

Investing in effective environmental management

Summary

If your firm has decided to set goals for environmental improvement and commit to leadership, then your first key step should be to consider the benefits of developing an appropriately scoped environmental management system (EMS).

About AusLSA

The Australian Legal Sector Alliance (AusLSA) is Australia's industry-led association working collaboratively to promote sustainable practices across the legal sector.

AusLSA provides tools and resources to law firms that assist the implementation of programs and policies to improve their environmental and sustainability impact. Using a collaborative and inclusive approach has developed best practice sustainability guidelines for the Australian legal sector.

Each of the 40 Members of AusLSA have made a commitment to Sustainability and the AusLSA Principles, and are encouraged to report on their sustainability impacts in the AusLSA Annual Report [HERE](#).

About AusLSA's EMS

An EMS is an internationally recognised management approach to deliver on an organisation's environmental goals.

Increasingly management and key stakeholders are asking organisations to more clearly demonstrate their commitment and progress through the implementation of an EMS.

AusLSA, in partnership with Net Balance, has developed a law firm specific EMS program. The program was created to provide firms with access to an effective and efficient system to enable an appropriate standard to be reached by AusLSA member firms. This management system is both rigorous and appropriate for the environmental risks of a legal practice. A more detailed outline of AusLSA's EMS is available [HERE](#)

In 2020 AusLSA is releasing a new EMS platform for members that includes a greater level of guidance, and convenience. The online tool guides the sequential development of your EMS and captures all the information and evidence required to implement your environmental programs and to progress to certification when you are ready.

AusLSA currently engages EY to conduct independent reviews of participating firm's environmental management systems against the AusLSA standard. Firms who meet this standard are provided with an AusLSA EMS certification for a period of two years after which recertification is required.



There are currently five firms who have completed their AusLSA EMS and had it certified by EY and three firms who have recertified. In 2020 we expect a further five AusLSA members to complete their AusLSA environmental management systems.

1. Henry Davis York (prior to their merger)
2. Clayton Utz
3. Allen Linklaters
4. Gilbert and Tobin
5. King & Wood Mallesons

Additional Assistance is available

While the AusLSA EMS system makes it easier for firms to establish a high-quality EMS there is still a significant learning curve in developing the system. A combination of staff time, resources and experience is required to implement these programs as efficiently as possible. In a busy office this sometimes slows the commitment and uptake of EMS.

AusLSA has the capacity to provide additional support for EMS planning and implementation to a limited number of its members each year. This assistance allows for an increased pace of completion, greater levels of confidence during the process and, and an improved quality EMS that is ready for independent assessment and certification.

AEMS assistance is normally provided by Kelvin O'Connor from AusLSA. Kelvin was until recently the Chief Operating Officer at a large Australian law firm and has since been involved in certification of the AEMS at five law firms.

The assistance available from AusLSA is flexible and can be tailored to your preferences but we generally provide packaged assistance as follows.

Assistance Option One – \$1,200

One day worth of time planning and briefing for firm's project manager
Generally broken into four main interactions and deliverables:

1. Introduction to the EMS process and tools
2. Assistance with identification of the 'mandatory' elements of the EMS
3. Assistance with identification of your firm's material environmental risks
4. Assistance with identification of risk reduction measures already undertaken by your firm

Assistance Option two – \$2,400*

Two days includes

1. All elements of Option One plus,
2. Project manager training
3. Facilitation with your stakeholder group for risk and planning identification
4. Guidance and review of core documents

**This option has an optional additional travel component if the firm requires onsite assistance. All travel is to be costed by AusLSA based on location and approved by the firm in advance.*

Assistance Option Three - \$3,600*

Full option includes

1. All elements of Option Two
2. EMS development intensives with senior managers, and Environment Committee (held on site with key participants)
3. EMS document completion and checking
4. facilitating certification of the EMS with EY

**This option has a recommended additional travel component to provide onsite assistance. All travel is to be costed by AusLSA based on location and approved by the firm in advance.*

Contact us.

If you are interested in learning more about the options for AusLSA support to develop and implement our EMS please contact either

- Richard Jennings AusLSA, General Manager 0407 676 575 or
- Kelvin O'Connor AusLSA, Special Projects Leader 0409 515 505