

SP Group to install 1,000 electric vehicle charging points

A quarter of them will be high powered and able to charge a car in just 30 minutes

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SP Group is speeding up the installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging points, saying yesterday that it

will roll out 1,000 such points by 2020 – double the number it announced in June.

A quarter of those new charging points or 250 will be high-powered direct current chargers. These 50kW chargers will be able to fully

charge a car in as little as 30 minutes – compared to up to eight hours for normal chargers.

SP Group said there will be some “extra-high-powered chargers” of up to 350kW, which will be able to support more powerful electric models with longer driving ranges, and be able to charge up a passenger car as quickly as 10 minutes.

It also plans to extend charging services to a wider range of vehi-

cles, including buses and trucks.

SP Group head of strategic development Goh Chee Kiong told The Straits Times that the lack of charging infrastructure was “a huge bottleneck” to EV adoption, and that is why “we’re making this huge investment... so that Singaporeans can have access to electric mobility as soon as possible”.

However, SP Group declined to reveal the investment sum, citing “competitive reasons”.

Hyundai agent Komoco – which was the first to offer a mass market electric car here – has said the cost of a normal charger is around \$5,000, while a fast charger costs about \$65,000.

Electric car-sharing firm BlueSG said the cost of each of its charging points starts at around \$15,000.

Industry watchers expect prices to be lower if more are installed.

SP Group said the first chargers – a mix of 30 normal and high-powered ones – will be operational by the end of this year.

The entire network of charging points will be located at “convenient

locations nation-wide, such as in shopping malls, residential areas, business parks and industrial sites, as well as close to coffee shops and food outlets”. Each location will have “two to six” charging points.

Mr Goh said talks are ongoing with government agencies to install charging points at Housing Board car parks.

SP Group was not ready to reveal charging prices, but said they would be higher than household electricity tariffs because of the capital investment involved in setting up the public chargers.

The vast majority of these points will be accessible to the public, Mr Goh added.

Asked whether Singapore’s power grid would be able to cope with the proliferation of electric vehicles, Mr Goh said: “In the near term, there will be no impact on the power grid. But in the mid to longer term, as we scale up the number of charging points... that consideration becomes serious.”

Studies elsewhere show that even if the overall electric vehicle popula-

tion remains relatively small, a high concentration in any one neighbourhood can cause electrical surges and put a strain on the grid.

Meanwhile, SP Group has tied up with HDT to “support... Singapore’s largest electric taxi operator, on all its vehicle charging needs for the next 10 years”.

HDT plans to grow its fleet to 800 electric taxis by 2022.

In August, SP Group had a similar tie-up with ride-hailing company Grab, which will bring in 200 battery-powered cars from next year.

According to Land Transport Authority figures, Singapore’s electric fleet remained small as at end-September, with 443 electric cars and 323 plug-in petrol-electric hybrids. The total car population stood at 614,292.

Among taxis, only 97 out of 21,279 were electric, while only two out of 136,588 motorbikes were battery-operated. And among bus and goods vehicles, only 42 out of 160,150 were electric.

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