

Z Energy: A growing network of EV chargers



Z Energy (Z) is a transport energy company with a nationwide footprint of retail, fuel and supply infrastructure and 100 percent ownership of the electricity retailer Flick Electric.

Around one in five Kiwi visit a Z each week, but despite its role as a highly visible business in almost every community across the country, many people are unaware of the steps it is taking to evolve as the needs of New Zealanders change.

A growing EV charging network

Z has invested in building a network of high quality, on-the-go charging for EV owners. It's currently leveraging its retail footprint to grow a public charging network, supporting those customers who have or are looking to shift to EVs.

Previous decisions the company has made about its retail site network means it has high quality Z sites in key areas of the state highway network, in both the North and South Islands.

“These sites are where EV travellers are increasingly looking to recharge – both their vehicle and, at the same time, themselves. We are seeing a high conversion rate of people using Z EV chargers also buying convenience retail products,” says Z’s CEO Lindis Jones.

By the end of 2023, Z had over 100 EV charging bays across 37 of its sites, and this is continuing to grow in 2024. These sites will provide important major route coverage and options for the increasing number of light passenger EV owners.

“We are aiming to make recharging as easy as we can for EV owners, because we are aware it has been identified as a stumbling block for some in buying a vehicle in the first place.”

Research conducted internationally by the McKinsey Center for Future Mobility confirms this view. In its 2022 consumer pulse survey held in nine countries including the US, China, France, Germany and Japan, 70 percent of those questioned said they thought charging infrastructure was inadequate while 42 percent said they would only buy an EV if public charger availability was as adequate as that of existing gas stations.

But 15 percent of consumers were also worried that power networks would not be able to meet surging demand as EV numbers grew.



Partnering along the way

Z acknowledges it can't press on with its EV network rollout alone.

In September 2023, Z started a trial of an innovative, domestically produced EV charger at the Z Waiouru retail site.

In partnership with local EV charger manufacturer Kwetta (formerly Red Phase), and supported by lines company Powerco and the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA), the four 200kW charging bays provide an ultra-high speed charging experience.

Napier based Kwetta uses an innovative technology that helps the EV charging infrastructure use power more efficiently and reduces pressure on the local electricity network. This technology should enable EV charging infrastructure to be rolled out more efficiently by avoiding costly and time-consuming upgrades. Kwetta's partnership with Z is bringing ultra-fast EV chargers to select Z service stations, with seven of its chargers deployed by the end of 2023.

Beyond the Z network

While public charging infrastructure is necessary for EV drivers, Z recognises the majority of EV charging is likely to happen at home or at the workplace and is looking to support customers with this.

"In 2023 we launched an innovative new bundled electricity offer targeted at EV owners, to support them to charge their vehicles at home efficiently. We are also supporting several businesses as they look to electrify their fleet, working with them to provide a charging solution for their specific business needs."

About Z Energy

Z Energy (Z) is a modern energy company and plays an essential role in keeping Aotearoa New Zealand moving. We have a nationwide footprint across our retail, fuel and supply infrastructure network, as well as a growing network of EV chargers at select sites and we own 100 percent of the electricity retailer Flick Electric.

About SBC

SBC is a member organisation that connects businesses, partners, and sectors to create impact that no single business could achieve alone. We work with executives and sustainability professionals to maximise their positive impact for shareholders, communities and the environment. We hold our members to account by asking them to fulfil member commitments. We deliver impact by championing our members to be at the leading-edge of sustainability and inspire other businesses to take action.