

Electric vehicle charging cook islands

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The first trial of the Leaders motorcade movement - a motorcade of newly purchased \$1.7 million Hyundai Ioniq electric vehicles for the 52nd Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting was undertaken in October last year. MELINA ETCHES/23103001

Responding to a Cook Islands News article on the lack of public interest in purchasing the electric vehicles bought by the government for the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting last year, TAU corporate services manager Danny Vakapora said: "The existing EV chargers at our office have adaptors along with the newly installed ones and we can confirm that our chargers have been compatible with the newly purchased EVs from the beginning."

Cook Islands News was earlier informed that the newly purchased electric vehicles were incompatible with the intended charging station at TAU. Consequently, four charging stations were installed in Rarotonga, two at TAU and two at the Office of the Prime Minister, the newspaper was told.

Twenty-five (25) Hyundai Ioniq electric vehicles costing \$1.7 million were bought by the government. Seventeen (17) of the vehicles have been allocated as replacement vehicles for the government vehicle fleet, and eight have been made available for sale to the public

In Parliament last week, Opposition leader Tina Browne of the Democratic Party said that one of the new electric vehicles that was given to her was parked at the Opposition Office because it wasn't working.

These eight EVs were part of a larger purchase of 25 Hyundai Ioniq electric cars acquired for the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting held in Rarotonga last November at a cost of \$1.7 million (US\$1.2 million).

"Given the government's ageing fleet and constrained budget for vehicle replacements, a decision has been made to retain the EVs and distribute them across government agencies requiring vehicle support to sustain core business and delivery operations," Henderson said.

According to the statement, the EVs for sale, the Hyundai IONIQ Electric 38.2kW Entry models, are well known for their eco-friendly design, energy-efficient performance, spaciousness and comfort, and excellent fast-charging capability.

"This reduced price offered great value for money, with similar medium-sized EVs selling in the \$50,000 (US\$30,663) to \$100,000 (US\$61,321) price range. In comparison, the more well-known Nissan Leaf EV, is presently selling in the \$60,000 (US\$36,796)-price range," Henderson said.

"Notwithstanding comments that the EVs 'are great cars to operate and no issues with them being electric and



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charging from home", and "having Pickering Motors readily available to service and do diagnostic work is a bonus" - the key issue was financial position/affordability.

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