Transport Professionals Association

DECARBONISING AUSTRALIAN TRANSPORT

TPA IS TAKING ACTION FOR NET ZERO

POLICY SUMMARY | 2026



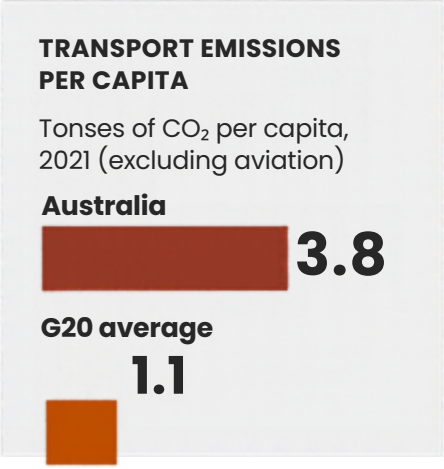
Transport Professionals Association

Decarbonising Australian transport: TPA is taking action for Net Zero

TPA is the leading professional organisation for Australia's transport community. Our members and stakeholders are clear that we must minimise transport's contribution to climate change.

In December 2024 TPA (then AITPM) released *The Path to Net Zero: Decarbonising Australia's transport system*. This addresses what governments at every level should do so that transport plays its part in the nation reaching Australia's 2050 Net Zero target. Our recommendations align with the accepted **'Avoid-Shift-Improve'** decarbonisation framework.

Furthermore, *The Path to Net Zero* outlines how the Australian transport community must be skilled up to face the decarbonisation challenges ahead.



Source: Climate Council of Australia (2023), *Shifting Gear. The Path to Cleanex Transport*, Figure 4, data sourced from Climate Transparency (2023).

Avoid the need to travel – and to deliver ever-more infrastructure



Even under a best-case scenario for the uptake of electric vehicles (EVs), to achieve Net Zero Australia must see deep reductions in passenger and freight tonne kilometres travelled. These will require more integrated land use and transport planning that brings people closer – in every sense – to work, services and each other. This will temper Australia's globally high dependence on carbon-intensive road-building programs to support urban development, including housing delivery.

TPA recommends

Planning authorities should mandate compact, mixed-use urban developments that are within easy walking or bike-riding distance of daily needs, serviced by high-quality public transport, enabling affordable, car-free living.

New subdivisions should have a mix of housing density with low rates of detached and permeable street layouts, with walkable block lengths.

Shift away from car reliance, towards active travel and public transport use

Governments should work to make walking, cycling and public transport the easy choice – less difficult or expensive than driving – for most trips.

TPA recommends

Governments and councils should design streets for people walking and bike-riding, and grow the reach of public transport services faster than road networks.

User-targeted subsidy, rebate and information programs should increase access for disadvantaged groups to shared and electric personal mobility choices.

Road user charging and tax systems should discourage inefficient and polluting private vehicle use.

Improve how vehicles are powered and infrastructure is built

In the face of climate change, Australia must catch up with its global peers in adopting low and zero-carbon transport technologies, including EVs.

TPA recommends

The Australian Government should lead reforms to standards, regulations, subsidies and taxation regimes, and invest in charging infrastructure, that will accelerate the uptake of zero-emission buses, trucks and cars.

Research and development should:

Target technological transition in the 'hard-to-abate' sectors of heavy road vehicles, shipping and aviation

Ensure intelligent transport systems maximise the movement of people and freight by existing assets

Reduce the carbon-intensity of infrastructure using innovative design and materials.

Lead the way to rapid transport decarbonisation

The Australian Government should lead the national journey towards sustainable mobility. To do so, it can and must fundamentally realign its transport investment priorities.

TPA recommends

The Australian Government should lead the development and implementation of a framework to decarbonise transport at the national, state / territory and local levels, addressing targets, funding, monitoring, reporting and governance.

Grant funding should be conditional on the achievement of decarbonisation objectives.

Governments should aim to allocate 20 per cent of transport budgets to walking and bike riding infrastructure, in line with world's best practice.

TPA commitment

TPA commits to support governments and the transport community in shaping and implementing this framework and achieving a Net Zero future for Australia's transport systems.

