

7 February 2019

Upcoming Budget must give motorists a fair go on fuel excise expenditure

With only about 100 days to go before the next federal election, Australia's peak motoring body has today released its Federal Budget submission, which calls government to reinvest at least half of the more than \$12 billion raised in net fuel excise into a dedicated land transport infrastructure fund to address the nation's worsening road safety, affordability and congestion issues.

The Australian Automobile Association (AAA) submission also calls for significant investment in transport infrastructure and an urgent commitment to developing a nationwide Land Transport White Paper to ensure a transport network fit for the 21st century.

The AAA released its budget submission following last week's launch of its federal election platform that also called for taxation reform on behalf of motorists.

Australian Automobile Association Chief Executive Michael Bradley said with the federal election expected to be held in May, Australian motorists were now in a virtual 100-day countdown to get all political parties and candidates to commit to significant long-term investment and planning in transport networks.

"In the lead-up to the federal election and the budget, politicians need to understand that Australian motorists bring their own money to the table," Mr Bradley said.

"Over the next four years, motorists will contribute about \$60 billion in federal transport-specific taxes – and they believe they are not getting value for money."

Mr Bradley noted Australians pay 41.6 cents in fuel excise for every litre of petrol.

"Australia's motoring clubs want at least half of money raised from this tax invested into land transport. Our transport system's failure to keep up with growing demand is harming our economy and our quality of life. Every year, congestion increases, the nation's infrastructure backlog grows, transport costs rise, and governments miss important road safety targets.

"Australia urgently needs well-planned and comprehensive policy action to reduce congestion, curb the road toll and renew its land transport system.

"Australia's last Transport White Paper was released in 2004. But in the 15 years since then our population has grown by 25 per cent and technology has changed dramatically.

"Transport investment is good economics – analysis shows that returns from transport investment are greater than the costs. But we can't simply invest on an ad hoc basis. We need a White Paper to fix the fragmented and unfocused development and management of our national transport system."

Media contact: Jake Smith jake.smith@aaa.asn.au 0403 466 153