



Australian Government
**Department of Employment
and Workplace Relations**

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Emission Reduction Plan 2024



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The document must be attributed as the (Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Emission Reduction Plan).

Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations 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 Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) is committed to the achievement of the Government's APS Net Zero 2030 target. In accordance with the Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy, DEWR intends to ensure its contribution to achieving the APS Net Zero 2030 target.

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

Natalie James

Secretary

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

Emissions Reduction Plan

Purpose

DEWR 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 the 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 outline a pathway for DEWR 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 DEWR to reduce emissions.

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

Net zero greenhouse gas emissions

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 2¹ 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.

Governance and reporting

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 DEWR 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.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations operational context

DEWR has approximately 4,300 personnel operating across all Australian states and territories. Our facilities include multiple office spaces, data centres and storage facilities, and across areas which incur extreme temperatures. The department is required to travel to both metro and regional areas

¹ Scope 1 emissions reflect emissions from sources owned or controlled by Government, including the stationary combustion of fuels (boilers, generators), and transportation (vehicle fleet). 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 that entity's boundaries. They are physically produced by the burning of fossil fuels by the generator of the electricity.

across Australia to work with stakeholders and members of the community to deliver the outcomes of the department.

DEWR has already commenced its net zero emissions pathway in line with the direction set in the Strategy. This includes the following key activities:

- Developed a departmental level climate risk plan comprising the elements of the Net Zero activities and shared risks with the relevant treatment owners from all Groups.
- The Enterprise Risk team has begun to develop climate specific training under the Risk Strategy.
- A DEWR Net Zero Steering Group and a Net Zero Working Group have been established to steer the department's strategic direction on Net Zero. The Steering group is chaired by an SES Band 2 officer and includes the department's Chief Sustainability Officer.

DEWR also hosts the Department of Education (Education) in its tenancies across all of Education's locations in Australia. Under a memorandum of understanding (MoU), operational between 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2025, DEWR provide 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 DEWR and Education.

In support of Net Zero, the Department has also received \$91 million over 5 years, as part of the 2024-25 Federal Budget. This will be invested in the new energy workforce which will establish the National Hydrogen Technology Skills Training Centre to support the skills workforce in the hydrogen industry. The initiative is being led by the Skills and Training Group.

Baseline emissions

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 DEWR's emissions reduction actions are being 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 DEWR are presented in our 2022-23 annual report.

Table 1: DEWR Baseline Emissions

Baseline year	Financial year 2022-23 ² (Location Based) ³
Scope 1 emissions	34.26 tCO ₂ e
Scope 2 emissions	3,369.04 tCO ₂ e
Total emissions	3,403.30 tCO ₂ e

Engagement

In the development of this plan, DEWR has engaged with:

- Department of Finance
- Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
- Department of Defence
- Department of Health and Aged Care
- Department of Education - to discuss options for shared locations and any associated and relevant outcomes to lower emissions.
- Fair Work Commission
- 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

Emissions reduction targets

DEWR plans to achieve 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.

Priorities and actions

For DEWR to 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:

- Procuring renewable electricity under the Department of Finance’s Whole of Australian Government (WoAG) electricity contract.
- Ensuring at minimum 5.5 NABERS rating for buildings in our lease accommodation footprint as current leases set to expire over the next 3 years.

² From Pg 76 of 2022-23 DEWR Annual Report - note for the Emissions Reduction Plan the figures have been converted from Kg to Tonnes. The figures reported under Scope 2 include the total consumption across the department’s leased property portfolio. The department currently hosts the Department of Education in its tenancies under an MoU arrangement, and energy usage cannot be meaningfully separated between the 2 entities.

³ A method to quantify scope 2 emissions based on average energy generation emission factors for defined geographic locations, including local, regional or national boundaries.

- Transitioning fleet vehicles to low emission vehicles by 1 July 2026.
- Incorporate the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) Environmentally Sustainable Procurement Policy into the departments training, policy and procedures by January 2025.
- Incorporating sustainable travel alternatives in line with the WoAG travel arrangements.

Additional actions being considered and negotiated with landlords for new office accommodation leases:

- Carbon modelling
- LED lighting planning
- Solar PV and LED lighting upgrades
- Electrification of Plant and Equipment

Buildings

Consolidation of the department's leased premises within specific locations across Australia is currently underway, with several existing leases expiring in the next one to three years. This will provide the department with the opportunity to preference buildings with better energy-efficiency, and to modernise office fit-outs with initiatives such as controllable LED lighting, and more efficient space utilisation.

The department is transitioning to modern ways of working including consideration of desk-sharing arrangements that will facilitate more efficient use of leased office-space, and a subsequent reduction in total energy consumption.

ACTION:

- In line with the Net Zero in Government Operations strategy, new market approaches for leased office space from 1 July 2024 will preference all-electric buildings where available.
- Future leases from 1 July 2025 will be negotiated with a requirement for 5.5-star minimum NABERS energy ratings.

Electricity

The department's energy contracts are managed by our Property Service Provider (PSP) under the WoAG Property Services Coordinated Procurement Arrangements, and the department has committed to transitioning electricity contracts to renewable sources where available.

ACTION:

- Consult with the Department of Finance to ensure participation in WoAG electricity procurement as per the Strategy and replace all electricity contracts with renewable electricity.
- The Department of Finance are approaching the market for new WoAG renewable electricity arrangements, and the department will migrate over to these arrangements as they are progressively rolled out, and existing contracts cease.

- In locations where the WoAG arrangements will not be available, the department will work with the PSP to transition existing contracts to renewable sources where possible.

Fleet

The department has committed to replacing its passenger vehicle fleet with Low Emission Vehicles (LEV) as existing leases end in line with the Commonwealth Fleet Vehicle Selection Policy.

ACTION:

- DEWR has undertaken a review of fleet vehicle utilisation to determine vehicles suitable for replacement with LEVs, including Battery Electric Vehicles (BEV) where usage is concentrated in metropolitan areas with ready access to charging infrastructure, and Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles (PHEV) where usage involves long-distance travel and extends to regional areas where access to charging infrastructure may be limited.
- Currently 32 of 35 leased fleet vehicles are passenger cars subject to LEV targets.
- 68% of passenger fleet vehicles will be LEV.
- It is expected that 84% of passenger fleet vehicles will be LEV by 1 July 2025 and 100% by 1 July 2026 as existing leases end and vehicles are replaced.
- DEWR has developed an EV charging plan, in accordance with the 1 July 2024 target.

ICT Requirements

The department's current data centre providers are planning to be Net Zero by 2030.

ACTION:

- As current contracts cease, DEWR will look to identify providers from the Data Centre Panel established by the Digital Transformation Agency (DTA) which will mandate that all data centre providers to the government achieve a NABERS energy rating of 5 at minimum.

Procurement

DEWR will align its procurement policy with the Environmentally Sustainable Procurement Policy and the Sustainable Procurement Guide published by DCCEEW.

ACTION:

- DEWR will update the departments procurement policy to incorporate the Environmentally Sustainable Procurement Policy and Sustainable Procurement Guide by 1 January 2025.
- To ensure the successful implementation of our sustainable procurement, DEWR will proactively education and build the capabilities of staff in this area.

Travel

To support the Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy, DEWR will look to integrate environmental considerations into our travel decisions and look at more efficient ways to travel with an aim to reduce emissions associated with business travel.

ACTION:

- DEWR will update the departmental travel policy following advice from the WoAG Travel Arrangements.
- Encourage the use of low-emission transport options where possible.
- Encourage the selection of hotels with NABERS ratings where available and suitable.

Involved participants

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

Table 2: DEWR Involved participants

Division	Branch
Technology and Services Division	IT Workplace Environment and Customer Support Branch
Technology and Services Division	Infrastructure, Platforms and Projects Branch
Finance and Budget Division	Finance Branch
Finance and Budget Division	External Budgets, Strategy and Performance
Legal and Assurance Division	Enterprise Risk, Assurance and Investigations
Cross-divisional	DEWR Net Zero Working Group
Cross-divisional	DEWR Net Zero Steering Group