



Regional and Community Action on Climate Change

Final Report 2009

Executive Summary

The Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action began operating in 2002 as a network to share information, coordinate community emission reduction activities and cooperate on the research and development of innovative corporate emissions projects. NAGA received funding from DSE to establish and support a NAGA coordination function; funding began in 2005 and was phased out by June 2009.

NAGA has utilised this funding to employ a Coordinator; expand its membership to nine councils in the northern metropolitan region of Melbourne and Moreland Energy Foundation; implement community emission reduction projects; support NAGA members' implementation of their own climate change actions and programs; and research and develop a major regional action plan for emission reductions that will build partnerships with key stakeholders, businesses and residents of the region. NAGA has continued to lead statewide efforts to install energy efficient public lighting, demonstrating the efficiency and effectiveness of regional alliances in promoting and supporting Victorian local government sustainability efforts. NAGA has established a leadership role in collaborative climate change action and has reinforced its members' support for a regional collaborative approach to addressing the challenges of climate change.

Background

The Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action began operating in 2002 as a network that shares information, coordinates community emission reduction activities and cooperates on the research and development of innovative corporate emissions projects. NAGA's goal is to achieve significant greenhouse abatement by delivering effective programs and leveraging council, community and business action.

NAGA's members are the Cities of Banyule, Darebin, Hume, Manningham, Melbourne, Moreland, Whittlesea, Yarra, Nillumbik Shire Council and the Moreland Energy Foundation Limited (MEFL). The NAGA region covers around ¼ of metropolitan Melbourne's population and comprises a cross section of urban and urban fringe land uses (residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, forestry, conservation, even mining) and socio-economic sectors.



NAGA implements emission reduction projects, and undertakes research into reducing carbon emissions across the NAGA region. NAGA members also establish their own cutting edge projects, which can act as pilots for future NAGA projects. Over the last 2 years, NAGA has attracted more than \$1,400,000 in cash and in-kind contributions to implement climate change projects in the NAGA region, demonstrating significant emission reduction innovation at the local government and regional level.

MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

BANYULE CITY COUNCIL, DAREBIN CITY COUNCIL, HUME CITY COUNCIL, MANNINGHAM CITY COUNCIL, CITY OF MELBOURNE, MORELAND CITY COUNCIL, MORELAND ENERGY FOUNDATION LIMITED, NILLUMBIK SHIRE COUNCIL, CITY OF WHITTLESEA, CITY OF YARRA

DSE funding for NAGA coordination

From 2005, DSE provided funding to NAGA for its coordination functions. These include:

- develop climate change abatement and adaptation measures to address the specific needs, opportunities and priorities of the partnership's community and/or region;
- build the capacity of local government, community and the private sector to engage in climate change abatement and adaptation measures to be effective partners in the delivery of a range of local government, State Government and Commonwealth climate change programs; and
- improve integration and targeting of a range of Government services and programs.

During the course of the DSE contract (1 January 2008 – 30 June 2009), NAGA has continued to demonstrate success as an alliance that can effectively promote information exchange and cooperation between its members, project partners and other stakeholders in the region. NAGA has developed a strong reputation amongst its members and project partners as a hub for development of partnerships and promotion of innovative local government responses to the challenges of climate change, and has demonstrated significant expertise in program development and program delivery.

NAGA has been working with members, partners and stakeholders to develop innovative solutions and approaches to climate change mitigation and adaptation. NAGA's activities span delivery of forums; dissemination of information and research; and development of detailed technical methodologies and guidelines, from energy efficient streetlighting to quantification methodologies for residential sector projects.

NAGA Transition Strategy

NAGA received funding from the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) for an Executive Officer/Coordinator and supporting operational costs to carry out business and transition planning activity to deliver regional and community action on climate change. DSE funding to NAGA commenced in August 05. The funding was phased out at the end of June 09. To ensure ongoing self-sustaining operations, NAGA has prepared a Transition Strategy, as required by DSE, which reviewed existing arrangements for the function of the Alliance and developed a plan for self-sustaining operations beyond 30 June 2009.

As part of the implementation of the Transition Strategy, NAGA reviewed and revised its Terms of Reference and Governance Structure (see below), and an updated Memorandum of Understanding between NAGA members has been signed. The updated MoU includes members' commitment to provision of funding contribution for NAGA coordination functions for 3 years.

NAGA Governance

With the expansion of NAGA's roles and priorities, and NAGA's coordination roles becoming fully member funded following the phasing out of DSE funding, NAGA's governance structures have been expanded and formalised, to ensure sound and effective decision-making; incorporate processes for accountability to the alliance as an entity, to the MEFL Board and to individual alliance member councils; and maintain effective communication and information exchange within NAGA's network.

NAGA's Executive, with Councillor or senior staff representation from each NAGA member, meets quarterly to oversee NAGA's strategic directions, high level members' engagement and advocacy priorities. NAGA's Steering Committee, with officer or coordinator representation from each NAGA member meets bimonthly to oversee NAGA's project establishment and management, and budget review.

In addition, NAGA has established a number of Working Groups to allow more detailed, in-depth work on specific issues, and implementation of NAGA projects, outside the regular schedule of NAGA committee meetings. The Working Groups provide a forum for ongoing project management; reporting and recommendations to NAGA's Steering Committee; detailed technical discussion and detailed project development. The following working groups are currently active: Adaptation, Advocacy, Streetlighting, Towards Zero Net Emissions project, Cogeneration, Buildings and Energy Management, and Economic Development.

NAGA Business/Action Plan

NAGA's Action Plan 2008 identified 5 strategic directions for NAGA, each with associated priorities and actions. These five strategic directions reflect NAGA's concern to achieve urgent and substantial climate action, as well as NAGA's focus on strengthening and sustaining the NAGA alliance and its role in the northern region of metropolitan Melbourne.

In 2009, NAGA developed the '*Towards Zero Net Emissions for the NAGA Region*' regional action plan, which defines NAGA's priorities for community emission reductions actions and programs for the next three years <http://www.naga.org.au/naga/project/151/>

Conclusion and future directions

NAGA has completed the transition from DSE funding to members' funding and has successfully established a solid and resilient governance structure. NAGA will continue to engage with and consolidate support for regional collaborative approaches to climate change action, both mitigation and transition/adaptation, through implementation of the *Towards Zero Net Emissions for the NAGA region* regional plan, and through working with partners and stakeholders at local, state and federal levels to promote effective policies, structures, programs and responses to the challenges of a low-carbon, climate changed future.

