Governments around the world are understandably and perhaps appropriately criticised for failing to adequately address congestion, environmental, and safety impacts of transport systems. Government policies, when coupled with new technological advances such as electric vehicles (EVs) and automated vehicles (AVs), are likely to play pivotal if not critical roles in delivering sustainable transport systems in the future. This presentation argues that government policies have been necessary to promote EVs, and are likely to be even more essential in managing the introduction of AVs. We first present research the supports the argument for needed policy intervention—using both carrots and sticks—to achieve penetration of EVs into mobility markets around the world. We then also show that economic tools—policy levers that can be used by governments—also have been effective in influencing behaviour including vehicle purchase decisions. We then show results from a recent, comprehensive survey conducted in Australia to estimate demand for EVs and AVs—revealing willingness to pay for these technologies and how consumers will react to government policies. Finally, I speculate about what government policies will be needed in the future when significant penetration of AVs has occurred, based on our current understanding of travel behaviour.

Professor Simon Washington is Head of the School of Civil Engineering at the University of Queensland, in Brisbane Australia. He is internationally recognised for his contributions in the fields of behavioural econometrics applied in the areas of transport safety and risk across all travel modes, transport and urban planning, and travel behaviour. He is Associate Editor or Editorial Advisory Board Member on six leading international transport journals. Over the course of his career, Simon has authored or co-authored more than 100 peer-reviewed journal articles and the second edition of a textbook which has been adopted in over 20 countries, and six book chapters. Simon has been lead investigator on more than $26 Million of externally supported research and has secured nationally competitive research grants in the US and Australia. Prior to joining UQ, Simon served on the faculties of the Queensland University of Technology, UC Berkeley, Arizona State University, the University of Arizona, and the Georgia Institute of Technology. He has been a visiting Professor at Ajou University (South Korea), University of Sydney, and Loughborough University (UK).

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