

30 November 2011

CO2 Emissions Standards
Vehicle Emissions and Environment Section
Surface Transport Policy
Department of Infrastructure and Transport
GPO Box 594
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Via email: CO2standards@infrastructure.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: LIGHT VEHICLE CO2 EMISSIONS STANDARDS FOR AUSTRALIA

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission regarding setting standards for light vehicle CO2 emissions in Australia. While it is not the role of the Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA) to comment directly on the appropriate levels of CO2 emissions for light vehicles, we would seek to outline the role of the built environment and building-related behavioural change in tackling transport emissions.

About the Green Building Council of Australia

The GBCA is Australia's leading authority on green buildings and communities, established in 2002 to develop a sustainable property industry in Australia and drive the adoption of green building practices. The GBCA promotes green building programs, technologies; design practices and processes, and operates Australia's only national voluntary comprehensive environmental rating system for buildings - Green Star.

The GBCA has more than 900 member organisations, including government departments, which work together to support the Council and its activities. The GBCA is also a founding member of the World Green Building Council, which was established to provide a federated 'union' of national green building councils with a common goal to support the sustainable transformation of the global property industry; there are now 92 such councils worldwide.

The Green Star rating tools

Green Star is a voluntary tool that encourages, recognises and rewards best practice and innovation. The first Green Star rating tool was released in 2003 in response to market demand for a rating tool that would evaluate the environmental design and construction of buildings as well as establishing a common language for green buildings.

There are currently nine Green Star rating tools which address a range of building types and more than 380 buildings have achieved Green Star ratings, with a further 535 projects registered. The Green Star rating system is designed to take an holistic approach within each class and building sector, addressing nine categories in total: Management, Indoor Environment Quality (IEQ), Energy, Water, Materials, Land Use and Ecology, Emissions, Innovation and Transport.

Green Star credits within the Transport category are designed to encourage and recognise developments that facilitate the use of alternative modes of transport for commuting. Access to public transport and providing sufficient end-of-trip facilities for cyclists and walkers are both key features of the Transport category. Minimisation of available car parking spaces is encouraged and points can also be gained in this category towards a project's total score by dedicating 'preferred parking spaces' solely to more fuel-efficient transport options such as car-pooling, small cars, mopeds and motorcycles, hybrids and other alternative-fuel vehicles.

Through implementing this range of measures, Green Star buildings can assist in making low-emissions transport options easier and more attractive to the building users and contribute to a behavioural and cultural shift away from high levels of private car use.

Green Star – Communities

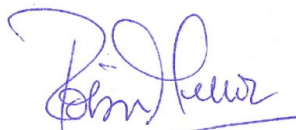
In 2009, in consultation with industry and all levels of government, the GBCA commenced work on the development of a rating tool for sustainable development projects on a community scale. The first step in developing the Green Star - Communities rating tool was to develop a national framework consisting of five best practice principles (a copy of the Green Star - Communities Framework is enclosed).

Stage 2 of the project involves establishing best practice benchmarks for assessing and certifying sustainable communities. A set of draft credits has been developed and these are currently being tested on a number of projects across Australia (copy enclosed).

One of the credits in the rating tool will focus specifically on transport and will encourage and recognise projects that reduce the environmental impacts of transportation. However, the Green Star – Communities rating tool aims to encourage the development of communities that take an holistic design approach that makes walking and cycling easier, safer and more attractive, improves access to public transport and minimises the need for private car use.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to provide comment. We encourage you to consider the GBCA as the primary green building and sustainable communities resource. Please do not hesitate to contact us if there is any further information that we can provide.

Yours sincerely,



Robin Mellon

Executive Director – Advocacy and International
robin.mellon@gbca.org.au