

**Office of the Official  
Secretary to the Governor-  
General**

**Emissions Reduction Plan**

# Acknowledgement of Country

The Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General acknowledges the Traditional Owners and custodians of the of the lands on which we work, and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

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# 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 a strong commitment by the Australian Government to lead by example on emissions reduction and contribute to the decarbonisation of Australia's economy.

The Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General (the Office) is committed to the achievement of the Government's APS Net Zero 2030 target. The Office is following the APS Net Zero 2030 target in full, as per the Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy.

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



Gerard Martin PSM

Official Secretary to the Governor-General

Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General

# Emissions Reduction Plan

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## Purpose

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The Office is responsible for managing and implementing emissions reduction initiatives set by the Australian Government's Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy (the Strategy) developed by Department of Finance. 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.

The goal of this Emissions Reduction Plan is to provide a pathway for the Office 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 the Office to reduce emissions.

This Emissions Reduction Plan has been completed in accordance with the Strategy, associated guidance and reporting standards for annual emissions reporting.

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## Net zero greenhouse gas emissions

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APS Net Zero 2030 is the target set by the Australian Government to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions from government operations by the year 2030. It includes scope 1 and scope 2 emissions from activities in Australia and its territories, as described in the Strategy. The APS Net Zero 2030 target applies at the aggregate level to non-corporate Commonwealth entities and generally covers the entirety of the entity's organisation. From an organisational perspective, this means minimising the greenhouse gas emissions that are within our control.

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## Governance and reporting

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Progress against actions identified within this Emissions Reduction Plan, and any additional measures adopted, will be included in our annual reports. This, combined with annual emissions reporting, will be used as a measure of the Office's progress towards reducing its emissions.

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

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## Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General Operational context

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The Office is a small Commonwealth budget-funded statutory agency with staff located at Government House, Canberra and Admiralty House, Sydney. The official households and properties cover 55 hectares of land and 33 buildings over the two properties.

The purpose of the Office is the facilitation of the performance of the Governor-General's role through the organisation and management of official duties, management and maintenance of the official households and properties, and administration of the Australian honours and awards system. The Office achieves this through a single program which comprises three components:

- Component 1: Support for the Governor-General;

- Component 2: Management and maintenance of the official properties; and
- Component 3: Administration of the Australian honours and awards system.

The Office’s operating environment is shaped by the broader economic, political and social environment. This includes ongoing and emerging cost pressures relating to managing heritage properties, the use of information technology, governance and compliance requirements and increasing supplier costs. These challenges make robust financial management practices critical to the Office’s ability to operate within its departmental budget.

The age of both properties combined with their heritage values requires ongoing investment of resources to ensure the Office meets its obligations to maintain the houses for the Australian public.

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## Baseline emissions

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Baseline emissions are a record of greenhouse gases that have been produced in the past and were produced prior to 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.

The baseline emissions for this plan focus on scope 1 and scope 2 emissions, consistent with the APS Net Zero 2030 target. Electricity-related emissions were calculated using the location-based method. The complete 2022-23 greenhouse gas emissions inventory tables for the Office are presented in our 2022-23 annual report.

Baseline year	Financial year 2022-23
Scope 1 emissions	127 tCO <sub>2</sub> e
Scope 2 emissions	697 tCO <sub>2</sub> e
Total Scope 1 & 2	824 tCO <sub>2</sub> e

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## Engagement

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In the development of this plan the Office has been working with Climate Action in Government Operations – to ensure that this plan aligns with the Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy and the Commonwealth Climate Disclosure requirements.

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## Emissions reduction targets

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The Office is following the APS Net Zero 2030 target in full, as per the Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy. The target covers the entirety of our entity’s operations within Australia and its territories for scope 1 and scope 2 emissions, as described in the Strategy.

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## Priorities and actions

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The Office has implemented the following measures as at 2024:

- Signed up to Whole of Government Electricity contract via Department of Finance inclusive of fully renewable sources;

- Active participation in bi-monthly sustainability workshop with agency maintenance provider to improve awareness and identify new opportunities;
- Replaced end-of-life internal combustion horticulture tools with electric tools;
- Replaced end-of-life light globes with LED;
- Power down idle equipment to buildings when unutilised;
- Technology uplift incorporating efficient computers and agency wide video conferencing facilities to assist with the reduction of travel related emissions;
- Incorporated sustainability considerations into Financial Management System procurement approval processes and capital works prioritisation assessments;
- Incorporated energy efficient design measures into capital works projects, such as improved insulation and efficient HVAC, lighting & appliance selection.

For the Office to further contribute to the achievement of the APS Net Zero 2030 target, targeted action on existing emissions reduction measures and the introduction of further or new measures is required. These actions are summarised in the following points, with further detail provided below:

- Awareness and behaviour;
- Asset management;
- Procurement practices;
- Travel practices; and
- Projects and initiatives.

### **Awareness and behaviour**

- Improved energy conservation practices;
- Improved waste stream management; and
- Improved staff awareness and education.

*ACTION:* Property and Projects branch nominate a dedicated resource responsible for the creation of education and awareness campaigns and materials, ensuring that key stakeholders from all business areas and all levels of management are engaged to turn best practice ideas and concepts into business-as-usual activities.

### **Asset management**

- Replacement of end-of-life equipment and incorporation of new technologies that support sustainable practices; and
- Addresses the *Commonwealth Fleet Vehicle Selection Policy* when selecting vehicles within the Australian Government Fleet.

*ACTION:* Measures to be imbedded into our asset management systems to ensure that procurement officers incorporate meaningful sustainability measures into our equipment and fleet purchases.

## Procurement practices

- Address the *Commonwealth Procurement Rules* when undertaking Value-for-Money assessments, such as climate change impacts in relevant financial and non-financial considerations; and
- Active consideration of sustainable practices incorporated into material selections and capital projects.

*ACTION:* Measures to be imbedded into our Financial Management System which capture detail of the sustainability measures considered by each procurement officer when conducting Value for Money Assessments.

## Travel practices

- Reduce reliance on vehicle and aircraft travel for delivery of Component 2 and Component 3 in favour of alternatives such as video conferencing; and
- Use Low (or Zero) Emission Vehicles for travel where available and practical.

*ACTION:* Measures to be imbedded into our travel policy that reflect our sustainability objectives.

## Projects and initiatives

### *Tree Replanting Drylands (Government House)*

The current tree population for Government House grounds has been estimated at approximately 1,971 which is 2,506 less than the survey conducted in 1999. This reduction is due to severe damage from several major storm events, disease and insect attack, environmental stress and natural attrition. This project will commence with an *Arbor Asset Evaluation and Future Growth Plan*, considering elements such landscape heritage, ceremonial planting, horticulture durability, fauna impact and security mitigation. It is recognised that the sustainability benefits of this project are unable to be reflected in the Office emission reporting data at this time however we consider this a relevant, worthwhile and impactful project. The Office will consider deployment strategy including commercial planting, community engagement and staff volunteers while also utilising the recently completed plant nursery to cultivate saplings.

### *Gas Sub-Metering (Government House)*

Government House has a current reliance on natural gas for several core elements including Main House heating and cooking, the Honours building mechanical systems, and Government House Cottage instantaneous hot water unit. These systems are generally in good working order as of 2024. This project is to install gas sub-metering so that the usage of each system can be monitored which will assist in identifying the value benefits of switching to electric once the asset approaches end of life.

### *Gas Pool Heating (Government House)*

Government House has a pool heater that uses natural gas, and the equipment has reached end-of-life. This project will remove the gas heater and either not replace it or replace it with solar, electric or another sustainable option.

### *Electric Vehicle Charging Stations (Government House and Admiralty House)*



As at 2024 Government House and Admiralty House have limited charging infrastructure for on-road fleet Electric Vehicles. It is anticipated this position will change over the coming years as our on-road fleet transitions to Low (or Zero) Emission Vehicles. This project will initially focus on delivering capability for on-road fleet vehicles, potentially expanding to include guest and staff as cost recovery models are considered.

*Gas Disconnection (Admiralty House)*

Admiralty House has minimal reliance on natural gas, and direct measures can be applied in the short term without the need for a sub metering program. It is proposed that the kitchen appliances and the instantaneous hot water unit be switched from gas to electric.

**ACTION:** These projects have been added to the *Property Works Program Forward Plan* and will be considered against competing priorities as funding and resources become available.

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1.0	CAiGO	Initial release		Final
1.1	CAiGO	Alteration of words 'carbon emissions' to 'greenhouse emissions' at p.4.	May 2024	Final
2.0	CAiGO	Revisions to streamline the template and align language and approach with other climate action in government operations initiatives.	June 2024	Final