

**INFRASTRUCTURE FOR ELECTRIC AND ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCE  
VEHICLES IN NSW**

**Organisation:** Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation (RAMJO)

**Date Received:** 1 May 2025

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**NSW Legislative Assembly Committee on Transport and Infrastructure**  
***Inquiry into existing and future infrastructure needed to support electric and alternative energy source vehicles across NSW***

Submission made via Parliamentary website

Dear Ms Voltz and members of the committee

**Submission from the Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation**

The Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation appreciates the opportunity to share its knowledge and commentary to this important inquiry. The Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation (RAMJO) brings together eleven regional councils in Southern NSW, covering an area of 72,724 square kilometres and a population of 151, 861 people. RAMJO is highly supportive of renewable energy and has been active in supporting member councils to identify potential energy efficiencies, reduce energy costs and use renewable energy for their own operations and buildings where appropriate. It has also been active in assisting councils in understanding options around electric vehicles and charging infrastructure.

RAMJO understands the Terms of Reference for this inquiry to be, that the Committee on Transport and Infrastructure inquire into and report on infrastructure for electric and alternative energy source vehicles in NSW, including:

- a. funding and location of electric vehicle chargers or infrastructure for other potential energy fuel sources;
- b. the viability of alternative energy sources for freight, heavy vehicles and other licenced vehicles in regional communities;
- c. use of existing infrastructure and measures to ensure a competitive market, including 'ring fencing' policies;
- d. measures to ensure the transition of workers from affected industries and industry standards; and
- e. any other related matters.

It is noted that there may be different issues faced by rural and remote councils compared with urban based councils. An example is the distances and large areas of several regional councils. Vehicles need to be able to travel long distances where there may be neither towns nor charging stations. Concern has been expressed that in these situations, particularly on hot days when vehicle air conditioning needs to be active, there can be a safety issue faced by staff. Changes in the ability of electric vehicles to travel long distance, as being foreshadowed in the most recent roll-out of new models, will help to alleviate these concerns. Significantly increasing the number of chargers within Regional NSW will also help.

An issue facing both metropolitan and rural councils is the vulnerability of our current on-road transport technology as we are observing increasing international tensions and more fluid security alliances. Australia is almost entirely reliant on imported diesel to transport food and medicine around the country. In December 2024, Australia had 49 days worth of fuel in reserve.<sup>1</sup> This remains well short of its International Energy Agency (IEA) obligations to hold 90 days' worth of oil stocks<sup>2</sup>.

There are therefore good reasons for looking and supporting different transport options. Moving to a greater electric vehicle transport system, including for heavy vehicles, increases security, reduces the impact of noxious gases emitted from current transport methods, reduces greenhouse emissions and has the potential to increase economic returns to local areas.

**a) Funding and location of electric vehicle chargers or infrastructure for other potential energy fuel sources**

RAMJO has been working with different sections of the NSW State Government to provide tools and advice to councils, and to facilitate access to funding for electric vehicles for councils where appropriate. In February 2025 in conjunction with NSW State Government and Griffith City Council, RAMJO ran an Electric Vehicle Day which included presentations from speakers, as well as having electric vehicles, trucks and equipment available for people to test drive and become more familiar with the vehicles and technology.

The support offered by the NSW government through Environment NSW with funding to assist in location and installation of electric vehicles, as well as incentives for fleet transitions has been appreciated. Many RAMJO councils are not in a financial position to pay for all of the infrastructure of chargers, both for business and community use, and for their own developing fleets.

Further, strategic planning and advocacy for funding and placement of electric vehicle (EV) chargers and broader infrastructure for other emerging energy sources such as hydrogen, should align with regional priorities, community needs and the capacity of local councils to deliver. The RAMJO region spans vast and diverse geographies, with many rural and remote communities facing significant barriers to clean transport adoption, including long travel distances, limited grid access, and low private sector investment. RAMJO supports targeted funding that prioritises equitable access and ensures that the location of EV charging stations and alternative energy infrastructure reflects both current transport corridors and anticipated regional growth. Funding models must recognise the unique challenges in regional development, including installation costs, ongoing maintenance and the need for interoperability across council areas.

RAMJO advocates for collaboration between all levels of government and energy providers to identify optimal sites, such as council facilities, tourism hotspots, industrial precincts and freight routes where public benefit is maximised. Where feasible, these initiatives should be integrated with renewable energy supply, community education and regional workforce development to support a transition to low-emissions transport solutions.

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Petroleum Statistics, [Australian Petroleum Statistics - Data Extract December 2024\\_0.xlsx](#)

<sup>2</sup> ABC, [Australia's fuel security falling short as 'war-game' report, released under FOI, reveals vulnerabilities - ABC News](#). 7 January 2025.

**b) The viability of alternative energy sources for freight, heavy vehicles and other licenced vehicles in regional communities**

As noted previously, there are considerable advantages to be able to move away from fossil fuelled transport. At the RAMJO held EV day noted above, Volvo provided an electric prime mover. Other electric trucks, including a Foton T5 Tipper and the Ford F 150 Lightning electric ute were also available. There are an increasing range of electric vehicle models that are providing services in regional areas. There was considerable interest from one of the large local wineries in the range of vehicles at the EV event. However, a significant issue facing communities in regional and rural communities is that electric energy can be poor, inconsistent and unreliable and as such, RAMJO is currently working with councils to identify areas of low capacity. An example is Berrigan Shire Council, who identified low electricity capacity as an issue that reduced their options to attract new businesses and to invest in new technology. Murray River Council have also expressed similar concerns and barriers to economic development. It is understood and being further investigated, that several communities are unable to expand because of their poor energy supply, while others suffer regular brownouts and/or blackouts, including during heatwaves, which a significant health and safety risk for communities.

Central NSW JO has completed significant work in this area and the Committee is referred to their report, which identifies communities with poor energy and provides options to address these issues. Their *Business Case on the Nexus Between Energy Security and Emissions Reduction*<sup>3</sup> identified that one-third of that region's sub-stations and their surrounding areas were experiencing network constraints and reliability issues. The report also identified infrastructure options to address the identified issues. This is a critical gap being faced by many communities and areas in regional NSW which requires addressing.

**c) Use of existing infrastructure and measures to ensure a competitive market, including 'ring fencing' policies**

No comment.

**d) Measures to ensure the transition of workers from affected industries and industry standards;**

RAMJO recognises that a successful transition to a low-emissions economy must be underpinned by deliberate and well-supported measures to assist workers in industries impacted by the shift, such as fossil fuel extraction, conventional transport and high-emission agriculture and manufacturing. As a regional joint organisation, RAMJO is aware that economic diversification and workforce resilience are critical in communities where employment is often concentrated in a small number of sectors such as within our region. RAMJO advocates for coordinated investment in reskilling, upskilling and redeployment programs tailored to the realities of regional labour markets. This includes support for TAFE and vocational training aligned with emerging sectors such as renewable energy, circular economy practices, advanced manufacturing and zero-emissions transport. RAMJO also supports the development of industry standards and accreditation frameworks that provide clear, transferable pathways for workers to transition into new roles.

<sup>3</sup> [Nexus between Energy Security and Emissions Reduction](#)

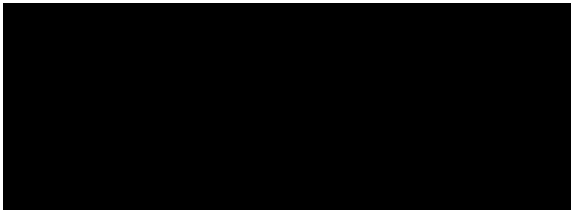
Specifically regarding EVs, there is a need for the training of mechanics and staff who will be using electric vehicles about any additional requirements. Training for mechanics should be a high priority given that fleets may already be incorporating electric or hybrid vehicles. On the one hand, there are usually considerably less maintenance issues with electric vehicles, however it is essential to ensure that the electric and battery components are not mishandled and staff are not placed at risk.

**e) Any other related matters.**

RAMJO continues to support its Councils in transitions to more efficient and effective infrastructure and vehicles, and renewable energy. We welcome any assistance that can be provided by the Committee to help address some of the current inequities noted in this submission around poor electricity provisions.

Thank you again for the opportunity to contribute to this inquiry. Should you wish to discuss this further, please contact me directly at [REDACTED] or on [REDACTED]

Sincerely



Yvonne Lingua  
Executive Officer  
Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation