

RE: *Fuel Quality Standards - Standardising Diesel/Biodiesel Blends to be reviewed on 14 March.*

Dear Mr. Garrett,

A paper titled *Setting National Fuel Quality Standards - Standardising Diesel/Biodiesel Blends* will be passing through parliament in a few days to allow 5% bio-diesel to be sold publically. This is a modification of a decision made by the previous government (*Fuel Standard (Automotive Diesel) Determination 2001*)

**The problem is the bill threatens to limit commercial production of these fuels to a 5% additive to what is otherwise 95% fossil oil where no such limit should be applied.**

This limitation cannot be allowed to pass. Clearly standards for the industry are desirable, but not at the cost of the whole industry. Already the decision made by the previous government has brought the industry to its knees – just as it is taking off just about everywhere else, and this decision may kill it entirely.

At some stage in the not too distant future, fossil fuels will become scarce. There's debate about when. The scaremongers say this will happen very soon and the conservatives give a longer period. And the truth is likely to be somewhere in between. But what is agreed is that fossil resources are finite and will be exhausted within our lifetimes. Before that happens what fossil oils we have available are likely to be sequestered for essential services and essential manufacturing, for the military, the police fleets and to keep the medical industry on its feet a bit longer etc.

All alternatives to traditional fuels have to be encouraged now. Bio-diesel in particular, as it represents a good alternative during a transitional phase. Vehicles don't require any modification to run these fuels, in fact the diesel engine was originally designed to burn bio-diesel.

As it stands, hydrogen cell technology is still a long way off, and getting further. There is ethanol, gas and hybrid technology, and electric technology also, but all of these approaches require new vehicles or major alterations to existing ones. In order to ensure continuity for our society, I recommend that bio-diesel is reinstated as a viable and ready alternative that will relieve the pressure that we all will feel in the coming years. Do you remember the petrol rations of the 1970's? Those times will come again sooner or later!

Bio-diesel is also potentially significant to the Australian economy because it can be readily grown and made here in Australia. It is made of grains; and Australia is a major world producer of grain. Furthermore it can be made from spoiled grain that is no longer fit for consumption. Grain that may have gotten wet during the harvest. Grain that may have been infected by fungus or other impurities. Bio-diesel can even – and usually is made from used cooking oil, thereby recycling a waste product that my otherwise seep into ground water in landfill.

Bio-diesel is cleaner than regular diesel. It produces fewer carbon emissions when burning, and in my experience, good quality bio-diesel gives much better mileage than its fossil cousin.

Bio-diesel is usually non toxic. In most cases you could use it to cook dinner. The smell of the emissions of my car – which has successfully run on bio-diesel 100 for many years, while hardly delicious, is not unlike the smell of a kitchen, albeit the kitchen of a

boarding school or take away. In the event of a major spillage, bio-diesel is less toxic and will metabolise into the environment faster than a spillage of cooking oil. Remember the Alaskan Exxon disaster about 15 years ago? If you go there today, and kick over any stone, there is still oil everywhere. Fossil oil thickens when it evaporates, and being toxic, it doesn't metabolise. There could never be bio-diesel disasters.

Unfortunately the value of the Australian bio-diesel industry has collapsed somewhat since the Howard governments cumulative decisions to reimagine the world as it was 50 years ago, illustrated by the slide in ABD (Australian bio-diesel) prices sliding from around \$15 a couple of years ago to bust late last year., but it's worth noting that the stocks for Bio-diesel stocks in Germany and the USA are still trading well, because no such bills that inadvertently strangle the industry have been passed in the States.

As I say, I have driven my Toyota 2.4 litre turbo Prado for 5 years mostly on bio-diesel 100. I bought a diesel car for this very reason. I haven't always been able to find bio-diesel at the bowser, and sometimes it has been of very dubious quality, but I am still very committed to using bio-diesel for my car, and very sincerely recommend that this bill be reconsidered.

Thanks you,

Yours sincerely,