



**The energy partner:
ENGIE**



*Working together: Chargefox CEO John Sullivan and
ENGIE Chief Development Officer Anna Quillinan*

Partnerships are usually assessed in terms of benefits for each of the two partners involved. But ENGIE and Chargefox's collaboration has three winners.

"As a business we're very much focused on putting our assets into locations that are linked to amenities such as food and beverage and rest rooms – shopping centres, for example," says Director of Green Mobility for ENGIE Australia & New Zealand, Greg Schumann.

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"The beauty of our partnership with Chargefox is that they direct their own customers, such as fleet managers and vehicle manufacturers, to those assets, which brings more people to our site hosts. That's a great benefit to us."

Energy company ENGIE came to Australia in 1996 but its history stretches back to the 1850s; its international network of power stations grew out of the company that built the Suez Canal. In 1964 its Hazelwood Power Station in Victoria commenced operation, and the company also owned the Loy Yang B power station – both were fired by brown coal.

In 2017, as part of ENGIE's commitment to decarbonisation, it sold Loy Yang B and closed Hazelwood and continues to rehabilitate the site.

Today ENGIE is one of the largest independent power producers in the world, and the second largest provider of renewable energy. In Australia it is developing an energy portfolio comprising more than 2000 MW of wind, solar and industrial-scale battery storage capacity projects.

In Australia, the Green Mobility arm of ENGIE began

five years ago, when EVs were still low on most agendas, including the government's. Electric vehicles accounted for just 0.21 per cent of all new cars sold in the country, and when Schumann approached big entities such as shopping centres, airports and universities, he found many didn't have an EV strategy.

In 2023, it's a very different story.

"We started the year with very few charge points and we're aiming at the end of the year to have more than 200," Schumann says. "It's accelerated in part because of the government grants we have won, such as the ARENA Future Fuels program – which involves rolling out 103 fast charging stations in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide – and we were also one of the winners of the first round of ACT rapid charger funding and the Queensland Government's EV Charging Infrastructure Scheme."

ENGIE owns and maintains charging stations, which are installed by JetCharge. "Under the philosophy that you don't go out to refuel, but instead refuel while you're out," says Schumann.

And that's where Chargefox comes in.

In July 2023, the Electric Vehicles Council put the number of public high-power charging locations at

558

and individual high-power public EV chargers in service at

967



“There are plenty of alternatives out there, but what appealed to us first of all was that most EV owners already have the Chargefox app on their phone. We also believed their customer base – more than 100,000 users – would bring increased usage to our assets,” says Schumann.

“Plus, because we have fleet partners, being able to offer the broader Chargefox network beyond our own assets was a benefit. We might put a station in the depots or offices of a fleet owner, but being able to connect them to a broader network when they’re out driving is a great result.”

Chargefox’s ownership was another appeal. In 2022 it was bought by Australian Motoring Services, which operates on behalf of the NRMA, RACV, RACQ, RAA, RAC, and RACT.

“ENGIE already had a relationship with the NRMA and RAA as a preferred energy supplier, but also the auto clubs have done fantastic work in putting a regional network together,” says Schumann. “Our network is more focused in the urban areas as that’s where a lot of our grants are based, so we believe that between ourselves and the clubs, brought together through Chargefox, it’s become a very successful network with significant coverage – the best in Australia.

“As part of the ARENA grant, we can’t put our chargers in just a few locations – they have to be spaced apart so that they pretty much reach all over the cities. And then when you add that to what the different car clubs are doing, it’s huge.”

In July 2023, the Electric Vehicles Council put the number of public high-power charging locations at 558, and individual high-power public EV chargers in service at 967. The Council said this was a 57 per cent increase in high-power charging locations compared to the same time in 2022. Locations often have multiple charging bays.

Schumann forecasts significant growth for ENGIE’s Green Mobility arm from here. “In the next few years, we’ll have thousands of charging points,” he says. “And that’s the beauty of working with Chargefox: both of us bring opportunities to each other to grow the business, while also making the transition to an EV easier.”

The combination of Chargefox’s reach through its customers and partnerships, and ENGIE’s support from federal and state governments to expand its network, means increasingly more Australians will have easy access to renewable energy to power their cars, enabling a smoother transition away from fossil fuels and towards clean, electric transportation.



CHARGEFOX