



MEDIA RELEASE

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EV drivers must pay their fair share

A proposal by the government of South Australia to introduce a road user charge for electric vehicles is welcome recognition all motorists – irrespective of how their vehicles are powered – need to pay their fair share.

Responding to the proposal, which is set to commence from 1 July next year, VTA CEO Peter Anderson said that as electric vehicles became increasingly popular in response to government incentives to increase sales, it was essential to start to factor in a mechanism for recovering road user charge revenue lost from an expected reduction in conventional petrol/diesel vehicles, over time.

“The South Australian government is to be applauded for taking a leadership role in anticipating the need for a mechanism to charge electric vehicle drivers for using the roads, just as heavy vehicle and petrol-driven passenger vehicle drivers have been paying for decades,” Anderson said.

“While electric vehicles are not expected to overtake sales of petrol and diesel fuelled cars for some time, these vehicles are the way of the future as governments around the world incentivise their purchase to help reduce our reliance on fossil fuels. At some point EV drivers will need to contribute to the maintenance and upkeep of the nation’s transport infrastructure so it’s only fair that they also contribute to the road user charge.”

Under the South Australian proposal, the amount of the charge is yet to be determined but is said to combine a standard registration-style fee and a separate usage-based component that would require motorists to use a logbook.

Mr Anderson said as the charging mechanism is further explored in conjunction with other state and national jurisdictions, a mechanism should be developed that charges EV motorists at the charging station, removing the need for logbooks.

“As state government’s roll-out EV charging stations they should consider how technology can be used to calculate and charge users at the charging station, like the way in which a percentage of fuel sales are levied back to the Commonwealth.

“Payment terminals at charging stations could conceivably be used as collection terminals with a percentage of the feed-in tariff rate applied and charged to the driver in real-time. This would mitigate the need for logbooks, which we know are cumbersome and less accurate, which is why the statutory formula was introduced as an alternative for calculating fringe benefit tax contributions,” Anderson said.

“As other jurisdictions recognise the need for EV’s to contribute to the road user charge, it will be important that a consistent and uniform charging mechanism be adopted – the VTA looks forward to participating in discussions with the Transport Infrastructure Council and state and Commonwealth jurisdictions to land on an EV road user charge that is fair and equitable.”

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