



Australian Government



Services  
Australia

# Services Australia Environmental Sustainability Policy

January 2025

Property and Corporate Support Branch

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# Introduction

The Services Australia (the Agency) Environmental Sustainability Policy assists the Agency to manage and report on greenhouse gas emissions, energy use, resource use and waste arising from building operations, motor vehicle and air travel, information and ICT and stationary supplies.

The objectives of the Environmental Sustainability Policy are to:

- Provide a prescriptive approach where appropriate to achieve consistent positive environmental outcomes in Agency owned or leased properties.
- Provide descriptors of sustainability issues the Agency is addressing.
- Ensure the overarching policies and government approach are made accessible and digestible for Agency decision-makers.
- Enable actions to meet sustainability targets.
- Increase engagement across the Agency to allow greater support and contribution towards the Agency's 2030 Vision and Australian Government legislation and policies.

Multiple factors impact and contribute to the Agency's sustainability response and are addressed in this policy to provide context across the Agency's operations. All Agency staff are encouraged to contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and support the policy in their decision making. As a collective, the Agency and its staff have a responsibility to the environment and should:

- Be innovative – support innovation through sustainable actions.
- Seek continual improvement – have robust governance and be accountable.
- Maintain ecological integrity – implement waste management practices, minimise environmental impacts of actions e.g. buildings and construction.
- Show respect – respecting the environment allows better practices to be adopted and will enable behavioural change across the Agency.

## Commonwealth Legislation and Policy

This policy supports the key decision-making necessary to meet sustainability requirements within legislative and policy obligations.

A key Government policy driver is the *Australian Public Service (APS) Net Zero Emissions by 2030* mandate which is underpinned by Department of Finance (Finance) Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy (NZGO).

NZGO outlines Commonwealth targets and measures for the following strategic priorities:

- Net Zero Energy
- Net Zero Buildings
- Net Zero Travel
- Net Zero Fleet
- Net Zero Procurement
- Net Zero ICT

This policy also complements Services Australia's Net Zero Emissions Action Plan which identifies key actions the Agency will undertake to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, providing a pathway for the Agency to meet the APS Net Zero by 2030 target.

Other Government legislation and policies that are relevant to the Agency's Environmental Sustainability Policy are:

- [Annual reports for Non-Corporate Commonwealth entities \(RMG 135\)](#)

- [RMG 500 - Commonwealth Property Management Policy](#)
- [Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water \(DCCEEW\) Procurement-connected Environmentally Sustainable Procurement Policy](#)
- [DCCEEW Sustainable Procurement Guide \(2024\)](#)
- [Commonwealth Procurement Rules | Department of Finance](#)
- [Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 \(Cth\)](#)
- [Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 \(PGPA Act\)](#)
- [Commonwealth Climate Disclosure Policy](#)

This list should be considered in conjunction with the supporting legislation and policies listed in each of the sections below which are specific to energy and greenhouse gas emissions, waste, water, fleet, travel, and procurement.

## Sustainability and the Agency

The Agency has an essential role in managing and implementing environmental sustainability measures, of which emissions reduction initiatives play a critical part. The Agency has already commenced its net zero emissions pathway in line with the direction set by the NZGO strategy. This includes the following key activities:

- Prioritisation of sites for focusing emission reduction efforts
- Establishing monitoring and reporting protocols and sharing of data between landlords and tenants
- Investing in decarbonising energy contracts, property portfolio, Fleet, and operations
- Providing resources for building our staff's capability and empowering them to be strong sustainability leaders

This Environmental Sustainability Policy describes the actions that our staff are responsible for implementing to reduce the Agency's environmental impact and operational greenhouse gas emissions. This policy focuses on the following priorities:

Key Sustainability Priorities for the Agency	Summary
<b>Energy and greenhouse gas emissions</b>	Improvements in the built environment focuses on improving the energy-efficiency of office space in Agency leased buildings through better standards and performance specifications.  Renewable energy uptake.
<b>Waste</b>	Waste minimisation and reducing landfill reduces emissions and encourages positive waste management behaviour.  Promote recycling and organic waste management.
<b>Water</b>	Increase awareness of water consumption and management across sites and staff housing.  Introduce water saving standards across the built environment.

<b>Fleet and Travel</b>	<p>Minimise road/air travel where possible.</p> <p>Convert petrol fleet to Low Emission Vehicles.</p>
<b>Procurement</b>	<p>Sustainable procurement and support of circular economy in all Agency procurements.</p> <p>Consideration of environmental impacts and more engaged staff during procurements.</p>

## Key Priorities in Detail

The Agency acknowledges that if we are to achieve sustainability outcomes, changes in business practices and the way decisions are made will be required. All staff have a responsibility towards the environment, should maintain an understanding of sustainability principles and be proactive in addressing risks to the environment.

### 1. Energy and greenhouse gas emissions

The Agency will optimise energy efficiency in our buildings by reducing emissions and delivering on the [APS Net Zero 2030 Policy](#) and the targets outlined in [NZGO](#).

#### 1.1 Supporting legislation and policy

This section outlines supporting government legislation and policies that are relevant to staff responsibilities and actions in Section 1.2. These are:

- [APS Net Zero Emissions by 2030 | Department of Finance](#)
- [Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy](#)
- [National Construction Code 2022](#)
- [DCCEEW Procurement-connected Environmentally Sustainable Procurement Policy](#)
- [DCCEEW Sustainable Procurement Guide \(2024\)](#)
- [Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 \(Cth\)](#)
- [Building Energy Efficiency Disclosure \(BEED\) Act 2010 \(Cth\)](#)
- [National Environment Protection Measures \(Implementation\) Act 1998](#)
- [National Environment Protection Council Act 1994](#)
- Relevant State and Territory legislation and local government requirements

#### 1.2 Agency staff – responsibilities and actions

1.2.1 Building management, refurbishment, and maintenance	
<b>Staff directly responsible for building management, refurbishment, and maintenance and leasing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must comply with the legislation and policy in section 1.1.</li> <li>• Must comply with Department of Finance policies where applicable – <a href="#">Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy</a>, <a href="#">Commonwealth Climate Disclosure Policy</a>.</li> <li>• Must comply with procurement-connected policies, reporting and procurement requirements where applicable – <a href="#">DCCEEW Environmentally Sustainable Procurement Policy</a> and</li> </ul>

	<p><a href="#">Sustainable Procurement Guide</a>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must manage buildings to meet Australian Government energy targets, including <a href="#">APS Net Zero Emissions by 2030</a>.</li> <li>• Ensure newly constructed or major refurbishments of commercial office buildings tenanted by the Agency meet the minimum energy performance standard set out in NZGO.</li> <li>• Ensure the Base Building Performance Specifications are met with each construction.</li> <li>• New office leases must include the relevant version of the Green Lease Schedule with ongoing minimum energy performance standards.</li> <li>• Ensure a NABERS assessment will occur and is considered in overall cost considerations before exercising a lease option.</li> <li>• Ensure a tenancy lighting assessment occurs in accordance with the <i>Building Energy Efficiency Disclosure Act 2010</i> from the effective date. Lighting should meet requirements of the National Construction Code.</li> <li>• Ensure separate digital metering differentiates the supply between base building and tenancy energy use.</li> <li>• Ensure digital sub-meters are established in areas of high energy consumption, such as in data centres to monitor and manage facilities and equipment consumption.</li> <li>• Ensure the system for requesting AHAC identifies the source of each request and does not allow for repeat or regular scheduling of AHAC.</li> <li>• Avoid the installation of new gas consuming equipment and seek replacement of existing gas consuming equipment with electric alternatives when the existing equipment reaches end of life.</li> </ul>
<p><b>All Agency staff</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should engage in positive environmentally sustainable behaviours in the workplace and comply with sustainability policy and procedures.</li> </ul>

<h3>1.2.2 ICT equipment</h3>	
<p><b>Agency staff directly responsible for managing ICT equipment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must comply with the legislation and policy in section 1.1.</li> <li>• Provide for major ICT energy efficiency and greenhouse initiatives through the annual business planning and budgeting processes.</li> <li>• Ensure ICT sustainability initiatives are implemented including procedures effectively managing the energy use of ICT equipment.</li> <li>• Procure ICT equipment that meets the minimum standard of ISO 14024 or ISO 14020 at the level of <a href="#">EPEAT</a> Silver or equivalent</li> <li>• Ensure energy management options are enabled on ICT equipment, which allow ICT equipment to power down to a low energy state during non-use periods.</li> <li>• Ensure Multi-Function Devices and printers have settings</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>defaulted to print double-sided or duplex.</li> <li>Ensure equipment that is not in use are not left plugged in where possible.</li> </ul>
<b>All Agency staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shut down personal computers and switch off monitors at the end of each working day</li> </ul>

## 2. Waste

The Agency will support the Australian Government’s commitment to transforming Australia’s waste into a resource, where most goods and services can be continually used, reused, recycled and reprocessed as part of a circular economy.

### 2.1 Supporting Waste legislation and policy

This section outlines supporting government legislation and policies that are relevant to staff responsibilities and actions outlined in Section 2.2. These are:

- [Commonwealth Legislation and Policy](#)
- [National Waste Policy \(2018\)](#)
- [National Waste Policy Action Plan \(2019\)](#)
- [Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy](#)
- [Product Stewardship Act 2011 \(Cth\)](#)
- [Hazardous Waste \(Regulations of Exports and Imports\) Act 1989 \(Cth\)](#)
- [National Environment Protection \(Used Packaging Materials\) Measure 2011](#)
- [Australian Packaging Covenant](#)
- State and Local Government Environment Protection and Planning Legislation and Policies
- [DCCEEW Procurement-connected Environmentally Sustainable Procurement Policy](#)
- [DCCEEW Sustainable Procurement Guide \(2024\)](#)
- Services Australia Asset Disposal Procedures
- Services Australia Waste Management Plan

### 2.2 Agency staff – responsibilities and actions

#### 2.2.1 General office waste

<b>Staff directly responsible for management of general office waste</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must comply with the legislation and policy in section 2.1.</li> <li>• Must ensure recycling facilities and receptacles are established and maintained in all building sites at convenient and accessible locations if supported by local council waste streams, including but not limited to:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ commingled waste (council curb-side recycling items)</li> <li>○ paper waste in accordance with the Security Policy</li> <li>○ landfill waste</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Maintain accurate and complete records for reporting purposes on the types of general office disposal infrastructure and disposal method at each building site.</li> <li>• Communicate to staff the available recycling streams and promote correct waste disposal through education on what items can be disposed of in each stream.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>All Agency staff</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the appropriate disposal infrastructure for landfill, recyclable and organic office waste.</li> <li>• Reuse surplus office stationery where practical.</li> <li>• Minimise printing by using the 'print preview' function and print double sided to reduce paper waste. Black and white printing is preferred to colour where appropriate.</li> </ul>
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## 2.2.2 ICT equipment and consumables waste

<p><b>Agency staff directly responsible for management of ICT equipment and consumables waste</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must comply with the legislation and policy in section 2.1.</li> <li>• Arrange infrastructure to enable the local recycling of ICT waste, including:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ e-waste such as mobile devices, batteries, toner cartridges</li> <li>○ desk top monitors</li> <li>○ cords/cabling</li> <li>○ packaging</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Reuse surplus, functioning ICT equipment.</li> <li>• Promote procedures for the responsible disposal of ICT and consumable waste to suppliers, contractors, other Agency staff and staff across the Agency.</li> <li>• Maintain accurate and complete records for reporting purposes on the types of disposal infrastructure at each site, the types and units of ICT equipment being disposed and the method of disposal.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>All Agency staff</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the appropriate disposal infrastructure for ICT waste (e.g. mobile phones) and related consumable waste (e.g., Toner cartridges).</li> </ul>
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## 2.2.3 Refurbishments and relocations waste

<p><b>Agency staff directly responsible for management of refurbishment and relocations waste</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must comply with the legislation and policy in section 2.1.</li> <li>• Reuse and/or recycle – where cost effective and practical, including but not limited to:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ workstations, desks</li> <li>○ carpets and tiles</li> <li>○ windows and doors</li> <li>○ bulk heads</li> <li>○ paints and solvents</li> <li>○ packaging</li> <li>○ ad hoc materials including glasses, woods, metals, ceramics, and plastics.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Establish reuse and recycling disposal infrastructure for large office relocations to optimise resource recovery.</li> <li>• Maintain accurate and complete records for reporting purposes on the types of disposal infrastructure (waste stream type) at</li> </ul>
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	<p>each site, the types and units (or volume) of items being disposed and the method of disposal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where new items are being procured, seek items that:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ are made from recycled materials</li> <li>○ can be returned via a stewardship program</li> <li>○ can be easily recycled or repurposed (e.g., single material goods where practical)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>All Agency staff</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use appropriate disposal infrastructure for items being discarded during office renovations.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.2.4 Hazardous waste</b></p>	
<p><b>Agency staff directly responsible for management of hazardous and infectious waste</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must comply with the legislation and policy in section 2.1.</li> <li>• Ensure disposal infrastructure for hazardous and infectious waste is established and maintained, including:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ batteries</li> <li>○ lead and lead based products</li> <li>○ fluorescent tubes and compact fluorescent globes</li> <li>○ asbestos (mandatory)</li> <li>○ sharps bins</li> <li>○ sanitary</li> <li>○ first aid.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Maintain accurate and complete records for reporting purposes on the types of disposal infrastructure at each site, the types of items being disposed, and method of disposal.</li> </ul>
<p><b>All Agency staff</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use appropriate disposal infrastructure for hazardous and infectious waste.</li> </ul>

### 3. Water

The Agency supports the efficient and responsible management of water to minimise the burden on water supply.

#### 3.1 Supporting Water legislation and policy

This section outlines supporting government legislation and policies that are relevant to staff responsibilities and actions outlined in Section 3.2. These are:

- [Commonwealth Legislation and Policy](#)
- State Government Water Legislation and Regulations, such as the [Water Management Act 2000 \(NSW\)](#)
- State Government Environment Protection Legislation and Regulations, such as the [Protection of Environment Operations Act 1997 \(NSW\)](#)
- [Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards Act 2005](#)
- Local Government Environmental Planning Policies (LEPPs)
- State and Council Catchment Management Plans
- Services Australia Water Management Guide for Staff Housing

### 3.2 Agency staff – responsibilities and actions

3.2.1 Building management and maintenance	
Staff directly responsible for water management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must comply with the legislation and policy in section 3.1.</li> <li>• Meet the requirements of the Services Australia Water Management Guide for Staff Housing when maintaining, refurbishing, or establishing staff houses.</li> <li>• Meet the requirements of Water Management Guide for Remote Service Centres (under development) when maintaining, refurbishing, or establishing Remote Service Centres.</li> <li>• Apply environmental standards and procedures for water management and infrastructure as established in the Services Australia Building Performance Specifications.</li> </ul>
All Agency staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report tap/water leakages and other water faults in a timely manner to the relevant responsible area.</li> </ul>

## 4. Fleet and Travel

The Agency will reduce the impact of greenhouse gas emissions from the use of Agency vehicles and flight travel. Enabling the transition to Low Emission Vehicles (LEV) requires Agency staff to support both the leasing of appropriate vehicles and manage the complimentary infrastructure to support the use of these vehicles. The Agency’s Fleet and Travel policies guide the use of air and fleet transport options.

### 4.1 Supporting Fleet and Travel legislation and policy

This section outlines supporting government legislation and policies that are relevant to staff responsibilities and actions outlined in Section 4.2. These are:

- [Commonwealth Legislation and Policy](#)
- [Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy](#)
- [Commonwealth Fleet Vehicle Selection Policy | Department of Finance](#)
- [National Construction Code 2022](#)
- [Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013](#)
- [Annual reports for non-corporate Commonwealth entities \(RMG 135\)](#)
- Services Australia Travel Policy
- Services Australia Fleet Policy

### 4.2 Agency staff – responsibilities and actions

4.2.1 Travel	
Staff directly responsible for fleet vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must comply with the legislation and policy in section 4.1.</li> <li>• Support delegates to transition fleet to LEV unless the vehicles meet the exemption criteria in the Commonwealth Fleet Vehicle Selection Policy.</li> <li>• Support Agency staff to use LEV and the associated</li> </ul>

	<p>infrastructure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain records to support required travel reporting requirements.</li> </ul>
<b>All Agency staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the LEV and charging infrastructure in accordance with directions.</li> <li>• Only travel where there is an essential need and alternative methods are not available.</li> </ul>

## 5. Procurement

The application of environmental standards in procurements for sustainable products and services provides a catalyst for improving environmental performance in supply chains - driving resource efficiency and innovation.

### 5.1 Supporting Procurement legislation and policy

This section outlines supporting government legislation and policies that are relevant to staff responsibilities and actions outlined in Section 5.2. These are:

- [Commonwealth Legislation and Policy](#)
- [Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy](#)
- [Commonwealth Procurement Rules | Department of Finance](#)
- [Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013](#)
- [DCCEEW Procurement-connected Environmentally Sustainable Procurement Policy](#)
- [DCCEEW Sustainable Procurement Guide \(2024\)](#)
- [Australian Packaging Covenant](#)
- [National Waste Policy Action Plan \(2019\)](#)
- [Recycled Content Guide](#)
- [Annual reports for non-corporate Commonwealth entities \(RMG 135\)](#)
- Services Australia Procurement Framework, procedures and templates

### 5.2 Agency staff – responsibilities and actions

5.2.1 Procurement	
<b>Staff directly responsible for procurement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must comply with the legislation and policy in section 5.1.</li> <li>• Staff must comply with the DCCEEW procurement-connected <a href="#">Environmentally Sustainable Procurement Policy</a> which applies from 1 July 2024 for construction services greater than \$7.5M (including GST) total estimated procurement value.</li> <li>• From 1 July 2024, staff must also comply with the associated <a href="#">reporting framework</a> for constructions services greater than \$7.5M (including GST) total estimated procurement value.</li> <li>• From 1 July 2025, the Environmentally Sustainable Procurement Policy will also apply to furniture, fittings and equipment, ICT goods and textiles greater than \$1M in total estimated procurement value.</li> <li>• Plan their procurement, identifying opportunities for sustainable outcomes using the <a href="#">Sustainable Procurement Guide (2024)</a></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must consider the environmental sustainability of goods and services (such as energy efficiency, environmental and climate change impact, and the use of recycled products) as part of the value for money assessment in accordance with section 4.5 of the Commonwealth Procurement Rules.</li> <li>• Use Agency procurement plan templates for all procurements over \$10,000</li> <li>• When approaching the market, specifying sustainability: requirements, key performance indicators (KPIs), and evaluation criteria as required.</li> <li>• Evaluate tender responses and conclude tender process (as appropriate).</li> <li>• Ensure sustainability requirements and KPIs are included in the Contract Management Plan/Snapshot (as appropriate) and managed throughout the contract lifecycle.</li> </ul>
<p><b>All Agency staff</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider sustainable procurement outcomes and opportunities, with reference to Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water for <a href="#">procurement-connected policies</a>, the <a href="#">Sustainable Procurement Guide</a> and sustainable procurement intranet information.</li> <li>• Support sustainable procurement by liaising with purchasing staff in office equipment requests.</li> <li>• Support corporate wardrobe recycling requests.</li> </ul>

## Policy Review

A review of the Environmental Sustainability Policy will occur annually and/or in the event of a policy or business change.

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