

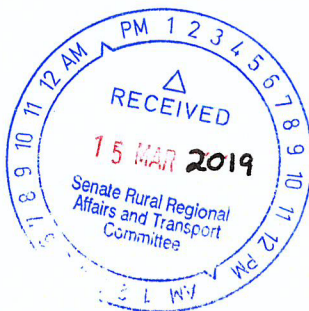


Australian Government

Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities

Secretary
Dr Steven Kennedy PSM

PDR ID: EC19-000175



Senator Barry O'Sullivan
Chair
Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Senator O'Sullivan

Letter of clarification regarding Acoustic Vehicle Alerting Systems in electric vehicles

I refer to the appearance by the Surface Transport Policy Division of this department before the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee at the Additional Estimates Hearing on Monday 18 February 2019.

Regarding electric vehicles, the division was asked several questions regarding whether the department was doing any specific work on mandating an Acoustic Vehicle Alerting System (AVAS) in electric vehicles. Having reviewed the evidence my department gave at the hearing, I wish to clarify the evidence that was given and provide a clear statement about the work that is underway on AVAS in electric and other quiet vehicles.

In December 2018 the Australian Government agreed to consider mandating United Nations (UN) Regulation 138 under an Australian Design Rule (ADR) and supplementary to the Vehicle Safety Standards ADR work program. UN Regulation 138 requires all electric, hydrogen fuel cell and hybrid vehicles (except motorcycles) to install an AVAS. This is to address concerns that both vision impaired and sighted pedestrians have greater difficulty detecting electric and hybrid vehicles travelling at low speeds compared to vehicles with conventional internal combustion engines. The department has undertaken consultation on this issue and is now in the initial stages of preparing a Regulation Impact Statement. Regarding the harmonisation and maintenance program, steps were taken in 2015 to ensure that there would be no regulatory barrier under the ADRs to vehicles that are fitted with an AVAS.

I would appreciate if you could note this clarification for the information of the Committee.

Yours sincerely

Steven Kennedy

5 March 2019