



**For Immediate Release**

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**NASTF PANEL BEGINS DIALOGUE ON OEM EDUCATION RESOURCES**

**ST JOHNS, FL (November 20, 2014)** – A three-person panel discussed key issues relating to Aftermarket Access to OEM Education Resources in a one-hour session during the NASTF Fall 2014 General Meeting, Wednesday, November 5 at the Sands Expo Center/Venetian Hotel in Las Vegas. Jill Saunders of Toyota, Rob Morrell of WORLDPAAC and Bill Moss of EuroService Automotive engaged with panel moderator Skip Potter of NASTF seeking a solution to a mismatch between inconsistent OEM resources and technician expectations.

Training resources provided by automakers for their franchise dealer technicians are laid out in a strictly defined and structured learning “roadmap,” says Jill Saunders, a Product Engineer for Toyota Motor Sales, USA and currently responsible for the development and support of the Techstream Diagnostic Scantool for all of North America and the US Territories.

Bill Moss, owner of a four-bay service shop, EuroService Automotive, in Warrenton, VA and currently serving on the Boards of Directors for both NASTF and the Automotive Service Association counters that “independent technicians mostly consume education as a solution-based” event.

“This disconnect is frustrating both the OEMs who are already spending money to comply with laws and agreements and technicians who are unsuccessful in their search of specific training topics,” explains Skip Potter, Executive Director of NASTF and moderator of the panel’s discussion.

Rob Morrell, Director of Training for WORLDPAAC since 2001 and currently serving as the Independent Co-chair for the NASTF Education Committee adds, “Third-party trainers like us can greatly improve the quality and consistency of our training programs if we have access to existing OEM resources.”

Charlie Gorman, one of the founding leaders of NASTF points out that the original intent of EPA service information laws was for OEM education resources to flow through these third-party aftermarket trainers, not necessarily direct-to-tech delivery.

“But very few (OEM) licensing agreements are available to us,” Morrell continues. “They (OEMs) could make money from us.”

Moss acknowledges that it is not the automaker’s responsibility to train the independent technician but, he says, “It’s valuable for us to have access (to OEM education resources) both directly from the OEM website and through our traditional aftermarket trainers.”

Saunders represents one of a growing number of OEMs who view independent service centers outside their franchise system (both aftermarket and other dealer franchises) as an opportunity to supplement the serviceability of their brand as aging vehicles outgrow the warranty period, transfer to second and third owners and move outside the convenient geographic reach of their franchise system. “It’s important for the Toyota brand to work with independents,” she says.

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Looking ahead towards reducing the frustration shared by OEMs and technicians over aftermarket access to OEM education resources, the panel agreed that NASTF has a role to play. “I think we’ve made a case today that the NASTF Education Committee’s effort to write a best practice document should help,” says Morrell, the Committee’s Independent Co-chair.

Moss adds, “It’s the technician’s responsibility to the customer to be service-ready and that includes an obligation to stay current through continuing education. It’s up to us shop owners to make sure that happens.”

The NASTF Fall 2014 General Meeting continued with a second featured-session, Vehicle Diagnostics and Programming Under the MOU, presented by Steve Douglas, Senior Director for Environmental Affairs at the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers. “It’s actually a great time to be in the automotive industry,” he says, noting the progress into more efficient vehicles and expansion of diagnostic service technology onto off-the-shelf laptop computers connected to vehicles through improved versions of the J-2534 “black box.”

NASTF’s Fall meeting wrapped up with reports by all six committees, led off by Claude Hensley, Co-chair of the Vehicle Security Committee revealing new initiatives by NASTF to keep the Vehicle Security Professional Registry safe from abuse and misuse.

The full length of the Fall 2014 General Meeting was recorded for post-event viewing on the NASTF YouTube Channel, [www.youtube.com/nastfdotorg](http://www.youtube.com/nastfdotorg). Additionally, each of the two featured sessions, the one-hour education panel and the 20-minute MOU presentation, are available separately for viewing convenience.

*NASTF was established in 2000 to identify, communicate and resolve gaps in the availability and accessibility of automotive service information, service training, diagnostic tools, and equipment for the benefit of automotive service professionals and their customers. NASTF was incorporated in 2006 as a 501(c)(6) not-for-profit organization. Additional details can be found at [www.nastf.org](http://www.nastf.org).*

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Event Photo available at:

<http://www.nastf.org/images/NAStF%20Graphics/Photos/20141105EduPanel.JPG>