



National Fuel Efficiency Standard

Curtin Community Submission

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Introduction

This year, constituents in my electorate are working with me to develop a Curtin Pathway to Net Zero. We are outlining what decarbonisation will require across major emissions sectors in Curtin, and the key policies that will get us there. We have five volunteer working groups, looking at transport, energy, buildings, greening and waste.

This submission has been developed by the Transport Working Group, which includes transport planners, engineers, and sustainable transport advocates. It outlines the need for a robust Fuel Efficiency Standard in line with international best practice, and reflects on the National Electric Vehicle Strategy, as well as calling for a broader transport decarbonisation strategy that goes beyond passenger EVs to consider the essential role that public and active transport must play in reaching out net zero goals.

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Federal Member for Curtin

Summary of Recommendations

Recommendations

1. The FES must fit within a broader sector-wide strategy to decarbonise transport that prioritises mode shifts to public and active transport for metropolitan areas.
2. The FES must be compatible with a target of 100% zero emissions vehicle sales by 2035 at the latest, in order to remain internationally competitive and meet emissions reduction goals.
3. The FES should be accompanied by stronger vehicle emissions regulations and fuel standards, including the introduction of Euro 6 by 2025, to reduce air pollution and associated health impacts.
4. Explore the wider introduction of emissions-based vehicle registration fees and individual vehicle smog tests.
5. The FES should apply to all new and used cars imported to Australia.
6. The FES should apply to all vehicle types, unless effective alternative policies can be demonstrated for heavy vehicles, agricultural equipment, and motorcycles.
7. Light vehicles used by military, law enforcement and emergency services should not be exempt from the FES.
8. The FES should be mandatory and established in Commonwealth legislation.
9. Flexibility mechanisms and bonus credits should be kept to a minimum.
10. The FES should commence as soon as is practicable, with regular opportunities to review progress and annual targets in line with the 2035 objective.

A sector-wide transport decarbonisation strategy

We will not achieve our decarbonisation goals by simply replacing current petrol ICEs with EVs. A net zero transport system will need to have much higher usage of public and active transport, especially in metropolitan areas such as the Curtin electorate. This includes zero emissions buses, rail, cycling and walking.

The Fuel Efficiency Standard (FES) and National Electric Vehicle Strategy (NEVS) must fit within a broader sector-wide decarbonisation strategy that prioritises public and active transport. We welcome the Government's commitment to develop a Transport and Infrastructure Net Zero Roadmap and Action Plan and recommend that this Roadmap has a clear objective of reducing car-dependency and increasing other modes of transport.

Increasing public and active transport use will have a much faster impact on reducing transport emissions and has many co-benefits for our communities. Higher public and active transport use, and the urban development planning that facilitates them, creates more accessible communities, with greater mobility equity. We will also see improvements to public health and road safety, through incidental exercise, improved air quality, and reducing vehicles on the road.

Recommendations

1. The FES must fit within a broader sector-wide strategy to decarbonise transport that prioritises mode shifts to public and active transport for metropolitan areas.

100% zero emissions new vehicles by 2035

The National EV Strategy is a step in the right direction, especially the commitment to introduce Fuel Efficiency Standards. However, the NEVS has no mention of dates or targets for the phase-out of new petrol ICEs.

The introduction of a FES is largely influenced by their existing use internationally, leaving Australia as the dumping ground for more polluting vehicles. To meet our emissions reductions goals and make the Australian market internationally competitive, we recommend the government introduce a target of 100% zero emissions vehicle sales by 2035 at the latest. The FES must align with this target and set average annual emissions targets that will achieve this goal and remain internationally aligned over time.

Recommendations

2. The FES and its average annual targets should work towards a clear objective of 100% new vehicle sales to be zero emissions by 2035 at the latest, in order to remain internationally competitive and meet emissions reduction goals.

The FES should be developed in a context of broader emissions regulations on vehicles. We support the introduction of the Euro 6 standard by 2025, which the government is considering implementing. We also recommend developing a clear timeline for when Euro 7 will be adopted, to help bring Australia more in line with international best practice - the EU introduced Euro 6 in 2014 and will implement Euro 7 in 2025.

Improving vehicle emissions standards will reduce other harmful pollutants from vehicles, such as particulate matter and NOx, with significant positive impacts for public health and air quality.

The government should consider supporting the wider introduction of emissions-based vehicle registrations, such as the ACT introduced earlier this year, and a Californian-inspired Smog Check which assesses the exhaust pollution of individual vehicles.

A compulsory smog check vehicle inspection as part of registration, combined with an emissions-based vehicle registration fee (instead of weight-based), would further support air quality and emissions regulations.

Recommendations

3. The FES should be accompanied by stronger vehicle emissions regulations, including the introduction of Euro 6 by 2025, to reduce air pollution and associated health impacts.
4. Explore the wider introduction of emissions-based vehicle registration fees and individual vehicle smog tests.

Designing our Fuel Efficiency Standard

This section will respond directly to some of the general questions presented in the Fuel Efficiency Standard Consultation Paper.

The FES should apply to all cars entering Australia, including used cars imported for sale. The FES should not, at this stage, apply to the domestic used car market. The FES should be applied on average to vehicles sold, allowing the range of vehicles to still be available for purchase. The FES should be applied to vehicle suppliers, not motor vehicle dealers.

Motorcycles, given their usage for personal transport, should be included in the FES unless an equally effective alternative is proposed and actioned. If the FES applies only to light vehicles (including utes, 4WDs and vans) there must be clear progress on developing equivalent policies or standards for heavy vehicles and agricultural equipment so that they also work towards a 100% zero emissions new vehicles by 2035. Where military, law enforcement and emergency services use light vehicles, those vehicles should not be exempt from the FES. Applying the FES across all vehicle types, not just light vehicles, may make for a simpler system to administer and comply with.

The FES should be mandatory and should be established in Commonwealth legislation. Flexibility mechanisms, and bonus credits should be kept to a minimum to increase scheme effectiveness and simplicity.

The FES should commence as early as is feasible, with regular opportunities to review annual targets and progress towards 2035.

Recommendations

11. The FES should apply to all new and used cars imported to Australia.
12. The FES should apply to all vehicle types, unless effective alternative policies can be demonstrated for heavy vehicles, agricultural equipment, and motorcycles.
13. Light vehicles used by military, law enforcement and emergency services should not be exempt from the FES.
14. The FES should be mandatory and established in Commonwealth legislation.
15. Flexibility mechanisms and bonus credits should be kept to a minimum.
16. The FES should commence as soon as is practicable, with regular opportunities to review progress and annual targets in line with the 2035 objective.