

2010

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

**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENT AND
WATER
REPORT NO 3**

REPORT ON ANNUAL AND FINANCIAL REPORTS 2008-2009

**Presented by
Mr Jon Stanhope MLA
Chief Minister**

Government Response

Standing Committee on Climate Change, Environment and Water Report No 3 – Report on Annual and Financial Reports 2008-2009

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
- Environment Protection Authority
- Office of the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment
- Conservator of Flora and Fauna

The Committee made 10 recommendations.

Response to Committee Recommendations

Recommendation 1

2.11 That the guidelines to assist agencies develop their resource management plans be finalised by DECCEW as a matter of priority. To further assist agencies, a model resource management plan should be made publicly available.

Government Response

Agreed.

The Property Sustainability Working Group encouraged agencies to share draft Resource Management Plans (RMPs) in order to exchange ideas and assist agencies in finalising RMPs.

Given the significant differences in facilities, staffing and services across the ACT Government agencies (offices, schools, hospitals), this approach was viewed as more effective than developing guidelines.

A draft DECCEW RMP was provided to the ACT Government Property Sustainable Working Group in August 2009.

Recommendation 2

2.22 That DECCEW include in its annual report a report on each greenhouse gas abatement program that includes greenhouse gas savings resulting from the program and the cost of the program for each year of the program.

Government Response

Agreed.

Subject to availability, data for energy efficiency programs administered by the Department will be included in the 2010-11 Annual Report.

Recommendation 3

2.44 That DECCEW and OCSE immediately implement measures to accurately account for resource use and to outline these measures in future annual reports.

Government Response

Agreed.

DECCEW and the OCSE will implement this recommendation in the 2009-10 Annual Reports.

Recommendation 4

2.45 That DECCEW adopt a whole of government approach to implementing resource management and recycling strategies. DECCEW should facilitate whole of government reporting in the context of annual reports.

Government Response

Noted.

The Property Sustainability Working Group encouraged agencies to share draft Resource Management Plans (RMPs) in order to exchange ideas and assist agencies in finalising RMPs.

Given the significant differences in facilities, staffing and services across the ACT Government agencies (offices, schools, hospitals), this approach was viewed as more effective than developing guidelines.

DECCEW will continue to implement the *ACTSmart Office* program to assist agencies (and the private sector) to implement more efficient recycling and streamline their waste management processes. The *ACTSmart Office* program facilitates participants' conducting waste audits, monitoring and reporting on progress.

DECCEW will continue to provide reporting advice to agencies through review of the Chief Minister's Annual Report Directions (Ecologically Sustainable Development reporting). Individual agencies, however, remain responsible for the resource management data in their annual reports.

Recommendation 5

3.5 That the EPA monitor the recently launched community awareness campaign about neighbourhood noise to determine whether there is a reduction in complaints.

Government Response

Noted.

The Environment Protection Authority will continue to monitor and report on the number of complaints received, by category.

Recommendation 6

3.9 That the EPA continue to discuss the issue of water quality management with the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment and include the progress of these discussions in future annual reports.

Government Response**Agreed.**

The EPA will continue to discuss the issue of water quality management with the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment and include progress of these discussions in future annual reports.

Recommendation 7

4.16 That future annual reports of the OCSE include a table which charts the number of complaints received and their broad subject areas.

Government Response**Agreed.**

The Office of the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment will implement this recommendation in its 2009-10 Annual Report.

Recommendation 8

5.11 That in future annual reports, the Conservator includes a summary table of the number of applications received and their outcome for the last 5 years.

Government Response**Agreed-in-part.**

This is a presentational issue; a tabular presentation can be provided.

However, as per other sections of annual reports, it would be appropriate to provide comparative data from the previous year, rather than the previous five years.

Recommendation 9

5.13 That the Tree Protection Act 2005 be amended to allow for the Conservator of Flora and Fauna to have the same jurisdiction over trees on unleased Territory land as for leased Territory land.

Government Response**Noted.**

This matter will be reviewed along with any recommendations that the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment makes as a result of her investigation into the Government's tree management practices and the renewal of Canberra's urban forest.

Recommendation 10

5.14 That the criteria defining regulated trees under the Tree Protection Act 2005 be reviewed as a matter of urgency to ensure this provision under the Act is meeting its objectives.

Government Response**Noted.**

This matter will be reviewed along with any recommendations that the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment makes as a result of her investigation into the Government's tree management practices and the renewal of Canberra's urban forest.