

AUSTRALIANS SAY GOING GREEN AT WORK A CHALLENGE

Research released by HSBC Bank in time for World Environment Day on 5 June shows Australians want to be more environmentally friendly in their workplace but lack of incentive and poor leadership prevent them from doing so. The findings come from research by HSBC Bank into Australian opinions on corporate sustainability with 1,000 people surveyed¹ across the country.

HSBC's research revealed four out of five Australians specifically look for environmental responsibility in their employer and more than 45 per cent of Australians want their employer to have stated policies on corporate social responsibility.

But as it stands, a third of Australians believe their organisation wastes both water and electricity and one in five Australians think their employer wastes electricity.

The research also demonstrates a gulf between Australian behaviours at work and at home when it comes to environmentally friendly actions. While 95 percent of those surveyed switch off their lights at home, only one in two will do the same at work.

So what would it take to make employees greener at work? Sixty-three per cent of Australians want management to lead by example to make green the norm. Fifty-four per cent feel they need guidance and training on the tactics to take to go green while one in two Australians want their employers to offer incentives to help employees reduce their organisation's impact on the environment.

Jennie Harris, Corporate Sustainability Manager at HSBC Bank Australia said: "World Environment Day is a timely occasion to re-evaluate both our individual contribution and that of businesses, towards tackling the climate change challenge we all face.

"This year HSBC is focusing on how employees can 'be part of the solution' and raise awareness about climate change and respond to the challenge.

"Sustainability is at the heart of HSBC's strategy. The HSBC Group went carbon neutral in November 2005 and we constantly re-evaluate our operations around the world to continue reducing our environmental impact.

HSBC research shows Australians say going green at work a challenge/2

“In 2007, HSBC announced the launch of both the US\$100 million HSBC Climate Partnership and the US\$90 million Global Environmental Efficiency Program and appointed Lord Nicholas Stern (author of the landmark 2006 Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change) as advisor on Economic Development and Climate Change.

“HSBC continues to focus on managing our environmental footprint as well as sustainability in risk management, in business development and our community initiatives. Encouraging employees to be part of the climate change solution is critical – for HSBC and for Australian businesses in general.”

The HSBC research showed:

- South Australians are most keen on seeing environmental responsibility in their workplace (88%), followed quickly by West Australians (86%). Northern Territorians are least compelled, with only seven per cent looking for environmental responsibility in an employer.
- Canberrans are most interested in their employer having stated CSR policies (52%) followed closely by West Australians (48%). Only three per cent of Northern Territorians want to see their employer with stated policies.
- New South Welshmen (23% of them) and South Australians (22%) are most concerned their employers are wasting electricity, while Tasmanians are least concerned – only 10 per cent believe their employer is wasting electricity.
- The ACT and West Australia are most concerned about the combined waste of water and electricity, with 37% and 34% respectively believing it’s an issue.
- Tasmanians are most consistent in their behaviour. Ninety per cent will turn the lights off at home, while 80% will do so at work.
- Victorians and West Australians need motivating, with 57% and 52% respectively saying they would act greener if their employer offered incentives to do so.
- The southern states most want leadership, with South Australians (67%), Victorians (65.5%) and Tasmanians (65%) saying they would go greener if their management led by example.
- West Australians and Tasmanians said they would act greener if someone showed them how. Sixty per cent in each state said education/training would make them greener at work.

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Notes to editors

HSBC Bank Australia

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ⁱ HSBC research conducted by Pure Profile, surveying 1,000 Australians 18+ years across all states