



THE METHOD OF MEASUREMENT

Each year, the Green Building Council of Australia writes nearly a thousand letters to governments, attends hundreds of meetings with politicians and policy makers, prepares dozens of government submissions, and distributes a media release every week covering political, technical or industry issues.

With close working relationships with all three tiers of government, and a seat on every government round table on sustainability in the built environment, the GBCA's advocacy strategy is starting to pay off.

The GBCA's advocacy efforts are focused on five green building priorities, as more governments rely on Green Star

as the method of measurement to demonstrate accountability, financial responsibility and transparency, and ensure their buildings and communities are truly sustainable.

**State Government Office
– Dandenong Site C2**

6 Star Green Star – Office Design v3
6 Star Green Star – Office As Built v3

More governments rely on Green Star as the method of measurement to demonstrate accountability, financial responsibility and transparency, and ensure their buildings and communities are truly sustainable.



PRIORITY 1: PROVIDE VISIONARY GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP

One of the most influential ways for federal, state and local governments to demonstrate their green leadership is to commit to achieving Green Star ratings for all buildings they own, occupy or develop, whether offices, schools, hospitals or public buildings, and whether new developments, building refurbishments or interior fitouts. This demonstrates both financial responsibility and long-term thinking.

The Victorian and Queensland governments have both mandated minimum Green Star standards for their office accommodation, and the South Australian Government has mandated Green Star for all the buildings within its Bowden Urban Village development.

The Victorian Government's Environment Protection Authority achieved a 6 Star Green Star – Office Interiors v1.1 rating for its headquarters in late 2012. Victorian Minister for Climate Change and Environment, Ryan Smith, said that the Green Star rating represents world leadership in sustainable office fitouts, and that the EPA now has "a vibrant and healthy workspace that delivers on every aspect of environmental, social and economic sustainability."

Perth's Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority has also mandated Green Star for two major projects: the Perth City Link and Elizabeth Quay. "A Green Star rating is more than a buzz word, it is a valuable tool that is helping the property industry and redevelopment authorities like the East Perth Redevelopment Authority to demonstrate environmentally-sustainable best practice in its developments," says the MRA.



PRIORITY 2: RETROFIT AND IMPROVE EXISTING BUILDINGS

Greening the vast amount of existing building stock in Australia is an enormous challenge. State and territory governments are introducing a range of policy incentives to improve existing buildings' energy efficiency, reduce water use, widen the range of green building materials used and reduce construction and demolition waste.

The GBCA is working closely with politicians and policy makers in all jurisdictions to recognise the long-term value embedded in the built environment, and to unlock the opportunities within the nation's existing building stock through supportive policies and incentives such as environmental upgrade agreements and the use of the Green Star – Performance rating tool, due for release this year.

The Edmund Barton Building in Canberra, home of the Australian Federal Police, achieved 5 Star Green Star – Office Design and As Built v2 certification for a complete retrofit in 2009. Speaking at the Edmund Barton Building's re-opening, the Australian Federal Police's Commissioner, Tony Negus, said that "the building now houses over 2,000 people, and the 46,000 square metres of floor space has been completely re-fitted to provide the modern office and technical requirements of a 21st century law enforcement organisation. Importantly, a number of key environmental best practice initiatives were incorporated in the building's refurbishment," including double-glazing, new chilled beam air conditioning and energy-efficient lighting.



PRIORITY 3: GREEN EDUCATION AND HEALTHCARE FACILITIES

Every pupil has a right to fresh air, daylight and good indoor environment quality within a building that reflects long-term sustainability goals and financial responsibility. Governments are recognising the importance of green schools to enhance learning, reduce teacher turnover and absences, and support the community to live more sustainably.

Six government schools in the ACT are either certified or registered to achieve Green Star ratings, while a further six state schools in Queensland have achieved Green Star ratings. The Tasmanian Government has committed to Green Star benchmarks for all new public buildings, including schools and hospitals. The first project registered by the Tasmanian Government was the Jordan River Learning Federation's Senior School. Australian Greens Leader, Senator Christine Milne, has said: "Greener buildings are not only better for our environment, but they are much more pleasant to work and spend time in and they save money on energy bills. It's great that Jordan River Learning Federation's students will get the opportunity to learn both in and about these buildings."

Just as schools are going green, sustainability is emerging as a focus in the healthcare sector, as more patients and staff demand facilities that decrease average lengths of stay, reduce the spread of secondary infections and improve the health and wellbeing of healthcare professionals. ►

3

PRIORITY 3: GREEN EDUCATION AND HEALTHCARE FACILITIES

(Continued)

The South Australian Government achieved the first Green Star rating for a healthcare project, with the Flinders Medical Centre – New South Wing achieving 5 Star Green Star – Healthcare Design and As Built v1 ratings. Subsequently, the government committed to achieving a Green Star rating for the New Royal Adelaide Hospital, and promises that the “planning and construction of the hospital has been guided by stringent environmental standards and will embrace environmentally sustainable practices.”

4

PRIORITY 4: MOVE BEYOND BUILDINGS TO COMMUNITIES AND CITIES

The Green Star – Communities rating tool provides best practice benchmarks for delivering adaptable, liveable, prosperous and sustainable cities, communities and precincts.

The new rating tool was launched in June 2012 by Federal Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, Anthony Albanese, who said that Green Star – Communities “goes to the heart of what we are seeking to achieve with our National Urban Policy – and that is to make our cities more productive, sustainable and liveable. The Green Building Council of Australia is to be commended for developing this tool, which will be of vast help to governments, developers and the public who want the best information to guide their decisions about sustainability.”

State and territory governments are lining up to register their projects for Green Star – Communities PILOT ratings. ACT Deputy Chief Minister, Treasurer and Minister for Economic Development, Andrew Barr, has said: “The introduction of the Green Star – Communities rating tool can only continue to improve our standard of building and planning, and I look forward to the benefits of its implementation in future developments around the ACT.”

5

PRIORITY 5: EMBED GREEN SKILLS ACROSS ALL INDUSTRY TRAINING

The demand for ‘green collar workers’ across the economy continues to grow. To capitalise on these job opportunities, we must have the necessary skills. In much the same way that OH&S has become an integrated part of industry training, green skills must be embedded into curricula to ensure we develop better, safer, greener buildings and provide people with job opportunities and skills in a low-carbon economy.

The \$9 million Plumbing Industry Climate Action Centre in Victoria was created to expand the green plumbing sector and boost jobs and opportunities for the Victorian economy. At the time of opening, just 10 per cent of Victoria’s 20,000 plumbers had sufficient green skills to meet the growing demand for environmentally sustainable plumbing. The 5 Star Green Star – Education Design v1-rated centre tackles this skills gap head-on by delivering integrated education and training and providing a real-world example of innovative design and sustainable plumbing. ●



ANZ Centre 833 Collins

6 Star Green Star – Office Design v2

6 Star Green Star – Office As Built v2

6 Star Green Star – Office Interiors v1.1

Photography by Earl Carter