

Thursday, 23 October, 2008

GOVERNMENT TO EXPAND FOCUS ON FUEL EFFICIENT VEHICLES

The Brumby Government will set up a working group to examine fuel efficient vehicle technology and look at ways Victoria can continue to be a market leader in this emerging industry.

Premier John Brumby and Environment, Climate Change and Innovation Minister Gavin Jennings announced the working group to coincide with today's signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Better Place, Macquarie Bank and AGL on the deployment of an electric vehicle network powered by renewable energy in Australia.

"The Brumby Government is taking action to encourage the development of fuel efficient vehicles in Victoria so we have transport options in the future which use less oil and cut greenhouse gas emissions," Mr Jennings said.

"This Working Group will examine the development of fuel efficient vehicle technology, with a particular focus on the development of the first generation of electric vehicles and their infrastructure requirements.

"The Working Group's role will be on-going and it will consult widely with industry, environmental groups and across government."

The working group will focus on:

- Reviewing current fuel efficient vehicle technologies research;
- Assessing further opportunities for alternative fuel and technology development;
- Examining infrastructure needs for electric vehicles;
- Making recommendations and assisting in the development of standards for electric vehicles and charging; and
- Considering market and regulatory impediments.

"I hope today's announcement by Better Place and its partners will be the first of many for the Australian market," Mr Brumby said.

"I'm delighted Melbourne was selected to be the Australian headquarters for Better Place.

"Better Place will help generate further knowledge about alternative fuel vehicle technologies and will be valuable to our state to further capitalise on our position as a market leader in the automotive industry.

"The Victorian Government supports any initiative that will have positive outcomes in reducing emissions in the transport sector and I welcome this innovative approach to help make broad adoption of electric vehicles in Australia possible."