

I just stumbled over the Department of the Environment, Heritage, Water and the Arts position paper, "Proposed Management of Diesel/ Biodiesel Blends" by accident today. It certainly does not seem to have received much publicity.

I drive a Citroen C4 diesel-engined car, and the manufacturer specifies that it can be run on fuel blends containing up to 30% biodiesel. Your position paper seems to suggest that diesel containing any more than 5% biodiesel should cease to be available except to fleet operators under special circumstances. I believe this would be bad policy because:

1. On the face of it, restricting the use of bio-fuels to levels lower than permitted by the vehicle manufacturer will result in higher net carbon dioxide emissions.
2. Preventing vehicle manufacturers from gaining any competitive advantage from producing engines capable of running on diesel fuel containing more than 5% biodiesel must surely discourage innovation. Essentially your position paper suggests that Australia should restrict biodiesel use to the levels grudgingly accepted by the \*least\* advanced manufacturers. Such a policy punishes innovation and rewards manufacturers that drag the chain. I do not believe that Australia's automotive future should advance like a convoy, at the speed of the slowest vessel.
3. At the moment I can buy and use diesel with up to 30% biodiesel content while staying within the recommendations of my car's manufacturer. If your proposals are accepted, that option will be removed, denying me consumer choice without any commensurate benefit. I do not believe that is compatible with a free, market-based economy.

I consider that the Australian government should set appropriate standards for diesel fuel in technical terms, and leave it to suppliers to meet the legal standard with whatever blend of biodiesel they choose. The percentage of biodiesel should be clearly marked, so that users can ensure that the fuel they buy meets the recommendations of their vehicles' manufacturers.

Best regards,