

# National Capital Authority Emissions Reduction Plan

Financial Year 2024-25

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# Acknowledgement of Country

The National Capital Authority 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 National Capital Authority (NCA) is committed to the achievement of the Government's APS Net Zero 2030 target. The NCA 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 NCA is taking to reduce our operational emissions and contribute to the APS Net Zero 2030 target.

SIGNED BY TERRY WEBER – CHAIR, NATIONAL CAPITAL AUTHORITY

# Emissions Reduction Plan

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## Purpose

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Australian Government entities are responsible for managing their emissions 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 provide a pathway for the NCA 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 NCA 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 the NCA's 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 the NCA's annual reports. This, combined with annual emissions reporting, will be used as a measure of the NCA'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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## National Capital Authority Operational context

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The NCA is established under the *Australian Capital Territory (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988* (the PALM Act). The NCA is a non-corporate Australian Government agency within the Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts portfolio.

At 30 June 2024, the NCA was accountable to the Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories, with the Minister responsible for administering the PALM Act.

The NCA performs the role of trustee of the National Capital, and in this capacity, serves the interests of the Australian Government, and the nation and its people. In short, the NCA is

responsible for: shaping the National Capital into the future; managing and enhancing the nationally significant parts of Canberra; and fostering awareness of Canberra as Australia's National Capital.

The NCA is a small Australian Government entity of around 60 staff. These staff are predominantly located in the Treasury Building in Parkes, ACT, with a small number of staff providing visitor services at the National Capital Exhibition at Regatta Point.

The NCA officers include architects, planners, engineers and people with expertise in safety, environment and heritage management, asset management, financial and project management and marketing, events and education. The agency uses a contracted service model for land management activities and operates an organisational model that reflects the professional skill sets and responsibilities of our subject matter experts.

The NCA manages the National Capital Estate, which covers a significant and central area of the Australian Capital Territory. The NCA's management responsibilities extend to 21 listed heritage places. This includes 2 National Heritage listed places – Anzac Parade (as part of the 'Australian War Memorial and the Memorial Parade' listing) and the High Court-National Gallery Precinct – and 19 Commonwealth Heritage listed places.

With a total value of over \$1 billion, NCA-managed assets include:

- Lake Burley Griffin
- Scrivener Dam
- Anzac Parade and its memorials
- Australians of the Year Walk
- Blundells Cottage
- Boundless Playground
- Captain Cook Memorial Jet
- Commonwealth Park
- Commonwealth Place
- Diplomatic Estates
- Kings Park
- Lindsay Pryor National Arboretum
- National Rock Garden
- Magna Carta Place
- National Capital Exhibition
- National Carillon
- Old Parliament House Gardens
- Parliamentary Zone
- Peace Park

- Reconciliation Place
- R.G. Menzies Walk
- Stirling Park (Gura Bung Dhaura)
- Yarramundi Reach
- 37 bridges, including Commonwealth and Kings Avenue Bridges
- over 40 historic and operational buildings
- over 175 memorials, plaques and public art items
- over 5000 public lighting infrastructure assets (including street, car park and pedestrian lights)
- around 60 kilometres of roads
- over 40 car parks with around 9000 parking spaces
- over 280,000 square metres of footpaths
- around 19,000 trees
- over 30 event venues.

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## **Energy consumption and sustainability**

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Some of the largest sources of electricity consumption across the National Capital Estate are road lighting, the National Capital Exhibition, the Captain Cook Memorial Jet, and gas boilers at Commonwealth Place.

The NCA is undertaking upgrades to lighting infrastructure across the estate which will improve reliability, energy efficiency and increase asset life through the replacement of old luminaires with LED devices.

The NCA uses 10% green energy on all its contestable sites managed under the Whole of Government Energy Contract.

The NCA has established several corporate initiatives to minimise the impact of its activities on the environment (some of which directly contribute to a reduction in energy use), including:

- active recycling of paper, cardboard, toner cartridges and co-mingled recyclables
- collection and recycling of compostable waste (eliminating it from the waste stream)
- collection and recycling of batteries, personal electronics and light globes
- promotion of efficient use of water in kitchens and washrooms
- use of recycled paper and office appliances
- conservative management of office lighting and air conditioning
- a commitment to electronic record-keeping, where possible.

These initiatives will continue to be championed within the agency.

In February 2024, the NCA adopted its Sustainability and Environmental Management Plan (SEMP). The SEMP sets out a series of goals and targets across 6 'pillars' – Net Zero, Water

Management, Built Environment, Energy Management, Biodiversity and Conservation, and Circular Economy.

The initiatives set out in this Emissions Reduction Plan relate to the activities and functions directly undertaken by the NCA. The SEMP goals and targets are complementary to these initiatives, however influence a range of activities and operations undertaken by both the NCA and others (but where the NCA has the capacity to overtly influence outcomes).

This includes for example, the NCA's influence on the sustainability of the National Capital. The National Capital Plan, administered by the NCA, can enhance city sustainability through the adoption of and/or enhancement of existing principles and policies addressing urban consolidation, climate-responsiveness in building design and landscape, energy efficiency, and taking a systems-based to development.

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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 NCA are presented in our 2022-23 annual report.

Baseline year	Financial year 2022-23
Scope 1 emissions	28,932 tCO <sub>2</sub> e
Scope 2 emissions	2,870,764 tCO <sub>2</sub> e
Total emissions	2,899,696 tCO <sub>2</sub> e

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## Engagement

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In the development of this plan the NCA has consulted with:

- Department of Finance, 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
- business units within the agency to identify where each team can contribute to emissions reductions and where the biggest 'wins' can be achieved.

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## Emissions reduction targets

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The NCA 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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For the NCA 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
- transitioning fleet vehicles to low emission vehicles
- embedding sustainability into procurement activity
- reducing travel and encouraging low-emission sources of travel where it is required
- people, culture and capability uplift
- considering circular economy principles for Information and Communications Technology (ICT) procurements.

## Energy and buildings

The NCA's office space does not exceed 1000m<sup>2</sup> and is therefore not subject to targets and measures set out in the Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy. The NCA has however, relevant to its role in managing the National Capital Estate, identified opportunities to improve energy efficiency of lighting across the National Capital Estate, and to potentially achieve full electrification across the estate.

### *ACTION:*

Undertake longer term planning and design work for Commonwealth Place precinct to determine an appropriate future development model, which will help inform potential timing for removal of gas-powered assets.

- Consult with the Department of Finance to ensure participation in WoAG electricity services arrangements procurement as per the Strategy, and replace all electricity contracts with renewable electricity.

The Department of Finance is progressing the new Whole of Australian Government (WoAG) electricity services arrangements. This consolidated approach to electricity procurement will streamline the procurement process, provide consistency across entities, avoid internal competition for renewable resources, enhance commercial outcomes for the benefit of all entities and enable the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by Australian Government entities.

- The Built Assets team will finalise a design for street light and car park lighting upgrades, including the consideration of the establishment of a Smart City lighting network to assist with energy reduction and improved maintenance management. Light emitting diode (LED) upgrades of street light infrastructure will need to be rolled out over multiple financial years (subject to funding).

A design for street light and car park light upgrades will be finalised by June 2025. The design and recommendation for a Smart City lighting network will be presented for funding consideration as part of the internal business case process in October/November 2025.

- Upgrade of other public lighting infrastructure (pedestrian lighting and architectural lighting elements) across the estate to LED will be investigated and considered in future years after the upgrade of street light and car park lighting infrastructure.

## **Fleet**

The NCA will ensure that procurement and sourcing of motor vehicles is consistent with the Commonwealth Fleet Vehicle Selection Policy and requirements of the Strategy.

### ***ACTION:***

- The Corporate Services team will transition the NCA's fleet vehicles to LEVs or ZEVs upon expiry of current leases. This will include an assessment of agency requirements, the availability of fit-for-purpose replacement vehicles, value for money (including whole-of-life costs and environmental and climate change impacts) and any necessary supporting infrastructure such as electric vehicle chargers. The NCA's consideration of fleet vehicles will be done in the context of the Commonwealth Fleet Vehicle Selection Policy.
- The NCA will also negotiate with a third-party provider concerning the provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure across the National Capital Estate, including to facilitate charging of NCA fleet vehicles.

## **Travel**

Reasons for NCA staff travel include participation in meetings, learning and development opportunities (including attendance at conferences, symposiums, and training courses). The bespoke nature of some projects managed by the NCA require staff travel to review materials or products, or meet family members (for example, where individuals are being commemorated through a commemorative work). NCA Board members external to the ACT also travel to attend Board meetings.

To support Australian Government objectives concerning net zero, the NCA is dedicated to integrating environmental considerations into our travel decisions. The NCA will endeavour to balance operational requirements with a commitment to reducing emissions resulting from both transport and accommodation components of travel.

### ***ACTION:***

- The Corporate Services team will develop an agency travel policy and in doing so will consider the following matters as a minimum:
  - attendance at events (for example, conferences, seminars, training) virtually rather than in-person, where an event requires travel outside the ACT
  - where travel is required outside of the ACT, consideration of alternative means of transport to air travel (including trains and other land-based transport)
  - where no feasible or sensible alternatives exist to air travel, ensure direct flights taken where possible and offsets purchased
  - until whole-of-government minimum standards set, select accommodation having regard to NABERS energy ratings.

Consideration will also be given to green travel options for NCA staff including:

- encouraging use of public transport or active travel options
- ensuring electric vehicle charging infrastructure is available proximate to NCA workplaces
- adopting work from home policies that can reduce travel and energy use whilst maintaining effective business operations.

Preparation of an agency travel policy will be done having regard to Resources Management Guide No. 404 and Resource Management Guide No. 405.

An agency travel policy will be adopted by the NCA by 31 March 2025.

## **Procurement**

The NCA utilises a contracted service model for many of our on-ground activities, particularly in relation to management of the National Capital Estate. The NCA has multi-year contracts in place with several service providers to assist with the management of open space, Lake Burley Griffin and Scrivener Dam, and built assets.

The NCA requires service providers broadly to employ strategies to reduce their emissions, however there may be opportunity to further reduce emissions through future contracted service arrangements. This is in addition to requirements of the Australian Government's Environmentally Sustainable Procurement Policy (ESPP).

### *ACTION:*

- Consider how procurement activities not captured by the ESPP can achieve improved positive climate, environmental and circularity and contribute to the NCA's sustainability objectives.  
  
Initial consideration of the application of sustainability principles to procurement broadly will be completed by 30 June 2025. Application of resulting actions will be ongoing.
- Encourage completion of sustainable procurement training for NCA staff responsible for purchasing. This action is ongoing.

## **Information and Communications Technology**

A major consideration within ICT is the high rate of produce turnover due to rapid innovation and the embodied emissions of the regularly updated ICT equipment.

The NCA will incorporate circular economy principles into ICT purchasing to reduce embodied emission of regularly upgraded ICT equipment. The NCA will consider products that are environmental, more durable over time and easy to repair and upgrade. This initiative will reduce the creation of e-waste and extend the product life, ultimately reducing emissions.

### *ACTION:*

- Consider sustainability broadly and circular economy principles such as refurbishment, repair, reuse, and recycling during ICT procurements.
- Investigate alternative supply chain and product options to increase product lifecycles and reduce e-waste.

- Ensure procurement of data centre services (if necessary) align with minimum NABERS ratings for data centres as set out in the Strategy.

These actions will be undertaken as required when ICT procurements undertaken.

## **People, culture and capability**

The NCA is committed to enhancing knowledge and skills regarding climate risks and opportunities, and sustainable procurement, across the agency and to embedding their consideration in day-to-day decision-making processes.

### ***ACTION:***

- Champion sustainability and climate action within the agency by:
  - completing recruitment for a dedicated sustainability manager to lead implementation of this emissions reduction plan and related NCA policies by 31 December 2024
  - identifying a Chief Sustainability Officer to champion the Strategy and related initiatives that support climate action in government operations by 31 December 2024.
- Explore opportunities for NCA participation in the Environmental Contact Officer Network (ECONet) (an established network of public service staff committed to reducing the environmental footprint of government operations). Initial consideration of involvement in ECONet will be completed by 31 December 2024, with ongoing involvement as required.
- Encourage participation in suitable education and training for staff members. This action is ongoing and will utilise information and guidance provided by the Department of Finance, training opportunities available through the APS Academy, and other training providers.

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### Involved participants

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The following areas of the National Capital Authority have been involved in the development of this plan:

Team	Branch
Built Assets	Operations
Estate Management	Operations
Corporate Services	Operations
Procurement	Operations
Strategic Planning and Policy	Planning and Design