

GOVERNMENT VEHICLE EMISSIONS POLICY

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

UPDATED DECEMBER 2017

WHAT IS THE VEHICLE EMISSIONS POLICY?

On 4 March 2008, the Government announced the introduction of minimum Greenhouse Ratings for all fleet vehicles in order to reduce the carbon footprint of the fleet. A number of special purpose vehicles (eg operational vehicles in the police and fire services) are exempt.

WHEN DID THE POLICY COMMENCE?

The policy applies to all vehicle orders placed with manufacturers from 4 March 2008.

WHAT ARE THE VEHICLE EMISSION MINIMUM STANDARDS?

For passenger vehicles the minimum green vehicle guide emission rating is 240g/km of CO₂ (combined cycle), and for light commercial and 4WD vehicles the emission rating is 320g/km of CO₂ (combined cycle).

WHY MANDATE MINIMUM GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS?

Motor vehicles emit greenhouse gases (primarily carbon dioxide) which contribute to climate change. According to the Green Vehicle Guide, in 2004 cars in Australia contributed 41.7 million tonnes of carbon dioxide or equivalent greenhouse gases, which is 7.4% of total national emissions. Not all vehicles will have the same impact on climate change.

WHERE CAN I FIND THE GREENHOUSE VEHICLE EMISSIONS?

The Tasmanian Government provides the grams of carbon emitted per kilometre for every passenger and light commercial vehicle on contract.

The Australian Green House Office through its Green Vehicle Guide also provides information on greenhouse emissions, as well as details of each vehicle's fuel consumption. [For further details refer to www.greenvehicleguide.gov.au.](http://www.greenvehicleguide.gov.au)

WHY ARE THERE DIFFERENT REQUIREMENTS FOR PASSENGER AND COMMERCIAL VEHICLES?

Government agencies have a wide range of operational needs. The difference in ratings for passenger and light commercial vehicles recognises that agencies have particular needs that cannot be met by low emission vehicles. For this reason, the Government has applied a different minimum emission rating for light commercial vehicles. Heavy commercial vehicles (buses, trucks and large vans) generally do not have emission ratings, and are therefore not currently impacted by the policy.

WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF A COMMERCIAL VEHICLE?

For the purposes of this policy, light commercial vehicles are defined as all vehicles that are classified as either a utility, cab chassis, van or truck, together with all 4WD's that have a kerb side weight of greater than 2 tonne. This includes large 4WD vehicles such as the Landcruiser, Pathfinder, Patrol, Prado and Pajero models.

Sports Utility Vehicles (SUVs), which are predominantly used on road but have the ability to tow and can be used in an off road capacity if required, (eg RAV 4, Forester, XTrail, Outlander, Territory, Captiva, Escape and Kluger) are classified as passenger vehicles.

People movers are classified as passenger vehicles.

WHAT IMPACT HAS THIS HAD ON THE VEHICLES AVAILABLE UNDER THE VEHICLE CONTRACT?

Following the introduction of the policy, many vehicles previously on contract are no longer available for selection. There are now very few six cylinder vehicles on contract, and many more diesel variants. In order to compensate for the loss of many vehicles that have previously been available, the contract has been expanded to include many new makes, particularly in the executive range.

ARE THERE ANY EXEMPTIONS FROM THIS POLICY?

There will be limited circumstances where vehicles that do not comply with the minimum emission ratings will need to be purchased in order to meet the operational requirements of agencies.

Class exemptions

Vehicles required for the following specific needs have been provided with a class exemption:

- police and firefighting operations;
- patient/client transport (eg ambulances and buses); and

- towing or carrying of heavy loads (large 4WD, trucks).

Other class exemptions may be added to this list if the need is identified.

The following conditions apply to these exemptions:

- that there is no compliant alternative vehicle on contract that meets the special, operational needs;
- the special, operational needs must be the predominant use of the vehicle; and
- that consideration is given to the emission levels of the selected vehicle to ensure it is as close as possible to meeting the mandatory emissions ratings.

Ad hoc exemptions

Where an agency has a specific fit for purpose need that does not fit within the above class exemption categories, then a request for an exemption, endorsed by the Head of Agency, must be forwarded to Treasury for consideration and approval. These exemptions will be rare and will only be approved if it is shown that:

- the vehicle is required to meet the driver's/work unit's day to day operational needs;
- there is no suitable alternative complying vehicle on contract that meets these specific needs;
- operational needs necessitating the exemption of the vehicle is the predominant use of the vehicle;
- consideration has been given to the emission levels of the selected vehicle to ensure it is as close as possible to meeting the mandatory emissions ratings.

DOES THE POLICY APPLY TO EXECUTIVE VEHICLES?

The minimum emissions rating of 240g/km of CO₂ (combined cycle) for passenger vehicles will apply to all vehicles purchased for the operational and private use of SES personnel, Parliamentarians, medical practitioners and any other vehicles provided as part of an employment contract.

This means that these users will no longer be able to select commercial vehicles for their use, unless they have a minimum emissions rating of 240g/km of CO₂ (combined cycle).

Any exemption from this policy will need to be approved by the relevant Head of Agency, and can only be given if there is a predominant business operational need for a commercial vehicle.

HOW WILL THE SUCCESS OF THIS POLICY BE MEASURED?

In 2008, an independent consultant undertook an audit of the Government fleet's carbon emissions for the 2006-07 financial year. This will form the baseline for future comparisons. Agencies are also able to monitor their progress through reports available from the Government's Fleet Manager.

HOW DOES THIS POLICY BENEFIT THE TASMANIAN COMMUNITY?

By adopting this policy, the Government is making a statement that it is serious about reducing carbon emissions and addressing climate change. Not only will the policy impact on the emissions of its own fleet, it will also flow on to vehicles in the wider community as the more carbon friendly vehicles are sold and make their way into the hands of private owners.

WHAT ELSE CAN BE DONE TO REDUCE THE CARBON FOOTPRINT OF THE GOVERNMENT FLEET?

While choosing a vehicle with relatively low CO₂ emissions is one way of reducing the Government's carbon footprint, there are a number of other things that can help. These include:

- driving more efficiently;
- reducing the number of vehicles in the fleet;
- reducing the need to travel eg by adoption of teleconferencing facilities; and
- more efficient utilisation of vehicles (eg car pooling, improved scheduling of meetings).

Tips for greener motoring are available on the www.greenvehicleguide.gov.au website.

WHO CAN I CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION?

For information on the Government vehicle contract and the operation of the vehicle emissions policy, contact the Procurement and Property Branch of Treasury:

Phone: (03) 6166 4217
Email: joanne.hicks@treasury.tas.gov.au

For more information on the Tasmanian Government's Climate Change Policy generally, contact the Tasmanian Climate Change Office:

Phone: (03) 6232 7173
Email: climatechange@dpac.tas.gov.au
Website: <http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/climatechange>