

# AEC Emissions Reduction Plan

2024–25

# Acknowledgement of Country

The Australian Electoral Commission acknowledges the Traditional Owners and custodians 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

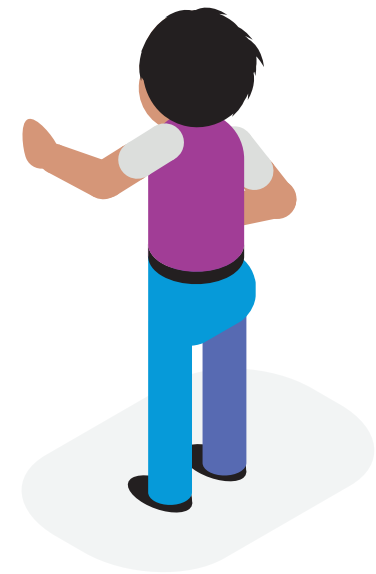
The Australian Government released the Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy in November 2023, setting out the overall approach and action required by Commonwealth entities to achieve the APS Net Zero 2030 target.

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 AEC is committed to the achievement of the Government's APS Net Zero 2030 target. The AEC 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 AEC is taking to reduce our operational emissions and contribute to the APS Net Zero 2030 target.

SIGNED BY ACCOUNTABLE AUTHORITY



# Purpose

The AEC 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 AEC 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 AEC 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 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.

# 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 the AEC'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.



# AEC's operational context

The AEC plays a vital role in delivering free and fair electoral events in an increasingly complex environment. With no fixed date for elections, the AEC must be ready to deliver an electoral event at any time. The AEC conducts federal elections, by-elections, referendums, industrial elections, and protected action ballots. The AEC maintains the electoral roll of more than 17 million people, conducts electoral boundary redistributions, manages political party registration, disclosure, and compliance, and delivers a range of targeted education and public awareness programs.

The preparedness for and the delivery of electoral events adds complexities to the AEC's operating environment. The AEC is a non-corporate Commonwealth entity with approximately 800 staff working across the states and territories. The AEC also manages a portfolio of over 80 properties across Australia, which are predominantly office space, including warehouses and multipurpose sites

consisting of office space and warehouse space. During election events, the AEC leases additional facilities to meet demand and hires additional staff which temporarily increases staff number to over 100,000. The surge in staff and facility infrastructure leads to significantly more carbon emissions during electoral events, which needs to be considered.





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

- Annual greenhouse gas emissions reporting in 2022–23
- Monitoring the usage and kilometres travelled within the AEC’s fleet
- Waste and water management
- Reduce, re-use, recycle approach during and after electoral events
- Procurement of carbon neutral, 100% recycled paper for office use as well as sustainably sourced election material, such as cardboard and papers
- Procurement of goods and services consistent with the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment’s Sustainable Procurement Guide
- Participation in the Commonwealth Government Energy and Action Response (GEAR) program

# Baseline emissions

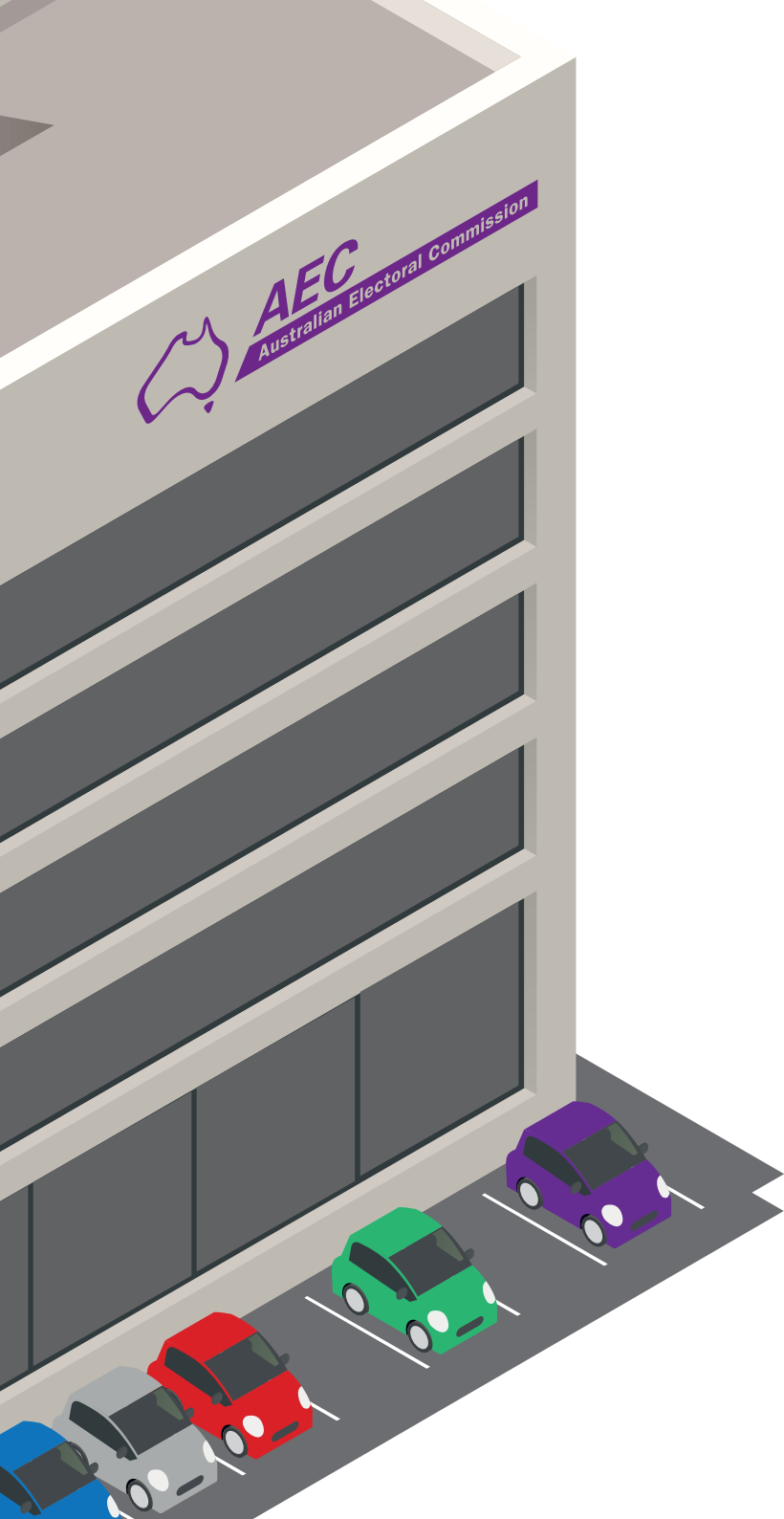
Baseline emissions are a record of greenhouse gases that have been produced in the past and were produced prior to the introduction of any strategies to reduce emissions. The baseline emissions from financial year 2022–23 are the reference point against which emissions reduction actions can be measured.

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 AEC are presented in our 2022–23 annual report.

Emission type	Emissions in financial year 2022–23 (amended)
Scope 1 emissions	19,325 kg CO <sup>2</sup> e
Scope 2 emissions	2,752,487 kg CO <sup>2</sup> e
Total emissions	2,771,812 kg CO <sup>2</sup> e







## Engagement

In the development of this plan the AEC has engaged with the Department of Finance (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

The AEC 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.

# Priorities and actions

For the AEC 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.

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These actions are summarised in the following points, with further detail provided below:

- Procuring renewable electricity
- Improving building standards
- Transitioning the fleet vehicles to low emission vehicles
- Sustainable procurement

Additional actions:

- Undertaking an energy review to identify areas for improvement in energy efficiency
- LED lighting planning

## Net Zero Buildings

To achieve net zero emissions within its office buildings, the AEC will look to implement a combination of energy-efficient practices, renewable energy sources and carbon offsetting strategies.

## Net Zero Electricity

The AEC will participate in the whole of Australian Government (WoAG) renewable energy contract. It is anticipated that the proposed Net Zero Energy project will result in approximately 80% reduction in scope 2 emissions by 2028 and approximately 100% reduction in scope 2 emissions by 2030.

## Net Zero Travel

Travel emissions account for over 15% of AEC emissions in 2022–23. To support net zero by 2030 the AEC will continue to review the necessity for travel.

## Net Zero Fleet

The AEC will gradually shift towards low-emissions vehicles (LEV) and electric vehicles (EV), with a target of 75% of new passenger vehicle orders to be LEVs by 2025.

## Net Zero Procurement

The AEC receives support from the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) and the Sustainable Procurement Guide which offers guidance for sustainable government procurement. To achieve Net Zero Procurement the AEC will follow DCCEEW's Environmentally Sustainable Procurement Policy from 1 January 2025. It is anticipated that the proposed Net Zero Procurement project will result in reduction benefits with respect to scope 3 emissions.

## Net Zero ICT

The AEC's in-house data facility centre's electricity usage will be covered by the WoAG renewable energy contract arrangement from 1 July 2024.



## People, Culture and Capabilities

To firmly embed sustainability within its culture, the AEC will implement a combination of immediate strategies, such as improving staff engagement and education as well as a strategic integration of sustainability into its business operations. This will ensure that sustainability becomes an integral part of the AEC's decision-making.

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