

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

Question No: 142
Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates
Outcome: Corporate
Programme: Corporate Strategies Division (CSD)
Topic: The Australian Government ICT Sustainability Plan 2010-15 - Media Report
Hansard Page: N/A
Question Date: 30 October 2015
Question Type: Written

Senator Xenophon asked:

1. In a media report dated October 5, it says:
“A spokesperson for the Commonwealth's Department of the Environment said the plan was a ""guidance document"" which had now lapsed.”
Do you agree that this would seem to contradict an answer provided to me by Department of Environment in the Senate inquiry into Commonwealth Procurement Procedures which stated: “The Plan is government policy and compliance is mandatory for FMA Agencies...?”

Answer:

The ICT Sustainability Plan 2010-2015 itself was a procurement connected policy. It was a guidance document for departments and agencies and did not mandate the use of Australian recycled paper.

However, in accordance with Commonwealth Procurement Procedures, the use of the Whole of Government Stationary and Office Supplies Panel is mandatory for all Non-Corporate Commonwealth Entities subject to the PGPA Act. All suppliers on the Panel were required to supply copy paper to agencies in accordance with the ICT Sustainability Plan 2010 - 2015. They continue to supply recycled copy paper to agencies in accordance with the National Waste Policy.

The Australian Government strongly supports recycling and sustainable use of any products to prevent valuable materials going to landfill. Commonwealth Procurement Rules ensure environmental sustainability is part of the considerations in achieving the cost effective use of resources in procurement decisions.

The Department of the Environment only buys 100% recycled copy paper and encourages other agencies to do the same.