

Public Consultation:

Fuel Efficiency Standard—Cleaner and Cheaper-to-run Cars for Australia

Submission from:



Convenor of Northern beaches Climate Action Network

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed improvement to Fuel Efficiency Standards which I support in principle with the following comments:

- 1 I support the underlying purpose of reducing “the average amount of CO₂ emitted by Australia’s new light vehicle fleet over time”
- 2 However we need to be net zero by 2030 to ensure providing a survivable future for our children, so the timescale needs to be very short. The majority of international commitments to reduce emissions for this sector are targeting 2035. Australia must not target net zero by any later than 2035.
- 3 The main mechanism to get to zero is electric vehicles – government could guarantee that all new cars are zero emission by simply mandating that no new ICE powered cars are imported by 2030. This would be far simpler and much easier to enforce than the circuitous emissions standards that will for sure be gamed by car companies manipulating data on their car sales, inventories, performance of hybrid vehicles etc.
- 4 Hydrogen powered cars must include the consequential emissions from diverting renewable power from displacing coal fired power from supplying the grid - currently this amounts to about 50kgCO₂/kg of hydrogen. As such they are the highest emission vehicles and definitely not really zero emission. Once the Australian grid is fully decarbonised then hydrogen powered cars will become truly zero emission but they will only be 18-38% efficient compared to 90+ % efficient for direct electric vehicles. No subsidies (direct or indirect) should be given to artificially boost the economics of hydrogen powered cars.
- 5 Australia should not set a timeframe for reconsidering the standard because the 2035 timeframe needed for net zero is too short to require any intermediate steps. This will also give certainty to car producers and the entire supply chain that Australia is really serious about this commitment.
- 6 The trajectory should be start strong and should be rigorously enforced to prevent gaming and cheating. Start strong in order to catch up with other major nations but also to allow for any back-sliding on the commitment.
- 7 Electric vehicles have very significant benefits for accelerating the transition to renewable power for our grid – 20M vehicles transitioning to EV’s can put a huge amount of distributed car battery storage onto our grids, improving the viability of renewable power and because more power is generated and used locally because of the local storage it will reduce not increase pressure on and costs for grid upgrade. We have to have joined-up-thinking between electrifying transport and powering the grid from renewables. To-date we seem to be ignoring this opportunity.

- 8 The simplest thing to do right now to start this transition is to agree national standards for the bi-directional charging of electric vehicles for the 97% of time they are not actually driving anywhere. Southern Australia have shown leadership and already agreed such a standard – it needs rolling out nationally to boost the uptake of both electric vehicles and renewables, especially rooftop solar for homes. Given the urgency of the transition, the National Construction Code could be updated to mandate net zero and the provision of bi-directional charging in the garages of all new homes.

Relevant Links:

<https://johnmenadue.com/the-green-hydrogen-myth/>

<https://johnmenadue.com/myopic-thinking-electric-vehicles-and-renewable-power/>

Thanks for considering.

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