

Plug-in electric vehicles phev cook islands

This feature by Professor John Hay looks at the introduction of fully battery-powered electric vehicles (BEVs) in the Cook Islands and discusses their advantages in an island environment.

The 25 Hyundai Ioniq electric vehicles, which cost the nation \$1.7 million, are parked at the Prime Minister's office for security reasons. Government has confirmed some of them will go to tender next week. The vehicles are pictured during the first trial of the Pacific Islands Leaders motorcade movement last month. MELINA ETCHES/23103001

While 17 vehicles were allocated to replace aging government vehicles, the remaining eight were offered for sale by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM) late last year. Paul Lynch/FACEBOOK/24030525

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.

While 17 vehicles were allocated to replace aging government vehicles, the remaining eight were offered for sale by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM) late last year.

However, "none of the EVs were sold during the tender process," confirmed Financial Secretary Garth Henderson in a statement, following inquiries from Cook Islands News.

"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 to \$100,000 price range. In comparison, the more well-known Nissan Leaf EV, is presently selling in the \$60,000 price range," Henderson said.

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

"To date, Pickering Motors Ltd, Cook Islands have provided professional and readily available service for the EVs. Pickering have the requisite diagnostic tools and expertise to resolve mechanical and technical issues, but also work closely with Hyundai to resolve these matters if and as they arise."

"By way of information and contrary to newspaper reports, when all of the EVs were originally purchased, seven charging stations were also procured to complement the use of the EVs. The purchase of the charging stations was always a part of the EV acquisition plan."

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