



Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group

CBD BUG

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Department of Industry, Science and Resources
GPO Box 2013
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Via email to: NEVS@industry.gov.au

Dear Sir or Madam

Submission on National Electric Vehicle Strategy Consultation paper

This submission provides the views of the Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group (CBD BUG) in response to the National Electric Vehicle Strategy Consultation paper.

As background to this submission, the Brisbane CBD BUG is a grass roots volunteer organisation of more than 800 members, representing the interests of the very large number of people riding bicycles to, from and within the Brisbane city centre. We are active in seeking policy decisions at all levels of government supporting people who want to cycle, and in particular relating to improved infrastructure, end-of-trip facilities, integration of cycling needs with other transport modes and a regulatory environment friendly towards people riding bikes. CBD BUG members meet monthly to exchange information and ideas, discuss issues of relevance and determine the direction of policies to benefit CBD cyclists.

While the CBD BUG focuses on issues affecting people riding bikes, we also strongly support initiatives enabling people to travel more often via : 1) walking, and 2) e-scootering, and 3) public transport.

1. Cease calling EVs “Zero Emission Vehicles - as this is greenwashing

We strongly object to the greenwashing of EV via describing them as “zero emission vehicles”.

Apart from the obvious emissions created in their manufacture, driving EVs also creates harmful tyre and brake particles, road surface wear and resuspension of road dust. These are a serious and growing environmental problem. This is being worsened by the increasing popularity of large and heavy SUVs and growing demand for EVs, which are heavier than standard cars because of their batteries. This greater mass means more energy/damage when the driver of an EV crashes.

Additionally, the generation of these emissions from EV usage is completely unregulated, unlike exhaust emissions which have been rapidly reduced by car makers thanks to the pressure placed on them by more stringent standards (less so in Australian than other counties of course).

We would also add that until the electricity grid is zero emissions the vehicles drawing their energy from it running won't be.

The misrepresentation of EVs as ZEVs is an attempt to remove what little environmental concerns people may hold that influence them to reduce their unnecessary driving, and creates a perception the Australian Government is pandering to interests of the overseas auto industry.

2. Ditch the Strategy's objective of "encouraging rapid uptake of EVs"

We disagree vehemently with the objective of encouraging rapid uptake of EVs.

Driving private motor vehicles is bad for the individual and the community. Australians' use of motor vehicles is grossly excessive and comes with massive costs from the economic, environmental, health and social perspectives.

EVs will create the same and possibly more traffic congestion and road fatalities and injuries as internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles.

Instead, all Australian governments should be focusing on switching people from driving to travelling by public and active transport.

3. E-bikes and e-scooters should be the central focus of a national EV strategy

E-bikes and e-scooters must be central in a national EV strategy – because in having much less mass than a typical EV these devices are far more efficient in moving a people.

These smaller devices can easily cover a significant proportion of people's daily trips to work and full time study (almost 40% of trip based on ABS Census data), are cheaper to purchase and use for consumers, can commonly be taken on public transport and pose far less risk to other road users than EVs.

E-bikes and e-scooters will still contribute to the other policy goals outlined in the consultation - such as increasing local manufacturing. However, these goals would be more easily attained via focusing on actions regarding e-bikes and e-scooters because these devices are smaller, cheaper and less complex than EVs.

4. Existing and potential government actions to encourage EV uptake

These actions include a host of government subsidies we view as repugnant – as these approaches simply add up to throwing away more taxpayer money that will to a large extent end up as additional profits for overseas auto manufacturers.

All motor vehicle usage (and the ownership that impacts public space i.e. on-street parking) should be heavily restricted via taxation - as a deterrent in an equivalent approach to the excises levied on alcohol and tobacco.

The revenue raised can then be directed to funding improved public and active travel infrastructure, which has been wholly neglected by governments at all levels across Australia.

The most simple and obvious step the Australian Government should take to transition Australians away from ICE vehicles, and to reflect the approaches already adopted in many overseas jurisdictions e.g. Norway, is to announce an import ban on new and used ICE vehicles from a future date.

It is essential importing used ICE vehicles is banned along with new ICE vehicles to prevent Australia becoming a dumping ground for used ICE cars as other countries ban new ICE vehicle sales.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the National Electric Vehicle Strategy Consultation paper.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Paul French', enclosed in a light grey rectangular box.

Paul French
Co-convenor
Brisbane CBD BUG
30 October 2022

Cc: Bicycle Queensland
 Space4Cycling Brisbane