



Press Release  
The Sustainable Energy Forum Inc  
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## **Government Limousine Purchase sends the Wrong Message**

The Climate Change Minister, David Parker, is reported as saying that the change in new Government limousines from the Ford Fairlane to diesel BMW 730Ld cars was because the Government "walks the talk" on sustainability, leading it to purchase the German BMW car. This decision is said to have been made because of the cars considered, the BMW was the most fuel-efficient and the second-best in emission standards.

The reported fuel consumption saving is actually quite modest, from 10.21 litres/100km (27.7 mpg) for the Ford Fairlane to 8.1 litres/100km (34.9 mpg) for the BMW, and the reduction in carbon dioxide emissions is reported to be from 260 to 212 grams per kilometre travelled.

"The catch is that the BMW cars are reported to cost the Government nearly twice as much as the Ford Fairlane, and that sends entirely the wrong message on climate change mitigation measures" said John Blakeley, Editor of EnergyWatch, the journal of the Sustainable Energy Forum.

Mr Blakeley said that the correct message on climate change mitigation which the Government should be conveying is that by being clever and using the latest available technology, it is possible to make considerable energy savings and reduction in greenhouse gas emissions at little or no extra cost.

"It would be a quite ridiculous position for the Government to say that a saving of about 2.1 litres/100km (7 mpg) in fuel consumption justifies spending almost twice as much money on the purchase of Ministerial cars" Mr Blakeley said.

"The Government should be urging all New Zealanders to take many actions which result in significant savings in their energy consumption without them incurring much additional cost, and should be setting its own example in doing this when it purchases new limousines" Mr Blakeley said.

"When the decision was announced about ten months ago to replace the existing fleet of Government limousines with diesel-powered cars, three models of car were suggested as possible replacements at little or no extra cost over and above the Ford Fairlane. I believe that at least one of these models was actually used for a while on a trial basis" Mr Blakeley said. "And all these three models would have met the stringent European emission standards for diesel cars."

Recent reports say that bids were actually received by the Government on 15 diesel-powered cars, including at least one of the three models suggested above, and the

Government's original stated intention was that these cars should cost about the same as the Ford Fairlane.

"The Government needs to explain why it now believes it necessary to pay nearly twice as much per car to replace the existing limousine fleet" Mr Blakeley said.

"There may be compelling reasons why the Government chose the BMW car, but surely sustainability and climate change mitigation are not amongst them?"

#### FOOTNOTES

1. In February 2007 it was reported that the Government was looking to replace its chauffeur fleet with one of three spacious luxury options - all diesel. These were the Chrysler 300C, the Peugeot 607 and the Skoda Superb which all have a similar retail price to the Ford Fairlane Ghia (\$71990). The fuel consumption rating of the Peugeot is 6.4 litres/100km(44.2 mpg), the Chrysler is 8.1 litres/100km (34.9 mpg) and the Skoda is 7.8 litres/100km (36.3 mpg). Their carbon dioxide emissions range from 170grams to 216 grams per kilometre. At that time (Feb 07) there was no mention of a BMW car being under consideration by the Government.

Reference: NZ Herald, 15/2/07

2. Although the retail prices of the four cars mentioned in 1. above are all around \$72,000, after excluding GST and the dealer's mark-up and discount for a bulk purchase, it is believed that any of them could have been purchased by the Government for around \$50,000. It was reported on TV3 News on 19/12/07 that one of the unsuccessful bidders had confirmed that their car could have been purchased for around that price.

3. The purchase price of the BMW cars is confidential and the NZ Herald on 19/12/07 guessed that it could be as much as \$170,000 based on prices in Europe. However TV3 News on 19/12/07 speculated that the Government had got a particularly good deal, and that the BMW cars were being purchased for around \$90,000 excluding GST.

4. The Co-Leader of the Green Party, Jeanette Fitzsimons, has noted that recent guidelines suggest an average fuel consumption of diesel cars purchased by Government of 6.5 litres/100km. It is noted that of the cars mentioned above, only the Peugeot 607 could have met this figure and the BMW is well outside it. The Government has replied that this is an average figure, and not all cars purchased by Government are required to meet it.

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