

A SPOKESPERSON FROM THE AUSTRALIAN:

We strongly reject any suggestion that *The Australian* has misled its readers or failed to meet appropriate standards of disclosure. There is no evidence that Stephen's external interests have influenced his editorial opinions. In fact, his work routinely contains forthright criticism of the same brands he is accused of favouring, for example:

- MG – two-star reviews of the Cyberstar and another model despite MG being a Newspress client and advertiser.
- Ford – two-star review describing the driving experience as “irritating and joyless”.
- Cadillac – compared fitting into the cabin to “a properly obese human squeezing into an economy-class seat”.
- BYD – described its design as “witheringly bland”.
- Zeekr – mocked its “stupid, childish and embarrassing” Tesla-style features.

Stephen's reviews are frank, fearless, and independent. That is why we publish them.

Stephen Corby is a freelance contributor whose car reviews appear in *The Australian Weekend Magazine* and other News Corp Australia titles. He is not a staff journalist and operates independently through his own company, Smart As Media.

The Australian pays for Stephen's columns. His reviews are frequently critical of car makers and are commissioned, edited, and published in the same way as other freelance contributions.

As editors, we assess his work on its journalistic merits, not on the commercial interests of any third party. Stephen's records show that more than three-quarters of his reviews for the Magazine concern brands that have no commercial relationship of any kind with his company.