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I-CAR ROUND TABLE OFFERS INDUSTRY A VOICE IN THE FUTURE OF COLLISION REPAIR TRAINING

Hoffman Estates, IL – December 9, 2009 – As it continues to gather information from the collision repair inter-industry around the needs of training, I-CAR, the Inter-Industry Conference on Collision Repair, hosted a “Round Table” discussion that attracted over 70 industry professionals from across the United States.

Over the past 18 months, I-CAR has worked to analyze roles within the industry and understand the competencies within those roles and the necessary training to meet those competencies.

Round Table attendees had the opportunity to review the training organization’s proposed new role-based curriculum model, or “Professional Development Matrix,” and offer comments around the competencies for the specific levels within various roles.

John Edelen, I-CAR President and CEO stressed the importance of training that is relevant to a specific role saying, “The organization of the training experience should be focused, provide the knowledge that is required to be successful in specific industry roles, and should progress over the course of careers by building on prior levels of experience and knowledge.” He added, “The recognized levels of training must increase the value of the training by linking it more closely to the performance of an individual’s role.”

Jeff Peevy, I-CAR Director of Field Operations, also reviewed the way in which recognition programs might be restructured under the new training matrix in the future. “These programs need to have meaning to the industry,” said Peevy. “What we have heard is that recognition needs to be role-specific.”

Rich Dreyden, Director, Auto Claim Education for Travelers Insurance summed up the essence of I-CAR’s work. “Career development is essential to retaining and attracting persons to the automotive repair and insurance industries. Today’s I-CAR discussion centered on establishing career development paths that will provide consistent direction. Having better organization and structure on the training model can only help our industry.”

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John Donley, President and CEO of IAnet agreed saying that, “role-based training will provide a greater value to the independent appraiser as the training will be relevant to their day-to-day activities.”

Topics from the meeting were also presented through a blog that was opened by Kristen Felder, founder of Collision Hub (www.collisionhub.com), as the meeting was in progress. Dave Henderson, of AutoWatch, commented through the blog. “I like the direction I-CAR is going with this. It makes great sense.” He added that the Round Table was a “great meeting with very good input from those attending the meeting.”

“I-CAR has developed a sound strategy for making its training more relevant. Engaging in a peer review process involving multiple industry segments during development will make this initiative a success,” said Joe Skurka of BASF Corporation.

Edelen agreed that the meeting helped to move the organization further along the path of re-engineering its curriculum. “This is exactly the type of feedback that we were seeking from the industry. This has been an important learning experience for I-CAR in understanding how role-specific, relevant training will unfold within the context of this new training matrix.” He thanked participants noting, “you’ve served I-CAR very well and you’ve positioned I-CAR to serve you — the collision industry — better in the future.”

Participants were encouraged by the content of the meeting and the direction that I-CAR is moving in the development of the new curriculum.

Al Motta, Head of Technical Training for Chrysler said, “The I-CAR Round Table discussion is a validation that they are well-positioned to take collision repair to the next level of competency. This ensures our customers receive the best and safest repair.” He added, “I endorse and applaud their efforts and achievements.”

“I-CAR has redefined training for the collision industry with this new structure,” said Tony Molla, VP Communications for ASE. “The focus on specific, relevant training areas based on the job descriptions will provide even more value to the individual and a broad spectrum of inter-industry segments.”

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Timothy Richardson, of UTI said, "My daily business relies heavily on I-CAR offerings and activities, and I am very excited about the direction they are taking. From my perspective, this event today was entirely necessary and it thoroughly met I-CAR 's goals as I understood them to be. Everyone involved in collision repair and refinish industry training depends, or should depend, upon the input of groups such as we saw here today. To see this group here today being mostly aligned and very much supportive of the general course that I-CAR has embarked upon is very encouraging to me. I am excited for the future of collision repair and refinish training with I-CAR continuing to be the standard."

Michael Quinn, Co-Founder of 911 Collision Centers based in Tucson, AZ said, "I haven't been this excited about I-CAR in over 15 years. The industry segments represented at this meeting is a testament to the support of the new I-CAR vision." Quinn acknowledged that everyone in attendance came on their own accord to be a part of the discussion. "The new leadership and re-focus of I-CAR is moving the organization in the direction our industry needs." he added.

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I-CAR, founded in 1979, is an international not-for-profit training organization dedicated to improving the quality, safety, and efficiency of auto collision repair for the ultimate benefit of consumers.



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