

Sustainable procurement guide

Office paper

Office of the Chief Advisor - Procurement



**Queensland
Government**

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Purpose of this guide

This guide aims to provide minimum and best practice performance information and procurement responses for office paper. Its purpose is to influence procurement of office paper 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 paper.

Target audience

Minimum performance criteria are benchmarks for industry performance within the supply market.

For industry: this guide provides insight into current and potential government expectations in relation to the sustainability of office paper.

For procurement professionals: this guide provides information to guide the integration of sustainability principles into the procurement of office paper.

How to use this guide

This guide is commodity specific (office paper).

Sustainability should be considered at every stage of the procurement process. Opportunities and strategies exist to address environmental and social impacts during procurement planning (including demand analysis), supplier engagement and through the management of the supply arrangements. The procurement process is described in more detail in the *Implementing sustainable procurement throughout the procurement process* section of this guide (refer below).

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 agencies or 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.

Introduction to office paper

Scope

For the purpose of this guide, office paper is defined as unprinted 80 grams per square metre (g/m²) white paper for writing, printing and copying purposes sold in sheets or reams, also known as 'cut and wrap' paper.

It does not include carbon paper, paper used by commercial printers, envelopes, notebooks and calendars.

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. This applies especially for recycled paper, which must function

properly in all copiers, fax machines, laser printers, and ink jet printers without jamming or adversely impacting the device operations.

Products are assumed to be certified by mandatory Australian standards or equivalent international standards.

Sustainability debate: Virgin paper versus recycled paper

It is a common belief that the fibre source (i.e. recycled fibre content vs. virgin fibre content) is the only sustainability issue to consider when buying office copy paper, and further, that buying '100 per cent recycled' paper is the most sustainable option. The reality is much more complicated and should include a consideration of the overall life cycle impacts relating to the manufacture of paper.

Research during the development of this guide identified that while fibre source is an important issue, a range of other sustainability impacts should be considered when making a choice as to which paper will be procured. Further, research does not support the proposition that recycled fibre content is necessarily better than virgin fibre, provided the virgin fibre is sourced from well-managed plantation forests.

Thus, this guide suggests that a range of sustainability responses be addressed, including fibre source. As regards fibre source, a mixed-source paper is considered a preferable option, with the preferred percentage of virgin to recycled fibre content variable, depending on the specific paper, its origin and other sustainability impacts.

Key points associated with fibre sourcing options follow.

Why paper made from 100 per cent recycled fibre content is not recommended as necessarily preferable

- Paper fibres cannot be recycled indefinitely as the paper fibres break down after repeated recycling (five or six times¹) with a portion of the volume lost every time paper is recycled. Thus, inclusion of some virgin fibre content is essential in the manufacture of paper, with 100 per cent recycled content paper not being feasible over the longer term.
- Production of recycled paper fibre may require additional resources such as fossil fuels². Whereas, the waste by-products from processing virgin fibres can be used to produce energy, the waste by-products from processing recycled fibres are not as available for energy production.
- The local market may not have the capacity to supply recycled fibre content for paper. During 2004-05, only 4 per cent of printing and writing paper produced in Australia was made using recycled fibre³. This may change in the future as the Australian recycled paper segment of the market is showing strong growth⁴.
- Where recycled fibre is imported to manufacture recycled paper within Australia, the transportation of fibre contributes to the carbon footprint.

¹ New South Wales Government, Department of Environment and Climate Change, Know your paper –guide to Purchasing Recycled Content Office Paper, (January 2009).

² World Business Council for Sustainable Development, Sustainable Procurement of wood and paper-based products, (June 2009).

³ Australia's Transition from Native Forests to Plantations: The Implications for Woodchips, Pulp mills, Tax Breaks and Climate Change, Judith Ajani, The Australian National University, [online] accessed February 2010, http://epress.anu.edu.au/agenda/015/03/mobile_devices/ch02s06.html.

⁴ IBIS Report, Paper stationery Manufacturing, (Feb 2008).

- Where recycled paper is imported, the transportation of paper contributes to the carbon footprint.

Why paper made from 100 per cent sustainable virgin fibre is not recommended as necessarily preferable

- Recovered paper fibre is a valuable resource and its use in paper manufacture can assist in reducing the demand for timber. Research indicates that there may not be sufficient availability of locally sourced virgin fibre, with twenty per cent of virgin pulp used for production of paper in Australia being imported⁵. Further, the transportation of this fibre contributes to the carbon footprint.
- Studies have shown that producing paper from virgin fibre uses approximately 50 per cent more energy and 60 per cent more water than manufacturing paper⁶ from recovered fibre.
- Additional environmental gains are achieved by recycling paper at the end of life. Recycling prevents used paper going to landfill, which results in subsequent impacts such as production of methane (a greenhouse gas) and toxic leachates.

Based on the existing research, a mixed-source paper, (i.e. a combination of virgin content that is derived from sustainably managed plantation forest, and recycled content) is the preferred option from a sustainability perspective, and as such, it is the procurement response recommended in this guide. In addition, the other sustainability impacts associated with paper should be addressed in order to ensure a comprehensive approach is used.

Provided the virgin content is certified as being harvested, specifying a paper that is a blend of virgin and recycled fibre maximises the life of paper fibres, ensures ongoing sustainability of resources and will assist in stimulating the market for the recycled paper industry.

In order to make a fully informed decision about the specific percentage blend of virgin to recycled content, a full lifecycle analysis for specific papers is required. This analysis would examine impacts relating to sourcing of fibre and the manufacture of the particular paper, as well as consideration of the structure and effectiveness of the recycling market including:

- impacts associated with forestry practices and the availability of legal and sustainable virgin fibre
- transportation impacts from collection of widely dispersed post-consumer waste and delivery to the recycling mills
- the transportation impacts from distribution of pulp and paper products. Approximately 70 per cent of printing and writing paper used in Australia is imported⁷
- capacity of the recycled paper industry to supply the market and the effectiveness of the current use of recycled paper – anecdotal evidence suggests that most of the recycled fibre in Australia is

⁵ New South Wales Government, Department of Environment and Climate Change, Know your paper –Guide to Purchasing Recycled Content Office Paper, (January 2009).




⁶ Australia's Transition from Native Forests to Plantations: The Implications for Woodchips, Pulp Mills, Tax Breaks and Climate Change, Judith Ajani, The Australian National University, [online] accessed February 2010, http://epress.anu.edu.au/agenda/015/03/mobile_devices/ch02s06.html.

⁷ Australia's Transition from Native Forests to Plantations: The Implications for Woodchips, Pulp Mills, Tax Breaks and Climate Change, Judith Ajani, The Australian National University, [online] accessed February 2010, http://epress.anu.edu.au/agenda/015/03/mobile_devices/ch02s06.html.

used for production of packaging and industrial paper; thus, this guide does not specify a particular percentage of virgin to recycled fibre content in office paper.

Choosing sustainable office paper

The diagram below illustrates the steps to assist procurement professionals to progressively increase their sustainability requirements for office paper. It may also be used to evaluate how the paper currently procured is performing and identify where sustainability improvements can be made.

	<p>Meets no sustainability criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• source of virgin fibre is unknown• paper contains no recycled fibre content, or a low percentage of only pre-consumer pulp• chlorine is used in the bleaching process.
	<p>Meets the following sustainability criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• paper is a blend of sustainable virgin fibre and recycled fibres• virgin pulp content has been certified as legally harvested from a sustainably managed forest / timber source• paper bleaching is processed chlorine free (PCF), totally chlorine free (TCF) or elementary chlorine free (ECF)• paper packaging is recyclable and contains a minimum 50 per cent recycled content• paper is manufactured in a facility with an appropriate system of environmental management that specifically addressed the use of water and generation of waste.
	<p>Meets the following sustainability criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• paper is a blend of virgin and recycled fibres• virgin pulp content has been certified as legally harvested from a sustainably managed forest/ timber source• paper bleaching is PCF, TCF or ECF• transport impacts throughout the supply chain, including pulp and final paper product, are minimised• paper packaging is recyclable, ream wrappers contain a minimum 30 per cent post-consumer recycled content and cardboard boxes are made out of 100 per cent recycled content• paper is certified with ISO14024 Type 1 eco-label• paper is manufactured in a facility which:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– has an appropriate system of environmental management that specifically addressed the use of water and generation of waste– uses renewable energy sources– does not use solvents containing ozone depleting substances to clean production equipment• supplier of paper is able to provide reporting:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– disclosing the greenhouse gas emissions per tonne of paper produced– disclosing the energy and water consumption used to produce a tonne of paper• supplier of paper is able to demonstrate active participation in the social and economic development of local communities and key stakeholders.

Office paper: Summary of sustainability impacts and responses

Material sourcing and material choice

1. Fibre sourcing

Procure a mixed-source paper (i.e. blend of sustainable virgin fibre and recycled fibre) and ensure the paper meets the criteria listed below.

1.1 *Virgin fibre*

Ensure the virgin pulp content of paper has been certified as legally harvested from a sustainably managed forest/ timber source.

1.2 *Recycled content fibre*

Procure recycled content paper and encourage recycling of locally sourced post-consumer fibre.

1.3 *Transport impacts of fibre sourcing*

Procure paper from suppliers that can demonstrate initiatives to reduce transport intensity associated with the fibre sourcing and encourage the use of locally sourced fibre.

2. Social impacts

Give preference to papers made from responsibly managed forests with respect to communities, labour and the environment.

Manufacturing process (chipping, pulping, de-inking and papermaking)

3. Water use, generation of waste and pollutants

Procure paper that is manufactured in a facility with an appropriate system of environmental management that specifically addresses the use of water and generation of wastes and pollutants.

4. Energy use

Procure paper from suppliers that can demonstrate initiatives to lower energy consumption, improve energy efficiency and use renewable energy sources during the life cycle of paper manufacture.

5. Use of hazardous substances

Procure paper from suppliers that can demonstrate an elimination of restricted and prohibited hazardous substances in the paper manufacturing process.

Transport and packaging

6. Transport

Procure paper from suppliers that can demonstrate initiatives to reduce transport intensity of papers, including associated carbon emission impacts.

7. Packaging

Ensure packaging contains recycled content, is recyclable and contains no toxic substances.

Suggested criteria

Material sourcing and material choice

1. Fibre sourcing

Sustainable virgin fibre is an essential element in the manufacture of recycled paper as paper fibres cannot be recycled indefinitely. Therefore, 100 per cent recycled content paper is not considered sustainable in the long term.

However, the benefits of stimulating the recycling industry are recognised and procurement has the power to shift the market towards recycled content paper.

It is therefore recommended that a mixed-source paper is procured (i.e. blend of sustainable virgin fibre and recycled fibre).

The fibre sourcing issues discussed below must be addressed in the procurement process.

1.1 Virgin fibre

- **Issue.** Sourcing timber from unsustainable or illegal forests may create severe adverse environmental and social impacts such as loss of biodiversity, soil erosion and degradation, and compromise ecosystems.
- **Response.** Ensure the virgin pulp content of paper has been certified as legally harvested from a sustainably managed forest/ timber source. This applies to all virgin paper and mixed-source paper.

1.2 Recycled fibre

- **Issue.** Utilising recycled content pulp (both pre-consumer and post-consumer), conserves virgin forest resources. In addition, environmental gains are achieved as recycled pulp has a lower energy and water usage than virgin pulp. This recycled content could include both pre-consumer and post-consumer content.

Utilising pre-consumer content (off-cuts during production process) is good eco-efficiency practice as it avoiding waste within the production process.

Utilising post-consumer content contributes to recycling of paper that has been used by the end-consumer. However, it requires deinking and bleaching.

- **Response.** Procure recycled content paper and encourage recycling of locally sourced post-consumer fibre.

1.3 Transport impact of fibre sourcing

- **Issue.** Fibre content may not be locally available and may have to be transported a significant distance from the forest to the manufacturing facility/consumer to the recycling facility.
- **Response.** Procure paper from suppliers that can demonstrate initiatives to reduce transport intensity associated with fibre sourcing and encourage the use of locally sourced fibre.

Minimum performance criteria	Best practice performance criteria
<p>Minimum specification: All offered paper must be one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% certified sustainable virgin fibre content, or • 100% recycled fibre content, or • a declared and certifiable blend of sustainable virgin fibre and recycled fibre. <p>The offered paper must meet the following criteria:</p> <p><i>a) Virgin fibre content</i> Offerors are required to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • documentary evidence verifying the legality and sustainability of paper pulp fibres through forestry scheme chain of custody certification (e.g. by Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), Australian Forest Certification Scheme (AFCS) or any equivalent chain of custody certification recognised by the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC) Council) • a declaration that includes the origin and species of the wood and a certified declaration that the timber is from a legally-harvested forest (e.g. FSC, PEFC or any other equivalent means of proof will be accepted as proof of compliance.) <p>All evidence used to verify the legal and sustainable fibre source must contain valid expiry date, paper mill's name, product's name, certificate number, shows what the certification is for and the chain of custody.</p> <p><i>b) Recycled fibre content</i> Offerors are required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide a certification or a test report from a third party or self-declaration from the paper mill (including date, products covered and signature of mill manager) that specifies the recycled fibre content of paper • disclose percentage of pre- and post-consumer content of recovered fibres • disclose where the recovered fibres are sourced from. <p>Use of locally sourced recycled fibre is encouraged.</p>	<p>Best practice specification: All offered paper must contain a blend of virgin and recycled fibre.</p> <p>In addition to the minimum performance criteria, the offered paper must meet the following additional criteria:</p> <p><i>a) Virgin fibre content</i> Offerors are required to provide documentary evidence (e.g. self-declaration from the paper mill signed by the most senior decision maker) verifying that the fibre used to produce the paper must not contain genetically modified organisms (GMOs). This includes transgenically modified trees and plants that have genes of other animals and plants inserted.</p>
<p>References: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 (see <i>References</i>, below).</p>	

2. Social impacts

- Issue.** Logging of unsustainable or illegal forests may displace indigenous communities. Without land or other natural resources, native cultures often disintegrate. Other social impacts of paper production are impacts on health, wellbeing and the stability of local communities as the use of chemicals such as chlorine compounds creates hazards and risks for workers and the communities close to mill sites.
- Response.** Give preference to papers made from responsibly managed forests and with socially responsible practices with respect to communities, labour and the environment.

Minimum performance criteria	Best practice performance criteria
<p>Minimum specification:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Offerors are required to provide a declaration that the offered products are Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) or Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC) Council certified as this certification provides assurance that ownership rights are respected. Offerors are required to provide information on initiatives or formal commitments in place to address the environmental and social impacts of paper production, which may affect the communities close to forest or mill sites. Offerors are required to provide details of any employment-related convictions in the past two years and, if so, what was the outcome? 	<p>Best practice specification:</p> <p>Offerors are required to demonstrate participation in the social and economic development of local communities through training, education and employment participation schemes.</p>
<p>References: 8 (see <i>References</i>, below).</p>	

Manufacturing processes

3. Water use, generation of waste and pollutants

- **Issue.** The process of manufacturing paper generates a range of environmental impacts, particularly water consumption and a significant amount of waste and pollutants.
- **Response.** Procure paper that is manufactured in a facility with an appropriate system of environmental management that specifically addresses the use of water and generation of wastes and pollutants.

Minimum performance criteria	Best practice performance criteria
<p>Minimum specification: Offerors must provide a copy of current documentation that formally demonstrates a system of environmental management is operating within the company. The system should encompass identification, evaluation, improvement and monitoring of environmental performance of the paper manufacturing facility.</p> <p>The environmental management system must especially include a framework for action on waste and pollutants management. The system of environmental management may be certified, for example against ISO 14001, in which case a copy of the valid certificate is to be provided.</p> <p>Use of water Offerors are required to disclose water usage per tonne of production in paper manufacturing process.</p> <p>Offerors are required to demonstrate initiatives to reduce the usage of water and provide details of reduction targets. This may include recycling water or improving the efficiency of the production processes to reduce the consumption of water.</p> <p>Management of waste and pollutants Offerors must demonstrate that there are effective policies and procedures in place to minimise waste and emissions of pollutants, including measures to recycle waste materials from the production process.</p> <p>Offerors must demonstrate a contract is in place with a registered hazardous waste contractor for the environmentally responsible disposal of any hazardous waste produced during the production process.</p>	<p>Best practice specification: Use of water Offeror must provide a written declaration that the total discharges to water shall not exceed values as specified by GECA.</p>
<p>References: 2, 3, 5 (see <i>References</i>, below).</p>	

4. Energy use

- **Issue.** Significant amounts of energy are required over the life cycle of paper manufacture.
- **Response.** Procure paper from suppliers that can demonstrate initiatives to lower energy consumption, improve energy efficiency and use renewable energy sources during the life cycle of paper manufacture.

Minimum performance criteria	Best practice performance criteria
<p>Minimum specification: Offerors are required to disclose energy consumption (including percentage of electricity used from renewable sources used for power generation, type of renewable energy, and any third party certifications) and greenhouse gas emissions per tonne of paper produced in the paper manufacturing process.</p> <p>Offerors must demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • initiatives to reduce or offset greenhouse gases emitted in copy paper production, including any reduction targets that have been set and achieved (e.g. carbon offset credits) • that a proportion of energy used in paper manufacturing process is from renewable energy source either by onsite generation of renewable energy or direct purchases from electrical grid which is fed by green power plants. 	<p>Best practice specification: Offerors are required to disclose the carbon footprint of the offered product.</p> <p>Preference may be given to products certified as carbon neutral under the National Carbon Offset Standard.</p>
<p>References: 7 (see <i>References</i>, below).</p>	

5. Use of hazardous substances

- **Issue.** The bleaching of pulp with chlorine creates a hazardous by-product which adversely affects aquatic ecosystems. Additional toxins are used as biocides to prevent bacterial growth in the pulp and finished paper products.
- **Response.** Procure paper from suppliers that can demonstrate an elimination of restricted and prohibited hazardous substances in the paper manufacturing process.

Minimum performance criteria	Best practice performance criteria
<p>Minimum specification: Fibre-bleaching process Offerors must provide certification or where certification is not available, a self-declaration or certification from the paper mill (including date, products covered, and signature of mill manager) that paper is processed chlorine free (PCF), totally chlorine free (TCF) or elementary chlorine free (ECF).</p> <p>Equipment cleaning process Offerors must provide a written statement of compliance (signed by the mill manager) verifying that the solvents used to clean production equipment do not contain ozone depleting substances as listed in Annex A, B or C of the Montreal Protocol, or subsequent amendments.</p>	<p>Best practice specification: Offerors must provide a written statement of compliance signed by the most senior decision maker verifying that the hazardous substances listed below are not used in the production of paper or the final product:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • halogenated hydrocarbons (including CFC, HCFC and HFC), alkylphenol ethoxylates (APE), their derivatives (APBs) or linear alkylbenzene sulphonates (LAS), phthalates, acrylamide, optical brighteners and EDTA or its derivatives must not be used in the paper production process • prohibited dyes listed as specified by GECA • active components in biocides or biostatic agents used to counter slime-forming organisms in circulation water systems containing fibres shall not be potentially bio-accumulative • elemental chlorine and halogens must not be used in situ, including sodium chloride (NaCl) • additives assigned with the following risk phrases must not be prevalent in the final product: R45 (may cause cancer), R46 (may cause heritable genetic damage), R49 (may cause cancer by inhalation), R50 (very toxic to aquatic organisms), R51 (toxic to aquatic organisms), R52 (harmful to aquatic organisms), R53 (may cause long-term adverse effects in the aquatic environment), R56 (toxic to soil organisms) or R58 (may cause long term adverse effects in the environment). <p>Offerors must provide a written statement of compliance that no heavy metals listed below are used in the production of paper:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no dyes or pigments used shall contain lead, copper, nickel, aluminium, cadmium or chromium VI as constituent parts.
<p>References: 1, 3, 5 (see <i>References</i>, below).</p>	

Transportation and packaging

6. Transport

- **Issue.** Final paper products transported over long distances may have higher carbon impacts than products available locally. The intensity of carbon impacts is related to the method of transportation used (e.g. air transport has a higher carbon impact than road transport).
- **Response.** Procure paper from suppliers that can demonstrate initiatives to reduce transport intensity of papers, including associated carbon emission impacts.

Minimum performance criteria	Best practice performance criteria
<p>Minimum specification:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Offerors must provide quantifiable evidence and reporting that strategies have been developed and implemented to help paper carriers reduce fuel use, reduce air pollution and reduce and mitigate carbon emissions. This could include the use of ethanol blended fuels in shipping/delivery fleets, or abiding by the National Environment Protection (diesel vehicle emissions) Measure. 2. Offerors must demonstrate initiatives to offset carbon impacts from transportation of copy paper (including importing of fibre source, transportation from and to the mill and paper distribution). 	<p>Best practice specification:</p> <p>Offerors must disclose greenhouse gas emissions associated with transportation and distribution of sustainable virgin fibre, recovered fibres and final paper products.</p>
<p>References: 2, 3 (see <i>References</i>, below).</p>	

7. Packaging

- **Issue.** Packaging utilises resources and generates environmental impacts during its production. Packaging may also contain toxic substances that can create pollution problems if not disposed of correctly.
- **Response.** Ensure packaging contains recycled content, is recyclable and contains no toxic substances.

Minimum performance criteria	Best practice performance criteria
<p>Minimum specification:</p> <p>Offerors must provide a written declaration showing that ream wrappers and cartons/boxes used to package paper are recyclable in business or municipal recycling programs.</p> <p>Offerors must provide a written declaration showing that cartons/boxes used to package paper contain a minimum of 50 per cent recycled content.</p> <p>Offerors must provide details of demonstrated initiatives to reduce of use of dyes/inks in copy paper wrappers and packaging to facilitate the recycling process.</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 have been used in product packaging.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Best practice specification:</p> <p>Offerors must provide a written description of the product packaging together with a corresponding declaration showing that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ream wrappers contain a minimum of 30 per cent post-consumer recycled content and cartons/boxes contain 100 per cent recycled content • chlorinated or halogenated plastics are not used in product packaging • wrappers and packaging do not contain any prohibited dyes specified in GECA • packaging does not contain lead, tin, arsenic, cadmium, mercury, chromium VI or their compounds or any substances deemed carcinogenic under the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC).
<p>References: 2, 3 (see <i>References</i>, below).</p>	

Implementing sustainable procurement throughout the procurement process

Sustainability considerations should be incorporated at every stage of the procurement process.

Prior to incorporating any specifications or information contained within this guide:

- consider the specific market conditions and organisational needs prior to deciding if and where to apply these criteria
- document the options and decisions for how sustainability will be addressed in a plan for significant procurement or a business case.

Procurement planning

Demand analysis

Rethinking the need for a purchase can help avoid unnecessary consumption.

Consider both the 'need' for the commodity and how the use of the commodity is being managed. For example, develop internal policies and procedures with regard to paper use, such as:

- use printers capable of duplex printing (printing on both sides) – and set these printers' default to duplex printing configuration
- minimise the use of smaller stand-alone and desktop printers
- use electronic forms of communication wherever possible
- reuse single-sided scrap paper for internal or draft print-outs
- establish an office paper recycling program or policy, or improve upon an existing one to increase the supply of recycled content pulp
- develop training information session to raise awareness and promote paper recycling programs.

Supply market analysis

Collect information to identify the capacity of the supply chain to deliver the products in accordance with sustainability requirements.

Develop an understanding of the product supply chain, including sourcing of materials, in order to make a fully informed sustainable procurement response.

Use the sustainability issues identified in this guide to develop a pre-tender questionnaire that will help lead discussion with suppliers.

Conduct pre-tender supplier briefings in order to:

- engage potential suppliers, identify existing sustainable suppliers and develop an overall understanding of the market's sustainability performance and capability.
- determine whether the recommended minimum performance criteria identified in this guide are sufficient or if the best practice performance criteria would be more suitable.

Identify opportunities for collaboration between government and industry/specific suppliers in relation to sustainability issues contained in this guide.

Supplier engagement

The criteria in this guide can be used to develop requirements in the Invitation to Offer documents (ITO) as outlined below:

- minimum performance criteria for office paper may be set as mandatory specifications.
 - ensure that ‘mandatory’ requirements are able to be delivered by the majority of potential suppliers as those who do not meet the mandatory specifications are not evaluated during the tendering process.
- best practice performance criteria for office paper may be set as desirable specifications
 - these criteria relate to industry leaders in the sustainability field and therefore it is unlikely that all suppliers will be able to compete on this level
 - best practice performance criteria provide a market for more sustainable products
 - specifying for best practices may incur a price differential. 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.

Managing supply arrangements

Key performance indicators (KPIs) are an effective tool to ensure suppliers implement progressive sustainability improvements during the term of the arrangement. For example:

- if at the specification development stage it is determined that the potential supplier does not have a capability or capacity to meet a particular sustainability requirement at that point in time, the sustainability criterion may be set as part of KPIs (e.g. suppliers may be required to progressively increase the proportion of renewable energy used in the paper manufacturing facility)
- best practice criteria that are set as KPIs could be used to progress a supplier towards best practice via continuous improvement over time.

Reporting and measurement

Contract reporting requirements should specifically demonstrate the environmental and social benefits achieved by procuring more sustainable products.

Incorporate sustainability reporting requirements into contract/arrangement terms and conditions.

Measurements of sustainability performance for office paper could include:

- reductions in the volume of hazardous chemicals and raw materials used in the paper manufacturing process
- quantifiable reductions in the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the transportation/distribution of the final paper products
- reports of measures taken to eliminate the use of toxic substances in the product packaging
- carbon footprint calculations.

References

1. Department of Environment and Climate Change, New South Wales, Know your paper – Guide to Purchasing Recycled Content Office Paper, January 2009.
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