Energy Management Services Program Outcome Evaluation

FINAL REPORT - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Prepared by KPMG for the Science, Economics and Insights Division of the NSW Department of Planning and Environment.

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List of Acronyms

Term	Definition
BEAP	Business Energy Advice Program
CCF	Climate Change Fund
EAP	Energy Affordability Package
EEB	Energy Efficient Business
EEC	Energy Efficiency Council
EETP	Energy Efficiency Training Program
EMS	Energy Management Services
ESS	Energy Savings Scheme
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
KEQ	Key Evaluation Questions
LMS	Learning Management System
MEF	Manufacturing Efficiency Funding
NSW	New South Wales
PMEV	Policy, monitoring, evaluation and verification
PTS	Post-training support
OEH	Office of Environment and Heritage
UTS	University of Technology Sydney

Executive summary

Background

The Energy Management Services program (the EMS program or 'the program') was originally designed as a five-year program with a budget of $20 million funded by the New South Wales (NSW) Climate Change Fund (CCF) and 2017 Energy Affordability Package. The program aimed to empower businesses of all sizes to improve their capabilities for strategic energy management, in turn saving them energy and money.

The EMS program was designed with three distinct target audiences: small to medium businesses, business advisors (energy management consultants), and businesses in energy intensive manufacturing sectors. The program formed working partnerships with several stakeholder groups during the design and delivery of the program:

- **Delivery partners –** five local councils who took part in program outreach.
- **Strategic partners –** five partners consisting of key organisations and expert intermediaries, such as the Energy Efficiency Council (EEC) and Business Australia, as well as leading providers of energy efficiency services, that supported the design, delivery, and refinement of program offers.
- **Other service providers and advisors –** businesses who participated in the delivery of energy management systems training and/or coaching services.

Through these partnerships, the EMS program intended to engage influencers and decision makers within businesses, to assist them in reducing energy bill pressure and minimising risks associated with ongoing energy security to their businesses. The program also aimed to equip business advisors, including energy efficiency service providers, with energy management skills and knowledge to increase the market's capacity to deliver these services.

Specifically, the program had the following targets:

	Support more than 3,700 small businesses and business advisors to know how and where to access support to manage their energy.
	Train and support more than 1,300 businesses to understand energy management relevant to their organisation.
	Provide energy management benchmarking to 120 high energy using businesses (from May 2019).

The program was delivered through two core components of delivery: training and coaching, with a goal to meet the needs of businesses wherever they were on their energy management journey. The training and coaching offers were outlined as the following:

- **Training:** face to face, online training, and webinars on energy management to participating businesses. Online courses were delivered through a Learning Management System (LMS).
- **Coaching:** Coaching and one-on-one support by energy management consultants. The coaching component was reviewed and consolidated throughout the delivery of the program to provide more targeted support to participating businesses. The program was intended to operate in collaboration with other CCF programs, notably the Manufacturing Efficiency Funding (MEF) program. For example, businesses were able to use the EMS Medium Energy User coaching offer

to scope potential energy efficiency upgrade or metering projects and apply for co-funding under the MEF program where eligible.

In June 2020, the EMS program's funding was reduced by approximately $12 million, resulting in actual expenditure of $8 million of the original $20 million budget. Project delivery ceased by August 2021. All relevant announcements and communications were made to coaching participants in particular prior to the cessation of delivery in August 2021, with the Department honouring existing commitments. This limited unintended negative impacts on participating businesses.

By program's end, there were approximately 2,234 attendees across training offers including face-to-face workshops, online webinars, or courses delivered through the old and new LMS solutions. Additionally, 387 unique businesses participated in the coaching component and 43 businesses received benchmarking. Due to data limitations, the EMS program can only be assessed against its benchmarking target of 120 businesses and based on available evidence, the program fell short of this target.

Purpose and scope

This report has been developed to present the findings of the outcome evaluation for the EMS program. This outcome evaluation assesses the efficiency and effectiveness of the program in achieving its intended and planned outcomes.

This report was prepared together with an internal process evaluation for the program. It will be used to inform policy and evaluation design considerations for audiences across the NSW Government, including NSW Treasury, the CCF Administration Committee, the Climate Change and Sustainability and Net Zero program board, the Department of Planning and Environment Policy team, the EMS Program team, the Sustainable Program Branch, and the Energy Savings Scheme team.

This report will be made publicly available, providing the public with information on value for money and action to address climate change. Program participants, partners, and industry associations and bodies will also be able to understand the performance and effectiveness of NSW Government programs and provide further feedback and inputs to improve the design and delivery of similar programs in the future.

The following key evaluation questions (KEQs) were defined to scope the evaluation:

Table 1: EMS program outcomes evaluation KEQs

KEQs	
O1	**To what extent has the program achieved planned objectives for businesses?**
O1.1	To what extent do participating businesses report better understanding of their energy use and improved energy management skills?
O1.2	To what extent has EMS enabled participating businesses to adopt energy saving practices/actions? Has it impacted non-participating businesses too?
O1.3	To what extent has the program enabled energy and bill savings?
O1.4	To what extent has the program addressed barriers to businesses implementing energy savings initiatives and participation in other Department of Planning and Environment (hereafter referred to as 'the Department') energy savings programs?
O2	**How have the impacts (positive and negative) been distributed?**
O2.1	To what extent are benefits evenly distributed across regional NSW vs metro NSW?
O3	**To what extent has the program had an impact on the market for energy management services?**

O3.1	To what extent are benefits to participant businesses and service providers expected to continue after the program?
O4	**To what extent did program activities use cost-effective delivery strategies?**

Approach and limitations

To inform the evaluation presented in the report, an approach was adopted which included:

- A review of background documents, materials, and research conducted or commissioned by the Department during program design.
- Consultations with key Department, participating businesses, and service providers.
- A qualitative assessment of the extent to which the program:
  - Achieved the intended outcomes for businesses and service providers, meeting the original program objectives.
  - Was able to deliver training and coaching equitably in regional areas.
  - Was able to achieve long lasting impacts for businesses and the market as a whole.
  - Was able to deliver services in a cost effective.
- Documenting key findings, lessons learnt and recommendations to inform decision-making and design of future market interventions.

This approach delivered valuable insights on the effectiveness and efficiency of the EMS program, however there are some limitations to the analysis and findings. Quantitative data was only available from the coaching component and is self-reported. It provides useful insights to support participants' views but cannot be verified. The training component was mainly evaluated through stakeholder insights, with limited surveys and participant feedback available. The additionality of program impacts was unable to be isolated. Consideration of these limitations has been integrated within the analysis.

Key Findings

Based on current evidence and the analysis in this report, the following section summarises the key findings of this outcomes evaluation.

Outcomes for participating businesses

O1.1 To what extent do participating businesses report better understanding of their energy use and improved energy management skills?

There is evidence the EMS program led to some improvements in the understanding of energy use and energy management skills among both training and coaching participants. However, data limitations constrain these findings.

Improvements in understanding of energy use and energy management skills

Survey data collected following webinars and from users of the new LMS revealed that most surveyed training participants reported improvements in their understanding of training course topics.

In addition, surveys collected from coaching participants before and after receiving coaching shows a marked jump in those reporting complete confidence in managing their energy use from 9 per cent to 21 per cent.

Although these results are promising, it is important to note that:

- There were several caveats to the data used to extrapolate these findings (noted in section 3.4) which limit the strength of these findings; and

- Some participating businesses noted during consultation that they already had internal courses available which covered some of the same content as the EMS program courses, limiting the additionality of the training offer.

Performance against related program targets

The EMS program had three targets to improve accessibility of energy management information and support businesses and service providers in enhancing their skills and capabilities. These included:

- Supporting more than 3,700 small businesses and business advisors to know how and where to access support to manage their energy.
- Training and supporting more than 1,300 businesses to understand energy management relevant to their organisation.
- Provide benchmarking services to 120 businesses (from May 2019).

Sufficient data was only available to assess whether the EMS program met its benchmarking target. Based on this evidence, the EMS program fell short of its benchmarking target with a total of 43 participants. This could be attributable to several factors, including the reduction in program funding in 2020.

O1.2 To what extent has EMS enabled participating businesses to adopt energy saving practices/actions? Has it impacted non-participating businesses too?

The extent to which the EMS program enabled participating businesses to adopt energy saving practices and actions was largely driven by the coaching component of the program. However, there is also some evidence that both the training and coaching components have impacted or will impact businesses that did not participate in the EMS program.

Adoption of energy saving practices/actions

The training component of the EMS program focussed on capacity building for participating businesses rather than the implementation of energy saving practices or actions. There was insufficient program data to establish whether the training component led to the uptake of energy saving practices or actions among participant businesses.

By comparison, enabling the adoption of energy saving practices and actions was a key focus of the coaching component. Most surveyed coaching participants reported that they had or were intending to implement opportunities identified by their coach. Additionally, there is evidence to suggest that the coaching component may enable future energy saving practices, with a higher proportion of coaching participants (28 per cent) reporting complete confidence in identifying energy saving opportunities in the post-coaching survey than the pre-coaching survey (4 per cent).

However, survey data and consultations revealed that cost remains a significant barrier to the adoption of energy saving practices. Furthermore, the absence of an obligation on participants to adopt energy saving practices and actions may have limited uptake.

Impact on non-participating businesses

During program delivery, providers reported that the impacts of the EMS program were limited to participating businesses only. However, some spill over to non-participating businesses for both training and coaching components has been noted. Some training providers have continued to develop and deliver new training materials to businesses in NSW and across Australia who did not participate in the EMS program. Furthermore, some EMS coaching service providers reported that they have since grown their coaching services to both continue delivering coaching services to EMS program participants and target new clients in the future.

O1.3 To what extent has the program enabled energy and bill savings?

The coaching component was the main driver of energy and bill savings for participants. Figure 1 below summarises the total potential energy savings and outcomes based on estimates by coaching providers for opportunities identified under the coaching offer.

Figure 1: Potential savings estimated by coaching providers in relation to opportunities identified for coaching participants

An estimated **$19.4 million*** in energy bill savings per annum across NSW

Estimated average bill savings of **$20,502*** per annum across **955 opportunities**

An estimated **1.9 million MWH*** in electricity savings per annum

An estimated **654,756 GJ*** in gas savings per annum

Source: EMS program activity data.
Note: All savings figures denoted by a single asterisk (*) are based on coaching report estimates, not realised savings for coaching participants. In addition, although 1154 opportunities were included in the database, bill savings estimates were only available for 955 opportunities. Electricity and gas savings estimates were only reported for 857 and 291 opportunities, respectively.

Of the coaching participants who went on to implement energy efficiency initiatives after coaching, 40 per cent reported energy and energy bill savings. However available data on these savings was limited to estimated rather than realised savings.

It should also be noted that some surveyed participants stated that it was too early to quantify their savings or that it was difficult to estimate savings due to the impact of COVID-19 on their operations, further impacting the quality of these estimates.

Similar data was not collected for training participants due to the nature of the offering.

O1.4 To what extent has the program addressed barriers to businesses implementing energy savings initiatives and participation in other DPE energy savings programs?

Consultations found that both the training and coaching components of the program addressed the pre-existing barriers to the implementation of energy savings initiatives, however, additional barriers to implementation as well as barriers to participation in other programs emerged during program delivery.

Barriers to implementation and program impact

Both the training and coaching components were designed to address three barriers to implementing energy savings initiatives. These barriers, and the way in which the training and coaching components respectively addressed them, are outlined in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Approach of the EMS program to addressing pre-existing barriers to businesses implementing energy initiatives

Pre-existing barrier	Training component impact	Coaching component impact
Market failure in the availability and accessibility information regarding energy efficiency	Provided easy access to training information on energy management systems and other topics. The use of different delivery models, such as online delivery, also limited the impact of COVID-19 on the accessibility of information.	Coaching providers provided participants with information and advice regarding their energy efficiency. Some coaching providers have continued to provide this information to participants beyond the life of the EMS program.
Costs of energy management services and	Provided training courses free of charge to participants who may otherwise have incurred costs to	Provided subsidised access to energy efficiency experts and consultants where businesses, particularly

Pre-existing barrier	Training component impact	Coaching component impact
competing business priorities	source or develop their own training, or participants who may not have had the resources to undertake training.	smaller businesses, may not have had the financial resources to engage consultants.
Poor internal skills and capabilities regarding energy efficiency	Survey data suggests the program enabled improvements in awareness and understanding of energy management practices	Notably improved participant businesses' understanding of energy performance, practices, and needs and uplifted their capability and confidence to identify and implement energy efficiency opportunities.

However, during program delivery, it was evident that the cost barrier remains a significant obstacle to the implementation of energy savings initiatives and, by extension, resourcing constraints limit the implementation of these initiatives.

Barriers to participation in other energy savings programs delivered by the Department

There is some evidence of participation in other energy savings programs delivered by the Department among EMS program participants. Program data shows that 46 EMS participants were also engaged in the MEF program and almost 30 per cent of surveyed coaching participants indicated their interest in other energy savings programs including the Energy Savings Scheme (ESS) and the MEF program. However, due to data limitations, the extent to which this interest translated to realised participation rates and the extent to which eligible EMS program participants participated in other energy savings programs is unclear.

During stakeholder consultations, some barriers to participation in the MEF program and the broader suite of programs under the CCF were identified. Common barriers included:

- The lack of clarity regarding the pathway or roadmap between the EMS program and other energy saving programs; and
- Program phasing, which resulted in competing demands of some participants such that participation across programs was difficult or impossible.

Distribution of program impacts

O2.1 To what extent are benefits evenly distributed across regional NSW vs metro NSW?

The EMS program had a regional delivery target of 40 per cent. Available data indicates that this target was met across all coaching offers and met by the face-to-face training offer. Due to data limitations, the geographic distribution of online training and webinar participants as well as the geographic distribution of program benefits for both coaching and training offers was not available for analysis.

Coaching

In aggregate, the coaching component surpassed the 40 per cent regional delivery target, with regional participants accounting for 59.7 per cent of all coaching projects and deep regional participants accounting for 41.5 per cent. High variability was seen in regional uptake of offer types with Small Energy Users in regional NSW accounting for the largest share of their cohort.

While no explicit incentives were employed by the Department to target regional uptake, regional coaching 'drop-in sessions', strategic partnerships, and the natural distribution of manufacturing businesses contributed to high rates of regional participation.

Training

The delivery of the face-to-face training component of the EMS program was found to meet the 40 per cent regional participation target, with 39.7 per cent trained in regional areas. However, due to the lack of geographical data for online training and webinar participants, it cannot be determined if the

training component as a whole met this target. No further data was collected to assess the geographic distribution of training benefits.

Program impacts on the energy management services market

O3.1 To what extent are benefits to participant businesses and service providers expected to continue after the program?

While the coaching component of the EMS program is expected to continue delivering benefits for participants and service providers over the long term, the ongoing impact of the training component is unknown.

Benefits to participant businesses

Explicit benefits to coaching participants delivered through the EMS program included:

- Improved confidence to reduce energy use.
- Development of specific energy management strategies, trainings and policies.
- Improved confidence and capability to establish energy and net-zero targets.
- Unlocking other energy opportunities.
- Meeting business targets.
- Improved public relations.

Additionally, a high proportion of coaching participants reported their intention to continue their relationship with their coach beyond the life of the program. However, consultation with participants suggested ongoing benefits may be limited to some degree by barriers including competing priorities, limited capacity, and unclear pathways to other programs. Service providers also noted the long-lasting benefits seemed more evident for the High Energy User participants. This can be attributed to the potential to achieve larger energy savings.

Unfortunately, similar information was not collected from training participants and, therefore, it is not possible to identify the ongoing benefits for this cohort.

Benefits to service providers

In line with program objectives, the EMS program achieved notable benefits for service providers and the energy management services market at large. Across the EMS program more broadly, these benefits included:

- Upskilling internal business capabilities and capacity to service the energy management services market.
- Strengthening suppliers' business case to continue and further develop energy management service delivery beyond the life of the program.
- Changing the way in which service providers approach energy management as a philosophy and a service offering.

For the training offer specifically, consultations with strategic partners suggested that the 'EMS Advisor' training provided long term capacity to build the energy management services market in NSW and Australia. With training delivery continuing through the EEC and simultaneous development of a related accreditation program, the benefits of the training offer are expected to continue.

Cost-efficiency of the EMS program

O4 To what extent did program activities use cost-effective delivery strategies?

The EMS program had significant reach given over half of the program's funding was reduced. However, the internal costs of delivering the program contributed approximately 48 per cent of the total program costs, as of November 2021. This exceeded the intended estimated share of internal

cost of approximately 45 per cent outlined during program design. Based on the actual delivery costs alone, the program delivered:

- Coaching across 412 sites at an average cost of $8,017 per site; and
- Training to approximately 2,234 participants at an average cost of $265.

The high program delivery and management costs are likely to have been driven by several factors, including:

- The in-house development and delivery of training courses.
- The sourcing and implementation of a new fit-for-purpose LMS during program delivery.
- The review and consolidation of coaching offers and study of human centred design approaches during program delivery.

Recommendations

Based on the key findings and insights identified through the evaluation, six recommendations were identified to support possible changes in the design and delivery of future programs. These recommendations are outlined below.

Table 3: Summary of EMS program outcome evaluation recommendations

Recommendation	Rationale and supporting evidence	Recommendation benefits
1 To improve cost-efficiency of training development and delivery, the Department should give greater consideration to partnerships with external training providers with relevant industry knowledge.	A number of factors contributed to high project management and delivery costs for the program. These include: • The in-house planning, development, and delivery of some training courses. • The procurement and implementation of a new fit-for-purpose LMS. The program did engage with strategic partners and other stakeholders during the design and delivery stage of the program, however opportunities were identified during this evaluation where additional consultation and collaboration could have worked to mitigate some of the additional burdens on the program, such as those highlighted above, during the design delivery stages. Actions may include engaging experienced training providers with relevant industry knowledge to develop, deliver, and host training courses, ensuring sufficient consideration of internal and external platform options prior to launch, and stress testing program offers to a greater extent to ensure appropriateness and useability.	• Using specialised training providers to develop, deliver, and host training programs where appropriate may reduce the management and delivery burden on future programs and help to accelerate the delivery of targeted training offer grounded in best-practice standards using existing platforms or solutions. • Using experienced training providers with relevant industry knowledge may support increased uptake under future programs, particularly in the early stages of delivery, as they have established channels to the market and relationships with end-users. • This approach may also reduce the frequency, duration, and subsequent impacts of mid-program reviews, allowing future programs to focus resources on delivery and outcomes. • Future programs delivered with the support of experienced training providers can enable improved overall experiences and outcomes for participating NSW businesses and energy users.
2 To provide a clear demonstration of the benefits of future program offers, the Department should consider the wider application of practical	Tools such as the benchmarking tool developed for the High Energy User offer were particularly well received as a way to illustrate the value of energy management systems. Feedback from service providers and participating businesses suggested tools such as the	• Suppliers have an effective resource they can use to communicate the benefits of program offers to their clients, aiding future program uptake and the effectiveness of service providers in delivering tailored services.

Recommendation	Rationale and supporting evidence	Recommendation benefits
benchmarking tools where appropriate.	benchmarking tool used under the EMS program may be a way to: • Demonstrate the benefits of future program offers to potential participants and drive uptake. • Allow participants of potential future programs to track the impacts and outcomes of implementing program offers. • Develop tangible use cases for potential future versions of the EMS program or energy efficiency technologies and practices targeted by other programs. While this solution may not be practical for use by small energy users or in the diverse small business sector, the program team and service providers noted its potential value for medium and high energy users. Based on their experience using the benchmarking tool under the EMS program, service providers noted there could have been more benefit in applying the use of the tool across more program participants.	• Benchmarking tools provide an easy to use and accessible means by which energy users can easily comprehend data and information regarding their business' performance and inform future investment decisions regarding energy efficiency initiatives and projects.
3 To improve the overall effectiveness of its programs, the Department should give greater consideration to the phasing and linkages between its CCF programs, adopting a more integrated approach where possible.	Consultation with service providers and businesses noted that the phasing and linkages between the EMS and MEF programs was not aligned for some participants. This was apparent when some participants that underwent coaching courses under the EMS program were unable to progress to accessing benefits under the MEF program as the timing of the funding rounds did not align, limiting their ability to leverage knowledge and insights from one program to the other. A more coordinated delivery and phasing of offers between the EMS and MEF programs could have enhanced offer uptake and the overall effectiveness of the respective programs.	• The Department is better placed to identify and address inefficiencies in design and delivery across a suite of programs, allowing for adaptive learning over time. • A clearly defined roadmap or guide between programs provides service providers and partners with a more comprehensive narrative to outline benefits of participation to potential businesses, improving the customer journey. • Future net zero and energy efficiency programs are more likely to achieve sustained outcomes for energy users, transformation within the NSW energy efficiency market ecosystem, and an effective and efficient transition to a net zero economy.

Recommendation	Rationale and supporting evidence	Recommendation benefits
4 To encourage sustained industry transformation, the Department should consider longer, phased programs.	Some providers in the market have continued the delivery of course content originally developed for the EMS program and, the EEC for example, is simultaneously developing a related energy management system accreditation program, both of which are expected to have a national reach in the long term. Despite these benefits, feedback from service providers noted that any market transformation in businesses' understanding and appreciation of an area takes time, particularly in an immature energy management systems market. Service providers felt the program ended just as they began to build momentum in uplifting their capability and service offering to clients, hampering the ability of the EMS program to leave a sustained impact on the market. Several stakeholders suggested market transformation programs, such as the EMS program, need longer implementation periods to build momentum in delivery and enable stronger lasting impacts. This is especially true for programs like the EMS program that seek to build capability in immature markets (in this case the market energy management services). While acknowledging the need for programs to have defined operating periods, it is important that the duration of future capability building programs, such as the EMS program, is considered during the program design stage. To maximise benefits, the Department may determine the length of programs on a case-by-case basis after research and consultation and consideration of potential linkages with other energy efficiency programs.	• Customers and service providers can establish deeper and more beneficial business partnerships and relationships. • Longer programs linked to clear strategies or policies for program evolution: 1. Provides service providers with greater certainty upon which they can make investment decisions. 2. Enable the Department to effectively achieve changes in energy consumption behaviour and more sustained market transformation. 1. Support those businesses who are at the early stages of their energy management capability journey and require additional support over a longer period to time to understand their energy efficiency needs, opportunities, and implementable projects and practices. service providers
5 To enable mid-program improvements and assessment of future	Some of the findings in this evaluation, particularly in relation to the training offer, have been constrained by	• Consistent and robust processes for the collection and management of data and information will inform

Recommendation	Rationale and supporting evidence	Recommendation benefits
program outcomes, the Department should consider the adoption of robust data collection and management practices that align with the program logic and desired program outcomes and allow additionality to be demonstrated.	inconsistent, limited, and unavailable program data. These include: • Inconsistent collection of survey data across participating cohorts, preventing the formation of robust counterfactuals or comparisons to be made. • The old LMS solution, which operated during the first two years of the EMS program, did not collect any data on user experience of training participants, and limited data on the experience of webinar participants. As a result, this evaluation was unable to provide a comprehensive assessment of the entirety of the program, particularly the training offer. • Limited implementation and post-implementation data on energy savings from coaching recommendations, meaning energy savings outcomes are only reported as estimates. Discussions with the program team also indicated that if the above-mentioned gaps in data collection were addressed, they would have had greater capacity to deliver improvements to the program and respond to the needs of participants.	deeper insights on program performance and outcomes. • The Department can have a greater capacity to learn and adapt the design and delivery of programs, enabling greater market transformation potential, leading to targeted program improvements mid-delivery and more informed insights and learning at program end. • NSW energy users benefit from the availability of targeted, fit-for-purposes energy efficiency programs, enabling rapid and sustained change in the NSW energy market.
6 To enable robust assessments of cost-efficiency and performance of future programs, the Department should consider adopting clear and consistent processes and practices for classifying, collecting, and managing financial data and information on program management and delivery	Consultations with Department stakeholders have identified a systemic issue in the collection, access to, management, and reporting of information relating to the financial performance of the EMS program. As a result of a lack of clear and consistent processes and practices for the collection and classification of financial data and information, program development, management and delivery costs may not reflect the complexity of program delivery or be easily categorisable or trackable over time. This limits assessment of cost-efficiency and the ability of program teams and the Department to	• Assessments of the cost-efficiency and performance of future programs will be enabled by a robust evidence base. • Improved understanding in the long-term of the cost-efficiency of different program mechanisms and processes, allowing lessons for greater cost-efficiency to be embedded in the design of future programs. • The Department is better positioned to monitor the use of funding across its programs, enabling greater accountability and transparency for internal and external stakeholders across government and the community.

Recommendation	Rationale and supporting evidence	Recommendation benefits
costs. Approaches to categorising expenditure and defining efficiency should be assessed against the administrative effort involved.	identify and implement cost-efficiency maximising opportunities. In the case of the EMS program, this outcome evaluation was unable to perform a robust assessment of the program's cost-efficiency. This was driven by financial data that prevented the quantification of various cost items, including 'set up costs', daily project management costs, and accurate staffing costs. Sourcing data on the costs of the program was time consuming for the program team to complete, indicating that the information was not easily accessible or categorised in a way suitable for this kind of analysis. To address these data limitations, a clear and consistent set of guidelines and practices for the collection of detailed financial data and information should be adopted for all Department programs. This should include considerations for: • The determination, specification, and application of different cost categories/codes to enable effective comparison between and within programs. • The development of consistent financial reporting requirements and structures to enable effective tracking of program performance. • Governance arrangements that clearly outline the parties that have ownership of and responsibility for the collection and management of data and information. • Broadening access to program financial information to program team members to allow costs to be monitored over time.	

Contact us

Danielle Woolley

Partner

+61 2 9335 8765

dwoolley@kpmg.com.au

Prabpreet Calais

Associate Director

+61 2 9335 7303

pcalais@kpmg.com.au

KPMG.com.au