



# Drivers ignore log books only at their peril

**CHRISTINE O'MALEY**

A local mechanic has warned motorists to watch out for the fine print in their vehicle's warranty or be prepared to pay.

Khalid Al-Ali, a mechanic for 16-years, runs an MTA approved mechanical licensed workshop centre in Seven Hills.

He said it is paramount for all drivers and mechanics to follow log-books to the letter.

Most car dealerships offer at least one free service, but Mr Al-Ali warns it is not necessarily going to be free.

The service adviser at Blacktown's Heartland Holden, Pravin Singh, says whatever is listed in the log book is what will be done for free, anything extra comes out of the consumer's pocket.

For example, one Subaru model includes an oil filter and oil change in the first service.

The car dealership or any MTA approved mechanic can do the service, which includes performance tests and inspections across the entire vehicle.

Mr Singh said even if a part doesn't look like it needs replacing, it must be replaced when the log book instructs.

"Whatever is written should be done, that's why it's there."

Whether the dealer calls for a service every three months or every six months, Mr Al-Ali said you must not miss

one or you may be responsible for voiding the manufacturing warranty.

"The number of people who fall into that trap is unbelievable," he said.

Holden mails its customers reminders when a service is due, but models after 1998 also have a built-in reminder.

"If you do miss enough services and there's a lack of maintenance, it's an issue. Your warranty can be voided," Mr Singh said.

He also recommends services at the dealership, even though it can be more expensive, because in his experience some mechanics have been responsible for voiding the warranty.

Mr Al-Ali said warranty issues are usually expensive which is why it is critical to carry out servicing as per the log book, to prevent any reason for blame.

"If you know the law, they can't bluff you," he said.

The price for a Holden Commodore's 30,000km service is around \$270, which doesn't include any part replacements, except the oil filter.

Mr Al-Ali said dealership parts are generally more expensive than the OEM approved market parts. But whether you use your local mechanic or the dealership, his best advice is to abide strictly by the log book at every service or it can come back on the driver and the mechanic.

"It's very important to follow guidelines in relation to warranty," he said.

The Department of Fair Trading also warned consumers to check the fine print of an extended warranty, if it is offered, because there is often a significant number of exclusions and conditions.





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**Right: Khalid Al-Ali from Taurus Service Centre, Caltex Seven Hills, warns motorists to always check their warranty.**