

Program for Change overview

The ResourceSmart Government Program for Change provides tailored direction and support for Government agencies to integrate environmental management with their strategic and operational management processes. The program provides a continual improvement framework to assist agencies to identify and address priority environmental impacts to suit their unique needs.

The Program for Change is supported by the Tools for Change. These tools provide relevant background information, how-to-guides, useful templates, case studies and examples to assist agencies to progress in their ResourceSmart journey and implement actions to reduce their environmental impacts.

This overview provides further information on the elements of the Program for Change.

Agencies participating in the ResourceSmart Program for Change will be expected to:

- 1. Gain commitment**
 - gain senior (executive) management commitment
 - develop an environmental policy
- 2. Establish baseline**
 - Establish environmental baselines for energy and resource consumption and practices which impact on the environment
- 3. Set targets and actions**
 - set targets to reduce environmental impacts
 - develop a ResourceSmart strategy to achieve the identified targets
- 4. Implement and communicate**
 - implement the Strategy, improving the environmental sustainability of organisational systems, infrastructure and behaviours
 - engage and communicate with others about the journey, goals and challenges
- 5. Monitor, report and celebrate**
 - monitor and report progress and outcomes
 - follow the specific reporting requirements mandated by State Government
 - celebrate and promote successes
 - review and update plans to ensure continual improvement.

The Program for Change process



Gain commitment

Key actions for gaining commitment

- Review the Victorian Government commitments and identify which targets and commitments apply to your agency.
- Develop an environment policy signed by senior management.
- Establish an environment team and appoint a champion.

Meeting Government targets

Government targets set the framework for agencies to demonstrate Government leadership in environmental sustainability. All departments and agencies are to:

- include the directions of the Victorian Environmental Sustainability Framework (see below) into business and operational planning
- produce a strategy outlining how sustainable practices will be implemented to reduce consumption and minimise waste.

Through the Victorian Government's Our Environment Our Future - Sustainability Action Statement, all public sector entities (including Government departments and agencies) are required to lead by example. That means reducing their environmental impacts and making environmental issues central to planning operations and policy decisions.

Launched in April 2005, Victoria's Environmental Sustainability Framework (ESF) identifies strategic directions for all Government agencies.

The 2006 Environmental Sustainability Action Statement (ESAS) details how Government will operationalise sustainability in its activities and programs. Action 16.1 of ESAS commits the government to expand environmental management programs into statutory agencies.

Environment policy

An environment policy is a statement of your agency's commitment to improving its environmental performance. The policy should reflect:

- your agency's mission and core values
- a commitment to protect the environment
- a framework for periodically reviewing environmental goals
- a commitment to continual improvement.

The development of an environment policy should involve representatives from all business units within the agency. The final policy should be signed off by senior management, CEO and/or Board and reviewed and updated every two to three years. Sample policies are available from a range of Government agencies.

Environment team

Making your agency ResourceSmart is a team effort. Each person's contribution is essential for success and no one is expected to achieve it on their own.

Environment teams assist with the program implementation and provide on-ground support to ensure all staff are effectively engaged. They comprise staff, often the environmental champions in the organisation, who volunteer their time at work to help reduce the environmental impact of an organisation's operations.

Establish baseline

Key actions to establish your agency's baseline

- Identify all agency functions and activities.
- Identify the associated environmental impacts.
- Document existing activities and achievements to date.
- Establish the baseline data for significant impacts.

Map your agency and its environmental impacts

The first step to establishing a baseline is to map out the different functions and activities of your agency and determine how they interact and impact on the environment. Consider all agency operations, service delivery and sites, including:

- offices
- facilities operations
(e.g. hospitals, schools, laboratories, workshops, depots, correctional facilities, stations, etc.)
- site visits and field work
- policy, legislation and regulation development
- asset management of natural capital
(catchments, forests and heritage areas)
- public space management
- education and information provision
- delivery of campaigns, programs and grants
- planning for infrastructure and development
- undertaking major events
(elections, sporting events, expos and entertainment)
- construction and demolition activities.

The greatest areas of impact may be the core business functions of your agency. Consider the sort of projects you provide funding to, the investment funds you manage and the messages you give to key stakeholders, etc. These areas may be the ones in which you could make the greatest difference.

Baseline environmental data

Once you have identified the different functions and activities of your agency, and their associated environmental impacts, you are in a position to establish the baseline data position, i.e. what data we have, what date we need and how we plan to get it.

At a minimum, the baseline needs to represent the organisation's key performance indicators (KPIs) for resource usage and environmental impacts. Additionally, existing activities and achievements should be documented as part of the organisational history.

It is a requirement that all agencies measure their annual resource use including:

- energy use
- water use
- waste production and
- greenhouse gas emissions
- other significant environmental impacts associated with particular types of activities.

Set targets and actions

Key actions for priorities and actions

- Identify priorities for the agency.
- Set targets and/or objectives around key areas.
- Develop a ResourceSmart strategy to achieve the identified targets.

Determine priorities

The strategic objectives of the environment policy define the direction for the organisation and state the organisational goals in relation to its environmental performance. Priority strategic objectives must reflect the significant environmental impacts identified through an agency's environmental impact assessment process. These priorities also need to reflect the relevant Government policy commitments.

Priorities and their associated targets must reflect at least:

- relevant Victorian Government commitments
- the Victorian Government's ESF strategic directions, e.g. using our natural resources more efficiently and reducing our everyday environmental impacts
- the identified significant environmental aspects and impacts
- the commitments made in the environment policy
- agency-specific requirements
- stakeholder and public views.

Set targets

Targets or objectives are based on the identified priorities of the strategic objectives. Targets may address either direct environmental impacts, e.g. a 20% reduction in energy consumption by January 2010; or they may address change objectives such as to publish a comprehensive environment policy by June 2010.

The targets can be qualitative or quantitative, but they must be measurable. If an objective is not measurable, there is no way of determining whether it is being achieved. Both objectives and targets should be SMART, ie:

- Specific: clear about what, where, when and how performance will change
- Measurable: the progress and achievement (or otherwise) of targets and benefits are able to be quantified
- Achievable: able to be attained
- Relevant: able to obtain the level of change indicated in the objective
- Time bound: stating a base time period as well as the period at which the desired outcome is to be accomplished.

The objectives and targets should be reviewed and revised annually along with the strategy.

Determining actions

Based on the priorities and targets that you have identified, consider what on-the-ground actions and initiatives you must now take to improve environmental performance and reduce the environmental impact of your agency.

ResourceSmart strategy

The strategy should document work completed to date and include the following:

- introduction and background
- CEO message
- environment policy
- environmental performance data
- environmental objectives and targets
- action plan
- communications plan
- monitoring, review and continuous improvement.

The action plan element of the strategy should include actions for the following key areas:

- management and communications
- waste
- energy
- transport
- water
- purchasing
- operational activities
- biodiversity and water quality (if appropriate)
- planning and infrastructure.

The actions should focus on change management across infrastructure, organisational systems and behaviour change.

Your agency is required to have developed:

- the first ResourceSmart Strategy within six months of completing the training workshops
- a fully developed ResourceSmart strategy for the second full financial year after the completion of training workshops.

This strategy is to be updated at least every two years.

Implement and communicate

Key actions for implementation and communication

- Implement the strategy.
- Communicate changes to staff.
- Educate and train staff as required.
- Engage and communicate with others about the journey, goals and challenges, including internal and external communities.

Elements of implementation

- Governance.
- Project management and resourcing.
- Developing business case.
- Monitoring and reporting.
- Engagement and commitment.
- Education, communication and behaviour change.

Although the first four elements of implementation are more of a 'nuts and bolts' approach that can probably be completed at your desk, the last two elements recognise that implementation of sustainability programs will generate change across the whole organisation. Good engagement, education and communication, as well as a focus on behaviour change, are all required for the successful implementation of sustainability initiatives within your agency.

Staff communications

General communications to all staff will raise awareness of the various activities being implemented and how these may affect them. Communications should also include external communications to publicise success and share experiences through local networks and with other organisations. A communications plan will ensure communications occur on a regular basis and around key milestones of the action plan implementation.

Education and training

Environmental training includes induction training for new staff and contractors and specific competency training where required for those staff with specific roles and responsibilities under the action plan.

Education and training priorities for agency personnel include creating an understanding of:

- the importance of the environmental policy, procedures, objectives and targets
- the significant environmental impacts of their work activities and the potential environmental impacts of not following specified procedures
- their roles and responsibilities
- opportunities to influence further environmental improvement.

Behavioural change

While introducing new technologies, systems and infrastructure is important, so is involving all staff in the changes. Behavioural change programs help to support other changes in the workplace and are essential for helping to improve an agency's environmental performance.

Monitor, report and celebrate

Key actions

- Identify the key areas and the frequency of monitoring required.
- Set up processes for collecting, analysing and responding to data gathered.
- Celebrate and communicate successes.
- Review and update targets and the action plan, as required.
- Report annually on progress and outcomes.

Monitor progress and outcomes

Monitoring and measuring enables you to assess your environmental performance over time, identify improvements and any areas where corrective actions or troubleshooting is required. Monitoring information is used to understand the cause of problems and identify opportunities to improve performance.

Regular monitoring helps to assess if you are on track with the strategy and with meeting your targets, enabling you to manage your operations accordingly. Monitoring should be undertaken based on the key objectives and targets for all environmental impacts included in an action plan.

Key aspects for monitoring:

- **Monitor implementation of the action plan.** Are we on track? Are there any delays and why? What is being fast-tracked and do we need to build on this?
- **Track targets.** Use monthly data to track progress against the set targets. Will the targets be met? Do we need to prioritise some actions to meet targets? Can we communicate progress to staff to encourage continued behaviours?
- **Monitor staff feedback.** As actions are implemented, staff will provide feedback for what is working well and what isn't, as well as new ideas and opportunities. Acting on this feedback, as appropriate, will ensure staff feel that they are a valued 'part of the process'. It will also deliver improvements.

Collecting and analysing data can be very resource intensive so don't get caught up in the cycle of collecting 'data for data's sake'. Identify your needs and address them accordingly. Start with a relatively simple monitoring and measurement system and then build on it as you gain experience.

Report annually on key environmental indicators to Government and through annual reports

The Victorian Government Cabinet mandated in March 2008 that the ResourceSmart program have reporting requirements. Participating agencies are therefore required to annually report on:

- environment policies and programs
- improvements made
- progress on ResourceSmart strategy development/ implementation
- completeness of information provided
- any external verification
- environmental performance.

This would either be reported through agency annual reports or by other appropriate public means.

Review and update plans to ensure continuous improvement

Reviewing progress and outcomes is the key to continuous improvement, ensuring the set objectives and strategies continue to be relevant to the agency.

Areas for review:

- Were objectives and targets achieved? Why or why not?
- Do we need to update our objectives and/or targets?
- Is the environment policy still relevant or does it require updating?
- Are the roles and responsibilities clear and are they allocated correctly?
- Are resources allocated appropriately? Are additional resources needed? If so, what are these and how should this be progressed?
- Do staff members understand their responsibilities and roles in being more ResourceSmart?
- What stakeholder and public feedback has been received?
- Are Victorian Government policy commitments being met? Have they been amended or added to?
- What changes to the agency's operations or locations have an impact on the action plan?
- What are other agencies implementing and what are our opportunities to improve?

Celebrate and promote success

Last but not least, don't forget to celebrate the achievements and the hard work that has gone into making the agency more ResourceSmart.

An important ingredient for success is celebrating the triumphs and learning from the challenges. This will help to encourage people to work towards further improvements or continue to be involved in a long-term project.

Suggestions to celebrate:

- share achievements with the organisation
- promote, celebrate and reward people's ideas, contribution and achievements with certificates, small gifts, etc
- reach out to local media or trade publications to let them know that you are working to make your operations more environmentally sound
- present at Government networks
- consider applying for awards or public recognition.