

2011

**THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENT AND WATER
REPORT NO 5**

REPORT ON ANNUAL AND FINANCIAL REPORTS 2009-2010

**Presented by
Ms Katy Gallagher MLA
Chief Minister**

Government Response

Standing Committee on Climate Change, Environment and Water Report No 5 – Report on Annual and Financial Reports 2009-2010

Introduction

The Annual Reports of All ACT Government agencies are referred to the Standing Committees of the ACT Legislative Assembly for examination and report.

The Standing Committee on Climate Change, Environment and Water reviewed annual reports for:

- Department of the Environment, Climate Change, Energy and Water (now forming part of the Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate)
- Conservator of Flora and Fauna
- Environment Protection Authority
- Office of the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment

The Committee made 11 recommendations.

Response to Committee Recommendations

Recommendation 1

2.7 The Committee recommends that the Department of the Environment, Climate Change, Energy and Water cross reference the budget output classes in its annual reports when providing the analysis of agency performance.

Government Response

Noted.

Recommendation 2

2.14 The Committee recommends that the Department of the Environment, Climate Change, Energy and Water Annual Reports include collated information about whole-of-government performance against the Ecologically Sustainable Development indicators.

Government Response

Noted.

The Annual Report was drafted in accordance with the Annual Report Directions prepared by CMCD.

Recommendation 3

2.17 The Committee recommends that the reporting requirements for Ecologically Sustainable Development and Triple Bottom Line be revised to better address the intent of those concepts and better identify the distinction between the two.

Government Response

Noted.

Changes in relation to triple bottom line and ecologically sustainable development reporting were made when the Annual Report Directions were updated for the 2010-11 reporting year. The changes were intended to better deal with the intent of the concepts, but were not intended to distinguish between them. Rather it was intended to better align the common reporting elements and structure of the two sections, as the intention behind the environmental section of the Triple Bottom Line reporting was to reflect the information already reported under the Ecologically Sustainable Development section.

Recommendation 4

2.28 The Committee recommends that the Department of the Environment, Climate Change, Energy and Water include in the final Sustainable Energy Policy 2010-2020 a requirement for an annual review to assess progress of the policy's implementation.

Government Response**Not Agreed.**

Such a requirement could create an undue administrative burden that might detract resources from the implementation of specific measures under the policy.

Major program initiatives described in the policy will contain their own progress review frameworks. The Minister can initiate a review of the Sustainable Energy Policy should circumstances justify it.

Recommendation 5

2.29 The Committee recommends that the Department of the Environment, Climate Change, Energy and Water expedite the release of the Sustainable Energy Policy 2010-2020.

Government Response**Noted.**

The Sustainable Energy Policy will be released in the fourth quarter of 2011.

Recommendation 6

2.35 The Committee recommends that the Department of the Environment, Climate Change, Energy and Water expedite the release of Weathering the Change Action Plan 2 for public consultation.

Government Response**Noted.**

Weathering the Change Action Plan 2 will be released in the last quarter of 2011.

Recommendation 7

2.68 The Committee recommends that the Department of Environment, Climate Change, Energy and Water maintain and report aggregate whole-of-government data on the Territory's progress towards achieving water saving targets.

Government Response**Noted.**

This information is published in the *Think water, act water* Progress Reports.

Recommendation 8

4.4 The Committee recommends that the Environment Protection Authority include complaints data from previous financial years into the Annual Report in order to facilitate comparison between annual complaint numbers.

Government Response**Agreed.**

This comparative data will be incorporated into the 2010-11 Annual Report (in the Annexed Report for the Environment Protection Authority).

Recommendation 9

4.6 The Committee recommends that the Environment Protection Authority include enforcement action data from previous financial years into the Annual Report in order to facilitate comparison of the numbers of notices, orders and prosecutions from year to year.

Government Response**Agreed.**

This comparative data will be incorporated into the 2010-11 Annual Report (in the Annexed Report for the Environment Protection Authority).

Recommendation 10

5.4 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government expedite the government response to the report on the Expanded Role of the Office of the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment.

Government Response

Noted.

In responding to this report, the ACT Government is considering both the report of the Expanded Role of the Commissioner, recommendations arising from the *Governing the City State Report* (the Hawke Review) and the Commissioner for the Environment's Tree investigation report.

Recommendation 11

5.20 The Committee recommends that, in future annual reports, the Office of the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment consider including information outlining the rationale for higher value single select tenders.

Government Response

Agreed.