



Department of Planning and Environment

SUSTAINABLE GOVERNMENT

Evaluation Management Response

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Executive summary

The Sustainable Government Program provides support to NSW Government agencies to deliver on the NSW Government's Resource Efficiency Policy (GREP): a framework of measures, targets, and standards for improved practices in energy and water use, waste, and clean air.

The Program was funded by the NSW Climate Change Fund for the period 2017 to 2022. As required by the funding, a program evaluation was undertaken at the end of this period, to determine how effective it had been, and how it might be improved.

The main GREP targets examined by the evaluation were *E1 – Target to save energy across all government sites* and *E5 – Whole-of-government solar target*

The evaluation found that the program had been overall effective in supporting NSW Government agencies to reduce their resource use.

- The Program was well designed and was appropriate to the needs of the agencies at the time it was designed,
- The Program assisted 82 agencies to investigate and implement 1065 energy-saving projects, and
- The Program will be able to deliver the savings required under the GREP, if some measures are undertaken to further improve agency compliance and performance.

Key recommendations to improve the program include:

- Increasing the focus on improving agency capabilities to identify and address energy and resource savings opportunities, especially around leadership and change management,
- Routinely assessing stakeholder agency needs as they mature, and
- Improving the usability and accuracy of the CASPER database, which agencies use to report their progress towards the GREP

The evaluation report made 12 specific recommendations, as well as some other findings and observations which were not tied to a specific recommendation. These are itemised and addressed in Table 2.

Table 1 Summary of recommendations and program team management response

Recommendations	Accepted (actioned)	Partly accepted	Not accepted
12	12	-	-

Management response to evaluation findings

Table 2 Evaluation findings and response

Rec. No.	Report finding	Recommendation	Response	Action/Explanation	Responsible party	Action contributors	Timing
KEQ 1. How well was the program designed?							
	The program design is evidence-based and aligned to agencies' needs	N/A					
1	The program logic is largely appropriate	Improve future program planning with a more rigorous use of the program logic approach.	Accepted	Program logic approach has been used in strategic review and revision of Sustainable Government (SG) program. Outcomes of revised program logic and evaluation plan now include annual review.	SG Program Lead Program Services (IPM)	SG Program Team	Completed For annual review each Jan
	The program design was appropriate to address the problem statement	N/A					
KEQ 2. How well was the program delivered and managed?							
	Program implementation was well planned, and program reporting has been undertaken	N/A					

Rec. No.	Report finding	Recommendation	Response	Action/Explanation	Responsible party	Action contributors	Timing
2	There is an opportunity to improve program monitoring by using key indicators to measure performance	Use the Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) workbook attached to the operational plan to monitor program outcomes and support adaptive management.	Accepted	Evaluation plan process has been introduced – M&E workbook used to review evaluation plan annually. Program outcomes tracked in SPACE for annual monitoring & evaluation to support adaptive management. Changes made to evaluation plan where necessary.	SG Program Lead	SG Program Team	Completed For annual review each Jan
	The Sustainable Government program has supported multiple agencies with their energy efficiency projects.	N/A					
	The Sustainable Government Team's work has been dominated by feasibility assessments of Solar Photovoltaic projects	N/A		Dominance due to meeting GREP & NZP requirements. A revised program logic has been developed which shifts dominance away from Feasibility Studies to broader Net Zero & Sustainability enablement.			Completed
3	There is an opportunity to improve the way the Sustainable Government (SG) Team manages its project data	Improve the SG Team's project management practices.	Accepted	The team has undertaken project management skills development. SPACE to be used for project management as required. The CASPER database is being revised & improved, including data cleansing.	SG Program Lead	SG Program Team (CASPER)	Complete by Jun 2024

Rec. No.	Report finding	Recommendation	Response	Action/Explanation	Responsible party	Action contributors	Timing
4	It is unclear that the collaboration with Treasury has facilitated the work of the Sustainable Government Team	Greater collaboration with Treasury to improve and streamline the GFF processes.	Accepted	The GFF is managed by NSW Treasury. SG review identified the need to improve collaboration established between Treasury and the SG team. SG team will inform and advise Treasury of need to streamline GFF process, within existing relationship.	Treasury GFF Team	SG Program Lead	Complete by Dec 2025
5	Agency reporting efficiency could be improved if program databases and data collection requirements were better aligned	Liaising with other government programs to align reporting requirements and reduce the reporting burden on agencies.	Accepted	Alignment with other Govt programs may be achieved, however data sensitivities will hinder integration with programs outside NSW Government.	SG Program Lead	SG Program Team	Complete by Dec 2027
6	Agencies have mixed views about how they have been engaged	Provide a greater level of strategic support to agencies, in addition to technical support and information provision.	Accepted	Net Zero Diagnostic tool to assist with assessing and triaging agency capabilities and maturity.	SG Program Lead	SG Program Team	Complete by June 2024
				Revised program includes focus on assisting agencies with strategic planning. Bi-monthly Community of Practice meetings are now held.	SG Program Lead	SG Program Team	Ongoing In revised plan Oct 2023
KEQ 3. To what extent is the program on track to achieve the planned outcomes?							
	The outcome 'Accurate and relevant data is available to inform future sustainability and planning strategies' is constrained by CASPER user experience and data quality challenges.	N/A		The redesign of the CASPER reporting interface is underway to improve user experience. Data cleanse project is underway.	SG Program Lead	SG Program Team (CASPER)	

Rec. No.	Report finding	Recommendation	Response	Action/Explanation	Responsible party	Action contributors	Timing
	The outcome 'Government agencies identify resource efficiency savings opportunities and initiatives' is constrained because only 32% of agencies have an energy management plan.	N/A		A new Energy Management Systems (EnMS) Improvement Program is currently being designed. This addresses people, processes and systems to improve agency outcomes.	SG Program Lead	SG Program Team Agency Leads	Complete by Jul 2024
7	26% of agencies that are required to produce GREP reports claim to have met their GREP target.	Consider targeted interventions to lift the performance of the 65% of agencies who have not met their target.	Accepted	Refers to E1 target Priority for agency interventions based on highest emitting agencies not on track to meet E1 target. Some agencies have been unable to meet their targets for reasons beyond their control (e.g. Machinery of Government changes, budget constraints)	SG Program Lead	SG Program Team	In revised plan Oct 2023
8	The program will struggle to achieve the targeted 10% aggregate savings by 2023-24 unless the rate of energy savings improves.	The SG team could conduct a review of under-performing agencies and consider a targeted program of support at both leadership and operational levels to lift their performance.	Accepted	Final responsibility to meet GREP targets lies with agencies, not the Program. Program targets to be achieved through the targeted interventions such as the new Energy Management Systems (EnMS) Improvement Program.	SG Program Lead	SG Program Team Agency Leads	In revised plan Oct 2023
9	The outcome "Government agencies have the support needed to incorporate resource efficiency and GHG reduction targets within strategic planning" could be strengthened by the Sustainable Government Team taking a more strategic focus.	Routinely assess stakeholder needs to capture changes as agencies mature and needs change.	Accepted	Net Zero Diagnostic tool implemented to assess agency needs and maturity level. This will determine the level of support needed for agencies.	SG Program Lead	SG Program Team Digital Team	Complete by June 2024

Rec. No.	Report finding	Recommendation	Response	Action/Explanation	Responsible party	Action contributors	Timing
	The outcome “The GFF is managed and streamlined to drive sustainability projects within the government sector” is not apparent.	N/A	Accepted	Linked to Rec. No. 5 SG team continues to support agencies to navigate the GFF.	Treasury GFF Team	SG Program Lead	Complete by Dec 2027
10	The outcome “Government agencies are reporting on their sustainability performance on an annual basis” has, according to the Sustainable Government Team, been achieved.	Minimise the reporting burden on agencies by working with similar government programs to align reporting requirements.	Accepted	Process being put in place to work with other NSW Govt programs such as NABERS and Whole of Government procurement contracts. See Rec. No. 5 regarding minimising reporting burden.	SG Program Lead	SG Program Team	Complete by Dec 2027
KEQ 4. What lessons can be learned about program delivery and governance?							
11	Lesson - The Sustainable Government Program is a change program.	Upskilling the Sustainable Government Team’s capabilities to include change management and executive leadership support capabilities	Accepted	Strategic plan acknowledges this. SG team training in Change Management	SG Program Lead	SG Program Team	Completed
	The Sustainable Government Team needs the right mix of capabilities	N/A	Accepted	Report refers to Change Management capabilities – see Rec No. 11	SG Program Lead	SG Program Team	Completed
	Agency needs change over time, and programs must adapt to those changed needs or they risk losing relevancy	N/A	Accepted	Linked to Rec. No. 2 and 9.	SG Program Lead	SG Program Team Agency Leads	In revised plan Oct 2023

Rec. No.	Report finding	Recommendation	Response	Action/Explanation	Responsible party	Action contributors	Timing
12	CASPER is a critical service and may need further focus	Focus on CASPER data integrity and performance to ensure it adequately enables the Sustainable Government Program	Accepted	CASPER data cleanse process underway. CASPER review being undertaken, with view to redesign for improved performance.	SG Program Lead	SG Program Team (CASPER)	Complete by Jun 2024