

John Heaton



Moving the light vehicle fleet to low-emissions: discussion paper on a Clean Car Standard and Clean Car Discount

August 2019

Submission

I am not a fan of this proposal. Commenting on the detail is not appropriate. Instead I have commented on the principal that the purchaser of ICE vehicles should not be penalized where there is no alternative.

I expect the proposal will go ahead, so if it does it should be done reasonably and fairly. By which I mean that if there is no reasonable alternative to an ICE vehicle the ICE vehicle should not be penalized.

Specifically:

- There is no reasonable alternative to current utes used commercially.
- There is no reasonable alternative to current vans/mini-buses used commercially.
- There is no reasonable alternative to current cars/hatchbacks (7 seats – reasonable luggage space) used commercially.

The foregoing, especially those doing high kilometers, are not a market that the current electric vehicles address. There are vague proposals but nothing concrete. And, crucially, nothing that will be economic in the near term.

Electric vehicles are not yet economic nor do they have the capability of ICE vehicles, even without considering purchase price.

I work for a transport company. But I must emphasise that I do not represent the company for this submission. We use a number of vehicles that fall within this regime. I think that the company is not unique. Many of our vehicles do between 80 and 100 thousand kilometers per year, and there are no vehicles which will be economic in that scenario:

- Current battery guarantees only last 161,000km (100,000 miles) before the battery capacity is down to 70%,
 - The company would be up for replacing the batteries every 2 years. I understand that batteries are one third of the cost of a vehicle
 - All the range calculations for jobs carried out during the life of the vehicle need to be calculated on 70% of the battery capacity since that is where we approach battery replacement.
- Several of the vehicles work 20 or 21 hours per day.
 - They not only need to last the working day, because there is insufficient time to charge them during the working day (they are working), they need to be able to fully charge within 3 or 4 hours. This will require fast charging which will shorten the battery life even further.

- Electric vehicles don't have the range. Some days our vehicles will do 350 to 400km, laden. They need to travel these kilometers without being charged because there is insufficient time between jobs.

Other related thoughts:

- Why is hydrogen not part of this?
 - Hydrogen vehicles can be refueled easily and efficiently.
 - I accept there are not yet the vehicles, but there are some that seem will be available in maybe 5 to 7 years.
- All ICE vehicles will increase in price. Not just those subject to the tax.
- Not a fan of treating ICE vehicle drivers as uncaring folk who don't understand the impact on climate change. We do. But there is no economic alternative that will satisfy our needs.
- Not a fan of subsidies. Electric vehicles should stand on their own. But they don't because they are too expensive. A rip off in effect.