



ENGINEERS
AUSTRALIA

TAs discussion papers update

Road Pricing and Investment Discussion Paper

During the first 6 months of 2023, TAs will update the current discussion paper on [Road Pricing](#) to better reflect broader issues around road pricing and investment.

David Lowe (TAs NSW) will Chair the working group for this review. David can be contacted at david.lowe@turnbullengineering.com.au

There are major and inter-related reasons why road economic reform is both necessary and urgent;

- A means of funding transport infrastructure must be found to replace commonwealth petrol and diesel excise,
- Future road pricing must be designed to maximise equity and efficiency through managing demand, with the price charged designed to reflect distance travelled, size of vehicle and the level of congestion at the time of travel,
- There are too many distortions resulting in unfair cross subsidies, and
- The best choices need to be made in the allocation of scarce funds, especially in times of uncertainty and environmental threat.

Fuel excise revenue has been decreasing, largely due to improved vehicle fuel efficiency. In the future, the number of petrol and diesel vehicles in the system will decline further with the expected uptake of electric vehicles accelerating the decline of fuel excise revenue. This will have a major impact on government revenue that has been the backbone of road and transport infrastructure funding for many years.

The current pricing and investment system is complex, inaccurate, distorted and not transparent. A major objective of any review is to provide clear signals to users with a view to improving efficiency, fairness and equity, and direct linkage to efficient and effective expenditure. It is not an objective of the review to increase revenue; rather the outcome of the review should be revenue neutral.

Urban Transport Systems Discussion Paper

TAs developed a discussion paper on [Urban Transport Systems](#), which was approved and published by Engineers Australia in December 2021.

The paper recommends that a Sustainable Mobility Management approach be introduced for transport planning and infrastructure development in Australian cities.

It proposes utilising demand management and multi-modal, integrated land use and transport planning to limit traffic growth to levels that are more compatible with road network capacity and is sustainable in the long term.

Since that time, TAs has been engaging with a diverse group of stakeholders to outline its position and determine the level of support that exists for a change in transport and land use policy. The feedback we have received so far is positive, with the caveat that change on this scale will be challenging and will take time to achieve. To broaden our reach with stakeholders and to reflect our extensive overlap of interests, TAs has agreed to collaborate with the Planning Institute of Australia on shared advocacy and policy development.

Our original intent was to conclude the engagement process in September or October 2022 and produce a position paper that reflects the comments received. In reality, it is clear that the consultation process is far from complete. We are continuing to receive a rich stream of comment that is building support for our position and improving our understanding of complex policy and political issues so we have decided to extend the consultation process. Our view is that it is better to take a longer time to ensure the comment we receive is more inclusive than to rush the process.

It now looks like we will continue to receive comment up until about March or April 2023. At that time, we will report back to the TAs National Executive with a summary of the feedback we have received and a recommendation on how we should proceed. We will need to decide how much detail we can include in any future paper, without making it too unwieldy and complex and whether such a paper will allow for a further round of consultation.

If you would like to make representation to a stakeholder group or make a comment, please email Emmerson Richardson at emmersonrichardson@hotmail.com

“Future of Transport” discussion paper

Engineers Australia is preparing a discussion paper on the topic “Future of Transport”. The paper is being produced by Engineers Australia, not TAS, but is based on previous TAS discussion papers and will feature input from TAS members. The aim is to produce an overall synthesis of issues in the individual TAS discussion papers and how they can be responded to in a coordinated fashion.

A draft of the Future of Transport discussion paper was first completed in September. Members of the TAS executive and invited specialists have given input to Engineers Australia on the draft. It was hoped to prepare a discussion draft shortly. However this has been delayed recently by a Federal government request for responses to a proposed Federal Electric Vehicle (EV) strategy, which involves many of the same people to provide inputs. The EV strategy submission has now been completed and it is expected the discussion draft for the Future of Transport paper will be ready by January.