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Energy Markets  
Building, Resources and Markets Group  
Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment  
Wellington

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## Legislation for electric vehicle charging stations

We welcome the opportunity to respond to the Ministry's consultation, published July 2016, on the application of electricity legislation to secondary networks and publically accessible charging infrastructure for electric vehicles. Our focus in this submission is on the legislation to apply to electric vehicle charging stations to support the development of the infrastructure.

As we identify in our 'future-view' publication *Transmission Tomorrow 2016*,<sup>1</sup> we consider there is significant potential for a range of emerging technologies to help improve electricity network utilisation and to reduce network costs. This potential is especially significant if broader societal and environmental trends lead to the electrification of carbon based transport and industrial processes, placing greater demands on electricity networks.

We support, therefore, MBIE's consideration of steps to facilitate development of necessary infrastructure. In this context we consider decisions should be guided by two objectives:

1. enabling competitive provision for infrastructure installation; and
2. ensuring public safety.

We briefly expand on each below.

### Competitive provision for installation on public roads

We support the initiative, under the Minister of Transport's package of measures to encourage electric vehicle uptake<sup>2</sup>, to clarify the regulatory framework for the private sector's development of public electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

The Minister's paper to the Economic Growth and Infrastructure Committee concluded that although at-home supply is widely available for charging electric vehicles, there is "still a

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<sup>1</sup> *Transmission Tomorrow 2016* available at <https://www.transpower.co.nz/sites/default/files/publications/resources/Transpower%20-%20Transmission%20Tomorrow26052016.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Paper to *Economic Growth and Infrastructure Committee* paragraph 7.5 page 2 available at <http://www.transport.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Our-Work/Documents/Electric-Vehicles-Package-of-Measures-to-Encourage-Uptake.pdf>

need for public charging infrastructure”<sup>3</sup> and “this development needs to be supported in a way that is complementary to or does not compete with private investment”.<sup>4</sup> We agree with these objectives and support the direction to the NZ Transport Agency to “ensure processes to apply for access to the State highway corridor to install charging infrastructure are as streamlined as possible”<sup>5</sup>.

If an aim for the access consideration in the consultation paper is for expediency in installing charging stations on public roads then the road access conditions legally afforded to electricity operators could serve as the model to all potential providers. Further support may also be obtainable through other legislative instruments e.g. national environmental standards under the RMA.

### Public safety

We consider public safety as a primary objective for any publicly accessible electrical infrastructure. Specifically identified in the paper is the increased stringency for earthing under the Electrical Safety Regulations (ESR) 2010 as applied to ‘installations’.

We agree with the Ministry’s view that earthing is “an essential element of electrical safety”<sup>6</sup> and in such context calling electric charging stations ‘electrical installations’ would ensure this standard would be applied. However there may be other means to secure this safety objective, for example to create provisions in the ESR to ensure appropriate safety standards are applied to electric vehicle charging infrastructure, regardless of categorisation as ‘works’ or ‘electrical installations’.

Please contact me if you have any questions or would like to discuss any of points made in this submission.

Yours sincerely



**Micky Cave**

**Senior Regulatory Analyst**

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<sup>3</sup> Paper to *Economic Growth and Infrastructure Committee* paragraph 68 page 11 available at <http://www.transport.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Our-Work/Documents/Electric-Vehicles-Package-of-Measures-to-Encourage-Uptake.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid paragraph 70

<sup>5</sup> Ibid paragraph 71.1.2

<sup>6</sup> Paragraph 68 of consultation paper