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Helping fleets to switch to electric vehicles

On behalf of the Australian Government, ARENA has provided \$469,380 in funding to Everergi to help businesses and consumers to make informed choices about electric vehicles (EVs), and help electricity networks to plan for the potential impact of EVs.

With ARENA's support, Everergi has today launched an initiative aimed at vehicle fleets called the Charge Together Fleets program, developed in partnership with the Electric Vehicle Council (EVC).

This includes a free online platform - called BetterFleet - to assist businesses to develop a detailed business case for switching to EVs. Fleet managers will be able to develop procurement plans that include economic and environmental assessments of vehicles and charging infrastructure in minutes.

Fleets make up more than half of all new vehicles sold annually in Australia and this platform will significantly reduce the time and cost required for fleets to make procurement decisions.

Over 100 Australian fleets - including NRMA, Charles Sturt University and Ausgrid - have so far signed up to the Charge Together Fleets program. Charge Together Fleets will also provide Australian organisations interested in transitioning to EVs with a knowledge base, peer-to-peer learning opportunities, a national procurement initiative, and a webinar series.

Next year, Everergi will also launch an online platform and smartphone app for private consumers which will allow them to find the most suitable EV, arrange a test drive and set up home charging infrastructure.

Everergi is also developing an Australia-wide planning tool for electricity distributors to plan for and manage the potential impact of EVs on the electricity system. This forecasting framework will take into account current EV electricity capacity, network constraints, travel data, future charging infrastructure, local renewable generation, and capacity management options. The planning tool will be launched in early 2020 with Ausgrid as the first user. It will enable energy networks to better plan for EVs on their network, ultimately improving grid reliability.

ARENA CEO Darren Miller said Everergi's online platforms would help inform those who wished to purchase EVs.

"Charge Together Fleets is a free, practical way for fleet managers and businesses to make commercial decisions about the future of their fleet and how they can best transition to EVs with minimal impact on their operations.

"Taken together, Everergi's online platforms will help businesses, consumers, and electricity networks make informed decisions about switching to electric vehicles and managing the potential impact," he said.

Last year, ARENA and CEFC published a report which predicted the uptake of EVs would increase significantly over the next decade. The report said EVs would reach price parity with petrol cars by the early to mid-2020s when looking at upfront cost, and sooner than this on a total cost of ownership basis. A lack of fast charging infrastructure was identified as a barrier to the uptake of EVs.

ARENA has also committed \$21 million in funding to Chargefox and Evie Networks, providing two ultra-rapid EV charging networks along major interstate highways around Australia.

"This is about offering Australian businesses, councils and organisations real choice. BetterFleet will reduce the cost of planning a migration by tens of thousands of dollars in many cases and managers should be able to clearly understand the options they have and proceed from that basis," Everergi CEO Dan Hilson said.

"On current projections, we anticipate this program will help deliver tens of thousands of EVs on to Australian roads over the next five years. In the future, it will also help businesses to acquire charging infrastructure."

The \$1.05 million project has also received support from the NSW and South Australian Governments, Ausgrid, and NRMA. For further information, visit chargealtogether.org/