



The Place To Be

Media release

From the Minister for Environment

Monday 17 July, 2006

VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT CARS GO GREEN

Ethanol blended fuelled vehicles and 150 hybrid cars are set to become the vehicles of choice for the Victorian Government's employees as it embraces more sustainable procurement policies.

The initiative is part of the Government's Environmental Sustainability Action Statement, *Our Environment, Our Future*, released by Premier Steve Bracks today

Environment Minister John Thwaites said the Statement would require drivers of Government vehicles to fill up with ethanol blended petrol where it is available.

"Our commitment to invest in a minimum of 150 hybrid cars and use ethanol blended fuel as much as possible demonstrates the Government's determination to lead by example on sustainable procurement," Mr Thwaites said.

Mr Thwaites said the Victorian Government was swinging its weight behind suppliers of sustainable products and services.

"We will use our large spending power to send strong market signals to boost sustainable products and services," Mr Thwaites said.

Mr Thwaites announced that the Environmental Sustainability Action Statement would remove all restrictions on purchasing hybrid vehicles.

"Because hybrid vehicles use around half as much fuel per kilometre as a comparable size regular car, the State Government will be able demonstrate that sustainable purchasing can save money and help the environment."

Mr Thwaites said that greenhouse gas emissions from transport were a major contributor to climate change and would have to be reduced to ensure a sustainable future.

"Ethanol blended fuel produces less pollution and lower greenhouse gas emissions," Mr Thwaites said.

Mr Thwaites also announced that the State Government would trial the use of biodiesel by its heavy vehicles and would work in partnership with the International Council for Local Environment Initiatives to promote the use of biodiesel by local councils' heavy vehicles.

Mr Thwaites said the Sustainability Action Statement strongly endorsed the recommendations of the *Government Procurement and Environmental Sustainability Review*, which was developed by Victoria's independent Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability Dr Ian McPhail.

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He said the Government would immediately commence implementation of a number of the Commissioner's recommendations including:

- Ensuring there are no restrictions on purchasing hybrid vehicles by Government departments or Members of Parliament;
- Ensuring mandatory recycling or reuse of all new Government owned computers;
- Using approved ethanol-blended petrol in all vehicles where practical, available and cost-effective;
- Continuing to require departments to implement innovative solutions to minimise their energy consumption;
- Ensuring green standards are incorporated into all new Government accommodation leases;
- Establishing minimum energy and water efficiency standards for whitegoods and other major appliances;
- Supporting as appropriate suppliers who will take back their products and packaging for recycling or reuse; and
- Releasing an Environmental Procurement Framework, containing key policy principles and guidelines to assist procurement officers in accounting for environmental factors in procurement.