

**SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT PRODUCT  
GUIDE  
OFFICE FURNITURE**



## ABOUT THE AUSTRALIAN PROCUREMENT AND CONSTRUCTION COUNCIL

Founded in 1967 the Australian Procurement and Construction Council Inc (APCC) (formerly the National Public Works Council) is the peak council of departments responsible for procurement, construction and asset management policy for the Australian, State and Territory governments and the New Zealand Government. The APCC reports to the Australian Procurement and Construction Ministerial Council (APCMC), comprising Ministers with direct responsibilities for procurement and construction matters. The APCMC is a Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Ministerial Council.

The APCC has established itself as a national reference point for both government and industry on best practices, principles and emerging issues in procurement, construction and asset management disciplines.

The APCC collective maximises opportunities to leverage off one another and provides leadership in these disciplines to improve and implement new and evolving procurement practices in ways that will deliver service benefits to the Australian and New Zealand communities.

The APCC forum is a catalyst for knowledge sharing, intelligence gathering and has the information networks to draw on for innovative business solutions for jurisdictions to deliver expected targets, savings and outcomes. The APCC collective continues to strengthen relationships with government partners and other stakeholders to promote a consistent and coordinated national approach to government procurement.

## ABOUT SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT

Sustainable procurement means that when buying goods and services organisations will consider:

- ◆ strategies to avoid unnecessary consumption and manage demand
- ◆ minimising environmental impacts of the goods and services over the whole-of-life of the goods and services
- ◆ suppliers' socially responsible practices including compliance with legislative obligations to employees
- ◆ value for money over the whole-of-life of the goods and services, rather than just initial cost.

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This guide is a reproduction of the QGCPO Sustainable Product Guide Office Furniture, available at [www.qgm.qld.gov.au](http://www.qgm.qld.gov.au)

as at December 2009

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## ABOUT THIS PRODUCT GUIDE

This Product Guide, together with *\*Assessing supplier sustainability credentials*, constitutes the sustainable procurement guidelines for office furniture for participating governments.

This guide is the first in the *Sustainable Procurement Product Guide* series, developed by the Australian Procurement and Construction Council (APCC).

Key sustainability issues resulting from the production and use of office furniture and suggested procurement responses have been identified based on a range of existing standards, ecolabels and guidance documents regarding sustainable procurement requirements. This Guide does not provide a detailed life cycle analysis, nor an assessment of any one product or type of product.

## PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

This document aims to provide minimum and best, practice performance information and procurement responses for office furniture. Its purpose is to influence procurement of office furniture that has improved sustainability outcomes over its life cycle.

Information within this document is intended to guide procurement professionals in considering and integrating sustainability principles into their procurement processes, and to guide industry as to government expectations in relation to sustainability of office furniture.

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Sustainability considerations should be incorporated at every stage of the procurement process. Opportunities and strategies exist to address environmental and social impacts during procurement planning (including demand analysis), tender process and contract management phase. The procurement process is described in more detail in *Implementing sustainable procurement criteria* on page 19 of this Guide.

The suggested criteria contained in this guide may be applied at any stage of the process. The interpretation, modification and suitability of the criteria must be considered by the contract manager at the time of planning a procurement arrangement. Consideration should also be given to where in the procurement process they should be applied for maximum benefit.

The suggested specifications will not be suitable for all government agencies, nor relevant in all markets or procurement contexts. The sustainable procurement responses may be affected by factors including market readiness, availability of supply, product complexity and maturity, and organisational needs. Each procurement arrangement will be different.

This Guide is commodity specific (office furniture) and should be used in consultation with supplier-related sustainability criteria identified in *\*Assessing supplier sustainability credentials*.

## DISCLAIMER

In preparing this Guide, every effort has been made to use the most credible and accurate sources of information available. APCC disclaims any responsibility for inadvertent errors. Where errors or inaccuracies are brought to the attention of APCC, a reasonable effort will be made to correct them.

Reference made to any specific standard, label, product or supplier does not constitute endorsement.

The most current version of this Guide is available at [www.apcc.gov.au](http://www.apcc.gov.au).

Users of this guide are ultimately responsible to check the latest legal requirements. Specifications, best practices or benchmarks included in this Guide may have changed since publication of the current version.

## **INTRODUCTION TO OFFICE FURNITURE**

### **SCOPE**

For the purposes of this Guide, office furniture includes the following categories of final ready-to-use products: bookcases, circular tables, conference tables, credenzas, desks, drawer pedestals, filing cabinets, hutches, meeting tables, metal products and accessories, office seating (task chairs), printer cabinets, returns, screens, storage cabinets, visitor chairs, wall units and workstations.

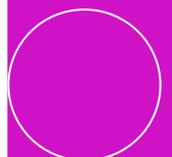
It does not include building products such as panels, carpets, fabrics, or office supplies.

### **FITNESS FOR PURPOSE**

For the purposes of this Guide, it is assumed that the product shall be fit for its intended application and the purpose for which it was manufactured. The product must be accompanied by warranty periods emphasising durability performance.

Products are assumed to be certified by Australian Standards or be approved by an acceptable overseas organisation.

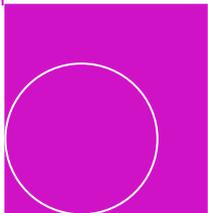
\* *Assessing supplier sustainability credentials* is available on the APCC website.



## OFFICE FURNITURE: SUMMARY OF SUSTAINABILITY IMPACTS AND RESPONSES

| Material sourcing and material choice   | Manufacturing process   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>1. Timber sourcing</b></p> <p>Procure legally sourced timber for all wood and wood-based materials.</p>   | <p><b>5. Impacts during manufacturing process</b></p> <p>Procure office furniture manufactured by a company with an appropriate system of environmental management.</p> |
| <p><b>2. Renewable and recycled content of office furniture</b></p> <p>Procure office furniture with recycled materials content and those manufactured from renewable resources.</p>                                      |   |
| <p><b>3. Hazardous substances used in the production of office furniture</b></p> <p>Procure furniture from suppliers that can demonstrate an elimination of hazardous substances in the furniture production process.</p> |   |
| <p><b>4. Ethical sourcing</b></p> <p>Procure furniture from manufacturers that apply fair employment practices and ensure raw materials be ethically sourced.</p>   |   |

| Packaging and transport   | Operational use   | End-of-life management   |
|---|---|--|
| <p><b>6. Transport intensity</b><br/>Procure office furniture that can demonstrate reduced transport intensity during manufacturing, sourcing of components and distribution of final product.</p> <p><b>7. Packaging</b><br/>Ensure packaging for the furniture that is procured contains recycled content, is recyclable and contains no toxic substances that can have severe environmental or health impacts.</p> | <p><b>8. Indoor environment quality</b><br/>Procure office furniture with reduced emission (offgassing) levels.</p> | <p><b>9. Life extension options</b><br/>Procure furniture that offers life extension options.</p> <p><b>10. Extended producer responsibility</b><br/>Procure office furniture that comes from manufacturer/supplier who offers a product take back/buy back service and a post-consumer recycling management strategy.</p> |



## SUGGESTED CRITERIA

### MATERIAL SOURCING AND MATERIAL CHOICE

#### 1. Timber Sourcing

**ISSUE:** Timber sourced from unsustainable or illegal forests may create adverse environmental and social impacts such as loss of biodiversity, soil erosion and degradation.

**RESPONSE:** Procure legally sourced timber for all wood and wood-based materials.

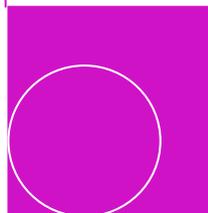
| Minimum performance criteria   | Best practice performance criteria  |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Minimum specification:</b></p> <p>Offerors are required to demonstrate that all timber and composite timber products used in the manufacture of office furniture products must be legally sourced.</p> <p>The following evidence will be accepted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ certificates of chain of custody for the wood certified as FSC1, PEFC2 or any other equivalent means of proof will be accepted as proof of compliance; or</li> <li>♦ a voluntary tracing system in place which may be 3<sup>rd</sup> party certified as part of ISO9001:2008 and/or ISO 14001:2004 or EMAS management system; or</li> <li>♦ a declaration that includes the origin and species of the wood and a declaration that the timber or wood product is from a legally-harvested forest; or</li> <li>♦ in specific cases, where the evidence provided is not considered sufficient to prove compliance contracting authorities may ask suppliers for additional evidence based documentation.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Best practice specification:</b></p> <p>Offerors are required to demonstrate that all timber and composite timber products used in the manufacture of office furniture products must be sourced from sustainably managed forests.</p> <p>The percentage of the final product made of wood, wood fibres or wood particles stemming from forests must be verified as being sustainably managed.</p> <p>Certificates of chain of custody for the wood fibres certified from any one, or a combination of the following must be provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ post-consumer re-used timber i.e. not virgin</li> <li>♦ Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified timber</li> <li>♦ Australian Forest Certification Scheme (AFCS) certified timber</li> <li>♦ chain of custody certification under an equivalent standard, such as those recognised by the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC) Council.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Contract performance clause</b></p> <p>All offered products must contain legally sourced timber.</p>   |   |
| <p>References: 1, 3, 6 (see page 22).</p>  |   |

## 2. Renewable and recycled content of office furniture

**ISSUE:** Office furniture that contains a high content of renewable and/or recycled materials avoids the depletion of non-renewable resources such as metals and petrochemical based plastics. Renewable and recyclable materials include timber (sourced from sustainable forests) recycled metals and recycled plastics.

**RESPONSE:** Procure office furniture with recycled material content and those manufactured from renewable resources

| Minimum performance criteria   | Best practice performance criteria  |
|--|---|
| <p>None currently expected to be met by the majority of the supply market.</p> | <p><b>Best practice specification:</b></p> <p>Offerors are required to provide products with reduced demand for virgin raw steel/aluminium/alloy materials and virgin plastics and therefore the final product needs to contain at least one or both of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ a percentage by weight (at least 5%) of recycled material content of wood-based materials, metals and/or plastics</li> <li>◆ a percentage by weight of renewable resource content (i.e. timber) that has been used in place of non-renewable resource content such as metal or plastic.</li> </ul> <p>Offerors must provide an appropriate test report by a third party/independent body where the recycled content and/or renewable resource content percentage by weight has been verified.</p> |
| <p><b>References: 2, 3, 4 (see page 22).</b></p>                               |   |



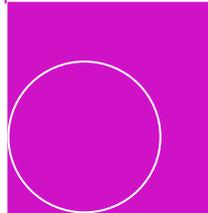
### 3. Hazardous substances used in the production of office furniture

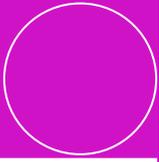
**ISSUE:** Hazardous substances used in the manufacture of office furniture, primarily in timber treatment as well as in textile, leather and glass manufacture, pose environmental and health impacts to manufacturers and end users.

**RESPONSE:** Eliminate key hazardous substances used in the manufacture of office furniture.

| Minimum performance criteria   | Best practice performance criteria  |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Minimum specification:</b></p> <p><b>Timber preservation:</b></p> <p>Offerors are required to demonstrate that all wood preservatives used are approved and registered for use by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) for the intended purpose of the product</p> <p>Additionally, timber used in furniture products must not be treated or impregnated with fungicides or insecticides that are classified due to their hazardous nature by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) as Group 1 or Group 2A. Offerors must provide documentation not more than three years old identifying any fungicides or insecticides that are used, and demonstrating that these have been checked against IARC lists and confirmed not to be on the Group 1 or 2A lists.</p> <p><b>Leather:</b></p> <p>Offerors are required to provide a copy of current valid AFRDI Standard 146 certificate if leather constitutes more than 1% by weight of the furniture as required by the Australasian Furnishing Research and Development Institute (AFRDI) Standard 146 Leather for Furniture.</p> <p><b>Glass:</b></p> <p>Offerors must provide copies of glazing specifications not more than three years old that demonstrate that none of the prohibited glass types has been included in the furniture. Prohibited glass types include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ lead glazing, (lead) crystal/flint glass, wire reinforced glass, (plastic) laminated glass or glass that has not been toughened</li> <li>◆ mirror glass may be used but the metal coating used must not contain more than 0.2% by weight lead and/or copper.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Best practice specification:</b></p> <p><b>Surface coating of wood, plastic and/or metal parts:</b></p> <p>Offeror/manufacturer must present a list with all surface treatment substances used for each material present in the furniture and their Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) demonstrating that the product does not contain hazardous substances that are classified according to Directive 1999/45/EC as carcinogenic (R40, R45, R49), harmful to the reproductive system (R60, R61, R62, R63), mutagenic (R46, R68), toxic (R23, R24, R25, R26, R27, R28, R51), allergenic when inhaled (R42) or harmful to the environment (R50, R50/53, R51/53, R52, R52/53, R53), cause heritable genetic damage (R46), danger of serious damage to health by prolonged exposure (R48), possible risks of irreversible effects (R68).</p> <p><b>All components:</b></p> <p>Offerors must provide a written statement of compliance signed by the applicant's most senior decision maker identifying potentially hazardous substances added or used in materials and production processes including Chemical Abstracts Services (CAS) numbers, Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs), No Observable Adverse Effects Levels (NOAEL) and Risk (R) phrases where available. These substances include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ fluorine, elemental chlorine, pentachlorophenol (PCP), tar oils</li> <li>◆ halogenated organic substances or solvents, aniline based amines.</li> </ul> |

| Minimum performance criteria  | Best practice performance criteria |
|---|------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Polyurethane foams:</b></p> <p>Offerors must provide a technical dossier of the manufacturer or a test report from a recognised body stating that blowing agents of polyurethane foams (PUR-foams) do not contain CFC, HCFC, HFC or methylene chloride.</p> <p><b>All other components:</b></p> <p>Offerors must provide written statement of compliance signed by the applicant's most senior decision maker that identifies potentially hazardous substances added or used in materials and production processes including Chemical Abstracts Services (CAS) numbers, Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs), No Observable Adverse Effects Levels (NOAEL), Risk (R) phrases and IARC Groups 1 or 2A where available. These substances include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ arsenic, cadmium, copper, lead, and mercury</li> <li>◆ phthalates DEHP, DBP, DAP or BBP, aziridine or polyaziridines, PBDE or short-chain chlorinated organic flame retardants</li> <li>◆ contain carcinogenic substances in IARC Group 1 or 2A.</li> </ul> |                                    |
| <p><b>Contract performance clause</b></p> <p>All offered goods and their components must not contain any of the prohibited substances listed in the above specification. At any point during the term of the said contract should constituents of the furniture change, it is the responsibility of the supplier/manufacturer to disclose the information to the contract manager.</p>  |                                    |
| <p>References: 1, 4, 3 (see page 22).</p>   |                                    |





#### 4. Ethical sourcing

**ISSUE:** Ensuring that manufacturers (nationally and internationally) apply fair employment practices to workforce employees and subcontractors, as well as ensuring that trade and sourcing of animals for material does not threaten their survival, especially considering endangered status of certain species.

**RESPONSE:** Manufacturers apply fair employment practices and raw materials must be ethically sourced.

| Minimum performance criteria  | Best practice performance criteria |
|---|------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Minimum specification:</b></p> <p><b>Fair employment practices:</b></p> <p>Offerors must demonstrate that imported content is not sourced from overseas companies/sources that are known to employ under-age children in their manufacturing processes in breach of ILO convention and that they have not been convicted in Australia for unsafe work practices under occupational, health and safety laws or have been found to have breach minimum employment awards.</p> <p>Documented workplace practices based on ILO core conventions and certified to SA 8000 or similar must be provided to demonstrate compliance with the requirement above.</p> <p><b>Ethical sourcing of materials:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Offerors must provide documented evidence that animals used for materials in the production of office furniture is not listed as endangered, threatened with extinction or subject to controlled trade in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) appendices I or II.</li> </ul> |                                    |
| <p><b>Contract performance clause</b></p> <p>Animals used for materials in the production of office furniture is not listed as endangered, threatened with extinction or subject to controlled trade in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) appendices I or II. The supplier must immediately notify if the manufacturer has any conviction under Australian work practices and occupational, health and safety laws, or have been found to have breached minimum employment awards.</p>  |                                    |
| <p>Reference: 1 (see page 22).</p>  |                                    |

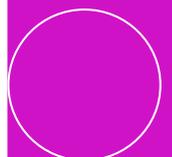
## MANUFACTURING PROCESS

### 5. Impacts during manufacturing process

**ISSUE:** Manufacturing processes can be resource intensive using energy, water and raw materials and resulting in emissions to air, water and land including greenhouse gases. This is particularly relevant to office furniture that is manufactured using steel and aluminium, which have high levels of embodied energy.

**RESPONSE:** Procure office furniture manufactured by a company that has an appropriate system of environmental management.

| Minimum performance criteria   | Best practice performance criteria  |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Minimum specification:</b></p> <p>Offorer/manufacture is required to demonstrate that the furniture manufacturing facility operates in accordance with an appropriate system of environmental management. The following evidence must be provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ a copy of current documentation that formally demonstrates a system of environmental management is operating within the company, especially including framework for action for energy, water and waste management. The system of environmental management may be ISO 14001 certified, in which case, a copy of the valid certificate is to be provided.</li> <li>♦ a copy of the manufacturer's, and any component supply manufacturer's, energy management policy, water management policy, waste management policy and/or details of the company's energy, water and waste management programs.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Best practice specification:</b></p> <p>Offeror must demonstrate that all manufacture facilities are supplied with at least 10% Green Power and progressing to 20% by 2020 as per Renewable Energy Bill by providing a copy of the manufacturer electricity supply contracts or billing information outlining the percentage usage of certified Green Power</p> <p>Offerors must demonstrate that products, including not less than 50% of components by weight, are manufactured in a facility that demonstrates effective energy, water and waste management outcomes beyond policy and procedure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Evidence, such as facility energy, water and waste performance reports, that clearly quantifies the effectiveness of the relevant energy, water and waste management policies and usage programs, and is publicly available, will be accepted.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Contract performance clause</b></p>  |   |
| <p>Offerors must provide or be able to demonstrate that an appropriate system of environmental management is in place and currently in practice.</p>   |   |
| <p>Reference: 1 (see page 22).</p>   |   |



## PACKAGING AND TRANSPORT

### 6. Transport intensity

**ISSUE:** Office furniture transported over long distances may have higher carbon impacts than products available locally. The severity of carbon impacts is related to the method of transportation used, for example air transport has a higher carbon impact than road transport.

**RESPONSE:** Procure office furniture that can demonstrate reduced transport intensity during manufacturing, sourcing of components and distribution of final product.

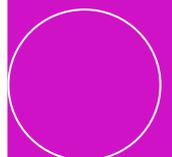
| Minimum performance criteria   | Best practice performance criteria   |
|--|--|
| <p>None currently expected to be met by the majority of the supply market.</p> | <p><b>Best practice specification:</b></p> <p>Manufacturers/suppliers are to provide one of the following forms of verification, listed in order of preference demonstrating that office furniture and components have reduced transport intensity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ a calculation showing the transport intensity of offered products through its supply chain</li> <li>◆ local sourcing of furniture and all key components</li> <li>◆ quantifiable evidence and reporting that strategies have been developed to help carriers save fuel, reduce air pollution and mitigate emissions, such as environmentally desirable fuels in shipping/delivery fleets, or abiding by the National Environment Protection (Diesel Vehicle Emissions) Measure</li> <li>◆ freight management policy is publicly available and in practice.</li> </ul> |
| <p>References: 1, 5 (see page 22).</p>   |  |

## 7. Packaging

**ISSUE:** Packaging made from virgin resources depletes natural resources and can contribute to landfill. It may also contain toxic substances.

**RESPONSE:** Minimise the amount of packaging used and ensure it does not contain toxic substances that have severe environmental or health impacts.

| Minimum performance criteria   | Best practice performance criteria  |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Minimum specification:</b></p> <p>Offerors must provide detail of any initiatives to minimise amount of packaging used.</p> <p>Offerors must provide a written declaration that the packaging used is readily recycled, made out of locally recyclable packaging material.</p> <p>All packaging materials must be easily separable by hand into recyclable parts consisting of one material to aid recycling (e.g. plastic, paper, cardboard).</p> <p>Offerors must provide a written description of the product packaging together with a corresponding declaration showing that no toxic, carcinogenic or hazardous substances that are classified carcinogenic under the IARC or are harmful to the physical and marine environment (containing Risk Phrases R50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58 and 59) have been used in product's packaging.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The declaration may be a manufacturer Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) with appropriate Chemical Abstract Services (CAS) numbers or a signed declaration from the packaging manufacturer's most senior decision maker.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Best practice specification:</b></p> <p>Offerors/manufacturers must provide a packaging take back scheme upon delivery of office furniture.</p> <p>Offerors must provide a written description of the product packaging together with a corresponding declaration showing that chlorinated or halogenated plastics are not used in product packaging.</p> |
| <p><b>Contract performance clause</b></p> <p>All packaging used are required to not contain environmentally toxic or possibly carcinogenic substances as per specification.</p>  |   |
| <p>References: 1, 3, 4 (see page 22).</p>  |   |



## OPERATIONAL USE

### 8. Indoor environment quality

**ISSUE:** Offgassing results from the following substances used to manufacture furniture and emitted during its use; formaldehyde and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) from wooden surfaces, coatings, textiles (dyes), metal, wood and plastic lamination, wood impregnation, finishing processes in tanneries and degreasing processes. These can adversely affect indoor air quality, which may have a direct adverse health impact on employees. Health effects that may result from these emissions can range from irritation to the throat, eyes and noise, nausea, headaches, loss of coordination to cancer.

**RESPONSE:** Procure office furniture with reduced emission (offgassing) levels.

#### Minimum performance criteria

##### Minimum specification:

Formaldehyde:

Offerors must provide a third party or independent testing showing timber to be compliant with E1 AS/NZS 2269:2004 (plywood, laminate and veneer products), AS/NZS 1859.1:2004 (particleboard or fibreboard products), AS/NZS 1859.2:2004 (MDF products).

The test methods must comply with relevant standards – plywood, laminate and veneer products (AS/NZS 2098.11:2005); particleboard or fibreboard products (AS/NZS 4266.16:2004); MDF products (AS/NZS 4266.16:2004).

Offerors must demonstrate that:

- ◆ formaldehyde content in glues do not exceed 1% water weight (w/w)
- ◆ emissions in wood must demonstrate a level below 1.0ppm (mg/L) of formaldehyde
- ◆ each timber component with a distinctive material specification must be formally proven to be compliant with E1 Grade as per AS/NZS 2269:2004
- ◆ all substrate edges are sealed for surface laminations and treatments onto wood-based panels.

Volatile organic compounds (VOCs):

Offeror must provide third party or independent VOC testing compliant to ASTM D6670-01 (2007).

VOC requirements for each component material/final product must be <0.5mg/hr per item/m<sup>2</sup>.

VOC content of adhesives used in the assembly of furniture must not exceed 10% by weight.

#### Best practice performance criteria

##### Best practice specification:

Formaldehyde:

Offerors must provide a third party or independent testing showing timber to be compliant with E0 or Super E0 AS/NZS 2269:2004 (plywood, laminate and veneer products), AS/NZS 1859.1:2004 (particleboard or fibreboard products), AS/NZS 1859.2:2004 (MDF products)

- ◆ The test methods used must comply with relevant standards – plywood, laminate and veneer products (AS/NZS 2098.11:2005); particleboard or fibreboard products (AS/NZS 4266.16:2004); MDF products (AS/NZS 4266.16:2004).

#### Contract performance clause

All offered products and their components must comply with formaldehyde and VOC content specifications.

References: 3, 4 (see page 22).

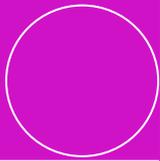
## END OF LIFE MANAGEMENT

### 9. Life extension options

**ISSUE:** Increasing the reuse, recycling and refurbishment of office furniture as a whole or its parts will assist in the reduction of demand. This has flow-on economic and environmental benefits.

**RESPONSE:** Procure office furniture that offers life extension options.

| Minimum performance criteria  | Best practice performance criteria  |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Minimum specification:</b></p> <p><b>Warranty and product/part replacements:</b><br/>Offeror/manufacturer must offer a minimum guarantee of seven years on the quality of the entire product provided the product is used according to its intended functional use; this guarantee shall be valid from the date of delivery to the end-consumer.</p> <p>Documentation must be provided at point of purchase from manufacturer/supplier confirming parts of products that are subject to wear have functionally compatible replacements that will be guaranteed for a period of at least five years.</p> <p><b>Modularity and recyclability:</b><br/>Offeror must be able to demonstrate that furniture is modular, efficient and effective to dismantle, refurbish and recycle, by providing documentary evidence from the manufacturer/supplier confirming that non-technical personnel using commonly available, non-specialist tools, can easily disassemble the product.</p> <p>Offerors must also provide documentation from the manufacturer/supplier providing specific information about how to maximise product life through straightforward (and low cost) maintenance and repair procedures, including associated instruction sets for any indivisible component part of a sub-assembly, weighing more than 150 grams (excluding textiles).</p> <p>Offerors are required to provide a statement from the manufacturer confirming that the product is designed for disassembly and recycling, including a description which includes diagrams/pictures of how the product can be disassembled and recycled and identifying the amount of the product designed for disassembly and recycling by percentage mass.</p> | <p><b>Best practice specification:</b></p> <p>Warranty and product/part replacements:<br/>Offerors/manufacturer must offer a minimum guarantee of ten years on the quality of the entire product provided the product is used according to its intended functional use; this guarantee shall be valid from the date of delivery to the end-consumer.</p> <p>This guarantee must ensure that total product refurbishment and re-use, functionally compatible replacements for parts of a product which are subject to wear, e.g. hinges, locks, table leaves, is guaranteed for a period of at least seven years (from the point of replacement).</p> <p><b>Modularity and recyclability:</b><br/>Offeror shall not provide built-in furniture and joinery items should be used unless functionally necessary.</p> |
| <p><b>Contract performance clause</b></p> <p>All offered products must have specific life extension options available during the Term of Arrangement.</p>   |   |
| <p>References: 1, 4, 5 (see page 22).</p>   |   |



### 10. Extended producer responsibility

**ISSUE:** Products and materials that are disposed of prematurely without refurbishment, recycling or reuse, leads to under utilisation of natural resources and increased landfill demand including exposure of hazardous and/ or toxic waste.

**RESPONSE:** Procure office furniture from manufacturer/supplier who offers a product take back/buy back service and a post-consumer recycling management strategy.

| Minimum performance criteria  | Best practice performance criteria  |
|---|---|
| None currently expected to be met by the majority of the supply market. | <p><b>Best practice specification:</b></p> <p>Offerors must provide a copy of publicly available detailed product stewardship program, signed by the manufacturer/supplier’s most senior decision maker and publicly available, outlining specific product take back/buy back services (covering collection, disassembly, re-use and/or recycling services) including a description of product and/or component and/or material.</p> <p>This program should also clearly indicate the proportion of components that has to be sent to landfill because it is neither functionally reusable, recyclable or able to be further refurbished.</p> |
| Reference: 1 (see page 22).   |   |

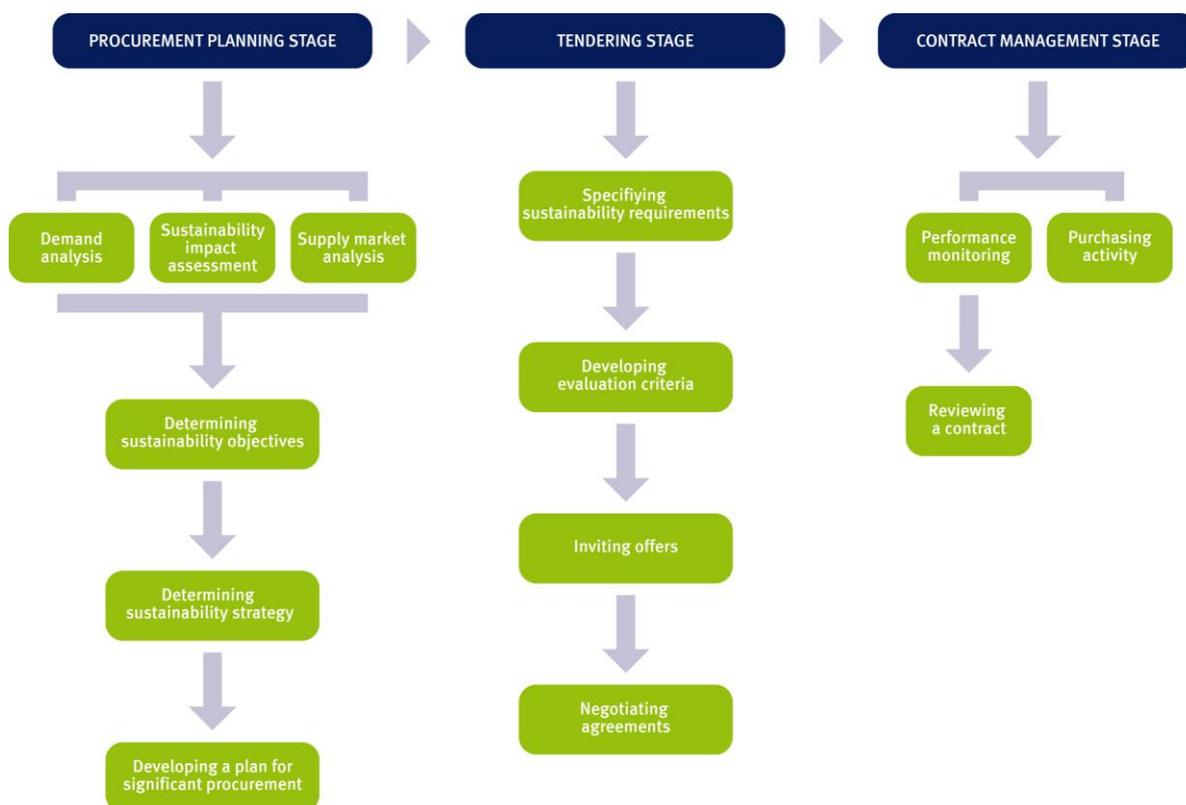
## IMPLEMENTING SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT CRITERIA

Sustainability considerations should be incorporated at every stage of the procurement process. Opportunities and strategies exist to address environmental and social impacts during procurement planning (including demand analysis), tender process and contract management phase. Figure 1 below outlines the stages of the procurement process.

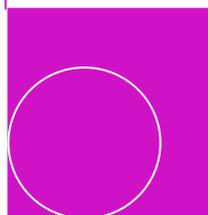
The information contained within this Guide can be applied at various points within this process to integrate sustainability considerations. There may be an opportunity to achieve sustainability outcomes by using different mechanisms at one or more stages within the procurement process. It is necessary to consider the specific market conditions and organisational needs prior to deciding if and where in the procurement process to apply these criteria.

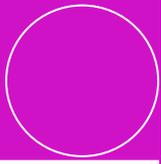
It is envisaged that most of the information contained in this guide will be used to assist with the sustainability impact assessment stage and may be used to specify sustainability requirements. Specifications should be utilised as part of a comprehensive, overarching approach to addressing sustainability impacts. The options and decisions for how sustainability will be addressed in the procurement process should be documented in a business case or a plan for significant procurement.

**Figure 1: Key stages of sustainable procurement**



The following offers a summary of the key stages within the procurement process to which information in this guide may be applied. For further, detailed information about integrating sustainability principles within the procurement process see (link to SP process guide).





## PLANNING AND PRE-TENDER STAGE

Information collected at the pre-tender stage can be used to identify whether the supply chain has the capacity to deliver the products in accordance with requirements.

This is also the stage in which opportunities for collaboration between government and industry/specific suppliers can be identified. Pre-tender supplier briefings provide an opportunity to engage potential suppliers, identify existing sustainable products and develop an overall understanding of the market's sustainability performance and capability. This will assist in determining whether the recommended minimum performance criteria identified in this Guide are sufficient or if the best practice performance criteria is more suitable.

Sustainability issues identified in this Guide can also be used in the development of the pre-tender questionnaire for discussions with potential suppliers.

For example, in the case of office furniture, pre-tender supplier briefings could be used to inform potential suppliers that sourcing of sustainable timber that has been certified by a recognised standard is preferable or mandatory.

Pre-qualification of suppliers is another procurement strategy for consideration during the pre-tender stage. Minimum performance criteria could be used to determine pre-qualification of suppliers, for example, only suppliers that can demonstrate that timber is legally sourced will be evaluated.

## DEMAND ANALYSIS

Considering sustainability at an early stage of procurement decision-making may identify opportunities to specify requirements in a way that will lead to improved sustainability outcomes. Importantly, rethinking the need for the purchase can help avoid unnecessary consumption.

This analysis should be carried out for both one-off and repeat contractual purchases.

It is important to consider both the 'need' for the commodity and how the use of the commodity is being managed. Ultimately, significant procurement planning is directly linked to user actions. For example:

- ◆ explore opportunities to not buy – this may be particularly relevant to temporary office accommodation:
  - are there opportunities to reuse or refurbish existing furniture
  - could second-hand furniture be utilised
  - is there access to redundant furniture either within the agency, groups of agencies or whole-of-Government
  - can the quantity of the products procured be reduced whilst achieving the same output, through job or desk sharing
- ◆ increase standardisation such as colour scheme and limit the model range for ease of redistribution, repair, reuse and replacement
- ◆ utilise modular designs and structures to facilitate multiple use, replacement and repair
- ◆ ensure the product and its components are able to be made available firstly for refurbishment and reuse (which may be onselling), secondly recycling, and as a last resort be disposed of cleanly and effectively
- ◆ ensure agencies' asset management plans clearly address sustainability impacts as well as measures to improve sustainability outcomes including demand management
- ◆ consider behavioural and cultural changes, for example:
  - status/entitlement issues - remove furniture from reward (no automatic replacement with change of role)
  - discontinue the practice of year-end budget spending on furniture.

## GO TO MARKET/TENDERING STAGE

The 'go to market' or tendering stage is an effective stage in the procurement process to integrate sustainability criteria.

Minimum performance criteria may be set as mandatory specifications and best practice performance criteria may be set as desirable specifications. It is important that adequate market research be conducted to ensure that 'mandatory' requirements are able to be delivered by the potential suppliers. Suppliers who do not meet the mandatory specifications are not evaluated during the tendering process.

Best practice performance criteria are those that relate to industry leaders in the sustainability field. The use of these criteria will help in differentiating the best performers, and by definition, it is unlikely that all suppliers will be able to compete on this level. Using best practice performance criteria provides a market for more sustainable products.

Consideration must be given to the fact that specifying for best practices may incur a price differential. Questions should identify whether or not there is a price differential in the upfront cost and whether ongoing savings maybe realised over the life of the product. This can then be incorporated into the full value for money assessment. It may be that the whole-of-life environmental, social and economic gains that derive from improved sustainability outcomes warrant an increased upfront cost.

## CONTRACT MANAGEMENT STAGE

Performance monitoring is essential throughout the life of the contract to ensure the supplier continues to perform according to the agreed specifications and conditions of contract. As part of the contract management process, sustainability should be carefully monitored and assessed alongside quality, delivery, service and price. The sustainability considerations addressed during the contract management stage are those that have been identified in the procurement planning and strategy phase.

Effective contract management provides an avenue to improve sustainability outcomes which could not be delivered through the specifications and tender evaluation processes alone. If it is determined at the specification of contract stage that the potential supplier does not have a capability or capacity to meet the sustainability requirements at that point in time, sustainability criteria may be set as part of key performance indicators (KPIs) over the duration of the contract/arrangement.

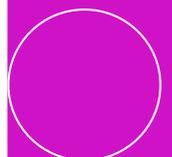
This will ensure suppliers implement progressive sustainability improvements during the term of the arrangement. Best practice performance criteria could be used to progress a supplier down the path of best practice via continuous improvement over time.

## REPORTING AND MEASUREMENT

Contract reporting requirements should specifically demonstrate the environmental and social benefits achieved by procuring sustainable products (in preference to) those of the standard product. Examples include reduced procurement costs through effective demand analysis and management, reduced consumption of raw materials, improved climate change impacts, improved health of employees and the community through reduced hazardous substances and more efficient use of limited resources.

The supplier's performance must be assessed and measured against pre-determined sustainability KPIs.

Measurements of sustainability performance could include improvements in use of sustainably sourced timber, reduced hazardous materials including VOCs, as well as reduced volumes of waste and improvements in energy efficiency.



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