

Environmental management policy

POL-G-021

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1. Title

Environmental management policy

2. Introduction

The National Museum of Australia (the Museum) is a major cultural institution charged with researching, collecting, preserving and exhibiting historical material of the Australian nation. The Museum focuses on the three interrelated areas of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture, Australia's history and society since European settlement in 1788 and the interaction of people with the environment.

Established in 1980, the Museum is a publicly funded institution governed as a statutory authority in the Commonwealth Arts portfolio. The Museum's building on Acton Peninsula, Canberra opened in March 2001.

3. Scope

3.1 Description

This policy highlights the Museum's commitment to minimising the environmental impact of its operations.

3.2 Purpose

To set out the varying roles played by all staff and contractors in minimising the Museum's impact on the environment.

3.3 Rationale

The Commonwealth Government, through its energy policy, is committed to improving the energy efficiency of Government operations and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The aim is to reduce the environmental impact of Government operations. All Commonwealth departments and agencies are required to comply with this energy policy.

To assist in complying with these requirements, the Museum has developed an environmental management system and this policy is a component of that system.

4. Principles and guidelines

The Museum is committed to pursuing ecologically sound practices through the continual improvement of its environmental performance. This will be done through the implementation of measures designed to minimise pollution and environmental impact from our operations. All employees should actively put into practice the principles set out in detail in the relevant standard operating procedures (see section 8 below).

The Museum supports and promotes environmentally responsible practices, and in all of its functions and operations, will endeavour to:

- operate within the principles of ecologically sustainable development
- develop and implement measures and adopt technology to prevent and minimise pollution and reduce waste, energy and natural resource use
- comply with all applicable environmental laws and regulations and will require compliance by contractors and suppliers
- systematically manage its activities to achieve and promote continual improvement by setting environmental objectives and targets and assessing the Museum's achievements.

To assist all Museum employees and contractors minimise the impact on the environment from their work, the Museum is committed to the ongoing implementation and promotion of an environmental management system that meets the requirements of the international

standard ISO 14001:1996. The environmental management system has been specifically designed to help the Museum reduce impact on the environment through continuous improvement of its environmental management practices. The environmental management system is primarily a web-based collection of procedures and plans to assist all employees in the incorporation of environmentally-friendly practices into their work.

The Museum will report on its environmental performance in the Museum's annual report. It will also annually review environmental management programs and assess whether the objectives and targets are being met and the desired outcomes are being achieved.

Some of the targets and objectives include:

- reduction in water consumption
- reduction in energy consumption
- increase the proportion of non-virgin paper used in office machines and publications
- increase in waste recycling.

5. Definition of terms

Environmental management system

The environmental management system is the collection of information and documents designed to assist all employees to minimise the impact on the environment from their Museum work.

Ecologically sustainable development

Ecologically sustainable development is the prevention and reversal of the adverse impacts of economic and social activities on the ecosystem, while continuing to allow the sustainable, equitable development of societies.

6. Definition of responsibilities

All contractors

- work in accordance with the guidelines set out in the standard operating procedures

Business unit managers

- ensure that they and their staff incorporate the guidelines set out in the standard operating procedures into their work wherever relevant
- assist in the dissemination of this policy and environmental management related information to their employees.

Coordinator *Environmental Management*

- ongoing promotion of environmental management and the monitoring of objectives and targets
- update the environmental management system when required.

General Manager *Operations*

- oversight of environmental management in the Museum.

Museum employees and volunteers

- incorporate the guidelines set out in the standard operating procedures into their work wherever appropriate.

Primary on-site contractors

- work in accordance with the guidelines set out in the standard operating procedures

- report on relevant objectives and targets on a six-monthly basis.

7. References

ISO 14001:1996 – Environmental management systems

Commonwealth Government Energy Policy, *Measures for improving energy efficiency in Commonwealth operations*, Commonwealth of Australia, 20 November 1997

8. Implementation

This policy will be implemented through the intranet based environmental management system and promulgated to employees, volunteers and contractors via the intranet, internet and relevant awareness sessions.

A web-based environmental management system has been implemented as it:

- makes information accessible to all employees and contractors
- facilitates updating.

The environmental management system is comprised of:

- a. environmental management policy (this document)
- b. the following standard operating procedures:
 - office energy conservation
 - office waste
 - packaging
 - paper
 - purchasing
 - publications
 - environmental reporting
 - executive vehicles
 - disposal of waste oils /chemicals
 - grease trap maintenance
 - storage, use and disposal of liquid chemicals
 - response to discharge of preserving agents
 - ozone depleting substances
 - asbestos
 - medium density fibreboard (MDF).
- c. The following National Museum of Australia management plans:
 - energy management plan (2005)
 - waste management plan (2005)
 - water management plan (2005)
 - paper management plan (2005).
- d. documents pertaining to the development and maintenance of the environmental management system.

Awareness training will be provided for all business unit managers as required.

All employees will receive a single-page guide to the standard operating procedures.

Relevant information for contractors will be included in the contractor site book.

8.1 Coverage

This policy covers all Museum venues and operations including travelling exhibitions and programs.

8.2 Other related policies

Nil

8.3 Exclusions

Nil

8.4 Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed in December 2008.