T R A N S C R I P T

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

Inquiry into Electricity Supply for Electric Vehicles

Melbourne – Friday 27 February 2026

MEMBERS

Georgie Purcell – Chair
Richard Welch – Deputy Chair
John Berger
Gaelle Broad
Katherine Copsey
Moira Deeming
Tom McIntosh
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WITNESS

Dr Alina Dini, Head of Energy, Infrastructure and Commercial, Electric Vehicle Council.

The CHAIR: I declare open the Legislative Council Economy and Infrastructure Committee's public hearing for the Inquiry into Electricity Supply for Electric Vehicles. Please ensure that mobile phones have been switched to silent and background noise is minimised.

I would like to begin this hearing by respectfully acknowledging the Aboriginal peoples, the traditional custodians of the land we are gathered on today, and pay my respects to their ancestors, elders and families. I particularly welcome any elders or community members who are here today to impart their knowledge of this issue to the committee, or who are watching the live broadcast of these proceedings. I also welcome any other members of the public watching via the live broadcast.

To kick off, we will have committee members introduce themselves to you, and we will start down this end with Mr Berger.

John BERGER: Thank you, Chair. John Berger, Member for Southern Metro.

Gaelle BROAD: Hi. I am Gaelle Broad, Member for Northern Victoria Region.

The CHAIR: Georgie Purcell, Member for Northern Victoria.

Katherine COPSEY: Katherine Copsey, Member for Southern Metropolitan.

Tom McINTOSH: Tom McIntosh, Member for Eastern Victoria.

The CHAIR: Thank you so much for appearing before us today. All evidence taken is protected by parliamentary privilege as provided by the *Constitution Act 1975* and further subject to the provisions of the Legislative Council standing orders. Therefore the information you provide during this hearing is protected by law. You are protected against any action for what you say during this hearing, but if you go elsewhere and repeat the same things, those comments may not be protected by this privilege. Any deliberately false evidence or misleading of the committee may be considered a contempt of Parliament.

All evidence is being recorded, and you will be provided with a proof version of the transcript following the hearing. Transcripts will ultimately be made public and posted on the committee's website. For the Hansard record, can you please state your full name and the organisation you are appearing on behalf of.

Alina DINI: Yes. My name is Dr Alina Dini, and I am appearing on behalf of the Electric Vehicle Council of Australia.

The CHAIR: Wonderful. Thank you. We now welcome your opening comments but ask that they are kept around 10 to 15 minutes maximum to ensure plenty of time for discussion and questions.

Alina DINI: No problem. Thank you very much, Chair and members of the committee. My name is Dr Alina Dini. I have more than 20 years of experience across electric vehicles and energy sectors, including roles with an automotive manufacturer and an energy services firm delivering EV infrastructure. I hold a CRC-funded PhD in civil engineering, focused on how consumer experience shapes EV demand. It is a lens that continues to inform my work. I have advised APEC, ASEAN and governments across Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia and the United States on transport, electrification and the energy transition. I currently serve as head of Energy, Infrastructure and Commercial at the Electric Vehicle Council of Australia, an organisation representing more than 75 stakeholders across the transport and energy value chain. I am also an EV owner of 13 years myself.

Victoria has a significant opportunity to lead in integrating electric vehicles with the electricity system. EVs sit at the intersection of transport and energy policy, and as one of the states at the heart of this transition, EV sales have grown by more than 40 per cent in Victoria in the last two years alone. Australia has a national objective of reaching 5 million electric vehicles on the roads by 2035. That represents a structural shift in both the

transport fleet and the electricity system. Uptake must accelerate materially over the coming decade to meet that trajectory. At present we are not yet deploying infrastructure or aligning policy at the pace required.

EVs represent where automotive technology is going. They are not simply cars; they are often considered mobile batteries. Electrifying transport is the most economically efficient pathway to reducing reliance on imported liquid fuels and strengthening domestic clean energy demand. Every dollar spent on petrol largely leaves the Australian economy. Every dollar spent on electricity increasingly supports local generation and jobs. EV adoption improves energy security, reduces exposure to global fuel price volatility and keeps more household spending circulating domestically. For many Australians, electric vehicles already represent the lowest cost motoring option available over the life of a vehicle, and they are absolutely terrific to drive. Integrated well, EVs improve system efficiency, support renewable energy integration and reduce long-term costs. They are also a superior transport technology: safer, cleaner and cheaper to operate.

Turning to peak demand impacts, which are central to this inquiry, concerns about grid stability are manageable. Most EV charging occurs at home and can be shaped through time-of-use pricing, smart charging and demand response programs. Managed charging allows EVs to absorb excess renewable energy – like a lot of sun during the day – and avoid contributing to peak demand. The objective is not to constrain uptake but to optimise charging behaviour using well-designed price signals.

EVs represent the largest new electrical load added to household generation, but managed strategically, they also represent one of the greatest distributed storage resources available to the grid. Distribution businesses are central enablers. However, legacy demand tariffs designed for traditional industrial loads can unintentionally suppress early fast charging investment, which we have already seen today. Transition and more locationally responsive tariff structures are required to unlock deployment where it delivers the greatest system value.

Now moving to public charging: public charging is essential infrastructure. Customers require access to a range of charging solutions. While private charging will serve most drivers most of the time, public charging is essential both for customers without access to home charging and for drivers when travelling longer distances. It is not optional infrastructure. It is foundational to confidence. Australia has invested over half a billion dollars in public charging in recent years, delivering approximately 4000 public charging plugs nationally. However, compared to leading international markets, this remains insufficient for the scale of the transition ahead. Public charging acts as a visible confidence signal. When drivers see reliable, accessible infrastructure, they invest. When they do not, adoption slows. Accelerated deployment of public charging, with distribution networks, charge point operators, retailers and government working together, is therefore an essential step. Deployment must also be geographically strategic. It is not simply about total numbers; it is about equitable, reliable and usable access.

The Electric Vehicle Council has consistently advocated for improved infrastructure transparency. We support the development of a national dashboard to provide visibility on charging installation and capacity consistent with leading international practice. This improves planning, investment efficiency and public confidence. We are also progressing a coordinated charging road map to align transport and energy system planning through to 2035, ensuring infrastructure rollout matches projected demand.

Government has a direct and critical enabling role to play. State and local governments can accelerate deployment by streamlining planning and approval processes, facilitating access to appropriate public land for charging infrastructure and demonstrating leadership through fleet electrification. Planning friction slows rollout and land access constraints delay projects, and these are solvable barriers. Government fleet electrification is particularly powerful. It provides demand certainty to the market and sends a visible signal to households and businesses. Leadership matters. When government moves decisively, the private sector follows.

Moving to bidirectional charging, vehicle to load, vehicle to home and vehicle to grid, all of which are similar concepts, are a capability growing from pilot to early commercial development. Bidirectional charging delivers tangible economic and system benefits. It can lower household electricity costs while supporting the grid during periods of high demand. The system level benefits – distributed storage, resilience and renewable energy integration – are substantial. To scale, we need regulatory clarity, streamlined approvals and nationally consistent technical standards, and we have come very far on these. But above all else we need market confidence for consumers and OEMs. Incentives for bidirectional use of EVs, such as through the Victorian energy upgrades, for example, would accelerate uptake and reduce risk.

While the Electric Vehicle Council is focused on accelerating mainstream adoption of electric vehicles, we recognise the importance of EVs across their full life cycle. EV batteries retain substantial residual capacity after retirement and can be repurposed for stationary storage – effectively two bites of the apple. This strengthens asset value and reduces waste. Victoria has a credible opportunity to build capability in battery diagnostics, refurbishment and materials recovery. Realising this requires early safety standards, traceability frameworks and long-term policy certainty. Across all these issues one principle remains constant: consumer experience drives adoption. Infrastructure that is reliable, interoperable and transparently priced accelerates uptake; fragmented systems inhibit it.

The question before this committee is not whether electrification will proceed – it will; the question is whether Victoria will lead in integrating it coherently. With decisive government leadership, accelerated public charging deployment, transparent infrastructure data and coordinated energy system planning, EVs will strengthen Victoria's electricity system. Thank you, and I welcome your questions.

The CHAIR: Thank you so much for that. We have got plenty of time for questions, so we will do 5 minutes each and then more if time allows. We will start with you, Ms Copsey.

Katherine COPSEY: Thank you. Thanks so much for your submission. Going to the capability of batteries on wheels, do you think that there is more that we can do to boost the general consumer's awareness of this capability in EVs? Do you think that people are still primarily thinking of them as a mode of transport in the buying public, and how can government assist in helping consumers understand the benefits for them as a storage and distribution device?

Alina DINI: Yes, certainly. That is a great question. At the heart of the transition to EVs is absolutely the end user, and we have seen in Australia an emerging trend around misinformation around EVs. Electric vehicles are often classified as 'the greenie solution' or 'the car that ruins the weekend', but in actuality we believe that EVs are just a transition toward the mode of operating vehicles in the future. I think how we overcome the issues of consumers not knowing a lot about how EVs can support the energy system is through consumer education programs, so targeted work principally commencing at the government level but also in support with other organisations can provide consumers with awareness of how EVs can support their household energy use at the point of sale. How it has been done in other jurisdictions is through dealers – educating dealers on informing consumers when they are searching for an EV or when buying one on how the battery can be used at home, what kinds of facilities are available through an electricity retailer and providing options.

Katherine COPSEY: Thank you. Am I right in thinking that with the widespread availability of vehicle-to-home and vehicle-to-grid capacity there are not really technical barriers to that remaining and it is more issues around warranty from the manufacturers for the battery to be used that way, or are there still governance and technical barriers that we need to overcome to see that deployed?

Alina DINI: It is a very fiddly question to answer. By and large the technical and regulatory barriers have been overcome and vehicle to grid is enabled in Australia today, so that can occur, and you are absolutely right to say that the barriers are more market-related, so whether the automotive OEMs will allow for their vehicles to be used in a particular way. What is coming and what we continue to work on in the industry is the harmonisation of standards on the vehicle and the energy system side so that future products can more seamlessly integrate. So there is an improvement to the current state that we anticipate seeing in a couple of years time that will make it even easier to use vehicle to grid, but currently it is an option that can be undertaken with the right arrangements in place with vehicles.

Katherine COPSEY: Thank you. And those standards that I have heard referred to by a few witnesses are at the national level? It is an Australian standard –

Alina DINI: That is right.

Katherine COPSEY: Right – that then the states should adopt and harmonise with?

Alina DINI: Correct.

Katherine COPSEY: Great. Going to fleet and the ability of government to provide a ready supply of second-hand vehicles and also to drive uptake of EVs, can I start with a bit of a random question: do Australians prefer to buy second-hand cars more than other countries?

Alina DINI: It is a good question. I apologise, I do not have that statistic at hand. I would be happy to come back to you with some more detail on the prevalence of second-hand buying versus new car buying over time. What I can tell you is roughly 1 million new cars are entered into the Australian market, brand new cars, per year, and that EV sales have been increasing year on year, with an average of nearly 15 per cent of new car sales year on year being electric. That is a slight increase of the actual number, but we are moving in that direction. I think what it demonstrates is that there is an anxious anticipation of using this new technology. It is often related to mobile phone use and that sort of take-up curve, the difference being that cars are more expensive and have a different purpose than a phone. In terms of the second-hand market, it is emerging, and I think it is emerging because of how long EVs have been available in Australia for sale. So we are seeing the fleet turn over more quickly, and that has been supported by the federal program of the electric car discounts, so the exemption of FBT for EVs. I do anticipate that over time there will be greater take-up of second-hand EVs, but we can certainly come back to you with a response on the numbers.

Katherine COPSEY: I am just interested – the points that you raise around current barriers to purchase, I just wonder if you have got a specific recommendation around giving certainty around battery life and so on for the second-hand market in particular?

Alina DINI: Yes, absolutely. I think that is a really good point. When you are buying a second-hand car, you want to make sure it is not a lemon, right? It has got to be a high-quality product that is just done being used by the first user. As it relates to EVs, what we have learned tends to bring confidence to second-hand buyers is having a battery diagnostic test. Now, this can occur at the dealer if it is an OEM product that is still associated with that brand. It can also occur at independent electric vehicle repairers. Either way you get a report on the battery's state of health, and that can give you confidence that it will continue throughout its life. I will just add one more point. There was some recent evidence provided, which I would be happy to send to the committee after this, that indicates that electric vehicle batteries are actually much more durable than we originally anticipated. While we anticipated EVs showing degradation after eight years, it seems that that degradation has decreased with real-life kilometres being driven. They are working even better than we hoped they would.

Katherine COPSEY: Great. Thank you.

The CHAIR: Thank you. I will go next. You mentioned in your opening remarks about how when the government acts decisively, the private sector follows. I just want to drill a little bit more into the role that you see government playing in this space. Something that has come through pretty consistently throughout this inquiry process has been that there are obviously three levels of government in Australia, and all of them have somewhat of a role to play, but it is a little bit messy. I guess, two questions: what role do you see local government, state government and federal government playing, and how can that be better improved to increase charging supply?

Alina DINI: That is a really good question. It has a multipart answer, so bear with me. In the first instance, what we have seen in Australia is when the current government brought forward a national electric vehicle strategy – and I mean, it is the Commonwealth government – there was a sudden signal shift globally that said Australia was open for business on EVs, and that incredibly increased the number of products available for sale and the amount of sales undertaken. What that demonstrates is when governments lead and provide evidence that they support a particular technology or pathway, industry follows suit. So absolutely, continuing those leadership signals at every level of government is going to be necessary to encourage and accelerate the transition. We are hoping to see more of that from the Commonwealth and more of that from the states individually, as many of them have already demonstrated support for electric vehicles.

As for local governments, it is slightly different of course because there are different sizes, different geographies and different priorities. We are working with local governments and have published a guide to support local governments in the EV transition to assist principally with public charging infrastructure, so making those regional communities provide throughput access to destinations by providing resources for public charging.

In terms of the second part of your question, around what we do next, because many of the governments have undertaken that work, I would just like to draw your attention to the fact that EVs are moving away from early adoption. We have had this range of products come in. First movers have taken them on. What we are moving into now is more mainstreaming of electric vehicles, and that requires a different level of interaction from government. It requires persistence with the existing support and more integrated work with the existing ecosystem to ensure that any of the microbarriers that exist are overcome. Now, we listed some of those in our submission. I am sure many of my colleagues who have presented evidence have also described, in terms of their lens, what is a priority. Overcoming some of those less apparent and more interesting examples of what could happen is going to be necessary to support consumers on the transition, and one example might be driving information into the hands of end users around the connection between the household electricity system and the EV, as your fellow panel member mentioned earlier.

The CHAIR: Great. Thank you so much for that. Also, you have proposed an EV-charging road map to better support growth across the country. Could you explain to us a little bit more what that would look like and how it would work?

Alina DINI: Yes, certainly. Taking a leaf out of the page of our peers overseas, the Electric Vehicle Council believes that it is necessary for Australia nationally to have a piece of work that outlines what level of infrastructure is required across private and public charging holistically and how the governments can be coordinated to meet that demand leading up to the government's target of 5 million EVs in 2035 – I mean, obviously the national target of 5 million EVs. The piece of work that we are hoping to undertake this year is some targeted modelling to better represent what type of charging is required where, and help provide some frameworks to government for future planning.

The CHAIR: Great, thank you so much. We will go to Ms Broad.

Gaelle BROAD: Thank you very much. I appreciate your contribution to the inquiry. It is just interesting: I have been reading news reports about BYD brand importing 40,000 cars into Australia in the six months to 31 December 2025 but only selling about 22,000 vehicles. So there could be a credit trading scheme where they have bonus, if you like, credits and then other companies that are not selling the electric vehicles could purchase those credits. Can you just expand on what is actually happening in the market with that?

Alina DINI: It is hard for me to speak to the strategic plans of specific automotive OEMs; that is sort of not our role here. But what I can say is that BYD has overtaken its competitors as the most popular brand making electric vehicles in Australia, and I would suggest that their intention of bringing additional vehicles is a demonstration that they expect to sell them, whether immediately in the last calendar year or not long after that. They are introducing new products every few months and I think are trying to have broad appeal with mainstream Australians. Where there might be a point of friction between vehicles moving is around the consumer experience. I think we still have quite a bit of misinformation in the public domain around EVs and their benefits and consumers perhaps not knowing where to go to find answers to some of the questions they might have, which is why we feel consumer education is the next frontier for accelerated EV adoption.

Gaelle BROAD: I think education is really important, and I know concerns have been raised on the *Spotlight* program, where Channel 7 looked at Indonesia. There is a huge component from nickel that goes into EVs. That particular facility was owned by China, and China I believe own BYD. Do you want to see more education on where batteries originate? We talked yesterday during the inquiry about the tracking at the recycling end, but it was mentioned that there is capacity to potentially track the source of batteries. Do you have concerns? Because there are very different labour standards in some countries. Should consumers know where these batteries are being produced?

Alina DINI: I think it is absolutely the case that any product that comes into the market and is available to consumers is produced ethically. I mean, that is probably more a personal opinion than a view of the EVC, but I think we would all agree that ethical working and ethical conditions are essential for a successful economy going forward. In terms of batteries specifically, there is a concept that I presented on to ASEAN just last year on behalf of the Australian government called the 'battery passport'. We have a couple of automotive manufacturers in our membership – for example, Tesla – who use details on their batteries that provide the composition of the battery, where it was manufactured and how it was produced. That is global best practice for

managing the value chain of the components that go into a battery and then can also provide detail at the point of recyclability. The EVC supports that work going forward. We would like to see more of it, absolutely.

Gaelle BROAD: That is encouraging to hear, because I know it has certainly been a concern. Another area that I was interested in, because I am in Northern Victoria, is the electrification of transport. I know the government has been requiring buses to be electric. That presents a significant challenge for regional bus routes where there is not the capacity and they have very different routes where they are not all going back to a depot. Are you aware of those concerns? Do you have any comment about that?

Alina DINI: In terms of that particular case, I am not specifically aware of it, but I am happy to come back on notice. What I can say more generally about electric buses, which is consistent with our promotion of heavy electric vehicles – all sorts of different types of large trucks – is that those technologies are coming into the market. They are becoming commercially viable. They are becoming favoured by the providers who use those vehicles normally. We are working very hard with our peers in the electricity system to make them aware of the fact that these types of buses and trucks will be entering into regional areas and need to be planned for so that they can recharge properly. What I will mention is that while that work is currently underway, it is not as advanced as some of the thinking around passenger cars, so we are working, as I said, with our peers in the energy system to prepare for heavy vehicle charging. That is part of the scope of the charging road map we mentioned before.

Gaelle BROAD: I am just interested in the resale market for EVs. People are hanging on to them for, what, eight years? How long has the industry been going and how significant is that? Because I have heard that there are plummeting sales on the resale of EVs. Do you have a comment about that?

Alina DINI: I do not have statistics around second-hand EVs and the resale value or resale rates on hand, so I would be happy to provide that to the committee on notice. I can say myself, I am a veteran EV owner – so 13 years – with two different BEVs, one plug-in hybrid. The first car we kept for seven years, the second one we still have, which I think is rolling on 10, and my third car I have had for five years now. We might be looking to move that on, but not for those reasons. I am just one example, but I think you will find that the retention rate of EVs is quite similar to that of traditional cars. The usability of it after that period of time, including its battery operation, is consistent to expectation if not exceeding it. Why second-hand take-up models might be diminishing is similar to the answer I provided earlier about new car sales. I think we are at the choke point now where, moving into the mainstream, we have new customers who might be considering taking up EVs and need some of their concerns or uncertainties around the technology demystified.

Gaelle BROAD: Thank you.

The CHAIR: Okay. Thank you, Ms Broad. Mr Berger.

John BERGER: Thank you, Chair. Thank you for your appearance this morning. I am interested to hear a bit more about your heavy vehicles integration. Are the big multinationals taking a real interest in it and looking at the technology in terms of whether they are just using semitrailers? Or are they going into B-doubles, or are they considering using their smaller fleets to do parcel pick-up and delivery?

Alina DINI: I am really happy to talk about heavy vehicles, although I am not the foremost expert at the EVC. I am happy to come back to you with more detail on this point. What I can say about heavy vehicle electrification is that it has begun to take up amongst many last mile delivery users in Australia. One example is IKEA; another example is Woolworths. We have freight providers such as TGE and Linfox who are using electric vehicle prime movers in their fleet, and we also have Volvo, who are a member of ours that have commented on bringing manufacturing of heavy electric vehicles into their facilities in Wacol. So the market is absolutely moving in that direction, and the underpinning catalyst for that shift is the need to decarbonise the transport sector. We have extensive evidence and movement in Australia around the introduction of renewables and decarbonisation of the energy sector. Transport is the next cab off the rank, and as a result of that there is lots of movement. In fact just last week I was at a very well known retail brand, a grocery retailer, who have electric vehicles in their fleet of every shape and size, and they were commenting on transport decarbonisation as their first priority in terms of sustainability now, given the inroads they have been able to make in electricity. So while we have seen some movement – not incredible acceleration in the last few years – I think the next few will be very active.

John BERGER: Following on from that, I am not sure whether you are familiar with our new West Gate Tunnel and its surrounding environments. With all the technology that is there, it can facilitate autonomous vehicles. Do you see electric vehicles being a major player in part of that autonomous driving, in that last mile delivery service?

Alina DINI: It is a good question. I am familiar with autonomous driving and electric vehicles going hand in hand and have been in quite a few autonomous vehicles myself, just hearkening from California. I rode a Waymo over Christmas, and it was quite fun. We might be seeing them here soon. In terms of heavy vehicles, I am less across the application of autonomous driving and would be happy to come back to you with that response.

John BERGER: Thank you. Thanks, Chair.

The CHAIR: Thanks, Mr Berger. Mr McIntosh.

Tom McINTOSH: Thanks very much, Chair. Thank you for being here today. I just wanted to follow up on some of Mrs Broad's very good comments. I represent Eastern Victoria, so we have got a massive workforce in the Latrobe Valley generating electricity. Following on from Mrs Broad's comments about worker safety, something that has been critical for over a century, I think, since the state invested in electricity generation capacity and worker safety: do you think it is something that we should all be mindful of, given that electric vehicles use electricity, and that for all workers in electrical generation, transmission, distribution and installation their welfare and safety is considered by government?

Alina DINI: I absolutely think that the safety of any workers on any piece of equipment should be supported by government. I think there is a difference between electrical safety as it relates to infrastructure in a building, for example. An electrician would be perfectly qualified to install electric vehicle charging, so any electric vehicle supply equipment would require the same credentials as an electrician to install in the home. Automotive technicians are slightly different. Working on a vehicle that has a battery requires a particular skill set, as you mentioned. Working with high voltage equipment on board a vehicle requires the correct skills and training, and yes, we would absolutely advocate for that. I just wanted to make the distinction between automotive and building.

Tom McINTOSH: Yes. Great. As far as consumer awareness of materials goes, do you think it would be fair to say that for any product that Australia imports – we will take the example of nickel – if it is used in stainless steel sinks or if it is used in car batteries, the government should be informing consumers of products? If there is going to be an approach to inform consumers about a particular product, then anywhere that product is used consumers should be informed. If it is nickel, for instance, wherever nickel ends up in front of consumers, if we approach with information, we should approach that broadly and consistently across consumer purchases.

Alina DINI: If I am understanding your question correctly, I think consumer awareness of what product or what resources are included in the products they buy makes good sense. It seems to be a reasonable practice. As it relates to electric vehicles and batteries, refer back to my comment about a battery passport and that the EVC supports an understanding of the origin of all materials that go into EV batteries.

Tom McINTOSH: Perhaps the committee could take into consideration that if we look at materials in these and that are used in other places across Victoria or Australia – outside of the electrical vehicle industry – that could be given due consideration as well.

Alina DINI: I think there is definitely a need for Australia to think about its role in the production and use of critical minerals.

Tom McINTOSH: Yes, fantastic. Have you got any stats around sales and share of on road in Victoria compared to Australia – how Victoria is tracking?

Alina DINI: Yes. As of last year, Victoria is tracking above the national average for EV sales. I think it was 12.9 per cent of new car sales in Victoria that were electric, whereas the national average was 12.2 per cent.

Tom McINTOSH: Okay, that is good. And a trajectory for 2030, 2035, 2040 – you take your pick on what sort of trajectory point: where do you see EV sales moving over the coming years?

Alina DINI: Well, it is funny you ask that question. We have been working very hard with many of our peers to establish thoughts around what EV sales will be required to meet the government's targets of 5 million EVs by 2030. In terms of a state-by-state breakdown, we do not have those numbers at hand but would be happy to come back to you with some indicative work.

Tom McINTOSH: Even Australia-wide perhaps, if that is –

Alina DINI: Yes, the government has released that particular target of expecting 5 million passenger cars by 2035, so I think that is the best one to use at this point in time. That is what we refer to.

Tom McINTOSH: Sure. And following up on Ms Copsey's comments around the battery on wheels, what do you see that doing for electricity prices and household bills – having more cars connected into homes and the grid?

Alina DINI: What I think is that when consumers have more choice on how they use their electricity, whether they use it to fuel their car or power their home, or they use their car to power their home, it offers the capability to use energy more efficiently. Electric vehicles being brought into the grid and plugged in at particular times can do things like absorb solar energy that is generated during the day. If you are working from home, for example, and you have your EV plugged in from 12 to 3 sucking up all of that solar and wind that otherwise would have been curtailed or wasted, that is a great, efficient outcome for Australians which keeps electricity prices down. Equally, if you are an EV owner and you are using vehicle-to-load in your home during peak demand times from 4 to 9 pm then you are using the lowest cost energy available to you and therefore keeping electricity prices down for Australians.

Tom McINTOSH: Yes, so more EVs equals cheaper power prices.

Alina DINI: That is right.

Tom McINTOSH: Thank you.

The CHAIR: Thanks, Mr McIntosh. Ms Copsey, with a follow up.

Katherine COPSEY: Thank you. We have been talking about uptake and a growing consumer base for this product, but I am interested in how we can support equitable access to this technology. We have come through the early adoption and innovation cycle with things like solar panels, and we are in the process of that with batteries. What should governments be doing to ensure that apartment dwellers and people on lower incomes do not miss out on the benefits of this technology?

Alina DINI: It is a great question. There is so much opportunity for any Australian to lower their cost of motoring by taking on an EV, so having equitable access to EVs, knowledge about them and places to charge is critical for that. We have worked with a number of organisations to support information sharing around how to streamline processes for introducing chargers in strata, for example. Anytime an apartment dweller or renter is looking to adopt an electric vehicle there are a certain number of pathways they can take with their strata. It is quite complicated and nothing is systematically the same in any strata, but we have outlined what steps they could take. We also support right to charge. This is an emerging concept that suggests that there should be legislation changed at each state level to allow for any strata dweller to have the right to approach the strata and ask for charging arrangements. In addition to that, I would like to draw your attention to our submission in the comments made around network tariffs and how and where tariff restructuring can support more cost-efficient public charging, particularly fast public charging – a great outcome for EV owners who cannot charge at home.

Katherine COPSEY: Can I ask a couple more?

The CHAIR: Of course.

Katherine COPSEY: Thank you very much. It is really good to know that there is guidance on the strata issue, because I have heard stories from constituents around that process being quite frustrating.

Alina DINI: It can be.

Katherine COPSEY: I believe we are in the process of preparing for changes to or reform of owners corporation laws here in Victoria. Are there any key takeaways that you have that you can expand on from the answer you just gave around how we can enable the uptake of this infrastructure? Also, I will ask a follow-up. I know in new builds we are asking that they be EV ready. Is there more we should be doing to make sure that these dwellings are accommodating the transport technology that we are going to be using in the future?

Alina DINI: Yes, absolutely. In terms of new builds and making buildings EV-ready, the National Construction Code updates that we recommended for 2025, which unfortunately were not taken up, provided some guidance around what measures could be introduced at extremely low cost to provide the necessary readiness for new building owners so that they could enable EV charging infrastructure to be brought in. I am really happy to share that with you, such that it could be considered, because the National Construction Code is obviously taken up on a state-by-state basis. So where Victoria can lead in this regard would be great. We will send that through. Secondly, as it relates to strata, I am also happy to send through the guideline that we produced last year, which we did do in partnership with the Owners Corporation Network. That particular guideline outlined, in the first instance of course, ensuring that strata cannot deny any particular resident access to EV charging. What that looks like is very much dependent on the building and its electrical set-up. There are a couple of use cases that are outlined in that document. It is probably best I send it to you rather than outline it now, but I am happy to do that.

Katherine COPSEY: Thank you. Yes, I understand that switchboard upgrades, where they are needed, can be a bit of a barrier. I noted in your submission there was support for incentives and uptake around bidirectional charging. Would you recommend similar energy upgrade support be provided for buildings that require large switchboard upgrades?

Alina DINI: Do you mean to enable residents who live in strata or rentals? Absolutely. I think anywhere where government can provide assistance to broaden the scope of who might be able to access charging at the residence for EVs is a great outcome, and the reason why that is a great outcome is because you can obtain the lowest cost electricity in your household versus doing so in a public charging station. So if we can support that with government endorsement or support, absolutely.

Katherine COPSEY: I have one more.

The CHAIR: I think it is just you and Gaelle, so go for it.

Katherine COPSEY: Okay, great. Thank you very much. Just turning now to public charging infrastructure, I am interested in the role that you spoke about – government filling in gaps in the charging network where we might not necessarily see a market provider go. But I am also interested in if there are particular locations where you see that government could encourage sensible time-of-use charging. I am thinking places like commuter car parks and other publicly owned locations where we can encourage daytime charging and solar uptake. Is that something that EVC has given consideration to?

Alina DINI: Yes. The application of public charging that we think makes the most sense is, yes, daytime charging that relates to workplace. If you are an employer or operate a fleet and you can make charging available to your employees, it is a great use case for absorbing daytime generation such as solar, so we are strongly supportive of those kinds of mechanisms. I will just refer back to my comment about a site visit last week. We visited a retail brand that had significant workplace charging available, and it was oversubscribed. They talked about being so oversubscribed that they in fact needed an online platform to help them manage it, so I think we can see that there is a great demand for being able to refuel your car while you work, leave with a full tank and go home and potentially even discharge to your house, which makes for a great outcome and again, a more cost-efficient outcome for the grid.

Katherine COPSEY: Great. Thank you.

The CHAIR: Thanks, Ms Copsey. Ms Broad.

Gaelle BROAD: I am very interested in the EV council's view on a road-user charge. We saw in Victoria the government did try and introduce a user charge, but then it was found to be non-constitutional. Where do

you sit with that? With the uptake of more EVs, that will result in a drop in fuel excise, and that funding goes towards maintaining our roads as well. So where does the council sit on Australia having a road-user charge applied?

Alina DINI: Certainly, we have a very specific position on road-user charging that pertains to both passenger and electric vehicles, which I will be happy to send you so that it is formally in your documentation. At a high level, we believe it is too early in the market to introduce road-user charging, particularly road-user charging that targets electric vehicles specifically. We are seeking a tipping point of at least 30 per cent of the market being fully electric so that everyday Australians, those who are most likely to be the next wave of consumers who have questions about the products, who have heard a lot of uncertainty or maybe do not understand the technology completely, are not then tasked with having to understand a new tax, and one that perhaps makes the decision to transition more difficult for them. So our position is we accept that Australia is looking to bring in road-user charging, but any kind of arrangement that would disadvantage the accelerated take-up of electric vehicles is not one we would support.

Gaelle BROAD: I am probably not surprised by that answer, because 'Should we charge our members more? No.' But what are you seeing in other countries? How do they apply a user charge?

Alina DINI: What we have seen, for example, in New Zealand is the introduction of road-user charging that includes electric vehicles, and we have seen a shift in terms of motorists moving away from taking on EVs. So we have evidence in the market that indicates that the introduction of taxes, particularly those that favour one technology over another, is not favourable for accelerated take-up. And it is a shame, because there is so much potential for vehicle electrification to support low-cost motoring for Australians, economic benefits to the grid and lowering reliance on foreign imported oil, so we would really like to see those benefits pass through.

Gaelle BROAD: What was the drop? I think that was in our previous meeting papers. What was the drop in New Zealand when they introduced the charge?

Alina DINI: I cannot from memory remember the statistic, but I would be happy to come back to you with some detail on that.

Gaelle BROAD: Thank you.

Alina DINI: I have got a lot of homework.

Gaelle BROAD: I appreciate that. Thank you.

The CHAIR: Mr McIntosh.

Tom McINTOSH: Thank you. I am really passionate about Victorian jobs. Electric vehicles offer generation, distribution, transmission, installation jobs all here in Victoria, and they save $40 billion to $50 billion a year of fuel money going offshore. It means all that stays here. What are the benefits to Victoria and to Australia through electric vehicles?

Alina DINI: It is a great question. I think you have nailed many of them. What we have not talked about, though, I think is just above what you have said: the tremendous automotive sector expertise that remains in Victoria. It remains, in terms of manufacturing, automotive repairs and any other aspects of the value chain that relate to the automotive sector, definitely at the heart of the Australian workforce. I think there is great opportunity to encourage retraining, so supporting electric mechanics, supporting second-hand vehicle battery testing, supporting dealer training. There is a great deal of opportunity to support training in those specific areas that can grow the EV ecosystem here in Victoria.

Tom McINTOSH: The Liberal–Nationals sold out our automotive industry and sent car manufacturing offshore. Do you think we can bring those skills back – we can continue to bring more skills back into Victoria and Australia? We lost tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of jobs during that.

Alina DINI: I do not have expertise in what skills are desirable for Australia in relation to automotive manufacturing, but what I can say is that electric vehicles are the future of motoring. They bring tremendous opportunity both in the energy and transport sectors and offer an extension of those skills from previous eras of manufacturing in Australia that we should see continued.

Tom McINTOSH: Last question: you spoke before about misinformation and consumer education. There are people – often, unfortunately, politicians – out there pushing technophobe ideological lines that are seeping through to people that make the difference in people making decisions. As the EVC – we know that it is slick ads; it might be a 2- or 3-second touchpoint to people. I think you talked earlier about traditionally it being environmentalists that pushed EVs. But to get out into that middle market, what sort of – I will use the word 'slick' – sharp advertising is EVC doing to try and reach people other than perhaps a passive 'EVs are great' sort of thing?

Alina DINI: I am so glad you asked that question. We every day talk about what more we can be doing for the everyday Australian in terms of helping them understand how an EV might be the best choice for their next purchase. We are currently working on a proposal for a consumer education campaign, but what we often refer to in our many media statements through our social media and also in our annual report, the state of EVs, which is the best known publication in Australia on the EV market, are the cost savings that you can experience by shifting from a traditional vehicle, or an internal combustion engine, to electric. Currently the statistics we have are that an Australian will save more than $3000 per year moving to an EV, and that is significant given affordability issues that we are experiencing now with inflation.

Tom McINTOSH: Sorry, just to hone in, are you able to get that out of reports and into short, sharp messages that meet people where they are, whether it is on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, whatever? Is that something the EVC is trying to do?

Alina DINI: We are desperate to do this. In fact we are really excited about how we can interface more with the everyday Australian. At the moment we are looking for partners to deliver this type of work, so if you had a particular suggestion or recommendation of who we might work with or how it might be funded, we would be very happy to discuss that.

Tom McINTOSH: Excellent. I will leave my comments there. Thank you, Chair.

Gaelle BROAD: I did find the data that we are talking about from the Electric Vehicle Council's state of EVs 2025 report. It showed New Zealand, where EV uptake was strong until the end of 2023. In January 2024 the government removed a successful rebate scheme and also introduced a road user charge for EVs. This triggered the collapse of EV sales, which plummeted from 40 per cent of all new registrations in December 2023 to just below 5 per cent in January 2024.

Alina DINI: Thank you for finding that stat – one less homework assignment.

Gaelle BROAD: There is one less job for you. Thank you.

The CHAIR: I think we might leave it there. Thank you so much for coming in and speaking with us today. You might get some follow-up questions on notice as well.

Alina DINI: Pleasure. Yes, we would be happy to do that.

The CHAIR: Great. That concludes the public hearing.

Witness withdrew.