

Appendix A: The Centre for Public Agency Sustainability Reporting™

About the Centre

The Centre is a collaboration of: the Global Reporting Initiative, ICLEI: Local Governments for Sustainability, the City of Melbourne and the State of Victoria. The Centre was launched in March 2005 and its mission is to improve the sustainability performance of public agencies through the practice of reporting. The Centre is not-for-profit, and seeks to build capacity in public agencies to undertake sustainability reporting and to facilitate the development of best practice. The Centre's launch was simultaneous to the launch of the Global Reporting Initiative's (GRI) Sector Supplement for Public Agencies (PASS), a sector specific guidance used in conjunction with GRI's Sustainability Reporting Guidelines.

The Centre has received some initial funds for core projects from the Victorian Government's Sustainability Fund. Public agencies also subscribe to the Centre to participate in projects, receive capacity materials, on-line support, conference participation and research and diagnostic services. The Centre is developing a research capacity which will help to support and direct the conceptual development of sustainability reporting by the public sector internationally as well as national projects.

The Centre's first projects

The *Australia New Zealand Reporting Alliance* is a learning group of 17 public agencies of different levels across Australian and New Zealand. It provides support and learning opportunities for participants through facilitated workshops, teleconferences, email and web-based mechanisms. The outcomes of the project include:

- Development of best practice case studies in public sector sustainability reporting;
- Regional guidance materials for public sector sustainability reporting;
- Increased knowledge of key issues in sustainability reporting by public agencies;
- Sharing of approaches, knowledge and experience in reporting;
- Accelerated implementation of sustainability reporting in the public sector in the region;
- Improved sustainability performance of public agencies, including public policy performance; and
- A set of recommendations to GRI on the ongoing development of public sector materials.

Participants in the 2005/2006 Alliance include:

- Brisbane City Council - QLD, Australia
- Brisbane Water - QLD, Australia
- City of Gosnells - WA, Australia
- City of Melbourne - VIC, Australia
- Department of the Environment and Heritage – Australia
- Department of Environment and Heritage – SA, Australia
- Department of Family and Community Services - Australia
- Department of Sustainability and Environment - VIC, Australia
- Landcom - NSW, Australia
- Melbourne Water - VIC, Australia
- Penrith City Council - NSW, Australia
- Queensland EPA - Australia
- SA Water - SA, Australia
- Sustainability Victoria - Australia
- Sydney Water - NSW, Australia
- Victoria EPA - Australia
- Waitakere City Council - New Zealand

The *International Cities Alliance* is a learning group of geographically diverse cities worldwide. It acts as a reference group exploring issues around sustainability reporting specific to local municipalities. The outcomes of the project will include:

- Development of best practice case studies;
- Development of tools and guidance specific to local government;
- Increased reporting activity;
- Improved quality of reports.

A number of international cities have participated in the project, these include: Amsterdam & Tilburg (The Netherlands), Cape Town & Durban (South Africa), New Delhi (India), Greater Vancouver Regional District (Canada), Melbourne, Wollongong & Newcastle (Australia), Oslo (Norway), Seattle (USA), Tampere (Finland), Vaxjo (Sweden) and Auckland & Waitakere (New Zealand). One workshop has been held at the ICLEI World Congress 2006 in Cape Town, South Africa and a briefing held as part of the recent Mayors' Asia-Pacific Environmental Summit in Melbourne. The aims of the workshops are to develop capacity building materials for local government reporters based on the engagement and feedback of leading cities.