

11 May 2023

To: evchargingstrategy@transport.govt.nz

FlexForum perspective on the draft electric vehicle charging strategy

The FlexForum is an association of organisations from across the electricity eco-system which want to accelerate progress through practical action to ensure distributed energy resources (DER) and flexibility are available to:

- support affordable and reliable operation of the electricity market and power system
- enable accelerated electrification by households and businesses as part of the transition to a net zero emissions economy.

Flexibility is our focus because it is central to electrification and decarbonisation. Encouraging the supply and use of flexibility provides households, businesses, communities and the electricity supply chain with more capability and options to accelerate electrification and decarbonisation and ensure it occurs while maintaining and improving reliability, affordability of supply and consumer choice.

The FlexForum has 22 participants and four observers and is setting itself up as a not-for-profit incorporated society to provide a framework to support the coordinated, collaborative learning-by-doing which is essential for Aotearoa New Zealand to electrify and decarbonise while maintaining and improving the reliability and affordability of electricity for households, businesses and communities.

The FlexForum supports the Government setting out a strategy and direction of travel for the Aotearoa New Zealand electric vehicle charging infrastructure system. The FlexForum also supports the focus on establishing frameworks to coordinate delivery of the outcomes identified in the draft strategy. Accelerating the pace of process relies on having a detailed list of the tasks required to achieve the desired outcome and ensuring someone is responsible for oversight and coordination of completing the list of tasks.

The FlexForum suggests developing a detailed implementation plan as soon as possible to support effective coordination of efforts and assessment of priorities. The [Flexibility Plan 1.0](#) published by the FlexForum in August 2022 was developed to provide an initial list of the tasks the electricity ecosystem must complete to realise the opportunity of electrification and flexibility. Many of the actions referred to in the discussion document align with the steps identified in the Flexibility Plan.

The FlexForum agrees a Zero Emissions Unit or similar is needed to coordinate efforts within and between industry sectors and interest groups. The FlexForum agrees that ‘the nature of EV charging will mean that actions will span across the electricity and transport sectors, with success predicated on joined up action across the sectors’.

The scope and practical nature of the tasks associated with electrification, including development of our EV charging infrastructure system, requires the coordinated and collaborative efforts of the electricity eco-system, regulators, policymakers, households, businesses and communities.

Further, the much closer integration of the transport sector with the electricity sector that comes with electrification makes it critical to take a whole-of-system view to effectively coordinate activity and ensure that tasks are completed, are done taking account of system-wide effects (ie, across transport and electricity sector siloes), and outcomes reflect a consumer perspective.

A learning-by-doing approach is needed to build practical experience about the capability, processes and practices which will underpin a EV charging infrastructure system which is consumer-focused and integrates with the electricity system and market. For example, learning-by-doing is needed to understand whether separate load control tariffs for EV chargers is practically workable. Practical evidence and experience gained through coordinated learning-by-doing is necessary to discover if ideas like this will deliver an optimal outcome for consumers taking account of all their electricity needs.

The FlexForum can provide a bridge between strategic aspirations and practical delivery by providing a framework for coordinated and collaborative learning-by-doing which will inform the choices of policy-makers, regulators and the organisations in the transport and electricity sector which are delivering electricity-related services to consumers, including EV charging infrastructure system.

The FlexForum would be available to support the Zero Emissions Unit (or other entity tasked with the job) in delivering the outcomes of the EV charging strategy.

You can contact us at info@flexforum.nz with any questions and to arrange any further discussion of the FlexForum perspective on how to ensure a whole-of-system and consumer-focused approach to delivering the EV charging infrastructure system

