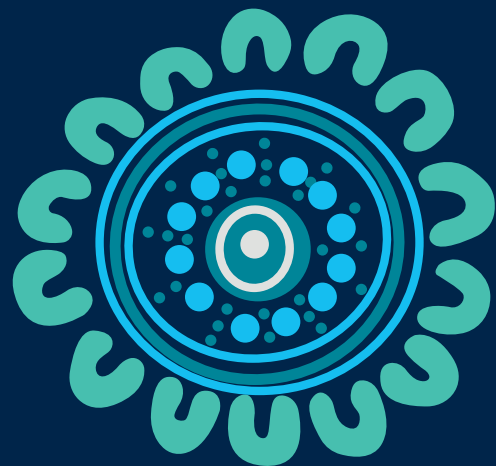




Australian Government
Department of Education

Emissions REDUCTION PLAN





Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Education acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and Elders past and present.

Accountable Authority Sign Off

The Australian Government released the Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy in November 2023, setting out the overall approach and action required by Commonwealth entities to achieve the APS Net Zero 2030 target.

The Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy represents the Australian Government's strong commitment to lead by example on emissions reduction and contribute to the decarbonisation of Australia's economy.

The Department of Education (Education) is committed to the achievement of the Government's APS Net Zero 2030 target. The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) is a significant service provider for Education in terms of property, energy, ICT and waste disposal. Education commits to support the emission reduction actions DEWR is leading, and to act in the areas of travel and capability uplift, to achieve the APS Net Zero 2030 target.

This Emissions Reduction Plan describes the priorities and actions Education is taking to reduce its operational emissions and contribute to the APS Net Zero 2030 target.



Tony Cook PSM

Secretary

Department of Education

29 August 2024

Purpose of this plan

Education is responsible for managing and implementing emissions reduction initiatives in the Australian Government's [Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy](#). The strategy sets out the Australian Government's approach to achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions from its operations by 2030 and the reinstatement of public emissions reporting.

This Emissions Reduction Plan sets out Education's pathway to contribute to the achievement of the APS Net Zero 2030 target through emissions reduction activities. This plan encompasses existing and new priorities and actions within Education to reduce emissions.

This Emissions Reduction Plan has been developed in accordance with the [strategy](#), associated guidance and reporting standards for annual emissions reporting.

Net zero greenhouse gas emissions

The Australian Government has set a target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions from government operations by 2030. Net zero is achieved when consumption of resources, such as electricity and gas, is reduced as far as possible, and energy is supplied from renewable sources. Where unavoidable greenhouse gas emissions remain, the Australian Government intends to coordinate a whole-of government policy on carbon offsetting.

This means minimising the greenhouse gas emissions that are within the department's control.

Governance and reporting

Progress against actions identified in this Emissions Reduction Plan, and any additional measures adopted, will be included in the department's annual report from 2023–24. This, combined with annual emissions reporting, will be used as a measure of the department's progress towards reducing its emissions.

As part of the Net Zero in Government Operations Annual Progress Report, the Department of Finance (Finance) will aggregate these measures to provide whole-of-Australian Government emissions reporting.

Department of Education operational context

Education operates across Australia and overseas with about 1500 employees. State and territory numbers are detailed at table 1.1.

DEWR hosts Education in its tenancies across all its Australian locations. Under a memorandum of understanding (MoU), operational between 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2025, DEWR provides Education with property, technology and other corporate services including application hosting, landfill waste and recycling, accommodation and fit-out and network hosting. There is no meaningful way to split emissions related to these services between Education and DEWR.

Table 1.1 Department of Education locations and number of personnel (as at August 2024)

Location	Number of employees
ACT	1268
New South Wales	41
Queensland	43
Northern Territory	6
Western Australia	27
South Australia	34
Tasmania	11
Victoria	53
Overseas	10



Baseline emissions

Baseline emissions are a record of greenhouse gases that have been produced in the past and were produced before the introduction of any strategies to reduce emissions. The baseline emissions from financial year 2022–23 are the reference point against which emissions reduction actions can be measured.

DEWR provides electricity and natural gas to Education as property services under the MoU. The 2022–23 greenhouse gas emissions inventory tables for scope 1 and 2 emissions¹ for Education are included in *DEWR's 2022–23 Annual Report*.

Engagement

In the development of this plan, Education has engaged:

- DEWR, as it hosts the department in its Australian tenancies
- Finance's Climate Action in Government Operations team, to ensure that this plan aligns with the Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy and the Commonwealth Climate Disclosure requirements
- internally with the Financial Management Division and Chief Financial Officer to discuss options and considerations for lowering emissions from travel and in procurement.

Note: DEWR, as the official lessee of the tenancies in which DEWR and Education are located in Australia, is responsible for engaging with neighbouring tenants to discuss options for shared locations and any associated and relevant outcomes to lower emissions.

Emissions reduction targets

Education will work with the DEWR Memorandum of Understanding Governance Committee to support its actions to meet the net zero targets and ensure shared climate action goals are included when Education renegotiates its MoU with DEWR in 2025.

Outside the corporate services DEWR provides, Education generates no scope 1 or 2 emissions that can be separated from DEWR. While Education's scope 3 emissions² arising from travel and accommodation activities in Australia are already low, it will introduce 2 key new measures around travel and capability uplift to further reduce emissions, as detailed in Priorities and actions on page 5.

1 Scope 1 emissions reflect emissions from sources owned or controlled by government, including the stationary combustion of fuels (e.g. generators) and transportation (e.g. fleet vehicles). Scope 2 emissions are indirect emissions which occur because of the activities that generate electricity, which is consumed by an entity, but is generated outside the entity's boundaries. They are physically produced by the burning of fossil fuels by the generator of the electricity.

2 Scope 3 emissions reflect other indirect emissions produced through government activities. At this stage, the APS Net Zero 2030 target does not include scope 3 emissions.

Priorities and actions

Education's actions towards the APS Net Zero 2030 targets, including shared actions with DEWR, are summarised below.

Buildings

Education will reflect DEWR's commitment to ensure a minimum 5.5-star NABERS rating for buildings leased within Australian, as current leases expire over the next 3 years.

Electricity

Under the current MoU, DEWR is responsible for the electricity contracts for all buildings Education occupies. Education, through DEWR, will procure renewable electricity under Finance's Whole-of-Australian Government renewable electricity contract, as these arrangements are set in each jurisdiction.

Procurement

Education will continue to ensure its procurement policy aligns with the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water's [Environmentally Sustainable Procurement Policy](#).

The department is updating its Request for Tender and Contract templates with clauses to signal to the market the department's overall commitment to the broader achievement of net zero and environmental sustainability. Future reviews will continue and where applicable to Education, will incorporate changes to Education's procurement framework.

Travel

Education complies with the whole-of-government travel policies:

- ▶ Resource Management Guide No 404 Official Domestic Travel – Use of the lowest practical fare.
- ▶ Resource Management Guide No 405 Official International Travel – Use of the best fare of the day.

Education will work towards the Net Zero Travel targets by developing guidance on sustainable travel to include the following criteria:

- ▶ travel only undertaken where other communication tools such as teleconferencing and videoconferencing are not suitable
- ▶ procure direct flights unless it is not value for money
- ▶ select low and zero emissions vehicles for hire cars unless it is not value for money
- ▶ staff will be encouraged to consider low-emissions transport such as trains or other land-based transport for distance travel, as well as to and from airports, including direction to select e-Uber where available
- ▶ as NABERS-rating data for accommodation becomes available, staff will be encouraged to select appropriate NABERS-rated accommodation or accommodation close to the office, unless it is not value for money.



ACTION

The Financial and Resource Management Branch, Financial Management Division, to develop and provide guidance on sustainable travel bookings by February 2025.

People, Culture and Capability

In July 2024, Education appointed the Assistant Secretary, Parliamentary, Audit and Risk Branch, as Chief Sustainability Officer (CSO) to champion the net zero in government operations strategy across the organisation. The CSO will participate in the Chief Sustainability Officer network and community of practice established by Finance.

In 2024–25, Education will focus on establishing the CSO role and embedding climate considerations in our governance processes and day-to-day work. The CSO will identify and communicate with staff about training that Finance or the Australian Public Service Commission is offering, communicate key messages from community of practice meetings and advice issued by Finance.



ACTION

CSO to promote the introduction of net zero training internally to all staff and set training targets for staff by 30 June 2025.



Involved participants

The following areas of Education have been involved in the development of this plan:

Division	Branch
Financial Management Division	External Budgets and Performance Branch Financial and Resource Management Branch
People, Parliamentary and Communications Division	Parliamentary, Audit and Risk Branch

The Department of Education Emissions Reduction Plan was developed August 2024.

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