



Local Government Association
of South Australia

LGA Climate Commitment Action Plan 2021-2023

Adopted by the LGA Board of
Directors on 18 March 2021

2021-
2023

The voice of local government

Table of contents

| | |
|---|----------|
| Message from the President | 3 |
| Introduction | 4 |
| About the LGA | 4 |
| About the Climate Commitment Action Plan | 4 |
| Action taken so far..... | 5 |
| LGA's Climate Commitment..... | 6 |
| Action Plan for 2021-2023 | 7 |
| 1. Advocate for urgent action on climate change..... | 7 |
| 2. Assist member councils in their efforts to reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change..... | 8 |
| 3. Advance the local government sector's leadership on climate change | 9 |
| 4. Achieve emissions reduction and adaption through the operations of the LGA. | 10 |

Message from the President

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing Australian communities. It requires a collective response, and action needs to be taken across all spheres of society. Addressing the impacts of climate change requires a sustained response over time, and the ability to adjust the course as the climate risks change.

Local government has been on the front foot for many years, leading the charge with the procurement of green energy, preparing for sea level rise, retrofitting community facilities, transitioning to a circular economy, driving the regional climate partnerships, building emergency management capabilities and more.

Climate risks vary across the state, and local government's success to date is closely tied with how councils have responded to the local risks faced by local communities in partnership with other levels of government.

As the peak body for local government in South Australia, the LGA recognises its important role to support councils with their own efforts, while also walking the talk by taking action in its own operations.

This plan formalises the LGA's commitment to tangible action on climate change. It contains a suite of actions that continue and extend LGA efforts to work with and on behalf of our member councils through our core roles to advocate, assist and advance. The plan also contains actions that address how the LGA can achieve tangible outcomes through its own operations.

By working together as a united local government sector, we can do more to prepare our communities for the unfolding impacts of climate change.



Mayor Angela Evans

LGA President

March 2021

Introduction

About the LGA

The Local Government Association of South Australia (LGA) is the peak body for local government in South Australia. The LGA provides leadership and services to councils, and represents the sector to State and Federal governments and other key stakeholders. Membership of the LGA is voluntary, but all 68 of South Australia's councils are members.

The LGA also provides competitive procurement and indemnity (insurance) services to councils through two separate commercial entities, LGA Procurement and LGASA Mutual.

The LGA is governed by a Board of Directors and supported by a secretariat based in Local Government House in Adelaide. The LGA is federated with interstate bodies through the Australian Local Government Association which represents local government's national interests.

More information about the LGA is available on our website at www.lga.sa.gov.au.

About the Climate Commitment Action Plan

The LGA acknowledges that climate change poses a serious risk to councils, and the communities and ecosystems they support. Climate change has the potential to damage council assets, cause disruption to the delivery of council services, generate unbudgeted financial impacts and affect the health and wellbeing of communities.

These risks require us to take immediate and ongoing action.

Over many years, South Australian councils have provided strong leadership, advocacy and action to reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change. Councils continue to plan and implement actions at local and regional levels to address changing climate risks.

The LGA has a dual role to both support councils with their own climate change efforts as the peak body for local government, and to lead by example by taking action in its own operations.

The LGA Climate Commitment Action Plan outlines the LGA's commitment to climate change mitigation and adaptation, and contains:

- An overview of recent action on climate change
- The LGA's Climate Commitment
- An Action Plan for 2021-2023.

The Action Plan will be updated every three years, with an annual review of outcomes achieved presented to a General Meeting of the LGA membership.

Action taken so far

This Action Plan builds upon many years of effort supporting councils to help mitigate climate change and adapt to its impacts. Many of these actions will be continued or built upon as part of the Action Plan for the next three years. A snapshot of the actions already undertaken by the LGA includes:

- **Advocacy**
Advocated for greater resources for councils to manage climate risks including coastal protection, stormwater management and emergency management.
- **Coordination**
Secured State Government funding for the LGA to host the central coordinator roles that underpin the Regional Climate Partnerships¹.
- **Resources**
Developed guides and templates for councils on topics including climate risk management, adaptation planning, energy efficiency, coastal adaptation, and heatwaves.
- **Procurement**
Supported councils to procure recycled road materials, solar panels, batteries, electric vehicles and charging stations, and electricity sourced from a local renewable source through LGA Procurement.
- **Circular economy**
Supported councils to transition to a circular economy in their procurement activities, including the *Buying it Back* pilot program which the LGA coordinates and participates in.
- **Energy efficiency**
Provided advice and services to councils to drive improved energy efficiency, including through LED street lighting.
- **Research and Development**
Funded important climate change research, development and actions through the Local Government Research and Development Scheme and the Local Government Mutual Liability Scheme.
- **Emergency management**
Assisted councils with emergency management planning through the Council Ready program, and significantly strengthened our sector's emergency response capability through the Local Government Functional Support Group.
- **Local Government House**
Reduced emissions associated with the operations of Local Government House through the installation of sensor activated energy LED lighting, waste management and recycled office supplies².
- **Corporate policies**
Adopted a Procurement Policy that seeks to conserve natural resources and integrate principles of circular economy, waste minimisation and energy minimisation.

¹ The Regional Climate Partnerships are a network of eleven regional, cross-sectoral groups delivering practical action to strengthen the climate resilience of their communities, economies and natural and built environments. Partners vary from region to region, but include councils, regional organisations of councils, Regional Development Australia organisations, landscape boards (formerly Natural Resource Management Boards), and the South Australian government. For more information see <https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/climate-change/programs-and-initiatives/adapting-to-climate-change/regional-climate-partnerships>

² As of 30 June 2020, 95% of the total office supplies and stationary purchased by the LGA contained recycled content.

LGA's Climate Commitment

The LGA's commitment to climate change is contained in our policy statements on "*Managing the Risks of Climate Change*". These policy statements have been developed with input from the local government sector, and adopted by our members at LGA general meetings³.

Our overarching policy statement is that:

Local government acknowledges that climate change poses a serious risk to local communities and ecosystems. All levels of government are urged to take action that will help address the effects of climate change in local communities⁴.

This is supported by additional statements addressing Partnerships; Funding and Strategic Investment; Embedding Climate Change Considerations; Decision Making; Consultation and Engagement; Energy Reduction and Storage; Greenhouse Gas Reduction Mechanisms; Integrity; and Electric Vehicles.

Many other statements in the LGA Policy Manual, such as those relating to waste management, circular economy, emergency management and planning and development also address climate change. This reflects the way in which climate change is a central consideration across the wide range of local government functions and services.

This LGA Climate Commitment Action Plan seeks to bring our climate change policies to life by outlining the LGA's commitment to taking action to support its members and through its own operations.

The LGA's Climate Commitment to our members and to the community is:

The LGA acknowledges that climate change poses a serious risk to councils, and the communities and ecosystems that they support. The LGA stands ready to:

- 1. Advocate for urgent action on climate change;**
- 2. Assist member councils in their efforts to reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change;**
- 3. Advance the local government sector's leadership on climate change;**
- 4. Achieve emissions reduction and adaptation through the operations of the LGA.**

It should be noted that this is a commitment made by the LGA Board to lead action within its scope of influence across the LGA's four core strategy areas.

³ The LGA Policy Manual is available at <https://www.lga.sa.gov.au/about-lga/overview-of-the-lga/corporate-documents/lga-policy-manual>.

⁴ LGA Policy Manual, Section 4.4, Managing the Risks of Climate Change, <https://www.lga.sa.gov.au/about-lga/overview-of-the-lga/corporate-documents/lga-policy-manual/environment-and-natural-resources/4.4-managing-the-risks-of-climate-change>.

Action Plan for 2021-2023

1. Advocate for urgent action on climate change

Responding to climate change is a shared responsibility across all levels of government and society.

As the peak representative body for South Australia's councils, the LGA has an important role to advocate for urgent and sustained action to reduce emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change. This will occur through direct advocacy to governments, partnerships, representation on influential decision-making bodies, and by raising awareness of the role and value of councils in managing climate risks.

| Action | Responsibility |
|--|--|
| 1.1 Policy Statement Review and update the "Managing the Risks of Climate Change" statements in the LGA Policy Manual based on recent science, evidence and practice. | Director Policy |
| 1.2 Advocacy Reinforce climate change as a priority in the LGA Advocacy Plan and continue to advocate to the State Government for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation of their Climate Change Action Plan 2021 -25 - State-Local Government Climate Change Partnership Proposal - Renewal of the Regional Climate Partnerships – Sector Agreements - Greater funding for councils for climate risk management, waste management, coastal management and stormwater management - Better recognition of and response to climate change in the Planning and Design Code - Greater support for the Electric Vehicle Strategy. Continue to advocate via the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) for greater Commonwealth Government funding and action on climate change, including funded schemes and incentives to support the uptake of electric vehicles. | Director Policy |
| 1.3 Raise awareness of Local Government efforts Increase awareness of the role and value of councils in managing climate risks through the LGA's ongoing awareness campaigns and stakeholder engagement actions. | Director Media and Communications |
| 1.4 Representation Advocate for greater support for councils to address climate change via the local government members on the Premier's Climate Change Council. | Executive Director Public Affairs |
| 1.5 Integration Ensure all relevant LGA Advocacy submissions address climate change impact. | Director Policy |
| 1.6 Partnerships Pursue opportunities to work collaboratively with government agencies and other organisations with aligned goals and values on projects, programs and campaigns that will assist local government action on climate change. Maintain a high level of engagement with and participation in the Adaptation Practitioners Network. | Executive Director Public Affairs Director Policy |

2. Assist member councils in their efforts to reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change

Councils have and are taking important action to respond to climate change.

The LGA can assist by ensuring that these efforts are well coordinated to avoid unnecessary duplication, informed by a contemporary evidence base, and by showcasing best practice and the support resources that already exist. LGA services in areas such as procurement and energy efficiency present opportunities to drive tangible and substantive emissions reduction across the entire local government sector.

| Action | Responsibility |
|---|---|
| 2.1 Coordination Host the central climate change coordinator roles that underpin the Regional Climate Partnerships and the state/local government Adaptation Practitioners Network. | Director Policy |
| 2.2 Showcase best practice In collaboration with the Regional Climate Partnerships, facilitate the sharing of climate change initiatives amongst local government elected members, staff and stakeholders through events and forums. Deliver an annual 'Climate Month' to showcase local government climate change projects, resources and tools via LGA's communication with members. | Director Policy Director Media and Communications Director Sector Development |
| 2.3 Knowledge hub and resource sharing Facilitate information, research and resource sharing between councils through a Climate Change Knowledge Hub on the LGA website, and in partnership with the Regional Climate Partnerships and the Adaptation Practitioners Network. | Director Policy |
| 2.4 Circular economy and waste management Support councils with the transition to a circular economy, including implementation of <i>Buying it Back</i> pilot program, and key actions from the State Government's Waste and Food Waste strategies | Director Policy |
| 2.5 Procurement Proactively assist councils with low-carbon procurement, including the procurement of green power, through panel contracts, training and support resources. | CEO LGA Procurement |
| 2.6 Energy efficiency Promote and expand the LGA's support services that assist councils to improve energy efficiency. | Executive Director Member Services |
| 2.7 Climate risk management Provide advice that assists councils to manage climate risks and potential liabilities via the Mutual Liability Scheme. | CEO LGASA Mutual |

3. Advance the local government sector's leadership on climate change

The local government sector has demonstrated leadership on climate change for many years.

The LGA can strengthen this leadership and support the sector to prepare for new and evolving climate risks through thought leadership, research and development, training and embedding the climate commitment across the LGA's strategic and business planning.

| Action | Responsibility |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 3.1 Thought Leadership Showcase the local government sector's leadership on climate change in state and national forums, and through the Premier's Climate Change Council. | Executive Director Public Affairs |
| 3.2 Training Integrate climate awareness and education as part of the LGA's Elected Member leadership development program. | Director Sector Development |
| 3.3 Research and Development Ensure climate change is retained as a research priority of the Local Government Research and Development Scheme. | Director Strategy |
| 3.4 Strategic Planning Embed our climate commitment within the LGA's Strategic and Annual Business Plans. | Director Strategy |

4. Achieve emissions reduction and adaptation through the operations of the LGA.

The LGA can lead by example by taking action with its own operations.

Understanding emissions associated with LGA operations is a necessary first step. There are also opportunities to take action through the management of Local Government House, corporate travel and events.

| Action | Responsibility |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 4.1 Local Government House Install solar panels to ensure 100% of electricity consumed by the base building of Local Government House is generated on-site. Install display screens that communicate live electricity generation data at Local Government House. Prepare a NABERS (National Australian Built Environment Rating System) rating for Local Government House. Install end of journey facilities to encourage active travel (cycling and walking) to and from Local Government House. | Director Corporate Services |
| 4.2 LGA emissions Measure, monitor and report carbon emissions associated with LGA operations in year one to establish a baseline from which the LGA can set a zero emissions target in year two. | Director Strategy |
| 4.3 Travel Modify the LGA's Travel Policy to encourage video conferencing, active travel and car-pooling wherever practicable. | Director Corporate Services |
| 4.4 Vehicles Modify LGA Vehicle Purchase and Changeover Policy to require low emissions technology as a minimum for all future pool vehicle acquisitions or changeovers, with a transition to zero emissions vehicles being the LGA's long term aspiration. | Director Corporate Services |
| 4.5 Events Develop and implement a Sustainable Events Procedure for all LGA events. | Director Sector Development |
| 4.6 Corporate climate risk Ensure climate risks are appropriately considered in the LGA's strategic risk register and Long-Term Financial Plan. | Director Corporate Services |
| 4.7 Monitor and report Monitor the implementation of the Climate Commitment Action Plan and report on progress every six months to the LGA Board, and annually to the LGA membership. | Director Strategy |



Local Government Association
of South Australia

148 Frome St
Adelaide SA 5000

GPO Box 2693
Adelaide SA 5001

T (08) 8224 2000

E lgasa@lga.sa.gov.au

www.lga.sa.gov.au



The voice of local government.