

# Electric cars to get 500 charging points by 2020

SP Group to build Singapore's largest public electric vehicle charging network

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Energy utilities provider SP Group plans to build 500 charging points for electric vehicles islandwide by 2020.

The points will be placed at housing estates, shopping malls, industrial sites and business parks, the firm announced yesterday.

While other companies such as Greenlots, Red Dot Power and BlueSG are already in the market, SP Group said its network will be the largest one fully accessible to the public.

More than 100 of the charging points will be of the direct current type with a 50 kilowatt power rating that can fully charge a vehicle in as little as 30 minutes.

SP Group said there are fewer than five direct current charging points here now. Most points use alternating current, and a lower 7.4kw rating, which takes the car about seven times longer to be fully charged.

An app will allow motorists to pay for charging electronically while also getting updates on the availability of charging points.

Details on pricing will be disclosed closer to the end of the year, when SP Group sets up its first 30 charging points. These will be a mix of the alternating current and direct current types.

There were 592 electric and plug-in hybrid cars on the road here as at the end of last month, about 0.1 per cent of the total car population of 613,383. There are



SP Group says its network will be fully accessible to the public. TNP PHOTO: KEVIN LIM

also 31 electric-powered goods and commercial vehicles.

"There is a chicken-and-egg conundrum when it comes to electric vehicle adoption... Many prospective drivers are concerned about the lack of a pervasive charging network," said Mr Goh Chee Kiong, head of strategic development at SP Group.

He added that some have "range anxiety" – the fear that the electric vehicle will run out of battery power in the middle of a journey.

Owners tend to install their own charging points if they live in landed properties or get their condominium management to have stations set up, said Mr Terence Siew, president of the Electric Vehicle Association of Singapore. There are 30 condos with charging points.

There will be more public choices available down the road.

Charging infrastructure spe-

cialist Greenlots operates 16 publicly accessible charging stations, with aims to lift that to 50 by the end of this year.

Electricity retailer Red Dot Power announced a partnership in February with PlugIT, a Finnish charging technology specialist, to install at least 50 charging stations by the end of next year.

BlueSG, which runs an electric vehicle-sharing programme, aims to build 2,000 charging points by 2020, and make 400 of them available to the public.

Electric vehicles generally cost more than comparable combustion engine cars, but Mr Siew said this will change as battery prices drop with mass production and economies of scale. "Electric vehicles will be cost competitive with normal cars," he added.

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