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Barry Sterland

Martin Stokie

Productivity Commission Commissioners

Investing in cheaper, cleaner energy and the net zero transformation – Interim report

Dear Martin & Barry,

Thank you for the webinar presentation on Friday 8 August 2025.

My letter responds to the PC executive summary and Draft recommendations.

I will start with Draft recommendation 1.3

I will ask the Commissioners, how light is the vehicle you drive?

Is this question more about how heavy is the vehicle you drive?

You have recommended a new emissions-reduction incentive for heavy vehicles but want to reduce incentives for the uptake of light EV's which are doing the 'heavy lifting' on reducing emissions.

Do heavy vehicles [see <https://www.nhvr.gov.au>] in cities create uneven road surfaces on major roads delivering heavy construction materials to development sites?

My lived experience as a local pedestrian living in an activity centre close to public transport is that I must step carefully on a concave surface where heavy transport trucks have travelled many times to building sites.

My light BMW EV 94Ah REX weighs 1,365kg.

Heavy vehicles on average weigh 6 tonnes.

In my view heavy vehicles need to be considered for a future road user charge given the damage to road surfaces, in my local area.

I strongly disagree with any road user charge being imposed on light EV vehicles in the future because this vehicle does not damaged road surfaces. The BMW i3 reduces emissions, on each journey. Please note that the REX has never been required and is there to prevent range anxiety.

The VIC Roads user charge was completely refunded by VIC Roads after the law was deemed unfair.

How high on your list of priorities is metropolitan air quality?

I recommend that this becomes a Productivity Commission priority based on this fact. Cleaner, Cheaper to Run Cars [based on] the Australian Vehicle Efficiency Standard can save \$5.52 billion in health benefits by improving air quality.

An impact statement prepared by the Australian Government's public service staff working for the Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development, Communication and the Arts in February 2024 clearly states this fact.

Electric Vehicle's do not produce these five key pollutants sulphur dioxide, fine particulate matter, nitrogen oxides, ammonia and non-methane volatile organic emissions that petrol vehicles emit.

Large cities (London) have introduced ultra-low emission zones to reduce the impact on children when crossing at pedestrian traffic lights where large volumes of emissions were prevalent as vehicles stopped in queues. <https://www.tfl.gov.uk/congestioncharge>

Here in Australia on 14/08/2025 Olivia Willis for the ABC Health Report wrote, 'How does our environment impact our health? Unravelling the exposome' and mentioned that Professor Wake in 2021 at the Murdoch Research Institute began recruiting for Generation Victoria [which will be] a major long-term study that will track the health of more than 50,000 babies born between 2021 and 2023 and their parents, over their lifetime. Australian professors' and their colleagues will be joined by international researchers to understand the health impacts of the physical, chemical, psychological and social exposures we face in a lifetime. These factors are known as the "exposome". <https://www.genv.org.au>

Will the findings of this study identify the importance of cleaner air and less pollution? I would be very keen to know as my daughter and granddaughter are of Generation Victoria age. It matters to me that the generations I leave behind have a healthy life worth living.

Will the Productivity Commissioners recommend that light EV's can continue to effectively provide cleaner energy and effectively contribute to the net zero transformation?  
When will EV vehicle to home clean energy be promoted?

Why "phase out the exemption of electric vehicles stamp duty and registration discounts"?  
Why remove another incentive to own an EV car by recommending phasing out access to employee funded schemes where Fringe Benefits Tax exemptions are relevant?  
Where are the recommendations to improve access to larger banks of charge-points in Australia?

How do we incentivise the uptake of EV vehicles if drivers worry about how to manage charging the car on long trips?

Recently we travelled in an i4 to Canberra. We had conversations with other EV owners at Cooma and Cann River. The MG driver said, "The first so called fast charger was only delivering a low charge so I have come to this charge point to access a faster charge". At Cann River the driver of a Tesla mentioned that there are queues of EV's waiting to charge during the school holidays.

What are the chances of the UK's zap-map.com equivalent here in Australia?

The most reliable chargers are managed by Evie, some of the Chargefox chargers need to be activated remotely. This does not promote confidence as there may be an out of order situation with a small bank of four chargers available.

My recommendation is to not “phase out policy overlaps for light vehicles.”

The wording in talking marks hints at duplication and this is clearly not the case.

I recommend the continuation of the current incentives for the uptake of electric vehicles for the reasons mentioned earlier in this submission.

I will also add part of Graham Readfearn’s analysis published in the Guardian on Sat 23 August 2025 under the heading ‘right policy wrong time.’ Aman Gaur the head of legal, policy and advocacy of the Electric Vehicle Council says ‘EV drivers’ [need to be] ‘exempt from a charge until 30% of new vehicle sales are electric.’ They currently make up less than 2% of the 21.7m vehicles on the road. Aman goes on to say,” We don’t want to see a model that slams the brakes on our transition to a cleaner transport economy.”

To complete feed-back I will include a comment about Draft recommendation 1.2 which mentions a change to the threshold of 100,000 tonnes of co2e per year to 25,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent per year. This change will effectively convey the importance of decarbonising industries that require large amounts of power thereby raising the integrity of the safeguard mechanism.

I agree with the other draft recommendations.

I welcome the opportunity to provide feedback about the PC’s Interim report.

I look forward to a reply to my letter, in the future.

Kind regards  
Carolyn Eccleston

