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Government committed to support choice

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To most Australians their car is more than just a means of transport; it is a symbol of freedom.

That's why technology is at the heart of the Morrison government's plan to bring down emissions in the transport sector.

When it comes to new vehicle technologies, including hybrid, hydrogen and electric vehicles, we're working in partnership with the private sector on the rollout to maximise consumer choice.

The role of industry in that partnership is to continue to improve these new vehicle technologies and lower costs; government's role is to ensure we have the right enabling environment.

Through initiatives such as the \$71.9m Future Fuels Fund, the government is supporting an environment that enables consumer choice, stimulates local industry development, and reduces emissions.

The first round of the fund leveraged \$55m in private sector co-investment to drive a seven-fold increase in the number of fast-charging stations across urban and regional centres.

Investments like this help to alleviate range anxiety and give households and businesses the confidence to embrace these new technologies.

In fact, our support for low emissions vehicles to date is more than \$1.4bn. This government backing is already creating the right environment for more private sector investment.

For example, the recent news that BlackRock, the world's largest asset manager, has bought a stake in the Australian EV charging network JOLT shows there is investment confidence in the rollout of EVs across Australia.

And despite a decline in overall new vehicle sales, the number of Australians making the switch to new vehicle technologies is accelerating. This year, Australians have already purchased more than 8700 battery EVs and plug-in hybrids - up 26 per cent on 2020.

Hybrid vehicle sales almost doubled in 2020, with this type of vehicle having immediate emissions reduction benefits, even over battery electric vehicles, across many parts of Australia.

The government will continue to support choice, co-investing with the private sector to fill charging gaps, or "black spots" in regional areas. The next round of the fund will also focus on enabling fleets to adopt new transport technologies that suit their needs. This emphasis on fleets will increase the flow of new vehicle types into the second-hand market, increasing availability and affordability for more Australians.

A technology-led approach to creating the right enabling environment, along with industry reducing cost of electric vehicles, will see many more Australians choose to drive them on our roads.

Angus Taylor is the Energy and Emissions Reduction Minister.