

2020 Retail Energy Competition Review: Electric Vehicles.

Question 1 Are there any other contextual developments the Commission should consider in relation to EV uptake and use in Australia?

Currently, there is no federal government policy or targets for EVs. Targets can provide confidence to consumers and businesses and encourage vehicle manufacturers to make a broader range of EV models available. Setting specific targets for the light passenger, light commercial and metropolitan bus sectors would also bolster the business case for expanding domestic EV manufacturing and supply chain activities. Policy could include exempting EVs from import tariffs and fringe benefit tax, reductions in registration and stamp duty costs and mandating that all new federal government fleet leases be EVs by mid 2020s (when EVs are expected to reach price parity with equivalent ICE vehicles).

A recent report by PricewaterhouseCoopers and the EV council has found the electrification of transport has potential to add \$3 billion to GDP, create over 13,000 jobs and reduce GHG emissions by 18 million tonnes.

Given the projected population growth and current urban development within the Blacktown LGA, it is essential to plan for electric vehicles in new developments and in urban centres.

Question 2: Role of retailer

What challenges and opportunities, given the current role of retailers in the NEM, are EVs likely to provide retailers?

We believe that there should be more consultation with our energy retailers to promote the inclusion of electric charging systems. As mentioned earlier currently there is no funding or incentives for this to happen and/or information to businesses and home owners about the operational costs.

Question 3: Regulatory environment

Do you consider that regulatory changes, like multiple trading relationships, that improve a consumer's ability to engage with multiple FRMPs at a household would enable innovative services and products to develop for EV consumers?

Similar to most electronic equipment there needs to be a regulatory standard for products, services and/or relationships. This will ensure negativity and promote consumer confidence.

b. Do you have any views on an appropriate method (e.g. through a change to the SGA framework or an alternative metering configuration), and relevant costs, to facilitate this?

The majority of household EV charging systems will operate overnight from the standard 10/15-amp outlet. This will in most cases be supplemented by solar through a battery system. This method is slow and could be uneconomical due to the timeframe for a full charge. EV chargers using 3 phase power is much quicker but again expensive exercise to install these systems. Installing 3 phase will increase the demand on the local power supply which may need to be upgraded. Changing to SGA's may resolve or reduce the power problems?

Question 4: Residential charging

a. Are there other offers in the retail market, or are you developing any others, aimed at EV consumers?

Some progressive retailers are already recognising the need for home EV charging and are offering tariffs to minimise charging costs for consumers. For example, retailer Powershop currently offers a "super off-peak" EV charging tariff of 11.88c/kWh in the period midnight – 4 AM.

b. Are there retail market barriers in developing residential products and services for EV consumers?

Question 5: Non-residential charging

a. Are you providing or developing any non-residential charging products or services?

BCC is at the early stage of building a public charging network in our LGA, predominantly in the form of "smart pole" Level 2 chargers, and other Level 2 chargers in public buildings.

b. Are there retail market barriers in developing non-residential EV charging products and services?

There have been numerous reports of consumers seeking to charge their EVs at public chargers becoming frustrated at having to submit personal information and set up an account to enable charging services. A better option would be a universal EV charging "fuel card" that could be used for tap-and-pay transactions. A card of this type could also be used to track vehicle-specific energy use, for example in a situation where an organisation pays for energy used by its employees.

Question 6: EV value streams

a. Are you currently developing products and services to harness EV value streams?

Blacktown City Council has been very proactive since 2015 by offering a free public EV charging system in the public library with further power point charging in the Civic Centre Car Park. Council also introduced the Mitsubishi PHEV to staff, approximately 10 of these vehicles have been in the fleet for the past 5 years. In March 2019 we installed the 1st of 10 roadside smart nodes/pole with free EV charging. Since then we have rolled them out throughout the city.

b. Are there retail regulatory barriers for retailers or new energy service provide accessing these value streams?

Price has been our only barrier.