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Submission for the National Future Transport Summit

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission for the National Future Transport Summit. It is positive to see constructive dialogue about transport futures and willingness to seek feedback.

This submission is on behalf of the Urban Mobility Directorate at the Western Australian (WA) Department of Transport and Major Infrastructure (DTMI). We have structured the submission to first, provide overall comments and recommendations and second, more specific responses to the first two consultation questions.

General comments

- We recommend that the Australian community and community wellbeing are given greater emphases in dialogue. The value proposition of technologies should be presented in this context.
- Framing the dialogue in such a way, with people and their wellbeing at the centre, allows measured consideration of ways in which selective use of technology, including emerging technologies like connected and automated vehicles, can contribute to addressing key issues and challenges. But equally, technologies do not present as the only nor always desirable, solutions.
- The vision presented on page 16 could be revised accordingly, acknowledging the contribution to a safe, efficient and sustainable transport system that connected and automated technologies could make.
- Similarly, the focus of the paper is on vehicles and mobility, with little consideration of active modes and accessibility. Again, by positioning people at the centre of the future transport paradigm, there is the opportunity to consider the specific, value-based role of technologies alongside other measures such as encouraging and facilitating more active transport, travel demand management and more sustainable settlements.
- We recommend recasting transport as (p4) “*critical for our nation and its economy and societal wellbeing*”.
- The national imperatives for action (p5) include “*runaway transport demand*” and “*the climate crisis demands action from transport*”. CAT are implied to be the primary solution. Yet later parts of the paper point to risks of a future featuring much greater vehicle use and travel distances.

- Some citations would be useful – such as for the reference to Waymo reporting on page 25.
- Some added detail would be useful to enrich and explain the relevance of case studies, like the Waymo Accessibility Network on page 28.

Responses to consultation questions

1. *Do you agree with the challenges described and how might these affect you or your industry?*

- More explicit and thorough discussion is recommended about how Australia is experiencing falling national competitiveness, how CAT will address this and what other factors, other than CAT, are important.
- Against the sustainability theme, the paper explains (p24) that “*highly efficient vehicles and networks maximise sustainable traffic flow, minimise congestion and cut emissions*”. Further down the page and on page 25, the paper acknowledges that benefits are not guaranteed and there are risks of greater travel distances and mode switch because of the attractiveness of connected and automated vehicle use. This risk deserves more attention.
- Terms like *sustainable traffic flow* could be elaborated on and defined.
- There are wider sustainability issues associated with a highly motorised future – especially one featuring significant independent mobility - like demands for space, emissions from brake and tyre wear and tear, whole of life vehicle costs and potential diminished serviceable life, declining physical activity because of reduced active transport and embodied emissions in infrastructure and vehicles.
- Referring to connected and automated vehicles as (p25) “*environmentally friendly*” should be reconsidered accordingly.
- While the division of responsibilities between tiers of government is a relevant issue, it is important to acknowledge that this division is purposeful and reflective of the different resources and capabilities available to each tier.

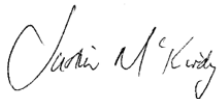
2. *What challenges are missing and how would they address the vision?*

- A sixth theme could be distinguished – governance, business and operating models. Presently, these considerations are nested under *infrastructure* but they deserve more express attention.
- The challenges particular to this sixth theme include defining models reflecting the differing interests of governments, suppliers and other stakeholders. In this context, we recommend more discussion about how seamless and integrated outcomes, including keeping public transport at the core of a future passenger transport system, and managing unintended environmental consequences, can be delivered.
- The challenges relating to *social legitimacy* could be expanded to include consumer opt-in as the default, rather than opt-out for information sharing.
- Relatedly, there is opportunity to better inform consumers about data collection and use practices, in keeping with emerging legislation like WA’s *Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing Act 2024*. This links to challenges that are articulated in the discussion paper, like “*overcoming negative perceptions and building trust*” and “*managing data security concerns*”.

- Explicit consideration should be given to affordability issues – especially for households.
- An additional challenge could feature equally under the *sustainability*, *social legitimacy* and *infrastructure* themes: making sure measures supporting CAT do not prioritise motorised at the expense of non-motorised mobility.
- On page 25, the discussion about a shift from individual vehicle ownership to shared mobility models, should address how a future operating model design mitigates community members selecting individualised travel over alternatives. Examples from cities featuring ‘shared’ on-demand services that have low rates of multiple-occupant trips provide good reference points.

I would be pleased to provide further comment or clarification, on (08) 6551 6803 or justin.mckirdy@transport.wa.gov.au. We look forward to seeing dialogue continue and hearing about the outcomes of the summit in September.

Yours sincerely,



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