



21 September 2018

Senate Select Committee on Electric Vehicles
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

To the Committee,

Senate Select Committee on Electric Vehicles – Questions on Notice

I refer to my appearance, and that of Senior Policy & Public Affairs Advisor, Mr Robert Giltinan, on 17 August 2018 for the purpose of providing comment to the Senate Select Committee on Electric Vehicles.

Please find enclosed responses to questions taken on notice at the hearing.

I trust this information is of further assistance.

Yours faithfully,

TIM TRUMPER
Chairman

**SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE ON ELECTRIC VEHICLES
NATIONAL ROADS AND MOTORISTS' ASSOCIATION (NRMA)**

QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE AT HEARING 17 AUGUST 2018

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QUESTION:

Senator REX PATRICK: So are we likely to see all the NRMA members driving electric cars in the next few years?

Mr TRUMPER: We are supporters of it. Obviously we are technology agnostic. We can't be 'This is the right technology.' That's not our position to be that. But we are very member-centric, so we detect what our members want. At the moment, they're very interested in this, and so we react to what our members are interested in.

Senator REX PATRICK: Is the uptake in New South Wales greater than in other states? I think South Australia is actually quite good, isn't it?

Mr Trumper: I'm not sure of that. I could take that on notice if you like.

ANSWER:

Electric vehicle sales data and projections are published in the Australian Electric Vehicle Market Study of May 2018, prepared by Energeia for the Australian Renewable Energy Agency and the Clean Energy Finance Corporation.

QUESTION:

Senator the Hon. KIM CARR: The NRMA's a premier motoring organisation in the country. There's the RACV and the equivalent in Queensland so you'd be aware the number of vehicles on the road at the moment. How long do you think it will take us to get to 100 per cent transfer to electric vehicles?

ANSWER:

Electric vehicle sales projections are published in the Australian Electric Vehicle Market Study of May 2018, prepared by Energeia for the Australian Renewable Energy Agency and the Clean Energy Finance Corporation.

Government and industry purchasing and operating incentives and the establishment of associated support infrastructure will affect the rate of uptake in Australia.

QUESTION:

Senator the Hon. KIM CARR: I will ask you some technical questions about safety. Have you given any thought to those issues? Have you had a chance to look at any of the other submissions that have been presented to this committee?

Mr TRUMPER: I have not.

Mr GILTINAN: In terms of safety, we were obviously born on a platform of safety. ANCAP recently have tested approximately six battery vehicles, and they have found there is no difference in terms of collision impacts compared to those traditional equivalents. Potentially, we would say that these vehicles could, at one point, be safer when solid-state batteries come to market, as they are non-combustible. Also, given the nature of an electric vehicle, the battery weight is placed along the floor of the vehicle, so it lowers the centre of gravity and also creates an environment where it is easier for the manufacturer to achieve weight distribution. On those grounds, it should actually make handling of the vehicle and also, potentially, braking better. We would see that there's no detriment, in terms of safety, in electric vehicles and, in fact, there may be a slight benefit.

Senator the Hon. KIM CARR: There have been a couple of submissions. If the secretariat gets the chance, could they be drawn to your attention? I wouldn't mind your response to those issues that have been raised around the question of safety. There are two aspects. There's the actual handling of the batteries, and I think there is still some controversy about that. There are issues about end of life of batteries: what do you do with them?

There's the issue about the relationship between the charging system and other people that are trying to use the grid, like workers who actually use the grid, given that there are safety issues associated with that. So if it's possible for us to provide that for you to have a look at, I would be interested in your responses to that. Then there's the question about warranties and matters that go to the life of batteries. Again, as a consumer organisation, I would be interested in your response because you're not wedded to any particular brand or committed to any manufacturer, so your assessment would be interesting. I would be interested in your assessments on those questions, given the international differences that appear to be emerging on that matter as well. Thank you very much.¹

ANSWER:

ANCAP has undertaken safety performance testing and assessment on a range of electric and hybrid powered light vehicles in recent years. Results demonstrate that all models tested present as identical in terms of collision safety to that of traditional internal combustion powered vehicles.

The NRMA supports manufacturers of all electric and hybrid vehicles and associated components prioritising safety to achieve optimal outcomes on Australian roads.

With technology progressing rapidly, it is reasonable to expect significant change in terms of components and required resources for the production of electric and hybrid vehicles. However, current research suggests that lithium ion batteries will continue to play a major role in supporting mobility for the foreseeable future.

¹ See, for example: ANCAP, *Submission 19*; Professor Peter Newman, *Submission 23 (Attachment)*, p. 44–45; VACC, *Submission 26*.

Whole-of-life vehicle production considerations such as the reuse, recycling and responsible disposal of batteries provides an opportunity for Australian industry. The NRMA supports the assertion that Australia has competitive advantages in the recycling of e-waste due to the ability to provide ethical, sustainable and environmentally robust processes.

Given current electric and hybrid vehicle sales projections, the safe handling of lithium ion batteries will become increasingly important as adoption rates increase and stationary energy storage rises.

The NRMA understands that specialised battery handling processes exist in the EU, Japan and North America.

In addition to battery manufacturing processes and handling, other opportunities will exist for Australian industry due to the imminent transition to electric propulsion technologies.

In readiness for an enlarged domestic electric and hybrid vehicle fleet, the NRMA recently commenced work with TAFE Enterprise to develop a bridging program for current motor vehicle technicians to transition to auto electricians.