



EV targets

REALITY CHECK



Geoff Gwilym VACC CEO

The Federal Government has a very ambitious zero and low-emission vehicles (ZLEVs) policy agenda. Labor's EV strategy, as outlined in its *Powering Australia Plan*, claims 89 per cent of new car sales will be electric by 2030. Based on the results of modelling commissioned by Labor, the details of which are mostly unavailable, from what we do know, the EV target will be achieved thanks to:

- the removal of the five per cent import tariff on EVs that fall below the Luxury Car Tax threshold
- the exemption of EVs from Fringe Benefits Tax for the personal use of business vehicles
- a government fleet target of 75 per cent electric cars by 2025
- the rollout of 1,800 public charging stations, and
- reviewing building codes to allow more charging options.

While these measures will stimulate EV buying, are they sufficient to raise electric vehicle sales in Australia from just under two per cent to 89 per cent of new vehicle purchases in the space of eight years?

While having a big EV vision is commendable, it must also be realistic.

According to VACC modelling, if the Federal Government offered an EV subsidy of \$10,000 for each new EV sold, and if it were applied at a \$60,000 EV price threshold, then 320,000 new EVs would sell in a 12 to 24-month period, which represents a 32 per cent share of the new vehicle market. The cost of this initiative would be just over \$3 billion.

While such a subsidy comes at a high cost, it's unlikely we'll achieve an almost 90 per cent EV sales target without a kick-start.

If it weren't for Australia's \$1 trillion debt, then doing more to reduce the upfront cost of EVs for the mass market would be an easier sell for the government.

Prepared by Victorian Automotive Chamber of Commerce



ROADSIDE ASSIST

SPORTING CHOICE

I'm considering a new Suzuki Swift and wonder is the Sport model worth the extra money? About 80 per cent of my drives are in the city. Is a new model coming out soon meaning end-of-model run-out deals?

Malcolm Gardner, email

I'd only buy a Swift Sport with a manual gearbox, which isn't great for mainly city driving. It's still a joy-bringing little hatchback with an auto gearbox, but if you're going to spend most of your drive in traffic, save \$5000 a buy a GL S Plus - it's still a fun city car. If the remaining 20 per cent of your drives are on twisty roads, it's worth going the Sport. Cabin materials aren't a great leap over lesser Swifts, but the handling and engine are. The Swift range has just had a price jump and although a new generation is imminent don't count on deals in the short term - most new cars are in high demand.

CAR ON TOW

We own a motorhome and want to tow a car behind. What method is best and what cars are suitable?

Jan Elliott, email

Flat towing is your best bet, where a car is towed with four wheels on the ground attached to an A-frame. Basically, most manual cars can be towed in this way, but very few automatics. The most common exception is the Suzuki Grand Vitara that was on sale until a few years ago. Auto transmission variants could be flat towed with 'neutral' position in the transfer case. If you want a manual car, the lighter the better. Check out a Suzuki Swift, Suzuki Ignis, Hyundai Venue or little Fiat 500. The ultimate setup, allowing serious off-roading where you stop, is with a manual Suzuki Jimny. But they're so desirable one may cost more than your motorhome!

DOT POINT

How often should brake fluid be replaced on my 2019 Hyundai i30? The dealer says every two years but the maintenance schedule states it should be inspected up to 96 months/120,000km and only replaced if necessary. My car has only travelled 16,000km.

Andrew Bolton, email

IAIN CURRY GETS ANSWERS

WRITE TO MOTING AT
CARS@NEWS.COM.AU OR
PO BOX 2808, GPO SYDNEY, 2001

It's not wise to skimp on something as important as brake fluid, but you're right, why replace it if it's in tip top shape? You can buy a brake fluid tester from auto stores - a pen-style tool that tests the percentage of water in brake fluid - or ask the Hyundai dealer to use its tool to determine if it really needs replacing. While you've done very few kilometres, fluids break down over time as well as distance.

P PLATE PERSECUTION?

Re: using GPS on a cradle-mounted phone when driving, this does not apply to P plate drivers. While I agree phones shouldn't be used for other things when driving, my daughter (on her Ps) should be allowed to use GPS to get to work. It doesn't seem fair.

Mark Steel, email



You're spot on, I should have replied more comprehensively last time. While fully licensed drivers may use a phone's GPS if it's mounted in a cradle, Learner, P1 and P2 drivers cannot. I accept this is to reduce distractions, but the rule appears contradictory as provisional drivers are legally allowed to use dash-mounted GPS systems such as a Garmin or Navman.

RESCUE SERVICE

Re: Holden Cruze transmissions, we had a 30,000km 2010 model with gearbox



LOYALTY REWARDED

Your advice to contact head offices of car manufacturers when seeking goodwill repairs was correct. I've just had the CVT transmission replaced on my 119,000km 2014 Subaru Outback as a goodwill gesture. I proved it had been serviced correctly and I think it helped I stated it was my fourth Subaru over the last 30 years. I waited three weeks for the new transmission, they gave me a loan car for that time, and handled it all very efficiently.

Tim Wheaton, email

Well done Subaru. It's really good to see a brand acknowledging this was a far too-early failure, despite it being a long time out of warranty. I'd imagine you'll keep buying Subarus for the next 30 years on the back of this customer care.

problems. I contacted Holden to see if they'd help with repair and they paid the whole \$8000. This was only 18 months ago. Happy days.

Max Bell, email

Great result. Your case is exceptional with such tiny kilometres travelled, but shows others similarly suffering there's no harm in asking Holden for help.

HIGH PRAISE

Re: Cruze transmissions, owners should take their car to a Holden dealer. Holden know they're faulty and have a stock of modified new transmissions they'll be happy to fit for the price of the labour, depending on kilometres. I found Holden fantastic to deal with, still backing its products.

Andre Stoffels, email

For suffering owners it's worth a shot. I failed to get hold of anyone at Holden who'd take a media inquiry, so I can't verify they'd potentially pay for a new transmission if the owner pays labour. There are no more dealers but there are more than 200 Holden Certified Service Outlets across Australia. Holden's website lets you search for your nearest on a map. Good luck, Cruzers.

TACHO HACK

Re: tachometers, if manufacturers stop fitting them, there's a range of phone apps that connect to a plug-in adaptor for your car's On-Board Diagnostics (OBD) point. This sends a whole range of engine data to your phone. You could repurpose an old phone and leave it connected in the car.

Peter Williams, email

Indeed. I've seen these used at the racetrack to monitor and record speed, rpm, power, temperatures, fuel economy and more. Securely mounting an old phone displaying the app (or fitting a screen that could do so) is a solution.

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