
Position Paper on Aftermarket Replacement Parts

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RCAR is a global association of insurance research centres that is dedicated to improving vehicle safety, damageability, repairability, and security.

Currently, RCAR has 25 insurance-supported members, spanning 19 countries in Europe, Asia, North America and South America

RCAR issues policy statements, design guides, position papers, and other information for use by those involved in designing, constructing, repairing, and insuring motor vehicles. This research is then used as a starting point to enter into meaningful dialogue with vehicle manufacturers and others on putting that research to practical use.

At the 2010 annual RCAR meeting, it was agreed to establish a separate RCAR Working Group to study aftermarket parts further and to determine what processes and procedures could be adopted to verify the quality of aftermarket parts.

After three years of work and with reference to the existing RCAR Position Paper on the Aftermarket Parts subject dated June 1996, this RCAR Working Group has the following remarks:

- Aftermarket replacement parts can make a potentially valuable contribution to providing a competitive market for damage repairs and potential reduction of automobile insurance costs.
- At present, a multitude of different replacement parts suppliers and an increasing number of parts of various levels of quality are in the market.
- Unified protocols and standards around what a "Matching Quality" part is should be defined.
- The insurance sector should only use aftermarket parts where the quality has been verified.
- As a final conclusion of their work, the RCAR Working Group has crafted the document "RCAR TECHNICAL CRITERIA FOR THE CERTIFICATION OF BODY REPLACEMENT PARTS," in which the aspects or qualities to be checked, as well as the work procedures to perform this verification to identify these "Matching Quality" parts, are defined. This document could be adopted as a guideline for any certification body involved in these issues.

This RCAR position paper defines its goal as providing the highest quality level of repair by requiring full disclosure about all parts available in the market, and endorsing a common standard for verifying and certifying that a part is "Matching Quality" to the "Original" one.

In reference to this, RCAR:

- I. Supports transparency regarding the replacement parts used in vehicle repair. Considerations include component quality and warranty information for all type of parts.
- II. Promotes the concept of insurers, collision repairers, parts manufacturers, and distributors, working together to ensure the testing and verification procedures are the best possible to protect users.
- III. Supports “Matching Quality” parts, certified and verified, in which the quality is determined based on measurable criteria. These criteria should show the quality equivalence between Original and Aftermarket parts. RCAR recommends the “RCAR TECHNICAL CRITERIA FOR THE CERTIFICATION OF BODY REPLACEMENTPARTS” as a guideline for quality verification and testing, and to identify “Matching Quality” parts. This document is annexed to this position paper.
- IV. Believes a competitive parts marketplace, with tested and verified quality parts, is in the interest of the repair sector. RCAR does not support policies focused solely on cost efficiency without regard to certification and verifiable quality.

This document is the output of the RCAR Aftermarket Parts Working Group, in recognition of the importance that replacement parts represents to the automobile repair sector. Through it, the RCAR Working Group seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- o To stimulate the replacement parts industry, thereby achieving the quality level defined as standard;
- o To encourage improvements in industry quality control systems;
- o To protect consumers by certifying that the parts attain a certain level of quality