

**Submission
No 6**

EMISSION FREE MODES OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT

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Submission to the Inquiry into Emissions Free Modes of Transport (NSW)

I appreciate the work of this Inquiry. Emissions free transport is an important feature of ongoing efforts to decarbonise our economy and find a more sustainable way of doing things. Namely, it assists in lowering Australian emissions and thus helping to mitigate climate change, which is a significant issue for the future wellbeing and sustainability of Australian society.

Public transport is an important area to pursue emissions free methods of transport. Public transport is already known as a more sustainable method of transportation. Trams, trains and buses can carry much more people more efficiently than, comparatively, cars. Public transport can be utilised by people for various reasons, such as convenience, or cheaper cost compared to private transport and, indeed, sustainability. Getting emissions free vehicles, such as electric vehicles, is a good way of continuing this trend. With public transport being overseen by the government and generally involved fleets of vehicles, decisions to encourage emissions free transport or technologies can have a big impact. This can have flow on effects to supporting industry to move towards making emissions free transport options.

There could be some upfront costs to taxpayers. Purchasing emissions free vehicles could be more expensive compared to the alternatives, particularly in the early stages of electric vehicles becoming more common. Providing other incentives or programs to support emissions free vehicles or related industries could involve some costs as well.

However, there should be balanced by the benefits accruing to taxpayers and the public over time. Electric vehicles can have much cheaper running costs, leading to savings over their lifespan. Indeed, as demonstrated in recent months, having vehicles dependent on fossil fuels can lead to fluctuating and expensive prices — costs which have been bypassed by electric vehicles.

There are also dividends in terms of sustainability, and contributing to lower emissions and mitigation on climate change. The destructive impacts of climate change have been well demonstrated in recent years, with the 2019/2020 Black Summer bushfires or the 2022 Eastern

Australian flooding. Australia is a country at the forefront of climate impacts, which should be well incentivised to take strong action on climate mitigation and provide leadership in this area. The transition toward decarbonisation, including the electrification and increased use of renewable energy, is a broader movement occurring in Australia. Having more emissions free transport will contribute to this trend, but also benefit from new economy. Hence, there are both environmental and economic benefits that will come from greater investment in lower emissions transport.

The government has an important role to have vision and make the decisions and investments that will benefit society over the long-term. This Inquiry considers an important area that provides an opportunity for the government to develop and implement a positive, future-looking vision for our transport sector.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Benjamin Cronshaw.