



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PLANNING, TRANSPORT, AND CITY SERVICES
Ms Jo Clay MLA (Chair), Ms Suzanne Orr MLA (Deputy Chair),
Mr Mark Parton MLA

Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into electric vehicle (EV) Adoption in the ACT

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From: [Jenni McInnes](#)
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Standing Committee on Planning, Transport and City Services Inquiry into electric vehicle (EV) adoption in the ACT

Formal submission by Jenni McInnes

Details of submitter:

Jenni McInnes

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

I make this submission in my capacity as a private citizen and electric vehicle owner.
I do not represent any group or organisation.

Text of submission

Summary

The government's move to procure more EV charging stations for Canberra is welcome, but the real barrier preventing EV adoption among Canberrans is the network of charging stations connecting us with other towns and capitals.

The ACT government should use its position as a regional centre and leader to invest in or otherwise promote the development of a stronger and more diverse range of regional charging stations, which should ideally be located alongside popular tourist, restaurant and entertainment destinations.

Detail

I make my submission in response to the welcome news that the government is procuring more electric vehicle (EV) charging stations throughout the ACT.

I have owned a MG ZS EV since November 2021 and absolutely love the car's performance and knowledge that I can charge my car at home from clean renewable

energy.

I think that encouraging increased ownership of electric vehicles in the ACT is important.

The government's recently announced commitment will significantly increase charging options for EV owners.

However, in my opinion having more chargers in the ACT will not be sufficient to encourage Canberrans to buy an EV, as the most common way for EV owners to charge their vehicle is at a home power outlet. (Assuming you have electricity at your carport, and are not prevented from having an exterior power outlet by building design or rental agreement.)

The main problem for EV owners comes when travelling away from Canberra.

One of the things holding people back from making the switch to an EV is range when making a trip away from home. When my partner and I drive to Brisbane to visit our adult son, we like to go via Moree so we can sit in hot spring spas. That route is no longer available to us, as our car (MG, the cheapest on the market but we love her) doesn't have the range between charging stations. We can still travel to Brisbane via the coast (Sydney, Newcastle).

Filling a car with petrol may take 10 minutes but charging a car on a trip can take over half an hour, and you want to have something interesting to do in that time. On our recent trip to Brisbane, I noticed that some charging stations were at service centres while other stations were in villages off the highway. Service centres have nothing to offer but unhealthy food and possibly a plastic tube playground. Having a charging station in a small town brings people into the village, to stop for half an hour or so, where they would visit the local shops or attractions. We visited an awesome playground in Nabyac and in Macksville I walked down from the service centre to a really nice antique store. Sadly the charging station that is by the river and cafes was broken and the service station was the only option. Having this restful interesting break is important while travelling where they suggest stopping each two hours for road safety.

Positioning stations in small towns is great for the economy. Service centres run by multinational corporations are designed for fast throughput to make overall travel time shorter and keep the traffic on the highway. EV Chargers not placed at highway service centres draw motorists away from the road and into towns and communities that people would otherwise drive past. This means local shops can get custom and money will flow into and circulate around small local communities. Half an hour at a hippy dress shop, toy store, cafe, or antique shop would make travelling around Australia fun again. Charging stations that are at major chain petrol stations are just reinforcing what it became (god I sound old) and small businesses continue to lose out.

While visiting Taree I had an idea of a model to allow this to happen more easily. A few

stores or attractions could band together to put in a charger near their shops. The businesses would share the cost of installation and maintenance of the charging station and share the customers that visit. They could charge for the electricity to cover running costs but keeping the charge for electricity low would also attract some people away from the service centres where they have a charger to make money rather than attract customers. Charging a lower price for electricity, or not charging at all, would attract more customers to their business and pay for itself. I shared the idea with the owner and he thought it intriguing and said he would discuss it with the other nearby shop owners.

Another way to attract customers to a collective's charging station is to have the unit charge at a faster rate. Speed of charging is an attractive drawcard. While travelling to Brisbane and back we would stop at CCS/SAE chargers and not just type 2 chargers. The type 2 chargers are slow trickle chargers suitable for home overnight charging. When we charged at a club in Golbourne they offered us member prices on meals so we had dinner there but then found out that their charging speed is so slow that the 45 minute break only gained us 20km range. When given a choice between stopping at a charger or pushing on further to a different one, a major decision was what was in the area and if it was a service centre or if it was near nice shops but a major factor was charging speed.

Even though most people only drive locally, encouraging Canberrans to invest in an electric car can be greatly affected by their perceived ability to travel long distances. The published range of an EV is on a full charge but one rarely charges to full as running between 20% and 80% charge is best for charging speed (it is slower as you get closer to 100%) and battery health/life. For this reason a car's actual effective range is not nearly as much as its official stated range. Around town this is fine but on longer trips distance can be worrying. We drove to our friend's home in Orange with a stop at Cowra with an art gallery visit one time and a Chinese meal another while waiting to charge. We made the distance but it is a close thing. We cannot drive to Batemans Bay. We might make it down the Clyde but getting up the mountain and then to Canberra would be touch and go. A station in Braidwood would help and another in Nelligen would make it a comfortable and workable trip. I am sure the same would be the case with the snow but I have not looked in that direction.

Placing charging stations in the ACT will undoubtedly encourage EV uptake in Canberra but give a thought to installing them in other places outside the ACT where we often travel to. Perhaps a grant scheme from the ACT government to assist with the cost to groups of local businesses outside Canberra in small towns putting in stations. By making travelling with an E-vehicle easier it will increase desire for EVs. It would also encourage travelling via small businesses and attractions instead of service centres and improve local economies. Perhaps they could offer discounts to Canberrans. It will certainly encourage places wavering on the edge of getting one but baulking at the cost (including maintenance) and if encouraged as a cooperative scheme would encourage small business cooperation. I think this plan will encourage Canberrans to buy an

electric vehicle as travelling to places away from home is easier.

I hope this submission has been of assistance to the committee.

I am happy to clarify any points in this submission upon request, or appear to speak in person if the committee feels it would be of value.

- Jenni McInnes
18, August 2022