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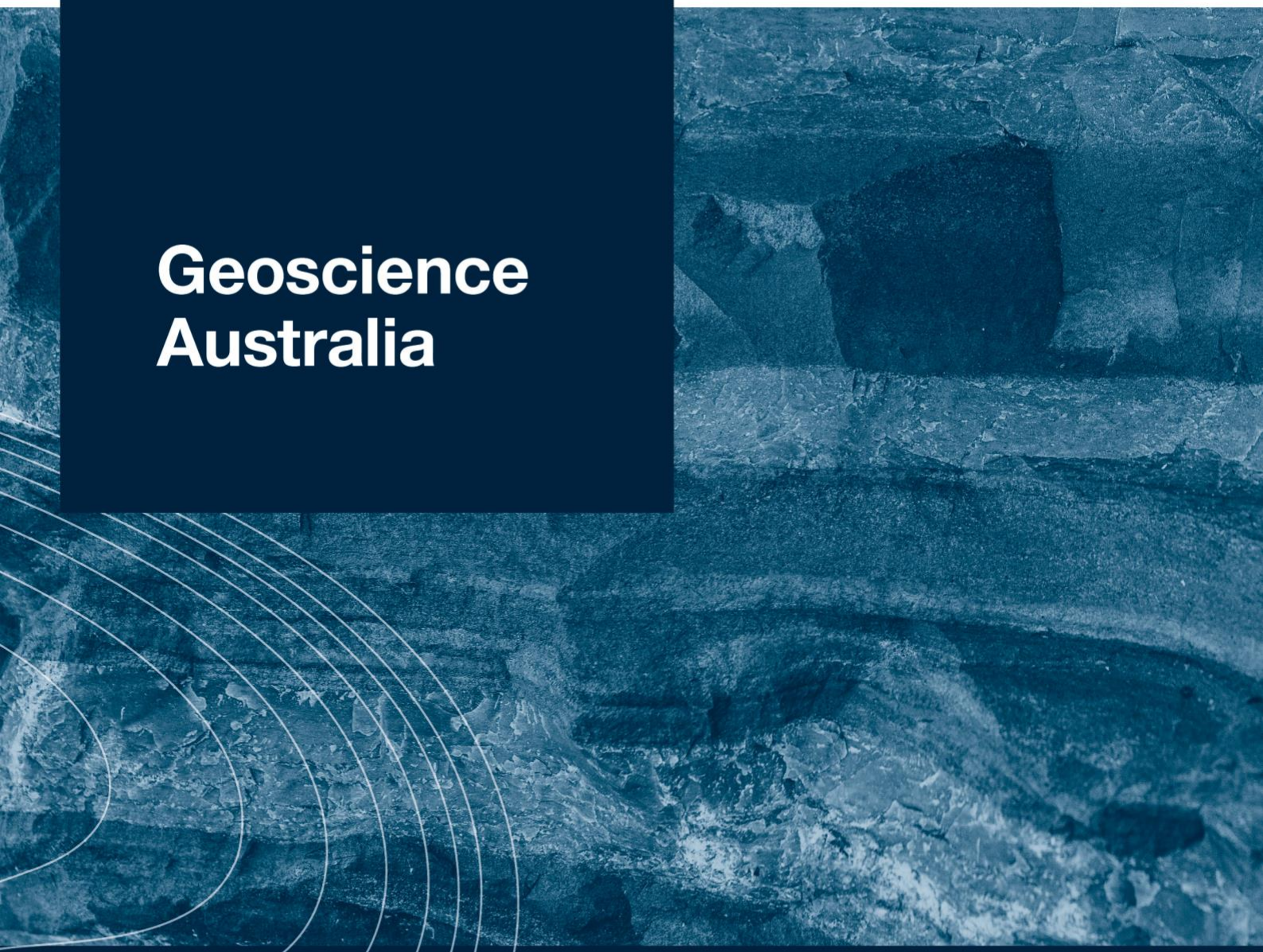
Geoscience Australia

Geoscience Australia



Commonwealth Climate Disclosure

2025–26

Acknowledgment of country

Geoscience Australia values the lands, water and sky as we work to deepen a shared understanding of Country and Earth. We respect First Nations peoples and their enduring connection, contribution and obligations to Country. Reflecting on our shared history, we are committed to listen and learn.



Credit: Geoscience Australia: A Journey of Connection, artwork by Lani Balzan

Accessing this document

The Geoscience Australia 2025–26 Commonwealth Climate Disclosure is available on our website at www.ga.gov.au/about/corporate-documents/commonwealth-climate-disclosure and transparency.gov.au.

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Cover image

The cover photo is of a banded iron formation from the Hamersley Ranges and can be found at the Geoscience Australia Time Walk in Symonston, ACT.

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Introduction

The Commonwealth Climate Disclosure is the Government's policy for Commonwealth entities to publicly disclose their exposure to climate-related risks and opportunities, as well as their actions to manage them.

As trusted leaders in applied geoscience, our work is directly impacted by the changing climate, particularly work related to intensifying extreme weather events. Our hazard data, exposure information and impact analysis is essential for assessing climate risks from bushfires, floods, droughts, storms, higher temperatures and coastal hazards that affect communities and the environment. We proactively update our policies and procedures to ensure resilience, aiming to meet the expectations of the Government and Australian communities.

Geoscience Australia has prepared the climate disclosure in accordance with all requirements, particularly the *Commonwealth Climate Disclosure: Resource Management Guide 140* with the year 1 reporting provisions, as part of the tranche 2 Commonwealth entities reporting in the 2025–26 financial year.

Core requirements of the Commonwealth Climate Disclosure are set out in this report and include commentary on our:

- governance processes, controls and procedures to monitor, manage and oversee climate-related risks and opportunities
- strategy to manage climate-related risks and opportunities
- operational model effects outlining the current and anticipated effects of climate-related risks and opportunities on our operational model
- risk management of how we identify, assess, prioritise, manage and monitor climate-related risks and opportunities, particularly how those processes are integrated into and inform our overall risk management process.

Governance

The Geoscience Australia Chief Executive Officer is the Accountable Authority responsible for:

- agency risks and climate-related risks under section 16 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act)
- setting our emissions reduction targets in-line with the Australian Public Service (APS) Net Zero 2030 target and Net Zero in Government Operations Strategy, included in our Emissions Reduction Plan
- agency risk and climate related risk and opportunity management oversight, receiving support and guidance from the Executive Board, the Chief Risk Officer and the Chief Sustainability Officer who was appointed in 2024 to champion activities that reduce our operational emissions and contribute to the APS Net Zero 2030 target.

Geoscience Australia recently completed a holistic review of our enterprise governance and risk management, supporting updates to committee structures, governance policies and the Enterprise Risk Management Framework, to better align with the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy. As part of this review, climate risks were considered at the enterprise level.

We are now currently working to improve our risk culture, uplift skills and capabilities in risk assessments, and encouraging employees to complete risk management training. We will report on the progress of this project in our 2026–27 Commonwealth Climate Disclosure.

The 2025–26 governance roles and responsibility structure associated with climate risk and opportunity management is outlined in Table 1.

Table 1 Governance roles and responsibility structure

Role	Risk Responsibility
Management	
Chief Executive Officer	Under s16 of the PGPA Act, the Chief Executive Officer, as the Accountable Authority, has responsibility for having systems of risk management in place – this includes determining risk appetite, tolerance and a positive risk culture.
Executive Board	Principal advisory board overseeing enterprise risks and opportunities, related strategies, targets, policies, activities and performance.
Chief Sustainability Officer	Responsible for championing lower emissions and sustainable initiatives.
Chief Risk Officer	Responsible for overseeing the risk management framework and governance as well as advising the Chief Executive Officer, Executive Board and the Audit and Risk Committee.
Independent Monitoring	
Audit and Risk Committee	Responsible for providing independent advice to the Chief Executive Officer on the appropriateness of our key governance arrangements, including system of risk oversight and management, and the system of internal control.

Strategy

Climate-related risks and opportunities

Geoscience Australia conducted an agency-wide assessment and identified 12 material climate-related risks and opportunities. Our disclosure of risks and opportunities relating to delivery of policy is earlier than required in the year 2 reporting provisions.

Table 2 Disclosure of our material organisational and policy climate-related risks and opportunities

No.	Description	Risk / opportunity	Type	Timeframe[1]
1	Increased winds and/or turbulence impacting data quality and safety of airborne surveys.	Risk	Physical	Short and medium term
2	Extended wet season and/or increased electrical and thunderstorms delaying project times; disrupting drilling; degradation of conductivity and radiometric measurements.	Risk	Physical	Short and medium term
3	Increased prevalence and range of bushfires increasing risk to staff operating in the field; infrastructure; reduced visibility when flying surveys.	Risk	Physical	Short and medium term
4	Extreme weather events damaging infrastructure and assets, including earthquake monitoring hardware, repository, and scientific equipment requiring costly repairs or replacement.	Risk	Physical	Short and medium term
5	Extreme weather events affecting access to offices, workforce mobility and staff wellbeing.	Risk	Physical	Short and medium term
6	Failure to reduce emissions to meet APS Net Zero 2030 target.	Risk	Transition	Short term
7	Improved drilling technology and/or operations minimising environmental impacts and operational times.	Opportunity	Physical and transition	Short and medium term
8	Acquisition of low carbon usage platforms and acquisition systems encouraging suppliers to move towards low carbon usage.	Opportunity	Transition	Short and medium term
9	Higher demand for geospatial, earthquake and AusSeabed data due to increased risk of natural disasters.	Opportunity	Transition	Medium term
10	Future policy innovation to mitigate climate risk.	Opportunity	Transition	Short to medium term
11	Implement office consolidation and optimisation planning to reduce redundant, unused office facilities and equipment across our Symonston site.	Opportunity	Transition	Short term
12	Upgrade lighting to high efficiency LED, coupled with lighting control sensors at our Symonston site.	Opportunity	Physical and Transition	Short term

[1] In our assessment we defined 3 timeframes: current, 2030 (short-term) and 2050 (medium-term) as recommended in the Climate Risk and Opportunity Management Program guidelines.

Operational model effects

The current and anticipated effects of climate risks on our operational model include:

- impacts to staff health and wellbeing due to extreme weather events – our workforce is primarily based in Canberra, ACT, any significant adverse weather events could have potential to impact staff welfare
- disruptions to business continuity due to natural disaster events, including safe access to sites
- damage to assets and data centres impacting access and reporting – our monitoring hardware is located across Australia, often in remote locations, impacts on our equipment could be time consuming as it would be impossible to replace numerous receptors quickly.

Risk Management

Our climate risk and opportunity assessment was undertaken in line with the Climate Risk and Opportunity Management Program (CROMP) and obligations under the Australian Government's Approach to Climate Risk and Opportunity Management in the Public Sector 2024–2026.

Geoscience Australia completed the first detailed operational climate risk assessment in the 2023-24 financial year, and again in 2025–26, following an update to our Risk Management Framework which included embedding climate risks.

The climate risk assessment process followed the 6 steps outlined in the CROMP guidance and used our risk management documentation as the overall guiding document to determine risk and tolerances. We manage and monitor climate related risks and opportunities, including how we prioritise and assess the nature, likelihood and magnitude of effects of climate-related risks and opportunities, using the Geoscience Australia Risk Management Framework.

Although many Geoscience Australia staff are based in Canberra, our workforce increasingly operates remotely across most states, including small teams at remote sites in Alice Springs, the Northern Territory, and Yarragadee, Western Australia. Given our infrastructure and fieldwork extend across Australia and internationally, all regions were considered when assessing climate-related risks.

We managed uncertainty by using reputable data sources and increasing the risk rating where the appropriate rating was unclear under our risk matrix.

Table 3 Internal and external data sources

Internal data sources	**External data sources**
Risk Management Policy and procedures	APS Net Zero 2030 target
Emissions Reduction Plan	Australian Government's Approach to Climate Risk and Opportunity Management in the Public Sector 2024–26
Insurance claims history	Climate Risk and Opportunity Management Program
Workshops and surveys with subject matter experts	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Sixth Assessment Report

Metrics and targets

Climate-related metrics

The APS Net Zero by 2030 is the Government's policy for the APS to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2030 and transparently report on emissions. The Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory presents greenhouse gas emissions over the 2025–26 period. Results are based on Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (CO2-e) emissions.

Greenhouse gas emissions reporting has been developed with the Emissions Reporting Framework, ensuring the methodology used is consistent with the whole-of-Australian government approach as part of the APS Net Zero 2030 policy. Not all data sources were available at the time of the report and adjustments to data may be required in future reports. Each entity is responsible for reducing emissions and is required to report on operational greenhouse gas emissions. Table 4 shows Geoscience Australia's emissions for the 2025–26 financial year.

Table 4 Greenhouse gas emissions inventory related to electricity usage using the location-based accounting method in 2025–26

Emissions source	Scope 1 t CO_2-e	Scope 2 t CO_2-e	Scope 3 t CO_2-e	Total t CO_2-e
Electricity (Location Based Approach)	N/A	2,792.51	145.14	2,937.65
Natural Gas	378.04	N/A	96.11	474.15
Solid Waste	0.00	N/A	28.65	28.65
Refrigerants*	49.30	N/A	N/A	49.30
Fleet and Other Vehicles	36.17	N/A	8.89	45.06
Domestic Commercial Flights	0.00	N/A	308.82	308.82
Domestic Hire Car	N/A	N/A	19.74	19.74
Domestic Travel Accommodation	N/A	N/A	91.75	91.75
Other Energy	0.35	N/A	0.12	0.47
Total t CO_2-e	**463.86**	**2,792.51**	**699.22**	**3,955.59**

Note: * Indicates optional emission source for 2025–26 emissions reporting and N/A is not applicable.

Geoscience Australia's total renewable electricity for the 2025–26 reporting period (shown in Table 5) includes mandatory renewables, which is the portion of electricity consumed from the grid generated by renewable sources, and voluntary renewables, which reflects the eligible carbon credit units surrendered by the entity, and may include purchased large-scale generation certificates, power purchasing agreements, GreenPower and the jurisdictional renewable power percentage.

Table 5 Electricity greenhouse gas emissions related to electricity usage using both the location-based and the market-based accounting methods measured in kilowatt hours (kWh) in 2025–26

Emissions source	Scope 2 t CO_2-e	Scope 3 t CO_2-e	Total t CO_2-e	Electricity kWh
Electricity (Location Based Approach)	2,792.51	145.14	2,937.64	4,409,799.63
Market-based electricity emissions	328.34	44.59	372.93	405,358.57
Total renewable electricity	N/A	N/A	N/A	4,004,441.07
Renewable Power Percentage [1]	N/A	N/A	N/A	762,454.36
Jurisdictional Renewable Power [2, 3]	N/A	N/A	N/A	3,241,986.71
GreenPower [2]	N/A	N/A	N/A	-
Large-scale generation certificates [2]	**N/A**	**N/A**	**N/A**	**-**

Note: N/A is not applicable.

[1] Listed as Mandatory renewables in 2024–25 Annual Reports. The renewable power percentage accounts for the portion of electricity used from the grid, that falls within the Renewable Energy Target.

[2] Listed as Voluntary renewables in 2024-25 Annual Reports.

[3] The Australian Capital Territory is currently the only state with a jurisdictional renewable power percentage.