

FEDERCARROZZIERI
FEDERAZIONE ITALIANA CARROZZIERI INDIPENDENTI

**RIPARATORI
INDIPENDENTI
NEL MONDO**



What is AIRC and why to create an international network?

The main target of AIRC is promoting the interests of vehicle repairers and -builders worldwide.

The name AIRC stands for Association Internationale des Réparateurs en Carrosserie. Formed in 1970, the AIRC is the global federation of leading national organizations in the area of repairing damaged vehicles, and producing vehicles for commercial use. These member organizations together represent more than 50,000 vehicle repairer and vehicle builder companies in many countries.

Main aims are:

- To join forces in order to ensure the future of the vehicle repair and builders industry
- International promotion of vehicle repairs and the vehicle repair industry
- International economic and political lobbying
- To promote the international exchange of knowledge and collaboration

The network is based upon shared information and best practice of each member country.

In this period of crisis due to Covid 19, AIRC member associations are providing assistance to members? If so, would you like to give us some examples?

The Covid-19 crisis has affected all markets worldwide. The member associations provide mainly information to their members in order to overcome this situation. All governments react differently at different phases during this pandemic. Here in Germany for example financial help is given to companies that suffer losses in their financial result due to restrictions. Many body workshops show big losses due to less traffic and consequently less accidents that happen because of that. This financial aid is limited by certain processes and applications. Therefore we provide the background information and support members with this knowledge. We also spoke to several insurances which create the flow of money to the workshops in order to create quicker payments or convince them to pay for disinfection of the customer cars. We also conducted a study which shows the necessity and the way combined with cost how to disinfect customer vehicles.

Independence is one of the characteristics that unites us: do you think that is our strength?

The strength of AIRC members and their member body & paint workshops definitely is their independence from any brand or vehicle manufacturer. This enables us to react more flexible on changes in our industry and markets. But another dependence creates increasing fears: insurers and claims management. Many workshops in all our member countries depend highly on these players which progressively define prices and conditions under which the repair shop can conduct its business. This also creates a destroying competitiveness between the workshops caused by lowering prices in search of volume. Workshops compete with each other for the lowest hourly rate only in order to get as many allocated vehicles from the claim manager or insurer. Finally many of them will find out that prices are so low that they effectively cannot survive on the long run.

How important is it to protect oneself and to have an association that provides adequate answers regarding our business?

Associations do receive information on levels that cannot be reached by an individual workshop. They combine wishes and needs and investigate for solutions. We rather look for solving problems for the whole industry rather for an individual workshop. On the other hand we have closed contact also with workshops from different sizes and each problem that appears there could have its impact on the whole industry. As an association we look on both ways and anticipate future trends and tendencies.

In the coming months, we will interview the presidents of the various European Associations. We are not asking you for any spoilers, but thanks to your global vision, would you be able to tell us if the European issues are similar or differ from country to country?

The European issues in our industry are very similar in the operative point of view. Nevertheless market players like insurers, claim management, fleets as well as politics and legislation can be very different in each country. E.g. you are allowed or even enforced by the insurers to use second hand parts in repairing a vehicle in some countries which would definitely not be the case in Germany where legislation demands insurers to pay the full price for new or even oem-parts. Each country to a certain degree has similar processes and the vehicle is the same, but market players and their way to manage claims can be different due to legislation or market policies.