



PUBLIC DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

UNITING COMMUNITIES INCORPORATED


ORGANISATION CERTIFICATION

FY2020–21

Australian Government

Climate Active Public Disclosure Statement



NAME OF CERTIFIED ENTITY	Uniting Communities Incorporated
REPORTING PERIOD	1 July 2020 – 30 June 2021 Arrears report
DECLARATION	<p><i>To the best of my knowledge, the information provided in this public disclosure statement is true and correct and meets the requirements of the Climate Active Carbon Neutral Standard.</i></p>  <p>Simon Schrapel Chief Executive Date 10/11/2021</p>



Australian Government
**Department of Industry, Science,
Energy and Resources**

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Version September 2021. To be used for FY20/21 reporting onwards.



1.CERTIFICATION SUMMARY

TOTAL EMISSIONS OFFSET	2,557 tCO ₂ -e
OFFSETS BOUGHT	0 (forward purchased in prior years)
RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY	0%
TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT	25/2/21 Suzanne Ridding Sustainable Business Consultants Next technical assessment due: 2022-23

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2. CARBON NEUTRAL INFORMATION

Description of certification

This certification renewal is for Uniting Communities Incorporated's (ABN 33 174 490 373) operational emissions in South Australia.

Organisation description

Uniting Communities is an inclusive not-for-profit organisation working alongside more than 80,000 South Australians each year as they strive for bright futures and great lives. We operate more than 100 community programs, travel over three million kilometres per year and have a team of over 1,500 staff and volunteers.

We work alongside South Australians as they strive for a bright future and great lives, supporting them to overcome adversity and disadvantage. Our service delivery, advocacy and community building activities are central to achieving this.

We offer more than 90 services across South Australia to support the needs of individuals and our community including mental health and counselling; residential aged care and support for independent living; housing crisis and emergency support; disability services; services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people; financial and legal; drug and alcohol counselling; family relationships; and respite and carer support.

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 certified carbon neutral organisation by 2015. Our carbon program, Beyond Carbon Neutral (BCN) is now a core organisation commitment across all operations including our central administration and 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 were 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, employee satisfaction, winning awards and delivering on contractual requirements for grant funding.

“Being carbon neutral makes sense for our organisation; we have a strong moral compass and research tells us that climate change will most affect people in our client base – the elderly, socially disadvantaged and people on lower incomes. Through becoming carbon neutral, organisations can enjoy the benefits while supporting the environment in which we live, and our broader community.”

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

This year, Uniting Communities Adelaide-based vertical village “U City” (built in 2019) became fully occupied. Whilst this building has increased our absolute carbon emissions due to the associated increase in related organisational activity, the carbon intensity relative to our revenue has fallen year on year since our first carbon neutral certification year, 2015. The building and community within has already received a number of awards for its design and innovation. Notably U City was rated Adelaide’s greenest six-star green star building and is in the process of seeking carbon neutral building certification.

Uniting Communities’ carbon account has been prepared in accordance with Climate Active’s requirements for organisations and other standards including the Greenhouse Gas Protocol Corporate Standard. Uniting Communities has used the Operational Control method of reporting.



3.EMISSIONS BOUNDARY

Inside the emissions boundary

All emission sources listed in the emissions boundary are part of the carbon neutral claim.

Quantified emissions have been assessed as relevant and are quantified in the carbon inventory. This may include emissions that are not identified as arising due to the operations of the certified entity however are **optionally included**.

Non-quantified emissions have been assessed as relevant and are captured within the emissions boundary but are not measured (quantified) in the carbon inventory. All material emissions are accounted for through an uplift factor. Further detail is available at Appendix C.

Outside the emissions boundary

Excluded emissions are those that have been assessed as not relevant to an organisation's operations and are outside of its emissions boundary or are outside of the scope of the certification. These emissions are not part of the carbon neutral claim. Further detail is available at Appendix D.

The emission sources in the boundary diagram below are as per the emissions categories in the emission summary table.

Since Uniting Communities' initial certification in 2015, this emissions boundary has expanded in line with Climate Active (formerly NCOS) requirements, to include water and external printing. All other quantified emissions sources remain the same.

Inside emissions boundary		Outside emission boundary
<u>Quantified</u>	<u>Non-quantified</u>	<u>Excluded</u>
Natural gas	Food	Volunteers' travel
Refrigerant	Medical supplies	Brokered services
Transport fuel – company fleet		Sundry consultants
Electricity		
Business travel – air		
Business travel – employee vehicles		
Employee commuting		
Copy paper (carbon neutral product)		
Office equipment and supplies		
External printing		
Waste		
Water		
Working from home		

There are no non-quantified sources in the emission boundary that require a data management plan. The sources in the above emissions boundary are immaterial and individually less than 1% of the overall inventory and estimated to be less than 5% of the overall inventory when combined.

4. EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS

Emissions reduction strategy

In August 2021, Uniting Communities announced its [commitment](#) to net zero by 2035 with interim targets of 100% renewable energy by 2030 and 75% electric vehicles by 2030 in the light vehicle fleet.

Uniting Communities continues to [commit](#) to being a certified carbon neutral organisation and to reducing its emissions per million dollars of revenue based on 2015/16 – its initial carbon neutral year.

Beyond Carbon Neutral committee is currently working towards its three-year 2019-2022 reduction strategy to continue to:

- Reduce waste to landfill, especially at the two aged care facilities where landfill is high due to the inability to recycle or compost continence materials
- Convert the vehicle fleet to hybrid petrol-electric
- Work with suppliers on low carbon products
- Achieve Carbon Neutral Building certification for our Adelaide home and vertical village U City
- Improve operational efficiency and reduce the use of paper and stationery
- Educate and engage employees on how they can reduce carbon emissions at work as well as home.

Uniting Communities is a strong advocate for others to join in committing to net zero and regularly gives presentations and information to other organisations to assist them in their learning and decision-making regarding taking action on climate change.

Emissions reduction actions

During 2020-21, Uniting Communities reduced its carbon emissions by 9% as well as its carbon intensity per million dollars of revenue by 19% (29% since the 2015 base year).

This overall reduction since base year includes a 20% decline in Scope 2 electricity emissions, partly due to the installation of solar systems on the three largest buildings (U City and the two aged care facilities) and the installations of LEDs and also due to the decrease in the SA grid electricity emissions factor as a result of the ongoing increase in renewable power across the State. In the last year however, electricity consumption has increased as all commercial tenants had moved into our U City vertical village (built in 2019). However, this building is a six-star Green Star Design and As-built rated building which will see emissions being lower than they may have otherwise been for a similar new building.

Travel in company vehicles and by air went down partly due to COVID-19 restrictions however the continued policy to convert the vehicle fleet to petrol hybrid-electric also contributed to the 4.1% reduction in fleet vehicle emissions.

The 14% reduction in waste to landfill was largely the result of our aged care facilities introducing new waste practices in their strive towards best practice waste management. The overall reduction was also a result of the efforts of some of our Carbon Program Site Representatives to introduce new bin systems and employee education.

Uniting Communities uses a variety of methods to reduce its emissions both at employee orientation and on an ongoing basis including, in 2021, the launch of its 10-year carbon commitment celebration year of employee engagement challenges.

5.EMISSIONS SUMMARY

Emissions over time

Emissions since base year		Total tCO ₂ -e
Base year:	2014–15	3,154
Year 1:	2015–16	3,080
Year 2:	2016-17	3,035
Year 3:	2017-18	2,849
Year 4:	2018-19	2,943
Year 5:	2019-20	2,820
Year 6:	2020-21	2,557

Significant changes in emissions

During 2020-21, like many other organisations, Uniting Communities was impacted by COVID-19 in terms of its business travel and employee commuting. To reflect the number of days employees worked from home during the year (mainly due to COVID-19), a Working from home emissions source has been added. There is a commensurate reduction in employee commuting, which also showed a reduction due to improvements in the methodology employed to model this emissions source.

Significant changes (over 5%) are shown in the table below.

Emission source name	Current year (tCO ₂ -e and/ or activity data)	Previous year (tCO ₂ -e and/ or activity data)	Detailed reason for change
Fuel emissions - company fleet	73 kL	85 kL	COVID-19 restrictions and the ongoing conversion of the light fleet to hybrid petrol-electric vehicles
Kilometres travelled in employee vehicles – business travel	1,277,524 kms	1,133,228 kms	Community services grew during the year, in particular services for older people

Natural gas	3,518 GJ	3,281 GJ	Full year's commercial tenancies by cafes at U City using gas for cooking
Waste to landfill	141.89 tonnes	164.43 tonnes	Introduction of new waste management systems / practices

Use of Climate Active carbon neutral products and services

For the majority of the year, Winc Carbon Neutral Paper was used – this is an Australian Paper product.

Organisation emissions summary

The electricity summary can be found at Appendix B. Electricity emissions were calculated using a location-based approach.

Emission category	Sum of total emissions (tCO ₂ -e)
Air transport (km)	5.44
Business travel – employee vehicles (km)	224.47
Carbon neutral products and services (copy paper)	0
Company fleet (fuel)	181.44
Electricity	1,128.90
Employee commuting	456.45
Office equipment, supplies & printing	94.69
Refrigerants	0
Stationary energy – natural gas	218.95
Waste	184.46
Water	37.29
Working from home	24.13
Total	2,556.22

Uplift factors

Not applicable

6. CARBON OFFSETS

Offsets strategy

Offset purchasing strategy: Forward purchasing (tCO₂-e)

1. Total offsets previously forward purchased and banked for this and future reports	7,008
2. Total emissions liability to offset for this report	2,557

3. Net offset balance for this reporting period	4,451
4. Total offsets remaining to offset the next and future reporting period	4,451
5. Total offsets required for this report	2,557

Co-benefits

InfraVest Changbin and Taichung bundled Wind Farms Project

The overseas offsets paired with the Australian Biodiversity Units are from wind power projects in Taiwan. This Gold Standard project is expanding Taiwan's renewables sector and raising environmental awareness. The wind farms consist of 62 wind turbines that generate over 480,000 MWh of clean power on average each year, which is supplied to the local electricity grid. By harnessing the power of prevailing coastal winds to generate clean energy, the Changbin and Taichung wind farms power Taiwanese homes, while helping to expand Taiwan's renewable energy industry. The project is helping boost sustainable development through several local initiatives, such as guided wind farm tours that raise awareness about climate change and pollution, supporting the elderly and a scholarship program

Stapled with

EcoAustralia Mount Sandy biodiverse native vegetation projects in South Australia

EcoAustralia is an award-winning stapled carbon credit product, provided by South Pole in partnership with Australian biodiversity protection organisation, Cassinia Environmental. The Australian component helps to protect and restore native vegetation. The product blends State Government-accredited biodiversity protection with international carbon offsets. An Australian Biodiversity Unit, equal to 1.5m² of government-accredited, permanently protected Australian vegetation is paired with 1 Gold Standard international carbon credit, representing 1 tCO₂-e of avoided emissions.

The Mount Sandy project brings together indigenous and non-indigenous communities by promoting traditional land management for biodiversity conservation, in partnership with the Ngarrindjeri people. This project protects a rare pocket of wetlands and woodlands between the Coorong National Park and Lake Albert. As one of the last remaining areas of native vegetation in the region, the land forms a strategic wildlife corridor and is of great significance to the Ngarrindjeri people, the indigenous local nation. New plantings are from the local nursery run by the Raukkan indigenous community.

Co-benefits include climate action, job opportunities for indigenous people and the protection of flora and fauna

Chakala Bundled Wind Power Project India

These projects contribute to several sustainable development goals and ensure employment opportunities and infrastructure development in the regions. Co-benefits include social, economic, environmental and technological wellbeing as described below.

Social well-being: The project helps in generating employment opportunities during the construction and operation phases. Project developers will use at a minimum 2% of the revenues accrued from the sale of carbon credits on an annual basis for community related activities. These include providing assistance for development of public amenities in the surrounding areas such as water distribution/sanitation facilities/building of schools and hospitals and free distribution of educational books and school uniforms, annual eye camps health checks for villagers. The project activity will lead to development in infrastructure in the region such as development of roads and may promote business with improved power generation.

Economic well-being: The project is a clean technology investment in the region, which would not have taken place in the absence of the VCS benefits. The project activity will also help to reduce the demand supply gap in the state.

Environmental well-being: Wind being a renewable source of energy, reduces the dependence on fossil fuels and conserves natural resources which are on the verge of depletion. Due to its zero emissions the Project activity avoids a significant amount of GHG emissions including specific pollutants like SO_x, NO_x, and SPM associated with the conventional thermal power generation facilities.

Technological well-being: The successful operation of the projects' activities should lead to promotion of wind-based power generation and would encourage other entrepreneurs to participate in similar projects.

Offsets summary

Proof of cancellation of offset units

Offsets cancelled for Climate Active Carbon Neutral Certification										
Project description	Type of offset units	Registry	Date retired	Serial number (and hyperlink to registry transaction record)	Vintage	Eligible quantity purchased (tCO ₂ -e)	Quantity used for previous reporting periods	Quantity banked for future reporting periods	Quantity used for this reporting period claim	Percentage of total (%)
Chakala Wind Power Project in India in Maharashtra	VCU	VCS – now VERRA	5/11/20	6870-353254779-3532587-6-VCU-034-APX-IN-1-1197-01012018-31052018-0 These offsets are now in the VCU section of the VERRA registry however there is no link other than to the VCU section. The project ID is 1197. https://registry.verra.org/app/search/VCS	2018	3,948	3,040	0	908	35.51%
Chakala Wind Power Project in India in Maharashtra	VCU	VERRA	22/7/19	7069-368178853-368180052-VCU-034-APX-IN-1-1197-01012017-31122017-0	2017	1,200	0	0	1,200	46.92%
InfraVest Changbin and Taichung bundled Wind Farms Project – Taiwan	VER	Gold Standard	30/11/20	GS1-1-TW-GS472-12-2017-6457-117603-122502	2017	4,900	0	4,451	449	17.57%
Stapled with: EcoAustralia Mount Sandy biodiverse native vegetation conservation project in South Australia	ABU	NVCR	26/11/20	2019/4003-VOL001-11103 to 2019/4003-VOL001-16629 Link not publicly available	2020	4,900	-	-	-	-
Total offsets used in this report									2,557	
Total offsets banked for future reports								4,451		

Type of offset units	Quantity (used for this reporting period claim)	Percentage of total
Verified Carbon Units (VCUs)	2,108	82.4%
Verified Emissions Reduction Units (VERs)	449	17.6%

7. RENEWABLE ENERGY CERTIFICATE (REC) SUMMARY

Renewable Energy Certificate (REC) summary

Not applicable

APPENDIX A: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Uniting Communities, including U City, have been the recipient of a number of awards including:

- CitySwitch State winners over 2000sqm – South Australia 2019 & 2020
- Australia's International Good Design for Social Impact Award Winner, 2020
- Property Council of Australia, Innovation and Excellence, 2020 SA State Development Winner
- UDIA SA Awards for Excellence 2020, Innovation in Development Winner
- UDIA SA Awards for Excellence 2020, Seniors Living Winner
- National innovAGEING Improving Consumer Choice 2020 Award Winner
- PIA SA Award for Excellence 2020, Great Place Award Winner
- Recipient, City Switch Hall of Fame, 2018
- Finalist, Carbon Neutral Adelaide Awards, Applied Innovation 2017
- Finalist, Carbon Neutral Adelaide Awards, Leadership & Influence 2017
- Winner, SA Climate Leaders Awards, Community and Regions Category, 2016

Below are links to our organisation website and other online promotional material.

Website	https://www.unitingcommunities.org/about-us/purpose-and-value/our-commitments/carbon-neutral
U City	https://www.ucity.com.au/
Twitter	https://twitter.com/UCommunities
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/UnitingCommunitiesOz/
YouTube – Our Carbon Neutral Journey	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ThwMrQCGbfk
Case studies	https://www.carbonneutraladelaide.com.au/business/uniting-communities

APPENDIX B: ELECTRICITY SUMMARY

Electricity emissions are calculated using a location-based approach.

Location-based method

The location-based method provides a picture of a business's electricity emissions in the context of its location, and the emissions intensity of the electricity grid it relies on. It reflects the average emissions intensity of the electricity grid in the location (State) in which energy consumption occurs. The location-based method does not allow for any claims of renewable electricity from grid-imported electricity usage.

Market-based method

The market-based method provides a picture of a business's electricity emissions in the context of its renewable energy investments. It reflects the emissions intensity of different electricity products, markets and investments. It uses a residual mix factor (RMF) to allow for unique claims on the zero emissions attribute of renewables without double counting.

Market-based approach summary

Market Based Approach	Activity Data (kWh)	Emissions (kgCO ₂ e)	Renewable Percentage of total
Behind the meter consumption of electricity generated	328,588	0	13%
Total non-grid electricity	328,588	0	13%
LGC Purchased and retired (kWh) (including PPAs & Precinct LGCs)	0	0	0%
GreenPower	0	0	0%
Jurisdictional renewables (LGCs retired)	0	0	0%
Jurisdictional renewables (LRET) (applied to ACT grid electricity)	0	0	0%
Large Scale Renewable Energy Target (applied to grid electricity only)	410,854	0	16%
Residual Electricity	1,760,104	1,888,733	0%
Total grid electricity	2,170,958	1,888,733	16%
Total Electricity Consumed (grid + non grid)	2,499,546	1,888,733	30%
Electricity renewables	739,442	0	
Residual Electricity	1,760,104	1,888,733	
Exported on-site generated electricity	38,727	-30,207	
Emission Footprint (kgCO ₂ e)		1,858,526	

Total renewables (grid and non-grid)	29.58%
Mandatory	16.44%
Voluntary	0.00%
Behind the meter	13.15%
Residual Electricity Emission Footprint (TCO₂e)	1,859

Figures may not sum due to rounding. Renewable percentage can be above 100%

Location-based approach summary

Location Based Approach	Activity Data (kWh)	Emissions (kgCO ₂ e)
ACT	0	0
NSW	0	0
SA	2,170,958	1,128,898
Vic	0	0
Qld	0	0
NT	0	0
WA	0	0
Tas	0	0
Grid electricity (scope 2 and 3)	2,170,958	1,128,898
ACT	0	0
NSW	0	0
SA	328,588	0
Vic	0	0
Qld	0	0
NT	0	0
WA	0	0
Tas	0	0
Non-grid electricity (Behind the meter)	328,588	0
Total Electricity Consumed	2,499,546	1,128,898

Climate Active carbon neutral electricity summary

Carbon neutral electricity offset by Climate Active product	Activity data (kWh)	Emissions (kgCO ₂ -e)
<i>Not applicable</i>	0	0

Climate Active carbon neutral electricity is not considered renewable electricity. The emissions have been offset by another Climate Active carbon neutral product certification.

APPENDIX C: INSIDE EMISSIONS BOUNDARY

Non-quantified emission sources

The following sources of emissions have been assessed as relevant, are captured within the emissions boundary, but are not measured (quantified) in the carbon inventory. They have been non-quantified due to one of the following reasons:

1. **Immaterial** <1% for individual items and no more than 5% collectively
2. **Cost effective** Quantification is not cost effective relative to the size of the emission but uplift applied.
3. **Data unavailable** Data is unavailable but uplift applied. A data management plan must be put in place to provide data within 5 years.
4. **Maintenance** Initial emissions non-quantified but repairs and replacements quantified.

Relevant-non-quantified emission sources	(1) Immaterial	(2) Cost effective (but uplift applied)	(3) Data unavailable (but uplift applied & data plan in place)	(4) Maintenance
Medical supplies	Yes	No	No	No
Food	Yes	No	No	No

APPENDIX D: OUTSIDE EMISSIONS BOUNDARY

Excluded emission sources

The below emission sources have been assessed as not relevant to an organisation's or precinct's operations and are outside of its emissions boundary. These emissions are not part of the carbon neutral claim. Emission sources considered for relevance must be included within the certification boundary if they meet two of the five relevance criteria. Those which only meet one condition of the relevance test can be excluded from the certification boundary.

Emissions tested for relevance are detailed below against each of the following criteria:

1. **Size** The emissions from a particular source are likely to be large relative to the organisation's electricity, stationary energy and fuel emissions
2. **Influence** The responsible entity has the potential to influence the reduction of emissions from a particular source.
3. **Risk** The emissions from a particular source contribute to the organisation's greenhouse gas risk exposure.
4. **Stakeholders** Key stakeholders deem the emissions from a particular source are relevant.
5. **Outsourcing** The emissions are from outsourced activities previously undertaken within the organisation's boundary, or from outsourced activities typically undertaken within the boundary for comparable organisations.

Emission sources tested for relevance	(1) Size	(2) Influence	(3) Risk	(4) Stakeholders	(5) Outsourcing	Included in boundary?
Volunteers' travel	No	No	No	No	No	No
Brokered services	No	No	No	No	No	No
Sundry consultants	No	No	No	No	No	No



An Australian Government Initiative

