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Origin to accelerate electric fleets

On behalf of the Australian Government, the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) has today announced almost \$6.2 million in funding to Origin Energy for the Accelerate EV Fleet Program.

The \$12.8 million program will see Origin deliver 1000 electric vehicles and charging infrastructure to business customers nationally.

Origin's program is designed to help establish supply chains and business ecosystems that can be scaled up as the capital cost of electric vehicles (EVs) fall and more businesses look to transition their fleets.

On top of higher upfront vehicle costs, charging infrastructure presents an additional financial barrier to switching to electric vehicles.

ARENA funding will support the installation of smart chargers, helping to reduce a significant component of the additional costs of running an EV fleet.

Light vehicles account for around 11% of Australia's total emissions. With fleet users accounting for nearly half of all passenger vehicles sold in Australia, decarbonising business fleets is an opportunity to efficiently switch large numbers of vehicles to low emissions alternatives.

Decarbonisation of land transport is a key priority for ARENA, with the Australian Government's Driving the Nation Program continuing to help industry and consumers take the steps necessary to see Australia's transport emissions reduce in line with international commitments.

ARENA Acting CEO Chris Faris said the program was an exciting opportunity to scale up Australia's emerging EV fleet leasing market.

"Origin's program is ARENA's largest to date targeting light vehicle fleets and we're excited to see what lessons we'll learn," Mr Faris said.

"Not only will we be putting 1000 new electric vehicles on the road, but this program will create a blueprint for how EV fleet leasing models can operate. And those 1000 fleet EVs will feed the secondhand market for EVs in the years ahead.

As EVs become more affordable, more and more businesses will be looking to electrify their fleets. The EV Accelerate Program is about demonstrating the business case and learning the lessons that will allow that transition to gather pace."

Origin General Manager E-Mobility, Chau Le said, "This funding from ARENA will allow us to support more business customers with their transition to EVs, helping them to reduce their carbon footprint and operating costs.

"Origin's ambition is to lead the energy transition with cleaner and smarter customer solutions, and helping to accelerate the uptake of EVs in Australia is an important part of this."

Since 2015, ARENA has announced over \$146 million in funding to projects that decarbonise the transport sector, including fast charging stations, hydrogen refueling and household smart charging.

ARENA has also supported heavy vehicle fleet operators, including Team Global Express' Depot of the Future project, Australia's largest order of electric trucks to date.

Origin is partnering with fleet management organisation, Custom Fleet to deliver the Accelerate EV Fleet Program, which will run until 2025.