

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications**  
**Legislation Committee**  
Answers to questions on notice  
**Environment portfolio**

**Question No:** 140  
**Hearing:** Supplementary Budget Estimates  
**Outcome:** Corporate  
**Programme:** Corporate Strategies Division (CSD)  
**Topic:** The Australian Government ICT Sustainability Plan 2010-16 - Senator Madigan Inquiry  
**Hansard Page:** N/A  
**Question Date:** 30 October 2015  
**Question Type:** Written

**Senator Xenophon asked:**

1. In April 2014- the Department of the Environment appeared before the inquiry initiated by Senator Madigan and myself in which I asked:

“I do not know if you have had a chance to read Mr Hampton's evidence at all?”

...In which Mr Blake from the Department stated  
“we have”

...Mr Hampton's (the Chief Executive of the AFPA) evidence included:

“The domestic pulp and paper industry is rightly proud of its high environmental and social standards and is uniquely positioned to meet a range of related sustainability policies, such as the Australian government Information and Communications Technology Sustainability Plan and the National Waste Policy. I will address these things in just a moment. These policies are designed to restrict waste and encourage recycling in Australia, which should be an important consideration in the purchasing of consumables such as Australian office paper. Unfortunately, following a range of visits undertaken by our organisation to a number of Australian government departments here in Canberra, there does appear to be a general lack of appreciation and consideration of these factors in these important paper-purchasing decisions. We would therefore recommend that stronger measures be put in place to ensure the adequate consideration and implementation of the existing sustainability policies and guidelines within Australian government departments and agencies. This would go some way to ensuring that the high environmental standards and other environmental benefits from using Australian paper products are fully considered in purchasing decisions.”

2. Does the Department concede that they were aware of AFPA's position that they wanted the policy kept and enforced?

**Answer:**

1. The ICT Sustainability Plan 2010-15, which has now lapsed and was a guidance document only, encouraged, but did not mandate use of Australian recycled paper.
2. The Digital Transition Policy requires from 2011 that Commonwealth Government departments and agencies move record-keeping activities to digital formats.
  - a. All agencies are expected to comply with this policy by December 2015.
3. The Department of the Environment only buys 100% recycled copy paper and encourages other agencies to do the same.

4. The Finance Department's Commonwealth Procurement rules ensure environmental sustainability is part of the considerations in achieving the cost-effective use of resources in procurement decisions.
5. Minister Hunt has written to other Ministers to ask that, wherever possible, agencies use 100% recycled paper.
6. The Department acknowledges that Industry groups were generally supportive of the ICT Sustainability Plan 2010-2015. The Plan was completed as intended, and recycled paper continues to be supplied to agencies in accordance with the National Waste Policy.