



Case Study

UPCLOSE

Zero Waste SA Industry Program



AUSTRALIAN
INSTITUTE OF
MANAGEMENT

Strategic approach to long-term sustainability

The South Australian division of Australian Institute of Management (AIM SA) understands better than most the importance of effective management systems and a strategic approach to implement change.

As a leading South Australian provider of education and training for business professionals, AIM often repeats these messages.

So when it took the first steps in a wide-ranging green program in 2005, AIM SA soon recognised the need to integrate sustainability as part of its core business. Today AIM SA is well on the way to being a model example of environmental efficiency in the office workspace.

Those who've been part of AIM SA's sustainability program refer to it as a journey. They've already travelled a long

way but are the first to concede they haven't quite reach their destination yet.

Planning for an eco-efficient office environment began in 2005 when AIM SA was relocating from the city to new offices being purpose-built in Hindmarsh.

The Institute identified an opportunity to incorporate green initiatives into the new offices but was mindful of budgetary constraints. The architect was briefed and came up with measures such as energy efficient inverter air-conditioning, lighting on timers, waterless urinals, and thermal glass and awnings on sun-facing windows.

Combined, these various initiatives made a significant start towards sustainability but a few green champions in the office felt far more could be done – and CEO John Stokes agreed.

“As a major provider of business management programs, AIM realised it needed to show leadership in the area of sustainability. Zero Waste SA's Industry Program proved critical in showing where we needed to devote our energy.”

John Stokes
CEO, AIM SA

Further improvements in waste management included more electronic marketing rather than printed materials, and increased use of recycled paper. But AIM SA still felt it was fiddling around the edges.

It needed to be more strategic in its approach to long term sustainability goals. To reach the next stage of its journey AIM SA sought the support of Zero Waste SA and joined the Industry Program.



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“The most significant change that has occurred during our journey to sustainability is that our approach is now more formalised – eco-efficiency is an important part of regular business.”

John Stokes
CEO, AIM SA

AIM TO SUSTAIN

In 2008 AIM SA developed a new banner to promote its commitment to corporate sustainable responsibility – AIM to Sustain. The initiative is designed to reinforce the sustainability message within AIM SA’s workforce and promote the Institute’s credentials among the wider community.

It focuses on sustainability in three key areas – environment, social and business.

A new logo created in a staff competition now features on the company’s website.



Sustainability objectives

A reduction in AIM SA’s environmental footprint and the integration of sustainability as part of regular business.

Outcomes

- new building initiatives lower environmental footprint
- switch from paper to electronic course notes
- estimated 75% reduction in waste to landfill
- ongoing actions lower energy and water use
- operational cost savings
- carbon emissions substantially reduced
- strong staff support for eco-efficiency
- recognised leadership in business community
- sustainability integrated into core business

Zero Waste SA support

- funded sustainability diagnostic to evaluate current program
- strategic support for green program implementation
- advice on new recycling alternatives
- funded eco-efficiency review to measure progress
- ongoing assistance with sustainability actions
- development of a case study



Treating sustainability as a business strategy

Zero Waste SA commissioned a sustainability diagnostic to critically analyse how well AIM SA was progressing with its green program.

AIM SA was reassured that it was heading in the right direction and given support on new policies and procedures to lift the program to another level as a strategic business management initiative.

“The analysis was really useful in directing where we needed to focus our efforts,” says CEO John Stokes.

“It prompted us to establish a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Environmental Committee with membership spread across the organisation. It comprised six people out of a total staff of 24.”

About the same time, AIM SA appointed one of its most active green champions, Kelly Bramhill as Sustainability Manager, and the environment became part of regular business during staff meetings. As the program gained traction AIM SA established terms of reference for its sustainability committee and timelines for implementing activities, and posted them on the Institute’s website.

Good environmental practice is now part of every staff member’s performance assessment, and green tips are regularly emailed to keep the sustainable message front of mind for everyone. AIM SA is also integrating eco-efficiency into its training program. Courses will have a green skills element in line with a Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreement and the

Institute has independently introduced a graduate certificate in sustainable management at the MBA level. All students at AIM SA are automatically informed of their environmental responsibilities as part of their induction.

Initiatives improve eco-efficiency

Measures introduced by AIM SA since 2008, and resulting actions, are reducing energy and water consumption, and cutting waste to landfill.

An ongoing focus has been reducing paper use. AIM SA’s printed course notes for more than 5000 students every year until it cut paper consumption in 2009 by issuing electronic notes on USB drives for Graduate and MBA programs. iPad or Amazon Kindle devices are now being investigated for viewing course material in other training areas.

AIM SA estimates it cut waste to landfill by about 50% when it moved to the new offices in 2007 and by a further 50% in the three years since.

Initiatives such as conveniently placed and clearly labelled tri-compartment bins in canteens and training rooms for paper, cans/bottles, and general waste have all contributed. AIM SA’s waste management contractor has been asked to identify other recycling opportunities.

Waterless urinals and hand sanitisers have helped cut water use, and switching off computers not in use is making inroads into lowering energy consumption.

Measuring environmental performance

Even though good progress was being made, AIM SA realised its sustainability program was still deficient in one important area – a method of measuring the results.

“To maintain the momentum, it was important for us to be able to monitor our impact on the environment and measure improvements so that we could better focus our efforts,” says Kelly Bramhill, AIM SA’s Sustainability Manager.

To support this process, Zero Waste SA funded an extensive eco-efficiency review which analysed data over the 2008/09 financial year. As a result, AIM SA received advice on ways to better capture relevant and up-to-date information to track the impact of future improvements.

Recommendations include monthly rather than quarterly invoices from energy and water suppliers and regular reports from waste contractors on recycling initiatives.

AIM SA rolls out expanded greening program

The eco-efficiency study confirmed that AIM SA has an eco-profile similar to most offices.

Energy consumption from air-conditioning, lighting and computers accounts for about 90% of the Institute's carbon emissions, paper usage is a high 7% and waste disposal just 3%. Over the 12-month study period this resulted in an estimated 262 tonnes of carbon emissions.

To help lower this further the report identified various actions to achieve an estimated 9.5% reduction in energy use, further water savings and ways to keep waste from landfill.

AIM SA has since developed its own plan and priorities based on cost versus potential savings. Initiatives either implemented or under review include:

Waste

- organic waste bins and collection service for kitchen food scraps
- recycled paper for all internal and external office printing
- electronic rather than printed training documents for some students
- educating staff to minimise email printing and support electronic filing of documents
- adjusting printer settings to reduce toner usage and to default to double-sided printing
- electronic faxing facilities and encouraging communication via electronic media rather than traditional paper-based methods
- improving waste bin and recycling signage in staff areas
- re-educating staff and students to refuse, reduce, reuse and recycle

Energy

- reducing the amount of time certain air-conditioners operate and switching them to manual operation rather than automatic
- increasing thermostat settings during summer to 23 degrees
- signs to encourage people to switch off lights
- updated software to improve power saving on computers
- replacing halogen lamps with energy efficient IRC low voltage lighting
- installing sensors and timer controls for lighting in some rooms
- replacing current water chiller with plumbed-in filter and cooler system

Water

- installing flow control valves on tapware

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Australian Institute of Management

The Australian Institute of Management South Australia has been a leading provider of education and training for the State's managers and executives since 1944. AIM offers a wide range of courses and qualifications from Certificate III in Frontline Management to an MBA program. As a professional association for managers, AIM SA is supported nationally by 25,000 individual and 5000 corporate members.

www.aimsa.com.au

Zero Waste SA

A South Australian Government agency that advances improved waste management policies and the development of resource recovery and recycling. The Zero Waste SA Industry Program advises and supports companies to achieve sustainability goals in waste, water and energy.

www.zerowaste.sa.gov.au



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