

Environmental progress report

Period: 1st May 2016 – 30th April 2017

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BACKGROUND

The Aldersgate Group is an alliance of leaders from business, politics and civil society that drives action for a sustainable economy. Formed in 2006, the Group now has 85 members and a permanent Secretariat of five. The environmental progress report refers to impacts of the Secretariat's activities and does not include environmental impact of the membership or Board of Directors.

The Aldersgate Group has prepared annual reports showing its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions since its 2011-2012 fiscal year. In preparing a report for the fiscal year ending April 2015, the Aldersgate Group determined there was a lack of consistency in these reports, arising from challenges in obtaining robust and comparable data from key suppliers and changes in Aldersgate Group's methodology in response to that lack of robust data. The Group determined that the ongoing effort to publish full GHG reports was not justified due to lack of comparability of data year on year, but acknowledged the value of monitoring key activities to help identify its impacts.

In line with the Board of Directors' recommendations, the Aldersgate Group Secretariat did not publish a GHG report last year, but has continued to review its environmental impacts against current practice.

ASSESSMENT

This year there has once again been a lack of consistency from the previous reporting year due to changing parameters and an inability to interrogate data due to difficulties in communicating with the building management.

Scope 1

The Aldersgate Group Secretariat's emissions increased by 25% in the 2016-2017 reporting year. This may be due to new appliances with differing energy use within New Zealand House, but the Secretariat was unable to ascertain the reasons behind this because of unresponsive building management.¹

Scope 2

Total electricity usage for Hub Westminster decreased by 24%. The Secretariat was unable to ascertain the reasons behind this because of unresponsive building management.

Scope 3

The Secretariat's Scope 3 emissions increased this year by one third. The increase can be largely attributed to the significantly higher volume of air travel, which was necessary due to tight time constraints or practicality. There was also a significant increase in train travel which reflects the Secretariat's endeavours to increase the Aldersgate Group's presence beyond Westminster in

¹ A meeting with office management has been requested

response to the growing “place-based” agenda² and the Secretariat’s efforts to engage more with the membership by visiting facilities where possible (including a visit to the National Grid operations centre and Viridor waste treatment plant). The Secretariat increased the number of pages printed this year, which may be partly attributed to an increase in staff members, although overall printing-related emissions declined. Emissions related to email storage has decreased, thanks to the departure of one long-standing member of staff and efforts to delete unnecessary emails.

ONGOING EFFORTS

The 2015-2016 environmental progress report set out ongoing efforts for reducing the Secretariat’s carbon emissions and improving data collection.³ The Secretariat has made progress on these targets, reducing emissions from email storage and obtaining a fuller set of invoices on gas and electricity usage. We will aim to build on this progress to improve:

1. **Supplier engagement:** The Secretariat continues to engage with key suppliers for more accurate information and lower impact services. Procuring data and invoices from our office space provider, the Hub Westminster, has been a challenge this year, due in part to changeover of staff in New Zealand House building management (JLL) who have been unresponsive. Nonetheless, the Secretariat has been successful in procuring more complete energy data this year from Hub Westminster, but still seeks an explanation for increased gas usage and reduced electricity usage. The Secretariat has requested a meeting with JLL to discuss this further.
2. **Scope 3 emissions:** The Secretariat will endeavour to limit Scope 3 emissions, reducing business travel related emissions by taking flights only when unavoidable, keeping printing to a minimum and taking steps to streamline data storage and emails. The Secretariat will continue to monitor these key factors over which it has more direct control.
3. **Methodology:** The Secretariat continues to use Defra’s guidance for compliance with greenhouse gas reporting regulation⁴ and Defra’s greenhouse gas conversion factors.⁵ Consistency of metrics has continued to be a challenge: the previous people based methodology for calculating Scope 1 and 2 emissions has been adjusted this year, as a decline in other people working the Hub Westminster co-working space from an average of 150 last reporting year to 90 this reporting year, resulting in highly skewed results for the Secretariat. The new methodology is based on share of floor area occupied and has been retrospectively applied to the previous year’s data for comparability. Going forwards, Scope 1 and 2 emissions will be calculated using the new methodology. The Secretariat will also continue to seek a more appropriate methodology to measure emissions from our online data storage and emails, as current conversion factors are from 2012 and based on US data.

² See for example, BEIS, *Industrial Strategy Green Paper* (January 2017)

³ AG Environmental Progress Report 2015-2016

⁴ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (October 2013) <http://bit.ly/1cUDUtF>

⁵ <http://www.ukconversionfactorscarbonsmart.co.uk/>