

MEDIA RELEASE

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Future fuels discussion paper headed in the right direction

Australia's peak motoring organisation says helping Australians into more fuel-efficient vehicles has obvious benefits and welcomes the federal government's Future Fuels Strategy Discussion Paper.

The Australian Automobile Association (AAA) says the Paper outlines a sensible principles-based approach, and five priority areas of activity capable of driving uptake of electric and other zero and low emission vehicles in Australia. The Government's twin focus on helping drive and incorporate technological advances, while preserving consumer choice, are to be applauded.

AAA Managing Director, Michael Bradley, said: "If managed properly, Australia's adoption of new vehicle fuels and technologies can give Australians greater choice, cleaner air, improved fuel security, and cheaper household bills.

"The AAA supports the Government's priorities, that start with the need to enhance electric vehicle (EV) re-charging and hydrogen refuelling infrastructure, and to focus on the role commercial fleets can play in accelerating the uptake of cleaner fuel technologies.

"The Government is right to immediately focus on addressing re-charging blackspots, which are a major cause of consumer apprehension, and which will likely persist in the short-term due to commercial realities."

While the AAA supports the Discussion Paper's position of not endorsing direct vehicle subsidies, the AAA believes more needs to be done to look at state and federal tax reform that can both incentivise the uptake of cleaner vehicles, while also capturing new technologies within Australia's transport taxation system.

The AAA also welcomed the focus on ensuring consumers are front and centre of the strategy to ensure they are in a better position to make informed decisions when confronted with new and diverse vehicle technologies in the market.

"The Government is right to highlight that access to better information can help households and businesses make better choices, but the Paper suggests the Government has so far stopped short of fixing the real problem," Mr Bradley said. "Sadly, as the Volkswagen scandal highlighted, technological advances are also being used to falsify compliance with emissions regulations globally, and the federal government has a role in protecting consumers, by ensuring information regarding fuel use and emissions is accurate."

The AAA's constituent clubs – NRMA, RACV, RACQ, RAA, RAC and RACT – are major investors in EV recharging networks.

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The Australian Automobile Association is the nation's peak motoring body, representing Australia's state-based motoring clubs and their 8.5 million members. The AAA is an apolitical and technology-neutral advocate for federal transport policy that improves safety, affordability, and mobility.