



# TRANSPORT

## For Small and Medium Enterprises (SME's)



### Climate Change

Climate change caused by greenhouse gases is one of the most serious challenges facing our community. Human actions—particularly burning fossil fuels (coal, oil and natural gas) and land clearing—are generating more greenhouse gases. These additional greenhouse gases trap more heat and raise the earth's surface temperature. This is called the enhanced greenhouse effect—it causes global warming and is changing our climate. The impacts of climate change will have social, environmental and economic consequences that will affect all communities across the globe.

### Why Small and Medium Enterprises

Greenhouse gas abatement is not just for the big end of town. Climate change will affect all of us and therefore it is to everyone's benefit to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Most measures to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions will save you money in the long term, increasing profitability. Some measures will even help to improve productivity and the marketability of your business. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions should be seen as an opportunity to provide your business with a strong business advantage.

### Transport

Transport is a central part of every business, whether it involves staff travelling to and from work or managing a vehicle fleet as part of your business activity. Vehicles are a key contributor to greenhouse gas emissions so making positive changes to your business travel habits can produce significant benefits. When considering how to begin to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the use of vehicles you will need to investigate the five categories of workplace travel:

1. Commuter travel—How do staff get to and from work?
2. Work travel—Where and how do staff travel during work hours?
3. Goods travel—How are goods delivered to and from your site?
4. Visitor travel—How do visitors and clients arrive at your business?
5. Fleet vehicles—What is the primary purpose of your vehicle fleet?

Considering these can help you to identify opportunities to reduce your greenhouse emissions across all of the five listed areas of business travel. Additionally there are a number of web sites that will guide you

through a detailed step-by-step process, to create a green travel plan for your business.

[www.travelsmart.gov.au](http://www.travelsmart.gov.au)

[www.environment.gov.au/settlements/transport/](http://www.environment.gov.au/settlements/transport/)

### Reducing Travel

Whether your travel involves deliveries to customers or meetings with clients, the easiest way to save on travel is to reduce the number of trips or minimise the trip distance required.

**Plan ahead.** By planning ahead you may be able to combine several trips. When ordering goods to be delivered to you, see if you can combine orders or organise a bulk order to reduce the number of trips required.

**Optimise the route.** Carefully planning to minimise distances travelled on your travel route can give you great savings. This applies equally to staff travelling to and from work and for work related travel.

**Time your trips.** Try and make your appointments outside of peak times and avoid congested roads. The less time you are on the road the less greenhouse gas emissions you emit and the more money you save in fuel costs.

**Teleconferencing and Videoconferencing.** These can enable you to hold 'virtual' meetings without the need to travel to the meeting. These can be very effective, especially if you are already familiar with the other people involved. Virtual meetings will save you money, time and reduce environmental impacts that would otherwise be generated by travel. If your business does not own teleconferencing or videoconferencing facilities, consider hiring these as when compared to the cost of frequent travel, especially air travel, they offer a much cheaper alternative. Telephone calls via the internet may also be a viable option for conducting meetings.

**Online shopping.** Are your services available online? Reduce customer and staff travel needs by setting up an Internet shop front. Added advantages of this are that you can market your business worldwide.

## Better Travel Choices

**Walking and cycling.** There are several things you can do to encourage staff to walk or cycle, for example:

- Provide showers, lockers and somewhere to hang wet clothes; a map of safe walking routes or cycling paths; emergency umbrellas; secure place for bicycles to be stored; an emergency get home service so if an unexpected event prevents people from walking or cycling home then the company will arrange transport.
- Encourage cycle hire or loan schemes; and bicycle users' groups or walking buddy schemes.
- Walking and cycling can also be used for business travel if meetings are nearby or for local trips.

Public transport. Encourage staff to use public transport by:

- Providing local transport maps and timetables.
- Offering payroll deductions for annual transport tickets.
- Providing a shuttle bus at the start and the end of the day to pick staff up from the local train station.
- Informing the local bus company of your staff requirements to see if they can alter bus routes to better suit your needs.
- Keeping transport tickets at office for work-time travel.
- Being flexible regarding delays due to cancelled trains and with regard to start and finish times and matching transport timetables.

**Car Pooling.** Encourage employees to share car travel by car pooling by:

- Creating your own database and roster system to help staff to identify options to car pool with other staffers.
- Setting out a standard system of cost sharing.
- Providing parking for car poolers.
- Providing emergency transport home if required.

**Working from Home.** For some businesses it may be possible for some staff to undertake some of their work at home efficiently. If such employees spent even spent a day per week working from home this will significantly reduce their travel emissions. Establishing a home office for staff is now a relatively low cost option and such working arrangements may help build staff satisfaction and loyalty.



## Managing your Vehicles

**Drive efficiently.** Up to 25 per cent of fuel costs may result from poor driving techniques. Educate staff about the benefits of slowing down and of driving and accelerating smoothly. Encourage staff to enroll in a driver-training program.

**Maintain your fleet.** Service and tune cars regularly. Ensure that tyres are in good condition and are kept at maximum pressure and aligned regularly. Do not use car boots for unnecessary storage as extra weight causes vehicles to consume more fuel.

**Reduce Fleet Numbers.** Does the company really need all those vehicles? Better planning may reduce the size of the vehicle fleet. Factor in running costs not just purchase price and consider short-term hire of specialist vehicles if they are only used occasionally.

**Choose the right sized vehicle.** The size of a vehicle can affect your running costs by up to 25 per cent. Make sure your fleet consists of vehicles appropriate for the task required. This could mean switching to smaller vehicles or providing a range of vehicles that are task specific rather than person specific.

Choose Efficient Vehicles Rising fuel prices make it even more important to choose fuel-efficient vehicles appropriate to your businesses needs. The fuel consumption of vehicles from 1986 onwards are available from <http://www.environment.gov.au/settlements/transport/fuelguide/>.

Also all new vehicles sold in Australia feature a Fuel Consumption Label on the front windscreen. The label indicates how many litres of fuel a vehicle will use to travel 100 kilometres on a standard test. Consider this label when purchasing new vehicles.

## Additional Benefits

**Vehicle longevity.** The life of your vehicle will be increased through regular maintenance and more efficient driving.

**Staff health.** Improve the health of staff and reduce stress by encouraging regular exercise and reducing time spent in polluted traffic jams. Staff will also be saving travel costs.

**Friendly neighbours.** Improve relations with neighbours by reducing traffic and parking problems.

## Transport Fundamentals

- Reduce travel requirements.
- Make it easy for staff to use alternative and public transport.
- Choose the right vehicle and the right fuel for the job.
- Maintain your vehicles.