

COMMENT ON ONTARIO'S HYDROGEN STRATEGY DISCUSSION PAPER

January 18th, 2021

Overview

Our members are supportive of the key principles and vision statement presented in the discussion paper on Ontario's Hydrogen Strategy. All GAC members are working to reduce GHG emissions from the transportation sector and many of our members have begun to develop or have already developed hydrogen fuel cell vehicles (FCEV). These vehicles have the potential to contribute to reducing GHG emissions from Ontario's transportation sector. However, they require specific infrastructure to make them a viable option for both commercial purposes, and eventually, consumer vehicles. Ontario's hydrogen strategy should begin to assess when and where this type of infrastructure can be developed. It should also begin to look at how automotive manufacturers who are investing in hydrogen vehicle technology can consult with the government to develop this infrastructure.

A key outcome of the strategy should be the increased uptake in the transportation sector of fuel cell vehicles as well as a clear commitment to allocate funds to infrastructure. Fueling infrastructure will be essential to allow drivers, both commercial drivers and ordinary Ontarians, to adopt FCEV technology. The strategy should lay out how the government plans to scale up investment in hydrogen production to reduce costs, develop hydrogen fueling infrastructure, and to make hydrogen a competitive option compared to other fuels. A part of this investment plan should also look at educating and incentivising businesses and consumers on the benefits of FCEVs. These incentives could take the form of either financial or non-financial measures.

Consultation Questions

1. Do you support Ontario's efforts to create a hydrogen strategy?

Yes, our association supports the efforts by the Ontario government to develop a hydrogen strategy. Hydrogen as a transportation fuel has a number of benefits beyond being a zero-emission fuel. With the appropriate refueling network, it gives consumers another zero-emission vehicle choice that could potentially meet their transportation needs better than battery electric vehicles.

2. What should be the key outcomes of Ontario's hydrogen strategy?

A key outcome of the hydrogen strategy should be the development of infrastructure to support hydrogen fuel-cell vehicles in the province of Ontario. The hydrogen strategy should aim to increase the uptake of FCEVs in Ontario's transportation sector. These vehicles should be viewed similarly to other low and zero-emission vehicles as an important aspect of decarbonizing various sectors of the economy.

3. What should be the timeframe for Ontario's hydrogen strategy?

Ontario should aim to coordinate its hydrogen strategy with that of the federal government. This would mean aiming to have commercial and personal FCEVs on the road by 2025.

4. What role can hydrogen play in various regions and sectors?

Hydrogen can play a role in reducing GHG emissions in the transportation sector. FCEVs are an alternative to internal combustion engine vehicles. Given that FCEVs can refuel significantly faster than battery electric vehicles (BEVs) can charge, they have the potential to play an important role in the shift away from gasoline powered vehicles. With FCEVs and a proper refueling network, consumers considering ZEV vehicles and concerned about the effect on their driving habits may not need to significantly change their transportation behaviors. Lastly, FCEVs may be especially useful for commercial fleets and other commercial purposes due to their scalability.

As noted during the consultation sessions, the Quebec City-Windsor corridor should be considered as an initial priority for hydrogen infrastructure given this major route's importance for the transportation of people and goods.

About Us:

Global Automakers of Canada (GAC) is the national trade association representing the Canadian interests of 15 of the world's most respected automakers. Our members include: BMW Canada Inc, Honda Canada Inc., Hyundai Auto Canada Corp., Jaguar Land Rover Canada ULC, Kia Canada Inc., Maserati Canada Inc., Mazda Canada Inc., Mercedes-Benz Canada Inc., Mitsubishi Motor Sales of Canada Inc., Nissan Canada Inc., Porsche Cars Canada Ltd., Subaru Canada, Inc., Toyota Canada Inc., Volkswagen Group Canada Inc. and Volvo Car Canada Ltd. Together our members represent more than 25 brands in the Canadian automotive market.

The 15 member companies and their affiliates directly or indirectly employ more than 77,000 Canadians in vehicle manufacturing, sales, distribution, parts, service, finance and head office operations from coast to coast. In 2019 the member companies of the GAC sold 1,146,587 vehicles representing 60% of the Canadian automotive market and supported over 60% of Canada's 3,300 new vehicle dealerships.