



Australian Government

National Health and Medical Research Council



National Health and Medical Research Council

Emissions Reduction Plan

2026

Acknowledgement of Country

The National Health and Medical Research Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners and custodians of the lands on which we work, and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

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Accountable Authority Sign Off

The Australian Government released the [Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy](#) (NZGO Strategy) in November 2023, setting out the overall approach and action required by Commonwealth entities to achieve the [APS Net Zero 2030 Target](#) (2030 Target).

The NZGO Strategy represents a strong commitment by the Australian Government to lead by example on emissions reduction and contribute to the decarbonisation of Australia's economy. The 2030 Target is the target set by the government to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions from government operations by the year 2030.

This Emissions Reduction Plan describes the priorities and actions the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) is taking to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions. It demonstrates NHMRC's commitment to the NZGO Strategy and to achieving the 2030 Target.

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Acting Chief Executive Officer

The National Health and Medical Research Council

DATE: 19/10/2026

1. Purpose

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) is implementing emissions reduction initiatives in line with the Australian Government's [Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy](#) (NZGO Strategy). The NZGO Strategy sets out the government's approach to achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions from its operations by 2030, including the reinstatement of public emissions reporting.

The purpose of this Emissions Reduction Plan (ERP) is to provide a pathway for NHMRC to contribute to achievement of the [APS Net Zero 2030 Target](#) (2030 Target) through ongoing and new actions.

This ERP has been developed in accordance with the NZGO Strategy, associated guidance and relevant reporting standards for annual emissions reporting.

2. Governance and Reporting

Progress against actions identified within the ERP, together with any additional measures adopted, will be included in NHMRC's annual reports. This information, combined with annual emissions data, will be used to measure progress towards reducing its emissions.

As part of the Net Zero in Government Operations Annual Progress Report, the Department of Finance will aggregate these measures to provide whole-of-Australian-Government emissions reporting.

3. Operational Context

NHMRC is an independent statutory authority within the Health, Disability and Ageing portfolio. Its mission is building a healthy Australia, which it progresses by delivering against three purposes:

- Investment - create knowledge and build research capability through investment in the highest-quality health and medical research and the best researchers.
- Translation - drive the translation of health and medical research into public policy, health systems and clinical practice and support the commercialisation of research discoveries.
- Integrity - maintain a strong integrity framework underpinning rigorous and ethical research promoting community trust.

Delivering these purposes requires NHMRC to engage with a broad range of stakeholders across Australia, including researchers, consumers and the health sector. The increasing emphasis on consumer involvement and stakeholder consultation means that some face-to-face engagement and associated travel will continue to be necessary. NHMRC will

balance these operational requirements with its commitment to reducing emissions, including through virtual engagement and reducing non-essential travel where practical.

NHMRC employed 281 APS staff as at 30 June 2026. The majority of staff (92%) are based in two leased offices (in Canberra and Melbourne), and the remainder are dispersed across the country through remote working arrangements. NHMRC does not maintain a vehicle fleet.

4. Engagement

NHMRC collaborated with a range of stakeholders in developing this ERP, including the:

- NHMRC Executive Board.
- Department of Finance Climate Action in Government Operations Team.
- Whole-of-Australian-Government Property Service Provider (Evolve FM).

5. Emissions Inventory – Baseline Emissions

Baseline emissions record greenhouse gas emissions before emissions reduction measures were introduced. The baseline emissions from financial year 2022–23 are the reference point against which emissions reduction actions can be measured (see Table 1).

The baseline emissions for this plan focus on Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions, consistent with the 2030 Target. Electricity-related emissions were calculated using the location-based and market-based methods.

The complete 2022–23 greenhouse gas emissions inventory tables for NHMRC are presented in its [2022–23 Annual Report](#).

Table 1: Baseline Emissions*

APS Net Zero 2030 Target	Baseline t CO ₂ -e	Baseline year
Total Scope 1	0	
Natural gas	0	N/A
Fleet and other vehicles	0	N/A
Refrigerants	0	N/A
Other energy	0	N/A
Total Scope 2	51,883	
Electricity (market based)	51,883	Baseline year is 2022–23
Electricity (location based)	221,066	Baseline year is 2022–23
Total Scope 1 and Scope 2	51,883	

* Notes

- Scope 1 emissions are direct greenhouse gas emissions from sources owned or controlled by an agency (for example, fuel combustion in vehicles).
- Scope 2 emissions are indirect emissions resulting from the consumption of purchased electricity, heating, cooling, or steam.
- ‘t CO₂-e’ stands for ‘tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent’.

6. Net Zero Target

NHMRC is committed to the 2030 Target (for net zero greenhouse gas emissions), to be achieved over the 16 June 2022 to 30 June 2031 timeframe.

The metric for monitoring NHMRC's contribution to the Target's achievement is t CO₂-e (tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent), which will be tracked against the initial baseline of its emissions in the 2022-23 financial year (as per the NZGO Strategy). Note that this baseline may change if additional emissions sources are included in the future.

NHMRC's commitment also includes meeting the related requirements of the NZGO Strategy:

- Development of an ERP (this document).
- Publication of progress towards the 2030 Target in annual updates to the ERP.

Background

The 2030 Target is defined in the NZGO Strategy as: *A target set by the Australian Government to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions from government operations by the year 2030.*

The objective of the 2030 Target is to reduce emissions to mitigate further impacts of climate change. It forms part of Australia's international climate commitments, including Australia's Nationally Determined Contribution under the Paris Agreement.

The 2030 Target, which is an absolute target:

- Applies to all non-corporate Commonwealth entities, and any corporate Commonwealth entities or Commonwealth companies that opt in.
 - The organisational boundary is the whole entity, unless an exemption has been agreed for security or other reasons.
- Includes Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions and is a net greenhouse gas emissions target.
- Was not derived using a sectoral decarbonisation approach.
- Has not been reviewed by a third party.

In 2026-27, the Department of Finance will review the NZGO Strategy to consider overall progress to date, domestic expectations and any changes to the 2030 Target and Strategy.

Progress against the aggregated 2030 Target for the Australian Public Service, including metrics, is detailed within the [Climate Action in Government Operations Annual Progress Report](#) prepared by the Department of Finance.

The following greenhouse gas emissions are included in the APS Net Zero Emissions Reporting Framework and 2030 Target: carbon dioxide (CO₂); methane (CH₄); nitrous

oxide (N₂O); hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs); perfluorocarbons (PFCs); sulphur hexafluoride (SF₆); and nitrogen trifluoride (NF₃).

7. Interim Targets

At the time of publication, NHMRC is not required to establish interim targets. Any interim targets developed during the term of this ERP will be included in annual updates.

8. Broader Climate-Related Targets

In addition to the 2030 Target, NHMRC has set broader climate-related targets. Although these will not be measurable in terms of emissions reductions, they will support this ERP and contribute to achieving the 2030 Target.

Table 2 provides an outline of these targets. Progress will be monitored and reported annually through the ERP annual updates.

Table 2: Climate-Related Targets

Category	Measures	Responsibility	Timeframe
Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue regular communications to staff on environmental matters. Promote energy efficient workplace practices and sustainable behaviours e.g. composting. Encourage staff participation in sustainability initiatives e.g. National Ride2Work Day. 	Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Chief Operating Officer (as the Chief Sustainability Officer – CSO)	Ongoing
Travel	Promote virtual attendance and reduce non-essential business travel where practical.	CSO	Ongoing
Buildings	Support emissions free commuting e.g. by providing showers and lockers.	CSO	Ongoing
Research	Develop mechanisms to incorporate sustainability considerations into research policy.	Executive Director Research Foundations	Ongoing

9. Priorities and Actions

NHMRC's emissions reductions priorities are to transition to 100% renewable electricity and secure new energy-efficient office accommodation. Table 3 details the actions that will support these priorities.

Table 3: Emissions Reduction Actions

Type	Description	Target Date
Electricity*	Derive 80% of electricity from renewable sources.	January 2028
Accommodation	Move to offices in Canberra and Melbourne with at least a 5.5-star NABERS Energy rating.	June 2028
Accommodation	A net reduction in NHMRC's organisational footprint across its 2 offices.	November 2028
Electricity*	Derive 100% of electricity from renewable sources.	July 2029

* Notes

Achievement of these Actions will depend on the Whole-of-Australian-Government (WOAG) Electricity Services Arrangements process led by the Commonwealth Department of Finance.