

**UNITING**  
**SA** *Together  
we can*

**Environment and  
Sustainability Action Plan  
2015-2018**

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## Foreword by CEO

UnitingSA supports more than 10,000 community members every year. Established in 1919 and governed by a Board of Directors, UnitingSA is a community service agency of the Uniting Church in Australia and forms part of the national UnitingCare network. More than 1,000 employees and 160 volunteers deliver a diverse range of programs across Aged Care, Community Services and Employment Services. Together, employees and volunteers work towards empowering people in need, building communities and strengthening families.

UnitingSA is striving for a sustainable future and as such, the organisation is committed to minimising the impact on the environment from its business operations. We will achieve this by:

- Complying with applicable local, state, and federal environmental regulations.
- Continually seeking to improve the environmental performance of our services.
- Engaging employees, customers and suppliers in reducing the organisation's carbon footprint.
- Training appropriate employees in sustainability management.
- Encouraging the development of innovative, sustainable products and services.
- Adopting sustainable procurement practices.
- Actively encouraging and supporting our suppliers to adopt sustainable practices.
- Using finite resources, including paper, energy, fuel and water as efficiently as possible.

Our Environment and Sustainability Action Plan will provide the strategies to assist us to measure and periodically report on our progress towards our sustainability goals. The Quality, Safety and Risk Management Council endorse the UnitingSA Environment and Sustainability Action Plan. This plan has been developed in consultation with employees and key stakeholders within UnitingSA.

Yours sincerely,



**Libby Craft**

Chief Executive Officer

## Introduction and Background

This Environment and Sustainability Action Plan is a strategic document which provides a framework for helping us to ensure that a realistic and consistent set of targets and actions are formulated and implemented within agreed time frames.



UnitingSA understands its impact on the environment through the use of paper and office equipment, use of electricity, water and gas, travel requirements as well as green waste management. We would like to introduce strategies to begin reducing our environmental impact whilst improving our business sustainability.

The actions contained within the Environment and Sustainability Action Plan are arranged under six environmental themes. Each of these themes has a corresponding broad goal. In summary, the themes and their corresponding broad goals contained within this action plan are based on the 6P Green Program: People, Planet, Profit, Power, Products and Policy. These six key areas have been identified as priority areas for UnitingSA to action in order to achieve positive environmental benefits and continuous improvement.

The Environment and Sustainability Action Plan is designed to ensure that initiatives that have the highest impact and lowest effort are prioritised for action.



## Goal 1: People

**Focus Area: To embed sustainability across UnitingSA services.**

Activities	Responsibilities	Timeline	Target / Indicators
1. Maintain and monitor waste management programs.	Executive Manager Property and Housing, Manager Property Services & Manager Quality	July 2018	a. All sites have clear signage and posters in place.
			b. An annual electronic report is developed by Suez our waste management company. This information is used by the SEE-Tick Program to communicate data with Property Services to monitor our waste management programs.
			c. National Recycling Week in November (to bring a national focus to the environmental benefits of recycling) is promoted on an annual basis.
2. Maintain a sustainability section for the 'Corporate Employee Orientation' presentation and ensure the 'New Employee / Volunteer Induction Checklist' includes environmental considerations for each site.	Manager Quality	July 2018	a. The 'Corporate Employee Orientation' presentation is reviewed and updated annually.
			b. Sustainability section is maintained on Intranet.
			c. 'New Employee / Volunteer Induction Checklist' maintains section with environmental requirements.

## Goal 2: Planet

**Focus Area: To increase the awareness amongst Managers, employees and other stakeholders on the impacts of environmental sustainability issues to manage the potential associated business risks.**

Activities	Responsibilities	Timeline	Target / Indicators
1. Maintain a range of strategies to advertise our commitment to the environment to reach external stakeholders and sponsors.	Executive Manager Property and Housing, Manager Property Services & Manager Quality	July 2018	a. Environment and Sustainability information is maintained and updated on our Website as required. The new Website will have suitable information available.
	Marketing Team		b. Newsletter articles are promoted annually. Articles in Flourish magazine include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recycled clothing donations being transported via horse float to country areas in need</li> <li>- Emergency Relief Team distributing free recycled clothing to families during Anti-Poverty Week</li> <li>- Regency Green partnership with Bunnings for residents to make pot plants &amp; develop the gardens</li> <li>- Recycled beds from Aged Care sites being donated to hospitals in the Congo instead of going to landfill</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- WSE Graffiti Removal Program that helps to remove graffiti and beautify the environment</li> </ul>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. The employee 'Bright Idea' process is communicated to staff to encourage new environmental suggestions during National Recycling Week in November each year.</li> </ul>

Comments:

## Goal 3: Profit

**Focus Area: To grow UnitingSA's profitably and sustainably by ensuring all processes minimise energy and waste.**

Activities	Responsibilities	Timeline	Target / Indicators
1. Ensure that the findings and recommendations from the sustainability on-site (UnitingSA owned properties only) inspections are used to benchmark performance and identify key opportunities for improvement.	Executive Manager Property and Housing & Manager Property Services	July 2018	a. Ongoing roll out of LED lighting upgrades and waste management strategies are improved in consultation with Suez.
			b. Benchmarks are established internally using SEE-Tick Program and reported to the Board.
2. Investigate the business case for switching to renewable energy options.	Executive Manager Property and Housing & Manager Property Services	July 2018	a. Solar options are evaluated with all new redevelopments and building upgrades.
3. Evaluate the UnitingSA motor vehicle fleet in relation to sustainable options e.g. measure benefits from hybrid vehicle usage.	Manager Property Services	July 2018	a. Ongoing assessments are completed to monitor hybrid vehicle usage, as well as measure, reduce and offset greenhouse gas emissions. Toyota runs a program that facilitates this process e.g. tree planting offset program. The SEE-Tick Program develops an annual report of the fuel and vehicle related omissions from our fleet vehicles.

Comments:



## Goal 4: Power

**Focus Area: To minimise the impact on the environment from UnitingSA's use of energy, waste and finite resources.**

Activities	Responsibilities	Timeline	Target / Indicators
1. Measure the carbon footprint of the organisation. Develop procedures to capture data for the carbon management system in order to measure the carbon footprint of the organisation on an ongoing basis.	Manager Property Services	July 2018	a. The SEE-Tick Program is used to measure our carbon footprint and produce data to aid corporate decision making.
	Executive Manager Property and Housing		b. Carbon footprint information is communicated in management and Board Reports
			c. Environment key performance indicators are established for future tracking and benchmarking (i.e. increased % of total waste being recycled; reduced % waste to landfill; reduced % of total water consumption, water consumption per person; \$ or % value of supplies purchased from environmentally preferred suppliers).
2. Ensure energy usage and waste management systems in all building projects for UnitingSA sites and Portway Housing Association properties achieve environmental building standards i.e. design, water consumption in gardens and energy ratings etc.	Executive Manager Property and Housing Manager Portway Housing Association	July 2018	a. Standards including The Building Code of Australia (BCA) and other requirements e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Managing energy use of air conditioners</li> <li>○ Water heater installation requirements</li> <li>○ 6 star energy efficiency requirements for new homes</li> <li>○ Household energy efficiency information &amp; advice.</li> </ul>

<p>3. Introduce appropriate waste management processes at all sites with a view to maximising re-cycling opportunities in order to minimise waste to landfill.</p>	<p>Manager Property Services</p>	<p>July 2018</p>	<p>a. All UnitingSA sites have a waste management system that improves our resource use and sustainability. Suez provide us with an annual report which is incorporated into the SEE-Tick Program</p>
<p>4. Conduct a waste and water management awareness campaign for employees e.g. single flush toilets replaced by dual flush, use of water efficient appliances and gradual changes to water management.</p>	<p>Manager Property Services &amp; Manager Quality</p>	<p>July 2018</p>	<p>a. Promote environmental initiatives during National Recycling Week which is held in November each year. Strategies would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Providing employees with SEE-Tick Program data</li> <li>- Promoting Bright Idea environment suggestions</li> <li>- Sending ideas to the 'Sustainability' email address re environment issues or concerns observed at sites</li> <li>- Emailing links to relevant information and resources</li> </ul>

Comments:

## Goal 5: Products

**Focus Area: To ensure that UnitingSA supplies and suppliers are consistent with our environmental objectives and to consider the introduction of “green” products/services.**

Activities	Responsibilities	Timeline	Target / Indicators
1. Review all major suppliers (materials, stationery etc.) to ascertain if there are more environmentally responsible alternatives within the same price range. Consider highest energy and water efficiency standards when purchasing new white goods, IT products and other appliances.	Manager Information Services	July 2018	a. A regular tender process of all major suppliers is conducted to ensure there is no major conflict with the organisation’s environmental objectives.
	Manager Property Services		b. Standard environmental clauses are incorporated into contracting processes.
2. Where possible, use readily biodegradable ingredients that minimise environmental impact for cleaning, hand washing and laundry use etc.	Manager Property Services WH&S Consultant	July 2018	a. Biodegradable products are used in the majority of sites including all Aged Care sites.

Comments:

## Goal 6: Policy

**Focus Area: To ensure that UnitingSA meets all necessary environmental compliance requirements and that appropriate environmental policies and procedures are put in place.**

Activities	Responsibilities	Timeline	Target / Indicators
1. Develop 'Sustainable Procurement Guidelines' for tenders and contracts that meet financial, safety and quality requirements.	Manager Property Services	July 2018	a. Guidelines are included in all tender documents.
			b. Environment and Sustainability Policy is reviewed on a regular basis to comply with community standards and legislative requirements. Last reviewed November 2016.
2. Procurement activities meet organisational environmental requirements.	Manager Property Services	July 2018	a. The Procurement Policy and processes are updated as required to ensure they meet organisational environmental requirements. Policy review due in July 2018.
3. Allocate budget for key projects and new environmental initiatives.	Executive Manager Property and Housing & Manager Quality	July 2018	a. Sustainability initiatives annual action plan developed and communicated to staff.
			b. The 'SEE-Tick Program' information report available on Intranet.

Comments:

**Further information about this plan is available by contacting:**

Manager Quality: Telephone 8440 2255

Or UnitingSA website at <http://www.unitingsa.com.au>

UnitingSA

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