



NEWS RELEASE

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LowCVP expert survey: Government must do more to deliver low carbon road transport

Partnership welcomes new Transport Secretary at City Hall Conference

Government must do more to lead the transition to low carbon transport a survey of diverse experts from the Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership (LowCVP) has concluded.

The LowCVP – a partnership including over 300 leading organisations – conducted a wide-ranging survey of the opinions of its member representatives; experts on the subject of low carbon transport. Organisations surveyed were from the motor and fuels industry, government, academia, road user and environment groups. 99 organisations responded with just over half from automotive or fuel supplying companies.

The full results of the LowCVP stakeholder survey are being announced today at the LowCVP Conference at City Hall, London where the Mayor, Boris Johnson, and the Secretary of State for Transport, are speakers.

Key findings of the survey are:

Government does not give enough priority to reducing transport emissions and is falling behind leading nations

Only a minority (16%) believe the Government is giving sufficient priority to low carbon transport issues, compared to 72% who disagree. (In a similar survey in 2007, 26% felt sufficient priority was given.) Only 4% believe the UK is a 'global leader', and 15% see the UK as a leader in Europe. In contrast, the majority believe that the UK is either an 'average performer' (49%) or lagging behind other countries (31%).

The UK Government ranked relatively well, however, in terms of the contribution made so far to cutting road transport emissions compared to other stakeholders with only the European Government being seen to do more.

Experts want to see a clear target for road transport emissions

90% of respondents favour the Government setting a specific sectoral target for carbon emissions from UK road transport as part of its carbon budgets to be prepared in response to Climate Change Act.

Most experts (52%) also believe the car industry will meet their target of 130g/km by 2015, although nearly a third (32%) think it will be missed. However, looking forward to 2020, the experts want more stretching targets. 84% support a target of at least 95g/km with over half proposing a level of 90g/km or lower.

Opinion on biofuels is divided, but there is general agreement that Government was right to slow down the rate of their introduction

Views on the value of biofuels are divided. 50% think that biofuels make a net positive contribution to tackling climate change, compared to 28% who disagree and 22% who are undecided. In spite of the well publicised concerns about biofuels, expert opinion has become only slightly more guarded among experts since 2007 when 56% were supportive.

Two thirds (65%) of respondents said that the Government was right to slow down the introduction of biofuels following the Gallagher Review.

Government support for electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles is justified – but Government should not pick technology winners

Just over half (57%) believe that the current focus on support for electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles is justified.

However, low carbon experts are concerned that Government should not try to 'pick winners'. 61% of the experts responding to the survey believe the role of Government is to specify the aim but not the means for emissions reductions. A quarter supports Government adopting a "technology portfolio" which it backs. Policies to reduce new car CO₂ emissions were seen as the top priority.

The content of car advertising should be more strictly regulated to encourage pro-environment choices

74% of the respondents agree or strongly agree that the content of car advertising should be more strictly regulated to more actively inform and encourage the purchase of low carbon vehicles. 83% think an environment label for used cars, similar to the new car fuel economy label, should be introduced.

Greg Archer, the LowCVP Managing Director, commented: "This survey of LowCVP members shows the need for Government to adopt a more strategic approach to reducing transport emissions.

"The new Government should look again at defining clear targets for greenhouse gas reductions from major sectors like road transport to complement their overall objectives."

Commenting upon the promotion of Lord Andrew Adonis to Secretary of State for Transport, Greg Archer added: “Since he joined the Department for Transport, Lord Adonis has shown himself to be committed to decarbonising transport and has actively sought out the views of diverse stakeholders to ensure he obtains first-hand knowledge of the issues. The Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership looks forward to working closely with him in his new role.”

For the full survey results please send a request to: secretariat@lowcvp.org.uk or download them from the LowCVP website: www.lowcvp.org.uk

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Notes to Editors

The research was conducted by the LowCVP between May 19 and 29, 2009. There were 99 responses received from the database of representatives of LowCVP member organisations (a 23% response rate) though only 91 were included for the analysis as 8 were received after the deadline. The data was analysed on behalf of the LowCVP by Icaro Consulting Ltd.

The LowCVP Conference is being hosted by Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, at City Hall. The Mayor has a target to cut CO₂ emissions in the capital by 60 per cent by 2025 “helping to create 'green-collar' jobs in a thriving low carbon economy”.

The Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership was established in January 2003 with funding from the DfT and the DTI (now BERR) and a mandate to accelerate the shift to low carbon vehicles and fuels and create opportunities for UK business. The Partnership’s aims are:

1. To facilitate cross-sectoral engagement between industry and other stakeholders with the purpose of:
 - Developing collaborative initiatives that develop the market for low carbon vehicles and fuels;
 - Building understanding and consensus regarding the optimum pathways to low carbon road transport;
 - Influencing Government and other decision makers on the future direction of policy and optimum delivery mechanisms.
2. To encourage research, demonstration and commercialisation of low carbon automotive technologies in the UK and assist UK businesses to participate in emerging markets.
3. To contribute towards the setting, and achievement, of UK Government’s targets for carbon reduction from the road transport sector.
4. To facilitate an effective flow of information within and between industry and other stakeholders to:
 - Raise awareness of recent developments and new opportunities;
 - Improve understanding and awareness of key issues;
 - Increase stakeholder knowledge of the mission of the Partnership and its achievements.

It delivers on these aims by facilitating practical initiatives amongst its members, providing advice to Government and other decision makers and through research to understand and address market barriers.

For further information:

Neil Wallis, Head of Communications, LowCVP

Phone: 020 3178 7863 Mobile: 07974 255720 email: neil.wallis@lowcvp.org.uk