



Clayton Utz, Maddocks, DLA, Norton Rose reveal carbon foot

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EIGHT Australian law firms have switched the lights on how much electricity and energy consumption each year.

A new report reveals the environmental footprint of the firms, which include Clayton Utz, DLA Phil Davis York, Jackson McDonald, Maddocks, McCullough Robertson, Norton Rose Australia and Swaab

The report, Environmental Consumption of AusLSA Members 2009/10, will be launched next week, during the global EarthHour initiative encouraging all individuals and businesses to turn off all lights and just one hour on 26 March.

The report has been prepared by the Australian Legal Sector Alliance, a new national association working collaboratively to promote sustainability across the legal sector.

It utilises data submitted using the AusLSA Environmental Consumption Calculator (ECC), the only benchmark environmental reporting system for law firms in Australia.

The report reveals that electricity is the primary source of emissions for all firms, and that business travel is as the second offender. Travel by aeroplane accounted for an average of 23 per cent of total emissions. In terms of the variance between firms, the report found.

This suggests firms with multiple sites and those that have more regional-based clients have greater emissions.

Despite a raft of available systems and technologies to reduce paper consumption, the legal sector remains a consumer of paper, according to the report, and nearly 126kg of paper is consumed per employee each year.

The objective of the Report is to drive the reduction of consumption by law firms, said the Australian Legal Sector Alliance.

In the report the Joint Chairs of the AusLSA board, Kelvin O'Connor (COO, Henry Davis York) and David Rennick (CEO, Maddocks) said: "It is a brave decision for firms to publish their environmental performance alongside their peers and we commend them for this public commitment to continually improve their sustainability performance."

All Australian law firms are invited to become members of AusLSA. Members will be encouraged to submit their own environmental consumption report.

"With a clear understanding of environmental impacts, firms can identify areas to focus upon and then map the progression of their sustainability journey. The data will also contribute to the development of consumption benchmarks and best practice sustainability guidelines for the Australian legal sector," AusLSA said.

AusLSA will help firms improve their sustainability performance by providing a forum for members to openly share information on their sustainability successes and the challenges they have faced.