

GEARING UP FOR THE NEXT 100 YEARS

The Smith Motor Group has marked its centennial year with the introduction of a new leadership team that will drive the business forward into its next century.

Managing director Hans Ehmann has set the wheels in motion to transition leadership of the business to group director James Ehmann, joined by group chief operating officer and chief financial officer Linh Bui.

The group will also trade under a new brand that brings its businesses together with a renewed focus to deliver the best service to customers across Australia and New Zealand, particularly in regional centres where 90 per cent of its businesses are located.

The Smith Motor Group is a silent hero in the South Australian economy, comprising 18 businesses, representing 17 brands and employing more than 300 people.

Its companies comprise vehicle and caravan dealerships, fleet management and leasing and crash repair, and is a proud supporter of SA regional communities where many of its dealerships are located, namely Port Augusta, Port Pirie, Port Lincoln, Whyalla, Victor Harbor and Clare, as well as interstate in Broken Hill and Horsham.

The Smith Motor Group's origins stem back to the original Holden dealership in Port Adelaide, founded in 1922 by brothers Bert and Mort Smith.

"Smiths is synonymous with South Australia's automotive industry and its proud history predates many of the automotive milestones that South Australians are familiar with," Mr Ehmann said.

"We had been in business for nearly 50 years before seat belts were formally introduced and Covid is not the first pandemic we have weathered.

"There are many, many South Australians who have purchased a vehicle, caravan or related automotive service through a Smith Motor Group member company over the past 100 years and we intend to remain a steadfast contributor to the South Australian economy under the leadership of James and Linh who will deliver on our new vision as a group – One SMG."

The group will drive an effort to expand its crash repair and body-shop service offering.

There is also planned growth in its caravan division, which currently comprises Dave Benson Caravans, and to build on its vehicle fleet and leasing business already represented across ANZ.

Under its new One SMG brand, the group will continue to invest in people, systems, and technology with a renewed focus on uniting its business under a common goal.

One SMG is also committed to supporting the communities in which it operates. Throughout the years, it has provided a range of sponsorship and funding for local sporting clubs, community groups, charities, and festivals.

It is also proud to support local employment, apprenticeships, traineeships and community engagement activities.