

AusLSA Reporting: Feedback from members

1. What was involved in the reporting process?

HW: It was pretty simple; just had to get in touch with the accounts team, who hold records of all statements, invoices, receipts etc. Responsibility for sourcing all the data was shared between the whole environment committee, so each person only had a little bit to do. Because we've been reporting for a while, people are generally in a good routine of flagging relevant statements/invoices and inputting the data into spreadsheets as they go, so there wasn't much to do.

LR: It was L&R's first year reporting, so it mainly involved sourcing historical data and pulling up all the info, invoices, statements on energy, water, electricity usage etc. Generally it was all very easy. The records were all there, and for things like travel and paper, we just had to contact the travel company and paper supplier and ask for a report.

2. How long did it take you to collect all the relevant data?

HW: Approx. 10-12 hours combined.

LR: Not very long; probably a couple of hours each day, over 3 days. So approx. 6 hours in total.

3. How long did it take you to fill out all the information for the report?

HW: 15 minutes! Very simple.

LR: About 2 minutes - it was so easy! The only thing that took time was collecting the information in the first place, but once it was all there, it took no time at all. And it will be even easier and quicker this year!

4. What was the biggest problem you encountered?

FB: Collecting data related to travel. Employees book their own flights using a number of different companies, so trying to source and collect all this data was very difficult. Again, they spend a lot of time trying to do this and work out if they had everything.

ME: Sourcing travel data, as mentioned above, was one of the main issues. They had a similar problem with paper consumption, as they outsource a lot of their printing etc, so took some time to get hold of all the data from the external sources.

6. Was the information collected for the report useful to you?

LR: Definitely. So helpful to be able to see how they're getting on, and what needs to be worked on. It will be even more helpful this year when they can compare the results to the last set, to see what progress has been made, or if any problems have arisen which need to be sorted out. But hopefully this won't be the case!

ME: Absolutely. Clients are constantly asking about ME's initiatives for reducing environmental footprint, and this is particularly relevant for work with banks and any big tenders. It's so important to have this information available and to be able to show that they are doing something about it.

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7. Has reporting made you think more carefully about your consumption?

LR: Yes. It's such an easy way to see where L&R are doing things well, and where they could put in more effort to reduce consumption. It's particularly helpful to see how other firms are doing, and to compare themselves to other similar sized firms to work out where they sit. If other firms have seen more impressive results, we know we need to improve our performance!

FB: Definitely. An important by-product of carbon reduction can be cost savings, which makes people pay attention. Since reporting last year FB Rice has implemented programmes to reduce carbon and have more ideas in the pipeline.

8. Now that you've done it once, and know what's involved, would you recommend reporting to other members? Any advice for members thinking about reporting?

HW: Yes. New reporting members should make sure that they try to keep good records of all invoices, statements, receipts etc throughout the whole year. It would also be an idea to keep spreadsheets and update them as information comes in.

ME: Yes - no reason not to! We would recommend ensuring that any members thinking about reporting have all their data records up to date, and log incoming data as soon as it comes in. That will make the reporting process much easier.

9. How did you communicate your reporting with AusLSA within your firm? Did you receive any feedback from your colleagues?

HW: There is an environment committee who updates everyone on these - through reports, email updates, presentations etc. There is also a dedicated environmental section on the website, and they use the AusLSA reporting logo so people are aware of that.

ME: All reporting and results are communicated both on the intranet and on the external internet. There is a Green Page dedicated to all things environmental, so any data or information is published there for all to see. They also communicate to staff on e.g. results and encouragement to reduce consumption via email.

10. Did you get sufficient support from AusLSA through the guidance documents, or from staff?

FB: Yes. The model was very easy to use, and had no problems whatsoever. The user guide was extremely comprehensive, and included lots of background as well as clear instructions on using the tool. Thought the mentoring scheme worked very well; it was great to have a point of contact for silly/technical questions - a very helpful resource that was used a few times!

Based on interviews with Scott Juza (Hall & Wilcox), Jenny Flintoff (Lander & Rogers), Lesley Tanswell (FB Rice) and Diana Owens (Minter Ellison) conducted by Hayley Roberts (AusLSA intern) during June 2012.