority to license and regulate stations and individuals that perform services in the areas of lamp and brake inspection and repair.

In 1982, California became the 20th state in the nation to adopt a vehicle inspection and maintenance (Smog Check) program. Pursuant to authority granted by SB 33 (Presley, Chapter 892, Statutes of 1982), BAR became the administrator of the California Smog Check Program in 1984.

For more than 40 years, BAR has helped to protect California consumers. From its headquarters in Rancho Cordova and 12 field offices stationed throughout the state, BAR serves many functions and administers various programs aimed at protecting Californians.

The image features a photograph of the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, taken during the 'golden hour' of sunset. The bridge's iconic orange-red towers and suspension cables are silhouetted against a warm, orange and yellow sky. The bridge spans across a body of water, with a grassy hillside in the foreground. The entire image is overlaid with several large, semi-transparent geometric shapes in shades of dark blue and green, creating a modern, layered aesthetic. The text 'MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES' is centered in white, sans-serif font.

MISSION,
VISION, AND
VALUES

MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES



MISSION

Serve Californians through effective regulation of the automotive repair and Smog Check industry.



VISION

Educate and empower consumers by promoting a competitive automotive repair marketplace and model vehicle emissions reduction program.



VALUES

Accountability
Communication
Diversity
Innovation
Integrity
Transparency

STRATEGIC GOAL AREAS

1

COMMUNICATION

Bureau of Automotive Repair (BAR) communication efforts will inform, educate, and empower.

2

ENFORCEMENT

BAR enforcement will continue to protect consumers from illegal and unethical practices.

3

EMISSIONS

BAR will continue to implement innovative strategies for achieving the emissions-reduction goals of the Smog Check Program.

4

LICENSING

BAR will continue to register businesses and license individuals in a timely and efficient manner.

5

ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

BAR will focus on leadership and staff development to improve morale and increase organizational productivity.



GOAL

1

COMMUNICATION

BAR communication efforts will inform, educate, and empower.

- 1.1** Establish a regular schedule for field office visits from chiefs and managers to promote effective and consistent communication with all field staff.
- 1.2** Create a forum for collaboration between rank and file staff and managers to promote transparency and open communication.
- 1.3** Leverage new and existing technology to enhance communication and outreach to all BAR stakeholders.
- 1.4** Promote outreach opportunities to increase public awareness of BAR services and programs.
- 1.5** Establish an industry outreach program to foster positive communication with licensees.
- 1.6** Enhance relationships and improve operations through effective communication between BAR, the Department of Consumer Affairs, and other control agencies.
- 1.7** Develop a formal action plan for implementation of upcoming regulatory changes.



GOAL

2

ENFORCEMENT

BAR enforcement will continue to protect consumers from illegal and unethical practices.

- 2.1** Collaborate with field staff to foster consistency, improve enforcement operations, and encourage innovation.
- 2.2** Balance support of Consumer Protection Operations (CPO) and Inspection and Maintenance (I/M) to maximize the effectiveness of enforcement efforts.
- 2.3** Evaluate internal case management processes to improve efficiency and effectiveness.
- 2.4** Modernize enforcement tools, equipment, and training to more effectively monitor industry compliance.
- 2.5** Update regulations to improve clarity, increase compliance, and eliminate inconsistencies and loopholes.
- 2.6** Explore new partnerships with external organizations to build relationships that improve enforcement processes.



GOAL

3

EMISSIONS

BAR will continue to implement innovative strategies for achieving emissions-reduction goals of the Smog Check Program.

- 3.1** Study the long-term effectiveness of the Smog Check Program to evaluate the longevity of the program.
- 3.2** Identify Smog Check stations issuing fraudulent certificates and block vehicle certifications to increase Smog Check Program effectiveness.
- 3.3** Study, diagnose, and repair vehicles that fail roadside emission surveys to help identify optimal strategies to inspect and repair vehicles.
- 3.4** Implement additional On-Board Diagnostic (OBD) test failure criteria to better identify defective or modified vehicle emission controls.
- 3.5** Modernize the BAR-97 emissions inspection system to ensure ongoing emissions reduction is obtained from older vehicles.
- 3.6** Research and develop innovative technologies to replace legacy programs and equipment to continue to effectively reduce emissions.
- 3.7** Explore options to increase funding for the vehicle retirement program to accelerate the removal of high-polluting vehicles.
- 3.8** Update STAR and Consumer Assistance Program (CAP) regulations to eliminate loopholes that negatively impact Smog Check Program effectiveness.
- 3.9** Revise CAP regulations to increase program participation.



GOAL

4

LICENSING

BAR will continue to register businesses and license individuals in a timely and efficient manner.

- 4.1** Modernize technology to increase the efficiency of program operations and expand online features available to licensees.
- 4.2** Document licensing business processes for standardization, consistency, and training.
- 4.3** Improve transparency and communication of licensing requirements by promoting enhanced education of the licensing process to applicants.
- 4.4** Reduce barriers to licensure for veterans, military personnel, and their spouses or domestic partners by offering licensing application assistance and expanding training requirement options.



GOAL

5

ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

BAR will focus on leadership and staff development to improve morale and increase organizational productivity.

- 5.1** Implement a staff development program to improve training, opportunities for advancement, and retention of employees.
- 5.2** Provide regular presentations and collaborative workshops to inform and involve staff in organizational processes and activities.
- 5.3** Engage with BAR programs to update and improve BAR's intranet and Internet sites to foster staff and stakeholder understanding of BAR objectives.
- 5.4** Use metrics to identify, manage, and evaluate staffing needs to improve program operations and meet performance measures.
- 5.5** Invest in technology systems and tools that streamline processes and increase staff productivity.



2013–2017 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

CONSUMER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

- Retired 192,811 vehicles and provided financial assistance to repair 26,047 vehicles through the Consumer Assistance Program (CAP), resulting in an estimated 27,576 tons of reduced emissions.
- Implemented an online CAP application and the ability for consumers to check their application status online. Approximately 50 percent of applicants now apply online since its implementation in March 2016.

ENFORCEMENT

- Updated Disciplinary Guidelines to assist Administrative Law Judges in determining appropriate penalties for violations. These guidelines are intended to bring consistency with how disciplinary actions are imposed upon licensees.
- Adopted regulations allowing for the issuance of probationary registrations and licenses when cause exists for the denial of an application. In certain warranted cases, this avoids the time and expense of an administrative hearing and permits eligible applicants to operate their business sooner.
- Adopted regulations establishing advertising requirements for Automotive Repair Dealers (ARDs) who perform mobile repairs. The new requirements not only assist BAR in combating unlicensed activity, but also help consumers with verification of a mobile ARD's license status.

- Implemented an electronic transmittal system for investigations to improve efficiency and reduce costs associated with the filing of administrative actions against registrants for violations of the Automotive Repair Act.
- Worked in conjunction with law enforcement agencies statewide to address the growing number of unlicensed individuals and businesses using Craigslist and other online advertisements to reach out to consumers. BAR issues more than 1,000 citations annually to unlicensed persons and facilities.

LICENSING

- Implemented an online license renewal system that includes payment of renewal fees by credit card.
- Implemented new licensing assistance and eligibility requirements to assist veterans, military personnel, and their spouses or domestic partners.

SMOG CHECK PROGRAM

- Published the first complete evaluation of the Smog Check Program since implementation of major changes set forth in Assembly Bill (AB) 2289 (Eng, Chapter 258, Statutes of 2010), including the inspection-based performance program known as STAR. The results indicated marked improvement in the quality of inspections performed by the Smog Check industry.
- Implemented statewide use of the On-Board Diagnostic (OBD) Inspection System (OIS) for testing of 2000 and newer gasoline vehicles (including hybrids) and 1998 and newer light-duty diesel vehicles.
- Implemented real-time Smog Check certificate blocking as provided by AB 2289 (Eng, Chapter 258, Statutes of 2010). When OBD data from a vehicle's computer does not match what is expected, the vehicle will fail Smog Check and require re-inspection and certification at a state Referee facility.
- Established and implemented new readiness monitor standards for Smog Check inspections on OBD II-equipped vehicles. The new standards improve the ability to identify vehicles needing emissions repairs and reduce the likelihood that consumers unknowingly purchase a used vehicle with an emissions component malfunction.
- Released the Automotive Resource Center, an interactive website designed to connect students, automotive technicians, shop owners, and other professionals in the automotive industry. The site offers convenient access to licensure requirements, approved courses and schools, automotive diagnostic and repair strategies, and employment opportunities.

DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS

BAR

Bureau of Automotive Repair

10949 North Mather Boulevard
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670
www.bar.ca.gov



Prepared by

SOLID PLANNING SOLUTIONS
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS

1747 N. Market Blvd., Suite 270
Sacramento, CA 95834

This strategic plan is based on staff and manager information and discussions facilitated by SOLID for the Bureau of Automotive Repair in May 2017. Subsequent amendments may have been made after the BAR's adoption of this plan.

PDE_17-221 