

Australian Government
Carbon Neutral Program
Public Disclosure Summary

NAME OF CERTIFIED
Communities



EN
Inc



An Australian Government Initiative

REPORTING PERIOD: 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018

Declaration

To the best of my knowledge, the information provided in this Public Disclosure Summary is true and correct and meets the requirements of the National Carbon Offset Standard Carbon Neutral Program.

Signature	Date
	30th October 2018
Simon Schrapel, Chief Executive	
Carbon neutral certification category	Organisation
Date of most recent external verification/audit	31 October 2017
Auditor	EY
Auditor assurance statement link	https://www.unitingcommunities.org/we-are-carbon-neutral/



Australian Government
Department of the Environment and Energy

Public Disclosure Summary documents are prepared by the submitting organisation. The material in Public Disclosure Summary documents represents the views of the organisation and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth does not guarantee the accuracy of the contents of the Public Disclosure Summary documents and disclaims liability for any loss arising from the use of the document for any purpose.

1. Carbon neutral information

1A. Introduction

Uniting Communities works with South Australians across metropolitan and regional South Australia through more than 100 community service programs, from 65 locations, travelling three million kilometres per year. Our team of more than 1,500 staff and volunteers support and engage with more than 30,000 South Australians each year.

Uniting Communities recognises that people of all ages and backgrounds will come across challenges in their life. We strive to build strong and supportive communities, and help people realise their potential and live the best life they can. Our services fall into the following categories:

- Older people – two residential aged care facilities and independent living assistance
- Youth services
- Families & children
- Aboriginal services
- Homelessness, emergency and community support
- Mental health & counselling, including Lifeline Adelaide
- Disability services
- Financial & legal services
- Goodwill stores.

Uniting Communities has been committed to reducing its impact on the environment since 2010 when the Board of Uniting Communities determined its goal of becoming a carbon neutral certified organisation by 2015. Beyond Carbon Neutral is now a core organisation commitment across all operations including its central administration building and all services.

In 2015 we became the first registered charity in Australia to become certified carbon neutral and the very first organisation in South Australia to do so. In 2016, Uniting Communities became a founding partner of Carbon Neutral Adelaide and in 2017 was named the first Ambassador of Carbon Neutral Adelaide. We are proud of our leadership position and of the additional benefits that we have attained by being carbon neutral, including financial savings, enhanced reputation and delivering on contractual requirements for grant funding and employee satisfaction.

Uniting Communities was announced the winner of the Community and Regions category at the Inaugural Premier's Climate Change Council – SA Climate Leaders Awards 2016. This award recognised our commitment to becoming certified carbon neutral and encouraging behavioural change in our organisation as well as in the broader community.

Our carbon program, Beyond Carbon Neutral (BCN), has been led by a committee of employees and management from across the organisation and our consultant program manager. Together they develop emissions reduction plans and initiatives, monitor progress and report to the executive team. Across the organisation, each site has a BCN Representative, performing the on-ground role of facilitating carbon reduction discussion and actions at their sites.

Uniting Communities' carbon account has been prepared in accordance with NCOS for Organisations and other standards referred to within that document including the Greenhouse Gas Protocol Corporate Standard and the National Greenhouse Gas and Energy Reporting Act 2007. Uniting Communities has used the Operational Control method of consolidation and has considered the following greenhouse gases – carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O) and hydro fluorocarbons (HFCs). The organisation does not cause emissions of any synthetic greenhouse gases.

1B. Emission sources within certification boundary

Quantified sources

The carbon account has been prepared using the Operational Control approach. In 2017/18 Uniting Communities operated its services from approximately 65 sites, five of which were owned and the remainder leased. The data from these facilities is entered into a carbon management system for which Uniting Communities purchased a license in 2014. The data entered is used to calculate the carbon emissions from each emissions source and is then aggregated. All data is maintained in this system and regular reporting is provided from it to our managers. There have been no changes in emissions scope this year.

Table 1: Greenhouse Gas Emissions Sources

Scope	Emissions source
Scope 1	Natural Gas
	Refrigerant
	Transport Fuel - Company Fleet
Scope 2	Electricity
Scope 3	Business Travel – Air
	Business Travel - Employee Commuting
	Business Travel - Grey Fleet
	Copy Paper
	Stationery
	Waste – Landfill
	Water

Excluded sources

The impact of excluding the following sources is not expected to materially affect the overall emissions.

As a public benevolent institution Uniting Communities relies to some extent on volunteers for the provision of its services. Some emissions due to their travel are currently unquantifiable as volunteers do not always claim compensation for their travel. Some services for particular programs are brokered to external providers, for example independent living services. These services are paid for through a set fee that does not include the breakdown of fuel or other emissions sources. As such it cannot be quantified easily.

Sometimes Uniting Communities finds it necessary to engage contractors and consultants however the expenses associated with these services are immaterial from an emissions perspective, as are the provision of food and beverage and medical supplies which are part of our residential aged care services.

Other immaterial or hard to measure activities include some purchased goods and services, accommodation, taxi travel and capital goods.

1C. Diagram of the certification boundary

The diagram below shows the facilities and operations that Uniting Communities operates along with the emissions sources included in its carbon account.



2. Emissions reduction measures

2A. Emissions over time

Overall emissions have reduced by just over 5% this year and by 15% as a percentage of operating revenue. This is largely the result of: continued efforts to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill (down by 1.6% or 3 tCO₂e), ongoing fuel efficiency measures (as detailed below), a reduction in air travel and improvements to trip planning by our independent living services units. Electricity emissions have reduced by 9% this year due to the amount of renewable energy in SA and the resultant reduced emissions factor for 2017/18, although consumption has actually risen by 0.4% due to organisational growth. Since the base year, electricity emissions have fallen by 25.5% or, in consumption terms, 7.2%. This year, many of our services have reduced their electricity emissions including our two aged care facilities.

There has been a 10% increase in the number of company owned fleet vehicles, however the overall fuel efficiency has improved by 4%. The percentage of lower emitting hybrid petrol-electric vehicles in the fleet increased by 4% in 2017/18 to 78% (94% for cars). Seven new site leases have been taken up this year and three have been closed in response to changes in program services and funding. Overall the difference in emissions is immaterial.

Table 1. Emissions compared with base year and prior year (after 2017/18 restatements)						
	Base Year 2014/15 tCO2-e	2015/16 tCO2-e	2016/17 tCO2-e	2017/18 tCO2-e	Change on Prior Year (%)	Change Since Base Year (%)
Scope 1	516	507	497	482	-2.9	-6.5
Scope 2	1,198	1,073	961	892	-7.2	-25.5
Scope 3	1,096	1,180	1,207	1,152	-4.6	5.1
Total	2,810	2,760	2,664	2,526	-5.2	-10.1
Total per FTE	0.0044	0.00485	0.00469	0.00410	-12.6	-15.3
Per \$1m operating revenue	49	48.6	44.9	38.2	-14.9	-22.1

2B. Emissions reduction strategy

Uniting Communities' Beyond Carbon Neutral (BCN) Committee maintains an overall emissions reduction strategy and a detailed plan of initiatives. Each year this plan is reviewed with input from the organisation's leadership team and site representatives. The plan is also reviewed quarterly by the BCN committee both to monitor progress and to discuss any new ideas. Whilst being conscious of the organisation's largest emissions sources, initiatives continue to focus on all sources with an emphasis on electricity, travel and waste in particular.

Emissions reduction is supported by annual budget allocations allowing building upgrades and behaviour change to contribute to carbon reduction. A key feature of the 2018/19 plan is the installation of solar arrays on both of the residential aged care facilities. This is expected to cut electricity emissions by around 10% and carbon emissions by around 5%.

This year will also see the implementation of Uniting Communities' own carbon emissions online training module for staff which will supplement the presentation given during employee orientation.

2C. Emissions reduction actions in 2017/18

Emissions reduction initiatives this year have focused on continued reduction of electricity, waste and water as well as 'buying green', especially through our BCN Site Representatives that facilitate local action through behavior change and other measures. This year our own Energy Workers have assisted by visiting around 10 of the smaller leased sites to identify emissions reduction opportunities. As a result, some have installed blinds and converted light globes to LEDs. The BCN Committee members also visited the largest aged care facility and is working with management and the BCN Site Representative there on reduction measures throughout the buildings.

Ongoing improvements to waste management have resulted in a 1.6% reduction in waste to landfill this year and a much larger increase in recycled (14%) and organic (27%) waste which is a positive reflection of the overall consciousness and commitment to reducing waste to landfill. In particular, our waste contractor Suez has assisted with waste reduction at our aged care facilities and this is ongoing.

During the year, Uniting Communities also commenced the collection of soft plastics, old mobile phones (by installing Mobile Muster boxes at several sites), batteries and e-waste. The soft plastics go to REDCycle (via Coles) and are made into furniture by local company Replas. In recognition of the soft plastic recycling initiative which started during Uniting Communities World Environment Week Activities in June, Replas kindly donated a bench seat made from recycled material. An e-waste 'Plug and Drop' receptacle has been placed in the reception area of the administration complex and is collected and broken down by local charity Electronic Recycling Australia, which also employs people with disabilities. The ABC's War on Waste series also motivated us to have a 'ban the cup' challenge and we now re-use 'keep cups' instead.

Travel emissions are inherent in the services we provide and this year our services have expanded, especially in independent aged care. However careful trip planning and the continued conversion of the fleet to hybrid petrol-electric is making travel by car more efficient. Efforts have also been made to increase the use of Uniting Communities' improved virtual meeting software such as Skype. We think twice before we fly or drive long distances.

3. Emissions summary

Table 2. Emissions Summary 2017/18		
Scope	Emission source	tCO ₂ -e
1	Natural Gas	125
1	Refrigerant	8
1	Transport Fuel – Company Fleet	349
2	Purchased Electricity	892
3	Business Travel – Air Travel	44
3	Business Travel – Employee Vehicles	249
3	Business Travel – Employee Commuting	334
3	Stationery Purchases	10
3	Waste to Landfill	194
3	Natural Gas (indirect emissions)	25
3	Purchased Electricity (indirect emissions)	164
3	Transport Fuel – Company Fleet (indirect emissions)	27
3	Upstream transport and distribution (Business Travel - Employee Vehicles)	19
3	Upstream transport and distribution (Business Travel – Employee Commuting)	26
3	Copy Paper	22
3	Water	37
Total Emissions		
Note: the amount for each emissions source has been rounded up or down to the nearest 1 tCO ₂ -e. When then added together they total 2,525. With decimal places they actually come to 2,526 as shown.		2,526

4. Carbon offsets

4A. Offsets summary

Table 3. Offsets Summary				
Date of cancellation	Offset project, unit type and registry	Serial numbers	Vintage	Quantity
14/8/18	Biodiverse revegetation projects in SA, KACCU, VCS	3773285199 – 3773286198	2018/19	1,000
18/10/18	Lower Darling River Eco-Corridor reforestation project, KACCU, CER	3767445833 - 3767446190	2018/19	358
18/10/2018	Madre de Dios Amazon Redd Project Peru, VCS, CER	6151-282298855-282299143	2018/19	289
26/3/18	Bundled Wind Power Project in Rajasthan by Orange Renewable Power Private Limited, VCS	4363-260940737 to 260941612	2017	876
8/8/18	Sichuan Huadian Xixi River Hydro-electricity Development Co., Ltd. Luogu Hydroelectric Project, VCS	2449-158363581 to 158363583	2011	3
8/8/18	Jilin Liaoyuan 50MW Level Biomass Cogeneration Project, VCS	2866-174043650 to 174043659	2009	10
26/10/17	Guohua Tongliao Kezuo Zhongqi Phase I 49.5 MW Wind Farm Project, VCU, VCS	Within 26230164541207 to 2623 164541776	2010	47
18/10/18	Bundled Wind Power Project in Rajasthan by Orange Renewable Power Private Limited, VCU, VCS	5806-260943240-260943317-VCU-034-APX-IN-1-1465-01042017-31122017-0	2017	78
18/10/18	Jilin Liaoyuan 50MW Level Biomass Cogeneration Project, VCU, VCS	4080-174043660-174043660-VCU-041-APX-CN-1-1126-25122008-24122009-0	2008/09	1
18/10/18	Hebei Chongli Qingsanying 49.3MW Wind Farm Project, VCU, VCS	738-32917090-32917109-VCU-008-APX-CN-1-394-14082008-22022009-0	2008/09	20
18/10/18	Hebei Chongli Qingsanying 49.3MW Wind Farm Project, VCU, VCS	738-32917050-32917083-VCU-008-APX-CN-1-394-14082008-22022009-0	2008/09	34
Total offsets retired this year				2,715
Total offsets retired for 2017/18 inventory				2,526
Less offsets retired this year relating to restatement of prior years				48
Total offsets banked for use future years				141

4B. Offsets purchasing and retirement strategy

Uniting Communities commenced purchasing offsets in arrears with effect from 2017/18. The Uniting Communities Board has set an offset purchasing guideline that at least 50% of offsets are to be purchased from Australia, subject to budget. Where it has direct control over the choice of offsets, e.g. where offsets are not retired by suppliers on our behalf, Uniting Communities will purchase offsets with co-benefits that resonate with its values of community and environment.

As detailed in Section 2, Uniting Communities' suppliers CMI Toyota and Lyreco International supplied eligible offsets with purchases. After these have been deducted from the carbon inventory, bulk offsets are purchased according to the requirements of NCOS for Organisations.

4C. Offset projects (Co-benefits)

The ACCUs purchased are both from biodiverse revegetation projects and carry environmental, social and economic benefits to the local area and community.

1,000 offsets (or 37% of the total) are from South Australian revegetation projects in the Murray Darling Basin between the Coorong, Murray Mouth and the Riverland. Plantings are on lands including National Parks and private conservation reserves including internationally recognised wetlands (Ramsar listed). Co-benefits include creating habitat for international migratory birds. Protection is also given to nationally threatened species such as the Tasmanian Devil and Wedge tailed Eagles. These are the first offsets in SA to have been accredited under the Commonwealth Government's Emissions Reduction Fund.

The remaining 358 Australian offsets (13%) are from the Lowan Darling River Eco-Corridor carbon project which is regenerating over 4,300 hectares of native forest in North-Western New South Wales. Through regeneration of natural forests and woodlands the project promotes biodiversity and ecosystem connectivity. The region is home to many vulnerable and threatened species of flora and fauna whose populations benefit from forest regeneration. The Lowan Darling River Eco-Corridor projects help to offset emissions and combat climate change by growing forests to capture and store carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. The carbon project also provides environmental and economic benefits to the landholders where a resilient, non-traditional income stream ensures sustainability of agricultural operations. Flow-on effects of carbon projects in the Darling River Eco-Corridor provide far reaching economic and social value to landholders and rural communities. Income from carbon projects helps to support the local economy, providing jobs and security to towns and businesses often adversely affected by drought conditions.

The majority of overseas offsets (876 or 32% of the total) are from a bundled wind power project in Rajasthan, by Orange Renewable Power Private Limited. The presence of the project has also ensured employment opportunities and infrastructure development in the project region. It has also added to increased activity in local schools by means of donation of materials and furniture.

289 offsets, or 11% of the total, are from the Madre de Dios Amazon Redd Project in Peru. This "charismatic boutique" project will dramatically reduce deforestation in the Peruvian Amazon and protect the habitat of 35 endangered species, including jaguar, puma, red howler monkeys and boa constrictors, and the livelihood of local indigenous communities who rely on the forest for their survival.

5. Use of trade mark

The trademark has been used as set out in Table 4. To the best of our knowledge this is complete.

Table 4. Trade mark register	
Where used	Logo type
Uniting Communities website: http://www.unitingcommunities.org/about-us/we-are-carbon-neutral/	Certified organisation
"We are Carbon Neutral" brochure and banner in administration building entrance at 10 Pitt Street, Adelaide.	Certified organisation
Carbon Neutral Adelaide website: https://www.carbonneutraladelaide.com.au/who-is-taking-action/uniting-communities	Certified organisation
Australian Government, Department of the Environment case study: http://www.environment.gov.au/system/files/resources/81375eff-2080-4715-8260-f64243a01ef8/files/case-study-uniting-communities.pdf	Certified organisation
Brand SA news- Uniting Communities in the push for a Carbon Neutral Adelaide: https://brandsanews.com.au/uniting-communities-push-carbon-neutral-adelaide/	Certified organisation

6. Have you done more?

Uniting Communities is considered to be a leader in emissions reduction and has reduced its carbon footprint by over 30% since its carbon neutral program began in 2010. We have continued to reduce progressively since becoming Carbon Neutral in 2015 and Beyond Carbon Neutral is now a core organisation commitment.

Uniting Communities has always been willing to share its approach with others in the sector and since it became Carbon Neutral its executives and consultant program manager have presented at many events. Uniting Communities is now the first and only Ambassador for Carbon Neutral Adelaide and as such commits to continuing to reduce its carbon footprint and to promoting the program and its experiences to others.

Uniting Communities has provided case studies to both the Department of the Environment as well as to the SA Climate Change Office as part of a Carbon Neutral Adelaide. We are also a signatory to CitySwitch in respect of our City of Adelaide based property at 10 Pitt St, a national program which encourages organisations to be as sustainable as they can. This includes a key element of emissions reduction, particularly energy and waste in office buildings.

With a strong focus on doing things properly we have gone above and beyond the minimum requirements of NCOS by purchasing a license to a carbon management system in which our emissions data is captured. The system is also used for monitoring and reporting on emissions to managers and representatives across the organisation, as well as the Beyond Carbon Neutral Committee.

As well as having a policy in place, we have shown our commitment to emissions reduction by allocating internal resources to committees and other activities as well as setting an annual budget. We have also had a carbon management consultant assisting us since 2010. These investments have more than been repaid in operating cost savings and other benefits and will continue to do so.

In 2017 we commenced a new development in Adelaide which we call U City. This building has already been rated the greenest building in Adelaide through its 6-star Green Star Design Rating. The intention is for it to achieve Carbon Neutral Building certification as soon as it can. This will be a radical mixed use building incorporating Uniting Communities administration and some of its services as well as retirement village and disability accommodation. The building will also house a function centre and be home to commercial and retail tenants.

The table below includes links to our organisation website and other online promotional material.

Website	https://www.unitingcommunities.org/we-are-carbon-neutral/
Twitter	https://twitter.com/UCommunities
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/UnitingCommunitiesOz/
YouTube	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bwoCOgEPXwo