**Opening Address and Welcome**

**Mr Michael Third**

**Chairman – Auto Recyclers Association of Australia**

**On behalf of the Australian Auto Recycler community, I would like to welcome our Asian friends and neighbours to our shores.**

**We have enjoyed meeting you on your home soil throughout the past four years, and it is now a privilege for us to host you in our Country.**

**We appreciate you making the considerable effort required to visit us on the Gold Coast, in Australia. Thank you.**

**Asia & Australia**

**It is particularly relevant that the AAEF has chosen to meet in Australia at this time.**

**Just one month ago the Australian Prime Minister released a major Policy Paper “Australia in the Asian Century”.**

**We are now living in the Asian Century.**

**In this century, the Asian region will become home to most of the world’s middle class and will be the world’s largest producer of goods and services, and the largest consumer of them.**

**The scale and pace of Asia’s rise is staggering, and there are significant opportunities and challenges for all of us.**

**The Government Policy Paper notes that Australia will in future have more comprehensive ties with key regional nations—China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Japan and South Korea.**

**We will also have expanded relations with many others, from Mongolia to Vietnam and beyond.**

**The Policy Paper calls on all Australians to play their part in Australia becoming a more Asia-literate and Asia-capable nation.**

**We believe this AAEF is a significant step down the path of the Australian auto recycler community working together with our Asian neighbours.**

**Working Together**

**The theme of our Conference is “Working Together”. This conference theme is relevant at two levels:**

1. **There are clear benefits in Government, vehicle manufacturers and auto recyclers working together within the borders of each country.**
2. **There are also clear benefits in Auto Recyclers working together across country borders – we can help each other.**

**The AAEF brings together representatives from government agencies, vehicle manufacturers and auto recyclers from both developed and emerging Asian economies.**

**The common bond we all share is a commitment to improving the environmental outcomes from the scrapping of End-of-Life motor vehicles.**

**Our hope is that this Conference can clearly evidence the benefits to the environment that flow from cooperation between these key parties, and foster cooperation in countries where it is lacking.**

**As we all know, the environmental hazards inherent in an End-of-Life motor vehicle are the same no matter in which country the vehicle is being used and, at end-of-life, recycled.**

**But, while vehicle manufacturers operate at an international level, the corporate ELV Policies of a parent company are often not adopted and adhered to in all countries in which that company operates.**

**There is every reason why the corporate policies of a vehicle manufacturer relating to environmental management of ELVs should be similar from one country to another.**

**For national governments, the actions of other national governments provide one of the most important influences on their decision making.**

**No national government wants to be seen to lagging behind others with whom it compares itself, and to be accepting lower standards for its community – particularly in relation to the environment.**

**For auto recyclers, experience has shown us that we cannot achieve widespread industry compliance with internationally accepted environmental standards for the management of End-of-Life Vehicles on our own.**

**These are the challenges we face. We must have the support of vehicle manufacturers and governments if we are going to have a “clean” industry.**

**International Cooperation**

**International co-operation between automotive recyclers is likely to enhance our industry’s ability to work with Vehicle Manufacturers and Governments in the implementation of accepted environmental standards for ELV management.**

**Automotive recyclers benefit from exchange of information and adoption of business practices that are seen to be successful in other countries. This helps lift the standards in each country.**

**In particular, automotive recyclers benefit from WORKING TOGETHER with governments and vehicle manufacturers.**

**Co-operation between these three parties is more likely to be achieved in countries where it is not yet operating when it can be shown to be operating successfully across many other countries.**

**This is particularly so given that the environmental standards as proposed by recyclers represent a WIN-WIN situation for all parties.**

**These are the issues we hope today’s Forum can discuss and possibly make some progress in achieving better environmental management of ELVs across all of our countries.**

**Thank you**