



# Addressing Black Spots Fast Charging Program – QLD, NSW, VIC & WA

Lessons Learnt Report

Author: Kevin Roxas

Email: [kevin.roxas@ampol.com.au](mailto:kevin.roxas@ampol.com.au)

24 March 2023



*The views expressed herein are not necessarily the views of the Australian Government. The Australian Government does not accept responsibility for any information or advice contained within this document.*

*This project received funding from the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) as part of ARENA's Advancing Renewables Program.*

# Contents

1.	Introduction and Background	4
2.	Purpose of Document	4
3.	Lessons Learnt	5
4.	Conclusion	7

# 1. Introduction and Background

Round one of the Future Fuels Fund ('FFF'), administered by the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) was made available to fund Battery Electric Vehicle ('BEV') public fast charging infrastructure in capital cities and regional centres.

The purpose is to install a network of BEV public fast charging stations that address "blackspots", or areas that do not currently have convenient access to public fast charging stations. Given the current early stage of the BEV industry, there are many blackspots within Australia's capital cities and large regional centres. The objective is to address blackspots by improving the availability of public BEV fast charging stations which will support BEV uptake by the public and businesses, including fleets.

Ampol applied for, and was successful in being awarded four separate FFF funding agreements for the installation of fast charging stations in QLD, NSW, VIC and WA (Ampol's addressing blackspots fast charging program). To date, Ampol has focused on and made significant progress in:

- Fast charging station site selection and screening through the engagement of network providers to understand supply availability, the completion of site assessments to refine site specific scopes of works, and landlord engagement.
- Procurement activities to identify suitable partners for the supply of fast charging hardware and the design and construction of fast charging stations.
- Execution works at scale following the commissioning of 5 pilot sites.

Ampol remains on track to deliver the remaining charging stations to be installed under the addressing blackspots fast charging program in early 2024, with the program currently progressing significantly to date.

## 2. Purpose of Document

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of Ampol's lessons learnt to date on the scale deployment of Ampol's EV charging network. Ampol has taken an open and collaborative approach to sharing the lessons learnt included in this report to ensure that ARENA's objective of accelerating the development and growth of Australia's renewable energy sector is met.

This Lessons Learnt report focuses on Ampol's findings around **potential cause of delays on site execution, and external resourcing constraints**

## 3. Lessons Learnt

### 3.1 Potential Causes of Delay on Site Execution

#### Landlord engagement

- Ampol's landlords hold high value assets i.e. >\$1m and are highly interested in works that will impact their investment and will undertake their own due diligence with respect to valuations, insurances, and impact to other tenants on the same land. All of these activities represent a time variable where the landlord may engage consultants to support their position. The majority of landlords have been cooperative and have provided either in-principle consent for the operational works or signed consent. Similarly, landlords have provided in-principle consent or signed consent for any council application which is lodged by Ampol and which requires owners consent to do so. A third type of consent has also been required in situations where metering data is requested to assist with initial site feasibility studies.
- As many of Ampol's landlords are sophisticated investors with a range of either simple or complex ownership structures, Ampol does experience time lags in engaging with landlords or their representative and/or managing agents. Communicating the proposed changes, responding to landlord queries, and waiting for the relevant documentation to be signed/executed and returned to Ampol all represent time variables.
- On this point, whilst landlord interaction does slow the program down when compared to Ampol's trust or owned sites, Ampol can largely demonstrate that the cohort of leased sites is being managed in a way that is achieving consent outcomes, albeit on a lag basis. Where there is a barrier or blockage to consent, our contingency is to seek a replacement site whilst complying with ARENA requirements and meeting the objectives of the program.

#### Procurement

- The majority of EV charging sites do and will require some form of electrical main switch board or electrical distribution board upgrade / replacement. Lead times on the manufacturing of electrical hardware has ranged from 8-16 weeks and is to be expected for the balance of the program. By Ampol implementing a multi supplier approach for the construction of each project, this allows improved risk management of these external issues.
- Ampol is partnering with three different organisations to balance overall program risk and provide program agility

#### Development Applications and Council Consents

- Ampol's approach to the execution of the project considers that works undertaken will be in accordance with and will comply with any local planning requirement. Initial site screenings are performed by Ampol's panel of external town planners who assess the planning approval pathway. Examples of a site screening report summary is shown below in which advice is provided on consents that may or may not be required based on the

relevant legislative instruments. Pro-active engagement with councils protects Ampol from any potential enforcement action, stop work action, infringements, reputational damage and social issues (i.e. neighbour intervention or protracted disputation).

- To date, all applications have been approved by the relevant Councils with no onerous conditions imposed other than general building / construction certification requirements. **With Ampol taking the councils through this journey of electrification, this shows a positive outcome, with councils being supportive of the introduction of EV charging stations to their local communities.**
- By way of background, the average time duration from lodgement to approval by state (to date) is 12 weeks in **NSW**, 8 weeks in **QLD**, 10 weeks in **VIC**, and 9 weeks in **WA**.

Summary		
Scope of installation	DA required?	
EV charge unit	Yes	The installation of these items are considered "development", defined as follows under the <i>Planning and Development act 2005 (WA)</i> : <i>"means the development or use of any land including any demolition, erection, construction, alteration of or addition to any building or structure on the land"</i>
Battery	Yes	
Solar panels	No	Under the <i>Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015</i> , development approval for solar panels is not required, subject to the following conditions: (a) The solar panels are parallel to the angle of the roof. (b) The works are not located in a heritage-protected place.  We note this site already contains solar panels on the roof of the retail building and fuel canopy.
Change of Advertising	No	Under the <i>Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015</i> , development approval is not required in the event that the content of an approved advertisement sign is proposed to be changed, subject to the dimensions, location and structure remaining unchanged.

## 3.2 External Resourcing Constraints

### DNSP's Program of Works

Ampol has been working closely with the relevant DNSPs and due to the sheer volume of work that the DNSP's are undertaking, resources are constrained. Ampol's program is closely linked to these works where network augmentation, specifically significant upgrades, are required.

### Procurement Process

Ampol has seen delays across the board when engaging the market for pricing, with request for extensions being around 4-6 weeks. This has been taken into account for the remainder of sites currently undergoing detailed design.

### **Detailed Design Process**

Ampol and its delivery partners have limited resources capable of completing detailed designs (e.g. electrical engineers and designers) which means both design works and design reviews are completed in a phased approach.

## **4. Conclusion**

Ampol recognises that there are several challenges on deploying EV charging stations at scale and these challenges all have potential implications to the program delivery schedule. Whilst these factors are expected to continue throughout the program, Ampol believes these are necessary steps if we are to take all of our stakeholders through the journey of electrifying mobility.

Nonetheless, Ampol endeavours to deliver the program with quality, reliability, and safety top of mind. This will be achieved by working collaboratively not only internally within Ampol, but more importantly, externally with our key delivery partners and stakeholders.

