

# Fallen stars

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"The SA220 and the Jumbuck lack airbags and other safety features that are expected as standard equipment by new-car buyers," Mr McArthur said. "The V240 has dual airbags but these failed to protect the driver and passenger from injury in our crash tests."

Victorian Transport Accident Commission (TAC) senior manager for road safety David Healy said all three vehicles performed poorly in the all-important frontal offset crash test. "All experienced loss of cabin structural integrity, with poor head and leg protection at impact," Mr Healy said. "There were high injury measurements for driver and passenger in all three vehicles."

Proton Cars Australia managing director John Startari told GoAuto last month he was frustrated that ANCAP chose to test the soon-to-be-replaced Jumbuck ute and that the rating could stick to the nameplate long after the redesigned version was introduced.

"If someone goes on to the ANCAP website and types in 'Proton', the only model to come up will be the Jumbuck and that is not a true representation of our range," Mr Startari said. "We hope they will test the new model Jumbuck as soon as possible."

Mr McIntosh defended the test, arguing



Great Wall Motors V240

that government agencies, fleet owners and consumers had a right to know that the vehicle, which remains on sale in Proton showrooms, performed to a one-star standard. And he would not undertake to test the new-generation ute as soon as it was launched.

"It depends on the volume, and I guess the market generally and our resources," he said. "It is up to Proton – they can encourage the test earlier – but we test to a regularly published schedule. Just because it's a bad result now and they're supposedly bringing out a new vehicle shortly, we'll wait and see when that vehicle comes out."

Meanwhile, Ateco Automotive spokesman Daniel Cotterill told GoAuto that a Great Wall Motors safety engineer attended one of the ANCAP tests and that the Chinese manufacturer was now analysing the data and considering changes to the V240.

He said that no safety improvements to the SA220 were expected because of its "mature design".

"From our point of view, I would say that the V240 has scored a 'high' two-star result ... which we feel here at Ateco is a pretty solid outcome," Mr Cotterill said.

"I don't intend to get into any sort of an argument or slanging match with ANCAP or anyone from there – and we're not disagreeing with their result at all. There's no quibbling about it, the umpire has had their say – but we do consider it to be a solid result for this type of vehicle."

This week's results follow concerns raised by a number of bodies since the arrival of Great Wall Motors in Australia, including the Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce (VACC) and the Society of Automotive Engineers – Australasia (SAE-A).

Earlier this month, VACC executive director David Purchase stressed that a work vehicle provided by an employer was just as much a workplace as an office, factory or warehouse – and that employers must select vehicles with the best protection they can offer for their workers on the road.

"It is astonishing that there are still work vehicles, in this day and age, that don't qualify for a one-star ANCAP safety rating. One importer, Kia, has withdrawn its Pregio van from the Australian market due to its very low crash-test performance," he said.

"Why should there have ever been a different standard of compliance and obligation for work vehicles in matters of safety and risk prevention, as opposed to fixed plant and equipment where there is zero tolerance for low standards of safety?"

Soon after the Chinese utes were launched, the SAE-A called on the federal government to make airbags and ABS brakes compulsory on all vehicles sold in Australia, and urged that forthcoming legislation mandating the fitment of electronic stability control (ESC) be broadened to include light-commercial vehicles.

*John Mellor's*  
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