



## **NATA Hosts Industry Meeting on “Right to Repair,” Secures Letter of Intent from Canadian Auto Manufacturers for a Voluntary Agreement.**

The National Automotive Trades Association (NATA) hosted an industry meeting on Wednesday, April 29<sup>th</sup> 2009 in Toronto for the purpose of establishing a framework for a voluntary agreement on the issue commonly known as “Right to Repair.”

Over 70 people attended, representing Canadian auto manufacturers, the Association of International Automobile Manufacturers Association (AIAMC), the Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers' Association (CVMA), the Automotive Industries Association (AIA), Industry Canada, Environment Canada, the Competition Bureau and of course, NATA.

Following opening remarks by NATA, AIA, CVMA and AIAMC, NATA presented a proposal for a voluntary agreement. This was followed by a question and answer and negotiation period that lasted the rest of the afternoon.

No formal agreement was reached, however, over the course of the next two days a letter of intent (“LOI”) was crafted and agreed to by AIAMC, CVMA and NATA. After some deliberation, the AIA decided to decline further participation in a voluntary process. The LOI and a cover letter signed by the three remaining associations have been sent to Tony Clement, Minister of Industry.

The LOI expresses a commitment on the part of Canadian OEMs to partner with the independent auto industry in “a proactive process with clear timelines to arrive not only a formal agreement but also the implementation of that agreement.”

This is arguably the most important issue ever to be tackled by a Canadian independent automotive industry association. NATA began working on the file some five years ago. The project became dubbed “VISTA” (Vehicle Information & Service Tool Agreement) and has involved countless hours of work including drafting letters, information packages, travel and meetings. The cost of taking on this issue has been significant, but the alternative was unthinkable.

By consistently approaching it in a respectful, amicable and professional manner, NATA has not only succeeded in securing a commitment to a voluntary agreement, but also has set the stage for ongoing positive relations as a respected partner with Canadian OEMs.

It is incumbent upon all independent automotive service providers to recognize and acknowledge their indebtedness to those hard-working people who have represented them so effectively. The best way to do this is by supporting your NATA-affiliate association through your membership.