

Switch your thinking Business Plan

2015-16 to 2019-20

Executive Summary

Switch your thinking (SYT) supports the community and local government Partners to reduce their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. This Business Plan outlines the rationale and strategies that will be undertaken between 2015 and 2020 to achieve this objective.

In the previous business cycle (2012/13 - 2014/15), the program achieved significant success expanding revenue streams and achieving all key actions and objectives set out in the preceding Business Plan. Highlights of the 2012-15 business cycle include:

- Securing over \$970,000 of grant funding to assist South East Regional Energy Group (SEREG) partner Councils to undertake corporate and community emission abatement and environmental awareness projects
- Streamlining and automating service provision by upgrading online education materials and up-skilling Council staff and community members
- Generating \$1.52 of revenue from external sources for every collective \$1.00 invested in SYT by SEREG partner Councils
- Retaining a record number of member Council subscribers, earning \$135,000 in income
- Delivering high-profile environmental awareness projects and abating over 9,400 tonnes of GHG emissions

Demand for Switch your thinking projects and services is forecast to increase over the next five years, as the regional population and SEREG partner Councils grow and the program expands its reach to sections of the community previously untargeted by the program.

Switch your thinking has unique strengths and is ideally positioned to forge beneficial partnerships and create novel opportunities to attract external investment. However, the broader political climate that provided funding opportunities for innovative local government and community emissions reduction projects during the last business cycle no longer exists.

The program also faces risks that result from the reliance on insecure external funding for staffing costs and is in danger of becoming under resourced as the regional population grows and stakeholder expectations expand.

To ensure the Switch your thinking program overcomes these threats, continues to build on its success, maintains competitiveness and expands the value provided to the SEREG partner Councils, it is recommended that the following key strategies are employed:

- SEREG partner Council contributions increased to cover staff employment costs
- SEREG partner Councils contributions indexed to current and forecasted residential population levels
- An additional full-time equivalent Officer employed in 2017/18 (bringing program staff to 3 full time Officers)
- A five-year business cycle is adopted
- New markets and funding sources are pursued by partnering with government, community and non-government organisations and groups to fill service gaps and reach new sections of the community

Implementing the above strategies will enable Switch your thinking to deliver new activities and services to partner Councils and their communities over the next five years in the four broad categories of:

- Education and promotion
- Innovation and advocacy
- Corporate abatement
- Administration and efficiency

The below table details expected program expenditure between 2015/16 and 2019/20 and the program income required to resource the strategies and activities contained in this business plan.

Program Expenditure	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Coordinator Salary & On-costs	119,145	124,210	129,487	135,314	141,403
Officer Salary & On-costs	83,773	86,773	90,461	94,613	98,956
Extra Officer Salary & On-costs			110,368	115,434	120,732
Vehicle Costs	10,980	12,078	13,286	14,615	16,077
Training & Conferences	5,000	5,175	5,356	5,544	5,738
Implementation Budget	65,000	68,513	72,399	75,842	74,227
Switched on Homes	360,113	0	0	0	0
Total Expenses	644,011	296,749	421,357	441,362	457,133
Program Income	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
City of Gosnells	79,670	105,492	165,158	172,525	180,444
City of Armadale	61,159	78,064	122,217	127,668	133,528
Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale	29,032	27,428	42,941	44,856	46,915
Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale Administration Fee	0	3,615	3,891	4,163	4,435
Carry Forward	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000
External Revenue					
Sponsorship + IP License Fees	70,000	70,000	70,000	75,000	75,000
Fuel Contributions + Misc.	2,150	2,150	2,150	2,150	2,150
Grants	402,000	10,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
Total Available Funds	651,011	303,749	428,357	448,362	464,472

Executing the recommendations and activities in this Business Plan will expand the program's capacity to facilitate corporate and community emission reductions and place the program in a competitive position to seize new funding opportunities that arise during the next five years.

The Switch your thinking program is a unique asset of SEREG partner Councils and the regional community. The investment outlined in this business plan will ensure the ongoing success and financial sustainability of the program and build capacity for further growth and innovation in the future.

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Glossary

Term	Definition
AGLG	The Armadale Gosnells Landcare Group
FTE	Full-time equivalent
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
Group	The South East Regional Energy Group
LGA	Local Government Area
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
Program	The Switch Your Thinking program
PV	Photo Voltaic
SEREG	The South East Regional Energy Group
SoHo	The Switched on Homes energy efficiency trial
SOS	The Switched on Staff project
SYT	The Switch your thinking program
WA	Western Australia



Our Mission

The mission of the Switch your thinking program is to assist the community and local government partners to reduce regional greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Program background

In 1999 the Cities of Armadale and Gosnells and Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale resolved to work together as the South East Regional Energy Group (SEREG) to reduce corporate and community greenhouse gas emissions. The Switch your thinking (SYT) program was developed by the group in 2002 as a vehicle to deliver diverse GHG emission abatement projects.

1.2 Organisational Structure

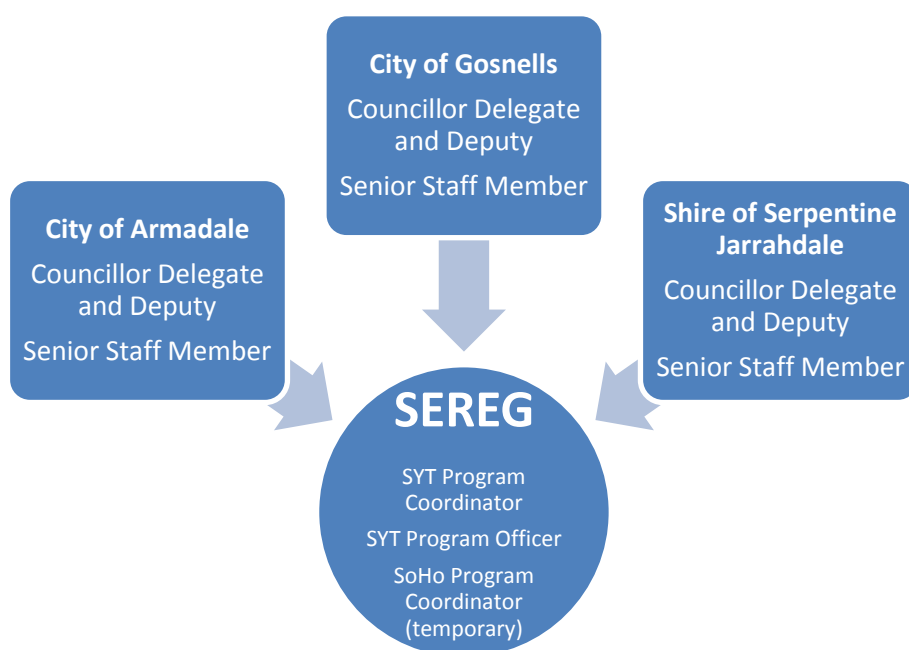


Figure 1. Organisational Structure of the South East Regional Energy Group

SEREG is comprised of a Councillor delegate and senior Officer from each partner Council. The Group's primary function is to guide the development and implementation of Switch your thinking to the satisfaction and mutual benefit of the partner Councils. SEREG employs a full-time Coordinator and Officer who manage the Switch your thinking program and implement projects and initiatives to achieve the program mission.

The Group is not a "Committee of Council" to any of the partner Councils, and operates under an endorsed Terms of Reference and Memorandum of Understanding to implement actions identified in the successive Switch your thinking Business Plans.

1.3 Products and Services

Switch your thinking provide a range of services to assist SEREG partner Councils and their communities to reduce GHG emissions by:

1. Increasing resource efficiency and environmental awareness
2. Trialling new technologies and efficient operational processes
3. Supporting the community and Council staff to adopt low-emission practices and technology
4. Assisting partner Councils to implement corporate greenhouse gas abatement strategies
5. Forging partnerships with businesses, government agencies and community groups
6. Leading by example through best-practice and quantifiable emission abatement

Specific products and services that Switch your thinking provides to partner Council and the regional community are:

Corporate Services	Community Services
Secure and acquit grant funding for corporate emission abatement and energy efficiency projects	Secure and acquit grant funding for community education and emission abatement projects
Assist in the development of Corporate Greenhouse Action Plans	Develop and deliver workshops that promote the adoption of sustainable behaviours and technologies
Provide technical advice and assistance relating to sustainability and GHG emission reductions	Partner with businesses to promote environmentally friendly goods and services
Assist to measure and report corporate GHG emissions	Develop and deliver locally relevant information for distribution through print advertising, physical displays and online
Promote corporate emission reduction projects and create positive media opportunities	Measure and report changes in attitudes and actions relating to climate change mitigation and environmental awareness
Deliver staff education and engagement initiatives	Support local environmental community groups and promote environmental awareness
Nominate partner Council projects for awards and recognition	Trial new technology and community engagement techniques

Table 1. Products and services provided by Switch your thinking

1.4 Success

Greenhouse Gas Emission Abatement

Closely aligned with the program mission, GHG emission abatement is a key measure of program success. Since program inception, Switch your thinking has helped program partners and the community to reduce regional GHG emissions by over 339,700 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent, 9,410 of which occurred during the last businesses cycle.

339,700 tonnes of greenhouse gases is equivalent to the amount of carbon that would be sequestered by growing 8.7 million seedlings for 10 years!

Program Expansion

Recognised for its successful track record in developing and implementing effective and exciting greenhouse gas abatement projects SEREG created a simple 'licensing' type arrangement which enables other Western Australian LGA's to deliver Switch your thinking to their own communities.

Making the program available to other municipalities yields the following benefits for SEREG partner Councils and the environment:

1. Broadens the reach of the program; increasing potential for emission reductions, creating economies of scale and producing attractive investment opportunities for funding bodies and corporate sponsors
2. Presents SEREG partner Councils as socially responsible and leaders in climate change action
3. Generates revenue that subsidises Switch your thinking activities in SEREG partner Councils
4. Facilitates knowledge transfer and resource sharing

In the last business cycle Switch your thinking attracted four new Councils to the program, increasing the total number of subscribing LGAs to a record high of 14 (see Appendix A for full list). Notably, during the 2012-15 business cycle, a 100 percent retention rate for subscribing Councils was achieved. This demonstrates the high value the program offers to member Councils and provides continuity to the community, which creates the opportunity to build the program's profile and success.



Figure 2. SEREG partner Councils and subscribing Local Governments

Awards and Recognition

Switch your thinking has been acknowledged for its innovation and success at both state and national levels. Highlights include winning the:

- Western Australian Premier's Award for Sustainable Management of the Environment
- National Awards for Local Government's Overall Award for Outstanding Achievement and the
- National Banksia Award's Education category

See Appendix B for a full list of awards won by Switch your thinking and SEREG.

Action on the ground – initiative case studies

Rewards for Residents

Switch your thinking community surveys continually reveal that cost is a major barrier - preventing local households from installing energy efficient and waterwise technologies. In response to this feedback SEREG developed the *Rewards for Residents* scheme (formerly Rebates 4 Residents). Through this scheme, discounts on a range of 'green' products are negotiated and promoted to residents. The *Rewards for Residents* scheme increases the affordability and distribution rates of environmentally friendly products whilst supporting and promoting local businesses. Since the scheme's launch, discounts have been offered across the following range of product categories:

1. Photo Voltaic energy systems
2. Solar hot water systems
3. Insulation and insulating paint
4. Pool blankets
5. Rainwater tanks and pumps
6. Energy display meters
7. Green printing services
8. Worm farms and composting systems
9. Green cleaning and personal care products
10. Home energy and water audits
11. Home and car window tinting

Since the inception of the scheme in October 2006 over 3,700 products have been purchased by participants who received up-front discounts or cash rebates of over \$900,450 and will save more than 96,672 MW of power over the products lifetime, reducing regional emissions by 73,470 tonnes of carbon dioxide.

Switched on Staff

In recognition of the significant environmental footprint of Council operations, the Switched on Staff (SOS) initiative was developed to engage Council employees in resource conservation, waste avoidance and environmental innovation.

Staff surveys revealed only 35 percent of staff considered themselves to be well informed about environmental issues but 89 percent of respondents considered being environmentally friendly at work to be important.

SOS was designed to be a fun, team-spirited way to engage staff in behaviour change and promote existing Council policies, procedures and programs whilst creating a vehicle to introduce new organisational culture and practices.

Piloted across SEREG partner Councils and incorporating behaviour change principles of public recognition, peer-assisted learning and regular feedback, SOS was considered an effective and novel way to increase environmental performance and reduce waste at Council.

Pilot results include:

- 638 staff members participated across nine locations
- 1,703 eco-pledges made by participants
- 354 employees attended lunch time activities
- 4,700 kWh of electricity saved
- 250 under desk recycling bins deployed

Since the successful pilot Switched on Staff has been rolled out across a further 11 Councils and is now offered to corporate sponsors thanks to funding from the Water Corporation.

Further staff engagement activities are planned for the 2015-2020 business cycle to build on the success of Switched on Staff and promote a culture of continuous improvement and resource efficiency.

Re-development of Online Resources

The 2014 community survey told us that the majority (61 percent) of respondents found email the most convenient way to receive information about sustainable living and energy efficiency. 57 percent of respondents also told us they wanted Switch your thinking to deliver more online services. Based on this feedback and to help meet the strategic objective of developing and delivering locally relevant climate change, energy efficiency and sustainable living information more efficiently, switchyourthinking.com was re-designed and the monthly community e-newsletter re-invigorated.

Launched on 30 April 2015 the new-look website features mobile responsive design, user-friendly navigation and facilities for information sharing through social media. The site re-development has resulted in significant increases to traffic already.

The table below shows visitor numbers and statistics for the re-designed website for the first 48 days of operation compared to the previous 48 days:

Measurement	Old site (Mar 13 - Apr 29)	New site (Apr 30 - Jun 16)	Percentage Change
Total number of sessions	1,832	2,674	↑ 46%
Total page views	2,424	5,472	↑ 126%
Number of users	1,656	2,247	↑ 36%
Average session duration	35 seconds	1 min 26 sec	↑ 148%
Bounce rate (% of visitors that only visit one page on the site)	88.5 %	77.7 %	↓ 10%

Table 2. Evaluation of new website

Improvements to the structure and content of the monthly community e-newsletter have also been implemented, leading to a 325 percent increase in subscribers since July 2012. The monthly e-newsletter was also migrated from MyLink to MailChimp at the launch of the re-designed website to achieve greater functionality and realise cost savings as our subscriber list grows.

The below table shows open and click rates of the Switch your thinking e-newsletter since migration to MailChimp compared to industry averages:

Edition	Switch your thinking enews		Industry Average (large non-profit)	
	Open rate	Click rate	Open rate	Click rate
June 2015	33.8%	9.4%	23.3%	2.9%
May 2015	31.3%	7.2%		

Table 3. E-newsletter efficacy

The strategic investment in an upgrade of switchyourthinking.com has already yielded increased traffic, facilitated content sharing through social media platforms and provided device responsive design.

The results of the Switched on Homes trial and the neighbourhood composting pilot, that tested the application other forms of digital technology to inspire measurable behaviour change, will be used as a foundation for further investment in new marketing and communication techniques, designed strategically to reach new sections of the community.

External Investment

A major benefit of Switch your thinking is the program's success in attracting external investment. During the 2012-15 business cycle Switch your thinking generated \$1.52 of external revenue for every collective \$1.00 of partner Council contribution. The graph below details sources of program revenue between 2012 and 2015.

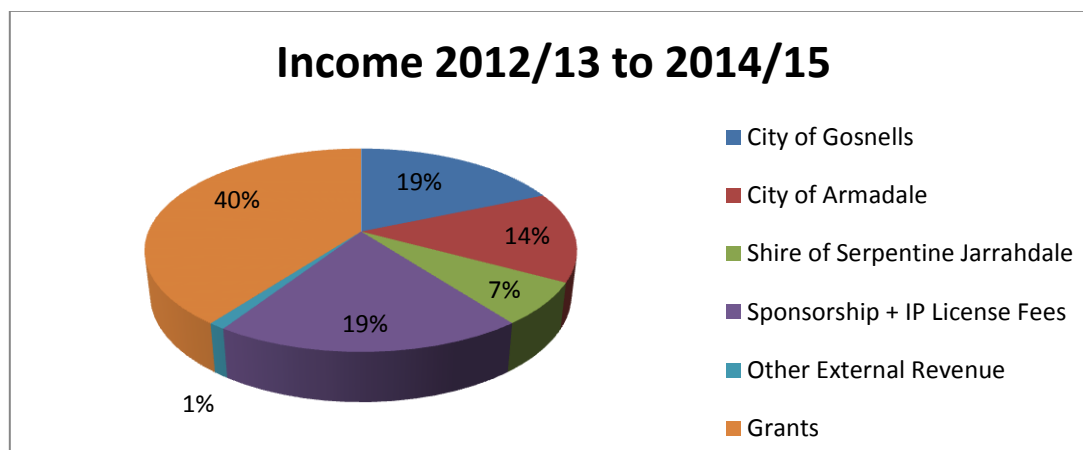


Figure 3. Sources of Switch your thinking program funding 2012/13 to 2014/15

***NOTE - Grant funding includes only funds that were invoiced between 2012-13 to 2014-15. Funding associated with Switched on Homes activities scheduled for 2015/16 are not included in the above graph.**

Grants and Corporate Sponsorship

The Switch your thinking team was instrumental in securing over \$970,000 of grant funds that were used to deliver 11 emission reduction and environmental awareness initiatives within SEREG partner Councils between 2012 and 2015.

The Switched on Homes (SoHo) energy efficiency trial is a high profile example of the program's ability to attract both grant funding and commercial investment.

Switch your thinking designed the innovative SoHo trial that was awarded Commonwealth funding through the highly competitive Low Income Energy Efficiency Program. Delivery of the trial is coordinated by Switch your thinking, leading the efforts of a consortium of national and local businesses and not-for-profit organisations.

Switched on Homes showcases partner Councils and demonstrates the Switch your thinking program's capacity to deliver innovative projects that hold great appeal and value to the local community. The trial, as the only Western Australian project to receive funding, also provides an avenue to influence state and federal policy.

Intellectual Property Licensing

Since 2007 the Switch your thinking program has assisted other Australian Local Governments to promote corporate and community resource efficiency and GHG emission reduction using a simple Intellectual Property License Agreement. Between 2012/13 and 2014/15 licence fees from subscribing member Councils created \$135,000 of program revenue.

1.5 2012/13 to 2014/15 Business Cycle

All strategic objectives outlined in the 2012-15 Switch your thinking Business Plan were achieved. (Further details including financials can be found in Appendix D.)

3.0 Market Analysis

3.1 Our Community

The strong population growth experienced during the last business cycle is forecast to accelerate over the next five years, fuelling strong demand for services from Switch your thinking and underpinning strategies to build on service delivery efficiencies achieved over the last three years.

As well as servicing new residents moving into the region, Switch your thinking will draw on the knowledge gained through the Switched on Homes energy efficiency trial, to reach sections of the community that may have been excluded from participating in the past due to financial and other disadvantages.

Switched on Homes was designed specifically to target community members with low levels of education obtainment, who may encounter barriers to accessing information and services traditionally provided by Switch your thinking. Using partnerships forged with service providers and the insight into participant energy use gained through the trial, Switch your thinking will be able to design and implement further projects that are appealing and accessible to this section of the community.

A surprising outcome of the Switched on Homes energy efficiency trial was the high participation rate of the seniors. A total of 64 percent of Switched on Homes participants identified themselves as seniors.

As Australia's population ages the regional community is also experiencing a corresponding shift in demographics. For example, the City of Gosnells expects a 77.9 percent increase in its retirement age population between 2011 and 2026.

Anecdotal observations show that seniors enrolled in the Switched on Homes trial have a strong sense of civic duty, a willingness to use digital technology to receive energy efficiency information, robust social networks and high motivation to adopt resource conservation behaviours. These attributes and the partnerships developed with seniors' associations through Switched on Homes will be utilised to expand participation within this growing segment of the population over the next five years.

Another growing trend in the regional community is the emergence of skilled, organised, vocal and well-informed community groups working to promote sustainability and environmental action locally. Prominent examples of such groups in the Switch your thinking member Council communities include the SJ Food Alliance, local Transition Town Networks (Gosnells, Armadale, Victoria Park, Mt Hawthorn) and the Vic Park Collective. Switch your thinking connects these groups with local expert, industry and government contacts as well as with each other to promote events and provide advice as required. By providing a 'one-stop' resource for these groups, Switch your thinking is able to foster their enthusiasm and create customer service efficiencies for Council. This Business Plan includes activities designed to strengthen

partnerships and increase support for community sustainability groups, enabling greater community penetration and efficiency than would be possible working independently.

3.1 Business Community

Switch your thinking provides a vehicle for partner Councils to encourage environmentally and socially responsible practices within local businesses. Partnering with responsible business leaders through corporate sponsorship promotes these businesses to the community and creates an income stream for the program.

The CDP S&P 500 Climate Change Report 2014 shows that companies that build sustainability into their core strategies outperformed those that failed to show leadership. Countless consumer surveys also demonstrate that buyers prefer to purchase goods and services from organisations that exhibit meaningful corporate sociability. By linking local businesses to local climate change action, Switch your thinking creates an opportunity for the commercial community to gain credibility by partnering with SEREG Councils to support grass roots community action.

However, the current economic outlook, with falling consumer and business confidence, job losses in the mining sector and the downgrading of the State's credit rating, discourages business investment in non-core activities.

Typically business owners are reluctant to invest in resource efficiency projects and sponsorship opportunities during periods of low economic confidence. Paradoxically this is the time that businesses and individual households can most benefit from information provided by Switch your thinking relating to reducing utility bills through low-cost resource efficiency actions.

Therefore, it is predicted that while opportunities for corporate sponsorship may contract in the short term, demand from the business sector for free advice and assistance relating to resource efficiency will remain strong.

3.2 Funding Bodies

Shifting political priorities at both a federal and state level have reduced the availability of grant funds and created a service gap that increases community demand for Switch your thinking programs and activities.

In the 2014-15 mid-year budget the Western Australian government announced \$1.8 billion in public sector cuts, on top of \$2 billion worth of savings measures announced in October 2014.

Long-term State Government priorities and cost saving measures have resulted in a wide-scale decline in funding for environmental education and GHG emission mitigation programs and a cancellation of many state coordinated programs (for example the WA Environment Awards).

As a result, only three percent of grant funds secured by Switch your thinking in the 2012-15 business cycle were sourced from the State Government. Based on recent reductions in State revenue forecasts, it is unlikely that this trend will be reversed in the short to medium term.

The graph below illustrates the sources of grant funding during the 2012-15 Business Cycle.

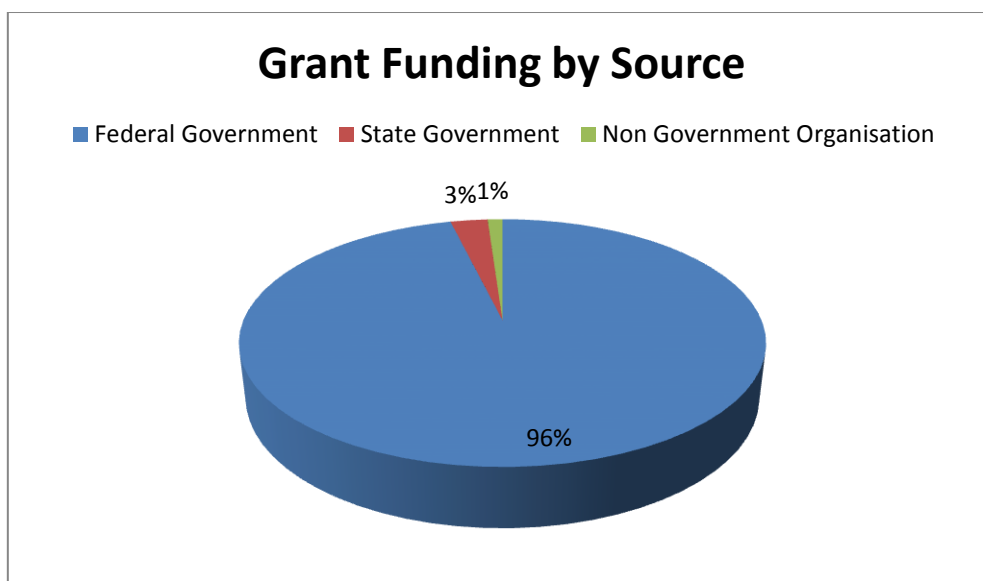


Figure 4. Grant funding sources between 2012/13 and 2014/15

During the 2012-15 business cycle, the majority of external funds were sourced from Federal Government grant programs. The below table details the grant programs successfully accessed by Switch your thinking:

Federal	State and Other
Low Income Energy Efficiency Program	Keep Australia Beautiful (NGO)
Community Energy Efficiency Program	WA Waste Authority
Local government Energy Efficiency Program	Department of Environment and Regulation
National Science Week	

Table 4. Sources of grant funding secured between 2012/13 -2014/15

On 17 July 2014 the Government of the day repealed the Clean Energy Legislative package (Carbon Tax). This led to the cessation of several environmental grant programs which Switch your thinking had benefited from previously. All Federal funding programs detailed above, with the exception of National Science Week, originated with the previous federal government and have since been closed.

The current federal government prioritises climate change policies that incentivise businesses and farmers to make carbon savings, with less scope for local government involvement and community-led programs. Switch your thinking secured significant amounts of funding during the former policy approach; however these opportunities no longer exist.

It should be noted that if a global agreement to make deep and immediate cuts to global GHG emissions is made in December 2015 in Paris, Australia will be expected to increase abatement efforts, potentially creating opportunities for Switch your thinking to lead community action.

3.3 SEREG partner Councils

Since program inception best practice standards relating to resource conservation and greenhouse emission reporting have significantly improved. In line with this improvement, community and stakeholder expectations have also simultaneously intensified.

An example of improved standards within climate change mitigation practice is the introduction of more rigorous measurement methodologies and reporting standards. SEREG partner Councils started voluntarily reporting and reducing GHG emissions in 2000 under the government's Cities for Climate Protection program. This program was superseded by compulsory reporting under the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting (NGER) scheme which measures Australia's progress towards national reduction targets under the Kyoto Protocol.

The City of Armadale is required to report GHG emissions associated with the Hopkinson Road Recycling and Landfill facility under the NGER scheme and participates in the Emissions Reduction Fund. Both of these federal programs are subject to independent audit and are tightly regulated.

The City of Gosnells and Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale are not captured under NGERs but both contract Planet Footprint to independently measure and report GHG emissions.

Another example of the continuous improvement achieved by a SEREG partner Council is the City of Gosnells' building program. In 2004 the City completed the Agonis Building in the Gosnells town centre. The two-storey community facility that houses the Knowledge Centre, Lotteries House, Business Station and a café was the first commercial construction project in WA to meet the sustainable design principles of the Australian Building Greenhouse Rating (ABGR) scheme (achieving a 4.5 star rating). Building on this success, the City achieved five green stars from the Green Building Council of Australia for its Administration and Civic Centre opened in 2009 and is currently constructing a six-star community sports facility at Mills Park in Beckenham.

As expectations of partner and member Councils, the community, funding and regulatory bodies change, the Switch your thinking team is increasingly called on to provide accurate technical advice relating to GHG measurement and abatement, community engagement and education and sustainability policy assessment.

3.4 Licensed member Councils

Similarly to SEREG partner Councils, the sophistication of climate change mitigation efforts of licenced member Councils have increased over time. This creates attractive opportunities for Switch your thinking to partner on innovative community initiatives and to facilities knowledge sharing between Councils.

Compounding the increases in expertise required by licenced Councils, Switch your thinking has also experienced greater demand for services resulting from expanding numbers of member Councils. In 2007 the City of Perth and Town of Victoria Park joined the program increasing the number of participant residents to 209,512. The program is now delivered across 14 LGAs to four times as many residents covering a territory of over 2,045 km². It is expected that over the next five years Switch your thinking will attract additional licenced Councils, creating increased revenue and program reach and driving demand for program services.

4.0 SWOT Analysis

4.1 Strengths

The Switch your thinking program has a number of unique strengths from which to draw a competitive advantage and capitalise on the up-coming opportunities.

Key strengths include:

Diverse and dynamic team

The success of Switch your thinking relies largely on the ability of its Officers to:

- Facilitate partnerships
- Design and deliver cross disciplinary projects
- Identify opportunities for external funding
- Provide technical advice relating to climate change mitigation and sustainability
- Engage the community

Switch your thinking is serviced by a small team (2 FTE positions) of sustainability professionals with skills and experience in sustainability, community education, business management and science.

Flexible programming

The mission of the Switch your thinking program, to reduce regional GHG emissions, covers a broad range of abatement strategies, activities and initiatives. This objective is well served by a flexible business plan which takes advantage of arising funding opportunities and is able to respond rapidly to community feedback, new technology and changing stakeholder priorities.

A key driver of the program's success to date is the ability to form partnerships with government agencies, corporate sponsors and all sectors of the community. Since the program's inception, SEREG and its project partners have invested more than \$3.3 million in regional actions promoting energy and resource efficiency.

Reputation and community standing

Over the last 13 years, Switch your thinking has built a reputation for cost effective GHG mitigation and innovative sustainability action. This reputation leverages community support for new initiatives and generates revenue through the sale of Intellectual Property Licences to other Western Australian local governments and through corporate sponsorship fees. Community acceptance of the Switch your thinking brand is upheld by the provision of accurate unbiased information and the employment of sound environmental practices by partner Councils.

4.2 Weaknesses

Reliance on external funding for staff salaries and wages

The Switch your thinking program is currently serviced by a full-time Officer and Coordinator. The Program Officer is employed on a permanent full-time basis and the Coordinator is employed on a full-time rolling three year contract. In addition, for the life of the Switched on Homes project (2013-2016), a project Coordinator has been employed on a full-time fixed term contract. This position is fully funded by the Low Income Energy Efficiency Program grant and the officer works solely on this project. For the duration of the Switched on Homes trial

(October 2013 to July 2016) 50 percent of the Switch your thinking Program Officer's salary is subsidised by Switched on Homes grant funding.

SEREG partner Councils provide on average 40 percent of program funding through cash contributions. These contributions are the only secure funding source from which additional funds are leveraged. Partner Council funding does not cover the full cost of employing the Switch your thinking staff, creating insecurity for staff and a risk of losing these positions if external funding is not realised or is withdrawn. Due to the nature of the Switch your thinking program and full capacity of partner Councils it is unlikely that the program would continue without dedicated staff to drive it.

In the 2012-15 business cycle, labour costs for the program for the two full-time employees were \$598,170 (~ \$76,500 of which was subsidised by Switched on Homes grant funding). SEREG partner contributions over this period totalled \$463,176. Given increasing economic uncertainty and reduced grant opportunities (discussed above in section 3.2), a key recommendation of this Plan is to secure funding to cover labour costs.

The direct outcomes of the recommended approach are:

- Increased program competitiveness when applying for grant funding
- Enhanced program desirability to corporate sponsors as all external investment will be directed into on-ground activities
- Broader scope of grants that can be accessed (many grant programs do not allow for funds to be used for staff wages)
- Improved ability to direct staff time into activities that achieve the program mission and produce value for SEREG partner Councils and the community

Human Resource Constraints

Service quality will be compromised if staff resources are not expanded as the regional population grows and demand services increase over the next five years.

As discussed in section 3.0 *Market Analysis*, it is predicted that demand for Switch your thinking services from the community, Councils and corporate stakeholders will increase significantly over the mid-term. To service increasing demand, facilitate the expansion of services to previously unengaged sections of the population and allow the development of new projects, additional staff resources are required.

4.3 Opportunities

Increasing demand for services

The most recent Switch your thinking community survey revealed that 61 percent of respondents had put more effort into energy efficiency in the last 24 months and that 85 percent of respondents reported that they were interested in energy efficiency, showing a strong demand for program services.

Consistent with previous community surveys, perceived high financial costs were found to be the biggest barrier preventing households from adopting resource conservation and environmentally friendly behaviours and technology. As economic uncertainty increases, this financial barrier provides a strong argument for Switch your thinking to continue delivering no-cost services to the community. It also adds to the value of lessons learnt throughout the delivery of the Switched on Homes energy efficiency trial to 240 low income households.

Another factor influencing increased demand for Switch your thinking services is significant reduction of programs at the state and federal government level, creating service gaps as programs such as the State's Hardship Efficiency Program and Federal Government's Home Energy Saver Scheme were both discontinued. Both of these programs previously assisted disadvantaged households to manage their utility bills and improve their energy efficiency.

Switch your thinking can capitalise on increased demand for services, offering the community quality, no-cost assistance and advice while employing a resource sharing approach at a low cost to partner Councils.

Partnerships

Switch your thinking has a strong history of collaboration and has developed tools such as Sponsorship Agreements and Intellectual Property Licences to facilitate active partnerships.

The failed Local Government Reform process, as well as the cancelling of many state and federal environmental education programs and the independent emergence of strong community groups has created opportunities for regional collaborative efforts to be strengthened and new partnerships pursued. Switch your thinking is ideally placed to take advantage of these opportunities, expanding the program to new Councils and undertaking strategic shared projects.

4.4 Threats

Potential reduction in external funding

As previously discussed, a fall in economic confidence is likely to increase demand for services from Switch your thinking and local government partners, while reducing availability of external investment in the program through corporate sponsorship, grant funding and Intellectual License fees, defining this threat as an opportunity as well.

Shifting political priorities and competition for funds from other programs is another risk related to a reduction in external funding that is already being realised.

Inadequate Resourcing

If program resources are not expanded in line with increasing demand for services, growing community and Council expectations and rising populations, then the number and/or quality of services provided by Switch your thinking will contract. Risks that could result from a scaling back of program services and quality include:

- Loss of reputation for Switch your thinking and SEREG partner Councils
- Loss of external funding
- Reduction in community support
- Increased pressure on branches within Council to deliver sustainability related services
- Inability to deliver accurate information and high quality services to internal stakeholders

5.0 SWOT Strategic Alternatives Matrix

	Opportunities (O)	Threats (T)
	<p>1. Increased appetite for cooperation among environmental programs & groups</p> <p>2. Large market gaps due to scaling back State and Federal environmental education initiatives</p> <p>3. Stimulation of community and Council interest in resource conservation caused by a fall in economic confidence</p> <p>4. Growing number of community groups interested in raising awareness of sustainability</p>	<p>Potential for loss of external funding due to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contraction of the economy 2. Shift in political priorities (State and Federal) 3. Greater competition for scarce funding opportunities from other programs
Strengths (S)	SO Strategies	ST Strategies
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Officers with diverse skill sets 2. Flexible programming 3. Established reputation and long operational history 4. Availability to forge active partnerships 	<p>Strengthen existing stakeholder relationships and forge new strategic partnerships to access additional resources and expand program reach</p> <p>Provide additional services to community groups</p> <p>Utilise flexible programming and Officer skills to develop initiatives to engage disadvantaged sections of the community and new services for partner Councils</p>	<p>Retain staff with diverse skill sets that can adapt rapidly to changing political priorities</p> <p>Leverage reputation and long operational history to out-compete for available funding</p> <p>Seek external funding from novel sources through diverse programming</p> <p>Utilise extensive networks and partnerships to collaborate rather than compete with other organisations</p>
Weaknesses (W)	WO Strategies	WT Strategies
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reliance on external funding for staff salaries and wages 2. Inadequate funding resulting in poor service delivery and/or program contraction 	<p>Commit internal funding to cover labour costs</p> <p>Link human resource planning to forecasted future demand to cater for increased interest, population size and emerging community groups</p>	<p>Commit internal funding to cover labour costs, enhancing program desirability for funding bodies and sponsors</p> <p>Plan to employ an additional FTE Officer in 2017/18</p> <p>Commit to five year business plan to provide greater program certainty and demonstrate commitment to funding bodies</p>

Table 5. SWOT Strategic Alternatives Matrix

6.0 Key Strategies for success

6.1 Commit internal funding to human resource costs

SEREG partner Councils agree in clause 1.2 of the 2012-15 MOU for the management and conduct of the Group and the Switch your thinking Program, to underwrite any short-term funding deficits associated with the salary and on-costs of the Switch your thinking Program Officer Position. While this situation has never occurred in the past, current economic and political trends (discussed above) create a risk to the future availability of external funding. Securing a commitment from SEREG partner Councils to fully fund program positions will provide stability and free-up external funding for project implementation. Benefits of this approach include:

- Increased program certainty and stability
- Ability to create more competitive grant applications and more attractive sponsorship proposals by directing all external funding into tangible activities instead of salaries
- Ability to apply for a broader range of grant funding (many funding programs specify that grant monies cannot be spent on staff salaries)
- More resources available for project implementation and corporate abatement activities
- Improved staff retention rates

Recommendation 1: SEREG partner Council contributions are increased to cover Switch your thinking staff wages and on-costs.

6.2 Commit to employing a 3rd FTE Officer in 2017/18

The Switch your thinking program is currently staffed by two full-time employees, with the program operating at full capacity. As discussed in section 3.0 it is predicted that demand for program services will continue to increase over the next five years.

Figure 5 (overleaf) illustrates historical and predicted future population growth in SEREG partner Councils, showing even stronger growth in the future than that experienced to date. By 2017 it is predicted that partner Council populations will reach 238,789 residents. This is a 44 percent increase from 2007 levels, when the last staff increase was made. Given commitments under the Switched on Homes funding agreement and pre-existing staffing arrangements, June 2017 is considered the most appropriate time to recruit an additional full-time Officer.



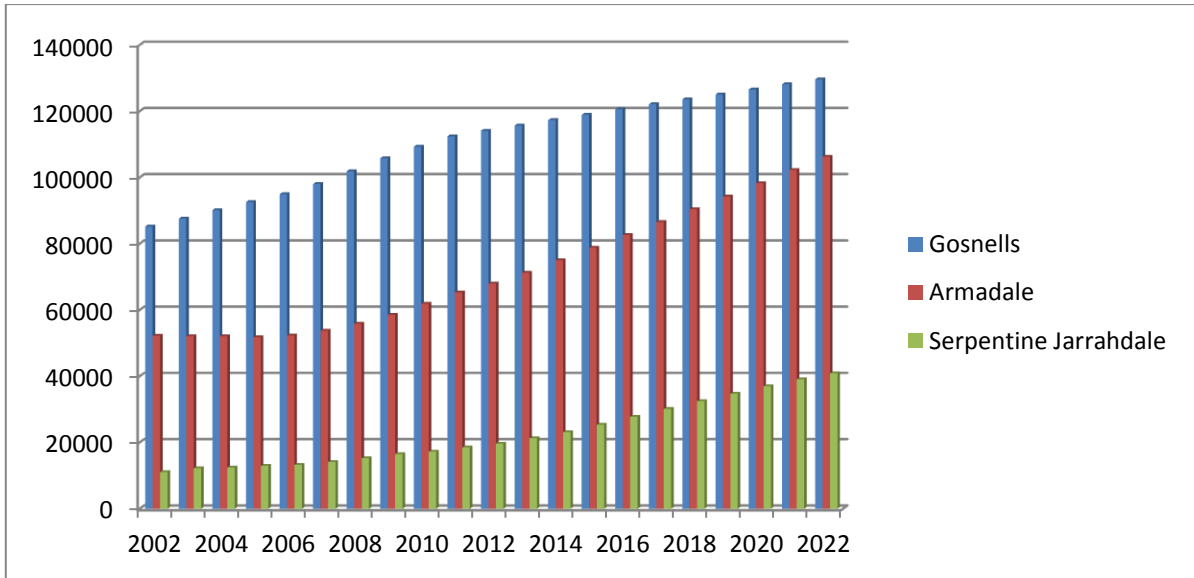


Figure 5 - SEREG partner Council's community population growth

Population is an indicator of demand for program services as population increases create an increase in both corporate and community emission profiles. Increases in corporate emissions are driven by expansion of Council operations (employee numbers, fleet, infrastructure and facilities) that are required to cater to a growing community. As Council operations and the community expands, so do abatement opportunities and the likelihood of being captured under Climate Change regulation.

Switch your thinking is also servicing a growing number of licensed member Councils. In 2007 the program signed licence agreements with its first two member Councils, increasing the area the program covers by 1.6 percent to 1618.1 km². The program is now licenced by fourteen LGs cover 2045 km² which is approximately a third of the metropolitan area.

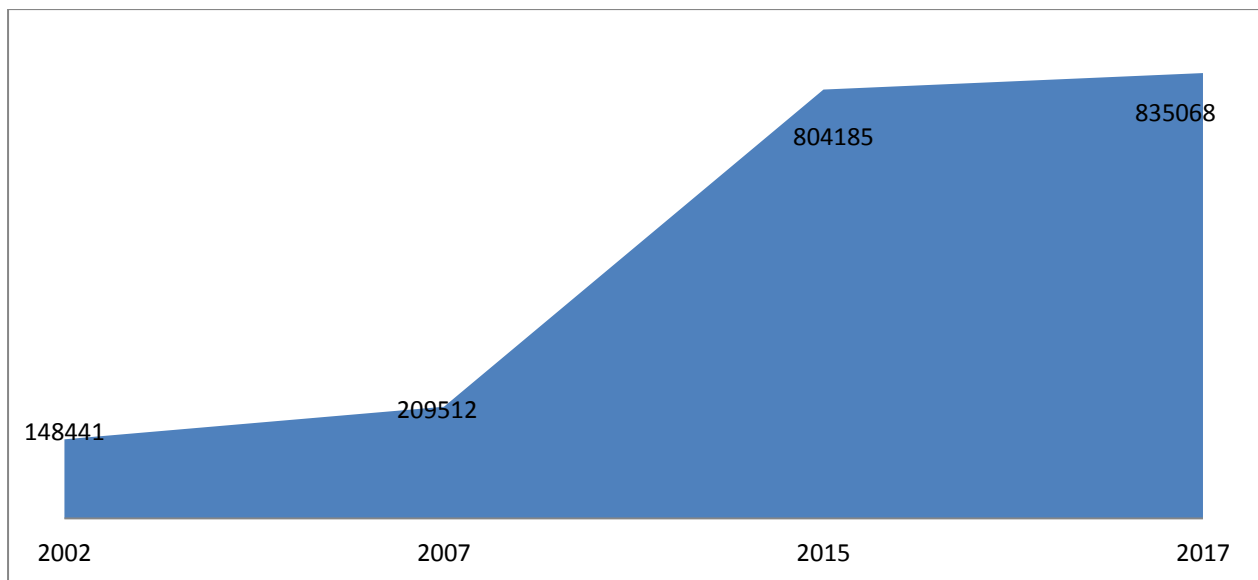


Figure 6 - Growth of the total population serviced by Switch your thinking 2002-2017 (2016-2017 predicted growth)

If staff resources do not increase in line with population growth and expansion of Council operations over the five years the program will be under resourced and risks a decline in service quality resulting potential reputational and revenue loss.

Conversely, a range of benefits will be released for SEREG partner Council if an additional Officer is employed. These benefits are discussed below:

1. Increased Corporate Services

The employment of an additional FTE Officer would facilitate the provision of additional services to SEREG partner Councils, including:

- Development, implementation and promotion of a sustainability rating scheme whereby small-scale building and retrofits project can be assessed for their energy, water and waste performance. This will ensure resource conservation is pursued as part of asset management practices and that Council's commitment to the environment is communicated effectively to the community and visitors to the region
- Staff training and development of reference material to ensure that environmental performance is considered in a meaningful way during procurement
- Assistance completing climate change adaptation plans
- Exploration of funding for energy efficiency retrofits at Council buildings through the federal government's Emissions Reduction Fund
- Assistance understanding energy use at non-contestable sites using energy audits and / or half hourly energy metering

2. Increased Value for the Regional Community

The employment of an additional FTE Officer would facilitate the provision of additional services to the regional community, including:

- Development and implementation of initiatives to offer continue assistance to Switched on Homes participants and to extend services offered to seniors and disadvantaged sections of the community. External funding and partnerships will be pursued to facilitate a community retrofit program targeting residents experiencing hardship
- Continued participation in National Science Week and further development of the Switched on Schools initiative
- Development of strategic partnerships with early years networks and other organisations supporting youth services

3. Increased ability to pursue unexpected funding opportunities

The employment of an additional FTE Officer would enable Switch your thinking to aggressively pursue external funding opportunities whilst maintaining high levels of service and performance on the ground.

The regional partnership approach employed by Switch your thinking realises many benefits for SEREG partner Councils, but also impacts program operations in the following ways:

- Switch your thinking has numerous and varied stakeholders, which increases the importance of maintaining consistent on-ground activities and service quality whilst pursuing unexpected funding opportunities
- Operating under an endorsed Business Plan reduces the ability of the program to request additional program resources on a yearly basis

In addition to having sufficient resources to take advantage of unplanned opportunities employing a third staff member would facilitate the delivery of additional on the ground activities, enhancing value for corporate sponsors and member Councils, potentially leading to increases in revenue.

4. Alignment with other metropolitan Councils

The regional partnership approach adopted by SEREG reduces costs for partner Councils, with Switch your thinking attracting external funding to subsidise program activities and facilitating cost sharing between partners. This approach also achieves economies of scale and management efficiency which are desirable to external funding bodies. In the 2012-15 Business Cycle the Switch your thinking team completed the following activities in partnership with SEREG partner Councils and the regional community:

Community Education and Engagement	Abatement Activities at Partner Councils
<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Re-development of switchyourthinking.com and delivery of monthly community e-newsletter ➤ Expansion of the e-subscriber database ➤ Coordination of the annual Young Re-Inventors Competition ➤ Development of online Waterwise directory ➤ Delivery of training to other LGAs to facilitate community education ➤ Development and delivery of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 22 Do-it-yourself Home Sustainability Audit Kits ▪ 19 National Water Week Display Kits ▪ 12 Family Rhyme Time Activity Kits ▪ 7 Seedling Activity Kits ▪ 18 Do-It-Yourself Water Audit Kits ➤ Development and delivery of the Switched on Homes Energy Efficiency Trial, to low income households living in Armadale, Gosnells and Serpentine Jarrahdale. (Trial commenced October 2013 and will conclude June 2016) ➤ Neighbourhood composting pilot undertaken in Heron Park in partnership with Satterley Property Group 	<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Supported the City of Armadale to report under the 2011 Clean Energy Act ➤ Received funding from Local Government Energy Efficiency Program for the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale Mundijong Football Club project ➤ Received funding from the Community Energy Efficiency Program for the City of Armadale’s Champion Centre Retrofit ➤ Assisted with corporate GHG measurement and reporting ➤ Assisted with the development of the City of Armadale’s Corporate GHG Action Plan ➤ Assisted with the City of Armadale’s participation in the Carbon Farming Initiative (now Emissions Reduction Fund) ➤ Assisted the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale with annual Waterwise Certification Audits ➤ Assisted with the installation of over 100 kilowatt of PV solar systems installed at Council facilities ➤ Assisted the City of Armadale with Landfill flare project at Landfill and Recycling Facility

Table 6. Program activities 2012/13-2014/15

Armadale, Gosnells and Serpentine Jarrahdale lead Western Australian local governments in climate change mitigation and sustainability action when they formed the South East Energy Group being among the first LGs to employ staff dedicated to work on GHG abatement and sustainability.

While Switch your thinking continues to deliver innovative and appealing GHG abatement projects the majority of Perth Metropolitan Councils also employ specialised Sustainability, Climate Change, Travelsmart and Waste Education Officers.

The table below displays the results of an informal online review of employment of sustainability professionals in Metropolitan Councils showing that excluding SEREG partners over 70 percent of LGAs employ at least one dedicated Officer with many employing more than one.

Local Government	Sustainability Officer (s)
Bassendean, Town of*	No
Bayswater, City of*	No
Belmont, City of*	+
Cambridge, Town of	Yes +
Canning, City of	Yes +
Claremont, Town of	No
Cockburn, City of	Yes +
Cottesloe, Town of	Yes +
East Fremantle, Town of	No
Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council*	+
Fremantle, City of	Yes +
Joondalup, City of	Yes
Kalamunda, Shire of*	Yes
Kwinana, City of	Yes
Mandurah, City of	Yes +
Melville, City of	Yes
Mosman Park, Town of	Yes
Mundaring, Shire of*	No
Nedlands, City of	Yes
Peppermint Grove, Shire of	No
Perth, City of	No
Rockingham, City of	Yes
South Perth, City of	Yes
Stirling, City of	Yes +
Subiaco, City of	Yes
Swan, City of*	Yes
Victoria Park, Town of	No
Vincent, City of	Yes +

Wanneroo, City of	Yes
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Table 7. Sustainability Officers in other Western Australian LGAs

Key	
+	Known to have more than one sustainability Officer and / or additional positions relating to Climate Change, Travelsmart or Waste Education
	Switch your thinking licensed member Council
*	EMRC services Bassendean, Bayswater, Belmont, Kalamunda, Mundaring and Swan providing some sustainability, climate change and energy efficiency related services

It should be noted that a number of councils that license the Switch your thinking program also employ sustainability officers whose work compliments the rollout of SYT initiatives.

Councils that do not adopt a partnership approach and employ sustainability professionals incur the full costs associated with these positions and have limited ability to subsidise these positions through external funding. Employing an additional Switch your thinking Officer would continue to deliver these cost savings to SEREG partner Councils whilst ensuring that sustainability and climate action in the South East continues to be resourced well and in-line with other Western Australian municipalities.

5. Risk mitigation

Employing a 3rd Switch your thinking team member in 2017 will ensure that the program is resourced appropriately to continue to delivering value to a growing regional community and will facilitate expansion of services to partner Councils. Adequately resourcing Switch your thinking will also mitigate the risks associated with under resources the program which includes:

- Reduction in service quality resulting in reputation and income losses
- Staff burn out and loss of continuity
- Tension among stakeholders as they compete for resources

Recommendation 2: Keep pace with forecast growth in community and corporate services by employing an additional Program Officer in July 2017.

6.3 Recalibrate SEREG partner Council Contributions

SEREG partner Council contributions were originally based on the percentage of regional GHG emissions contributed by each partner Council's population. These figures were provided through the Commonwealth's, now defunded, Cities for Climate Protection program and are no longer available. Population has since been agreed as a proxy for community GHG emissions. However, as a result of the different pace of development in each partner Council, contributions to the program on a per capita basis have become disproportionate. The financial contributions of partner Councils and the unique in-kind contributions of the City of Gosnells (incurred as a result of administering the program) between the 2012 and 2015 are detailed below:

Annual Contribution	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
City of Gosnells (Cash)	63,429	65,649	67,947
City of Gosnells (In-kind) *	14,642	14,858	13,631
City of Armadale	48,692	50,396	52,160

Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale	23,089	23,923	24,760
	149,852	154,826	158,498

*In-kind contribution is based on unique expenses associated with administering Switch your thinking, including the provision of human resources, financial and purchasing services as well as vehicle depreciation.

Based on the contributions outlined above and the total regional population there was a weighted average cost to SEREG partner Councils of 74 cents per resident per year during the 2012-15 business cycle.

SEREG Council Contributions between 2012-13 to 2014-15

Council	Average per resident cost p.a.	% of total population	% of total SEREG contribution
City of Gosnells	\$0.57	54%	47%
City of Armadale	\$0.71	35%	36%
Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale	\$1.12	11%	17%

The City of Gosnells administers Switch your thinking on behalf of the three SEREG partner Councils. The City of Gosnells incurred \$41,652 (12 cents per resident per year) of administration costs during the 2012-15 business cycle. The City of Armadale administers the Armadale Gosnells Landcare Group (AGLG), a landcare program shared with the City of Gosnells. It is estimated the administration costs associated with AGLG are similar to costs incurred by Switch your thinking, due to comparable program sizes, funding structures and management requirements. As the City of Gosnells and City of Armadale both incur administration costs of shared programs it is recommended that the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale's contribution is apportioned so that Switch your thinking program costs are shared evenly between all three partner Councils.

Recommendation 3: That partner Council financial support for the Switch your thinking program be based on municipal population, with the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale's contribution further adjusted to equally share administration costs between the three partner Councils.

6.4 Lengthen Business Cycle

Traditionally Switch your thinking Business Plans are produced and endorsed by SEREG partner Councils every three years. As the program has matured and SEREG partner Councils have demonstrated strong commitment to reducing regional greenhouse emissions, it proposed that the duration of business cycle be extended to five years. Lengthening the business cycle would provide greater certainty to the partner Councils, facilitate longer-term planning, demonstrate commitment to corporate sponsors and funding bodies and increase administration efficiency.

Recommendation 4: That the Switch your thinking partners Councils adopt a five-year cycle, commencing with the 2015-16 to 2019-20 Business Plan, as the basis for the program's business planning.

6.5 Development of new strategic partnerships

The program operates in collaboration, rather than competition, with other agencies. A key feature of Switch your thinking has been the formation of successful partnerships with government agencies, corporate sponsors, and across all sectors of the community. As a result of the broader economic, political and social trends discussed in this plan, opportunities exist to forge new strategic partnerships with government, community and non-government agencies and groups. Future partnerships will be sought to enhance service delivery, reach new markets, raise the program's profile, share resources and access novel funding sources, while maintaining program efficiency.

Recommendation 5: That the Switch your thinking program pursues new markets and funding sources by partnering with government, community and non-government organisations and groups to fill service gaps and reach new sections of the community.

7.0 Activities Scheduled for 2015—2020

Implementation of the key strategies discussed above will allow the delivery of the activities detailed below. These activities fit into four broad categories of:

Education and Promotion	Corporate Abatement
Innovation and Advocacy	Administration & Efficiency

7.1 Education and promotion

Seizing opportunities presented by the digital age, Switch your thinking will focus on expanding engagement with the local community through a revitalised web presence, new focus on online social networking and utilising a growing list of e-news subscribers.

An improved online presence including integrated website, social networking and e-news, provides an opportunity to support active citizen involvement, present up-to-date information on home sustainability and connect people with the sustainability groups, services, expertise and products around them. This is also a tool for expanding Switch your thinking to audiences not engaged in other Switch your thinking services, such as young families and youth, as well as developing partnerships with local business.

Switch your thinking will also strengthen school programs through a greater focus on teacher networking and involvement in the Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative. In addition to the annual Young Re-Inventor of the Year competition, a new program 'Switched on Schools' showcasing sustainability actions of local schools will also be piloted. Switch your thinking will continue to leverage partnerships with industry, the education sector and government to provide high quality information and workshops for the community, whilst supporting partner Council to deliver and promote community education initiatives.

Specifically, in the next business cycle Switch your thinking will:

- Expand program reach through social media
- Grow e-news subscribers
- Develop quarterly Green Business e-newsletter
- Deliver community workshops in partnership with community development, libraries and sponsors
- Develop resources and build contacts in sustainable home design, renovation and construction
- Partner with academic organisations to deliver sustainability 'master classes' to the community. Sessions will be delivered by experts on niche topics such as electric vehicles and indoor air quality
- Pilot the Switched on Schools initiative
- Support the piloting of 'Little Green Steps' in the City of Armadale

7.2 Corporate Abatement

Switch your thinking will continue to advocate for and support corporate GHG abatement within partner Councils. Working closely with SEREG partner Councils, Switch your thinking will continue to seek external funding for corporate projects and strive to implement abatement strategies that demonstrate leadership and realise cost savings.

In addition, Switch your thinking will share the lessons learnt from corporate abatement projects with our partnership network of 14 Councils across Perth, through case studies and support delivered on an 'as-needed' basis. In addition to this flexible arrangement, Switch your thinking will:

- Promote renewable energy generation, use and storage
- Promote fuel efficiency and investigate the use of alternative fuels and vehicles
- Support the City of Armadale's participation in the Emissions Reduction Fund
- Assist partner Councils to measure and report corporation GHG emissions and abatement actions
- Assist partner Councils to seek grant funding for corporate emission reduction activities
- Assist the City of Armadale with the development of a carbon offsetting strategy
- Engage staff at Partner Councils in Switch your thinking behaviour change initiatives such as 'Switched on Staff' and event related email campaigns and workshops (for example for Earth Hour and National Recycling Week)
- Provide materials to familiarise new employees with the Switch your thinking program during staff induction

7.3 Innovation and Advocacy

Switch your thinking is a dynamic program with the capacity to respond to rapidly changing opportunities, including changes in community interest, political focus and funding opportunities. The program is, therefore, often on the forefront of community engagement and behaviour change programs. As a result of the successful delivery of Switched on Homes, Switch your thinking will:

- Investigate broader applications of the key findings of the Switched on Homes energy efficiency trial
- Investigate the application of text messaging services and social media to provide time efficient prompts, coaching and calls to action
- Facilitate community partnership to promote waste reduction and resource conservation behaviours

7.4 Administration and efficiency

Switch your thinking will continue to provide a high level of service to an expanding community through a focus on strengthening partnerships and service efficiency.

Specifically, Switch your thinking will:

- Strengthen strategic partnerships with community groups

- Strengthen strategic partnerships with other climate change education service providers
- Build on existing relationships with community development departments to better utilise networks
- Improve capacity for online engagement through staff training in social networking and digital marketing
- Explore the use of advertising on social media and search engine optimisation to enhance marketing investments and reach new sections of the population

8.0 Financials

The table below outlines the forecasted program costs between 2015/16 and 2019/20, including the cost of employing an additional Program Officer in 2017/18. It should be noted that 50 percent of the salary and on-costs associated with employment of the Program Officer in 2015/16 are subsidised by grant funding.

Program Expenditure	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Coordinator Salary & On-costs	119,145	124,210	129,487	135,314	141,403
Officer Salary & On-costs	83,773	86,773	90,461	94,613	98,956
Senior Officer Salary & On-costs			110,368	115,434	120,732
Vehicle Costs	10,980	12,078	13,286	14,615	16,077
Training & Conferences	5,000	5,175	5,356	5,544	5,738
Implementation Budget	65,000	68,513	72,399	75,842	74,227
Switched on Homes	360,113	0	0	0	0
Total Expenses	644,011	296,749	421,357	441,362	457,133

Notes:

- 50 percent Officer Salary and On-costs are subsidised by the Switched on Homes grant in 2015/16
- The Switched on Homes budget in 2015/16 has been reduced by \$46,886.50. Which is 50 percent of wages and on-costs associated with the Switch your thinking Officer (\$41,886.50). This is contained in Officer Salary & On-costs budget line. \$5,000 from the Implementation Budget will also be spent on Switched on Homes activities and will be acquitted as a cash contribution to the trial.
- The forecast 48 percent increase in the training budget between 2016/17 and 2017/18 is due to increased staff numbers.
- The above financial projections allows for the additional officer employed in 2017/18 to be employed at a level 6 to service the growing complexity of projects undertaken by SYT

The table overleaf outlines forecasted income for the 2015/16 to 2019/20 business cycle. It should be noted that the grant income (\$402,000) included in the 2015/16 forecast refers to secured monies for the conclusion of the Switched on Homes trial. Modest grant income is forecast for subsequent years due to current grant availability, however should Federal and State funding opportunities arise, Switch your thinking will be in a competitive position to apply for significantly sized grants.

Program Income	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
City of Gosnells	79,670	105,492	165,158	172,525	180,444
City of Armadale	61,159	78,064	122,217	127,668	133,528
Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale	29,032	27,428	42,941	44,856	46,915
SJ Administration Fee	0	3,615	3,891	4,163	4,435
Carry Forward	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000
External Revenue					
Sponsorship + IP License Fees	70,000	70,000	70,000	75,000	75,000
Fuel Contributions + Misc.	2,150	2,150	2,150	2,150	2,150
Grants	402,000	10,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
Total Available Funds	651,011	303,749	428,357	448,362	464,472

The above budget forecast includes increases in partner Council contributions to cover salaries and on-costs of program staff, with the employment of an additional FTE in 2017/18. Employing an additional staff member in 2017/18 will ensure that program resources align with population growth and will create opportunities to provide additional service and value to the regional community and SEREG partner Councils.

Average partner Council contributions for this business cycle are forecast at \$1.16 per resident with the City of Gosnells contributing 50 percent of the total SEREG Council contribution each year from 2016/17. The City of Armadale contributes 37 percent and the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale 13 percent in-line with population sizes. The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale also pays an additional 12 cents per resident per year from 2016/17 to contribute to the administration of the program.

A modest return on investment of 57 cents for every collective dollar invested by partner Councils is forecast. However, it is expected that with additional staff resources the program will be able to deliver increasing value to the regional community and Council, despite external economic influences. Switch your thinking will be positioned competitively to seize external funding opportunities as they arise. Partner Council contributions will provide program certainty, fund growth through a new FTE position and ensure that Switch your thinking is well placed to build on its success to date.

9.0 Conclusion

The Switch your thinking Business Plan 2015-16 to 2019-20 proposes a business case for SEREG partner Councils to strengthen the Switch your thinking program and build on its considerable success.

The Program is a unique asset of SEREG partner Councils and the regional community. The investment outlined in this business plan will ensure the ongoing success and financial sustainability of the program and build capacity for further growth and innovation in the medium-term future.

Key recommendations of this plan include:

Recommendation 1: SEREG partner Council contributions are increased to cover Switch your thinking staff wages and on-costs.

Recommendation 2: Keep pace with forecast growth in community and corporate services by employing an additional Program Officer in July 2017.

Recommendation 3: That partner Council financial support for the Switch your thinking program be based on municipal population (from 2016/17), with the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale's contribution further adjusted to equally share administration costs between the three partner Councils.

Recommendation 4: That the Switch your thinking partners Councils adopt a five-year cycle, commencing with the 2015-16 to 2019-20 Business Plan, as the basis for the program's business planning.

Recommendation 5: That the Switch your thinking program pursues new markets and funding sources by partnering with government, community and non-government organisations and groups to fill service gaps and reach new sections of the community.

Appendix A

Switch your thinking member Councils

The table below lists the Local government Authorities that subscribe to the Switch your thinking program and the size of their communities:

Local Government	Population	# of households
Armadale	78,766	30,624
Belmont	40,083	14,633
Cambridge	27,442	10,907
Canning	93,448	35,217
Gosnells	118,910	43,648
Mandurah	82,120	34,468
Murray	16,523	6,826
Perth	22,324	11,401
Serpentine-Jarrahdale	25,350	9,134
South Perth	40,738	19,795
Victoria Park	35,903	15,877
Vincent	31,549	15,368
Wanneroo	187,392	66,827
Waroona	3,637	1,338
Total	804,185	316,063
Switch your thinking Member LGAs (forecast.id)		

Appendix B

Switch your thinking awards and accolades

Switch your thinking has been acknowledged for its innovation and success at both state and national levels.

Formal recognition of the program's success, through independent awards and recognition, helps attract corporate sponsorship and community support, creates positive publicity for partner Councils and lends credibility to grant applications.

The table below lists the awards won by the Switch your thinking program:

Awards	Category
WA Water	WA Program Innovation Award Finalist (2012)
KABC Sustainable Cities	Environmental Innovation Category Finalist (2011)
National Banksia	Education Category Winner (2010)
KABC Sustainable Cities	Environmental Innovation Category Winner (2010)
WA Environment	Resource and Waste Category Winner (2010)
National Awards for Local Government	Overall Award for Outstanding Achievement (2008)
National Awards for Local Government	Local Greenhouse Action Category Winner (2008)
WA Premier's Award	Sustainable Management of the Environment Category Winner (2008)
KABC Sustainable Cities	Overall Western Australian Winner (2008)
KABC Sustainable Cities	Environmental Innovation Category Winner (2008)
KABC Sustainable Cities	Energy and Water Conservation Category Winner (2008)
National Banksia	Local Greenhouse Action Finalist (2007)
Environs Australia	Local Leadership in Sustainability Most Outstanding Sustainability Initiative Gold Winner (2006)
Environs Australia	Local Leadership in Sustainability Most Outstanding Sustainability Partnership Sliver Winner (2006)
WA Environment	Government Leading by Example Category Winner (2006)
WA Environment	Community Energy Efficiency Category Winner (2006)

Appendix C

Key strategies and activities undertaken during the 2012/13 to 2014/15 business cycle

The 2012/13 to 2014/15 Business Plan identified four strategic focus areas as follows:

Education and Information Services <i>Objective - develop and distribute locally relevant climate change, energy efficiency and sustainability information in an efficient manner.</i>	Council Policy Review and Development <i>Objective - up-skill Switch your thinking staff in new state and federal GHG mitigation strategies, legislation and programs.</i>
Iconic and Innovative Regional Projects <i>Objective – facilitate iconic regional projects that demonstrate Partner Councils' environmental commitment and inspire the community.</i>	Behaviour Change Projects <i>Objective – pilot grassroots community behaviour change initiatives to promote adoption of emission reduction activities.</i>

Education and Information Services

The key activities scheduled for completion between 2012 and 2015:

1. Upgrade and redesign digital resources - incorporating website upgrade, integration of multi and social media and expansion of the e-subscriber database
2. Develop curriculum-based resources for primary and secondary schools
3. Publish school resources directory on switchyourthinking.com
4. Develop workshop instruction kits and resource library
5. Re-package the *Young Re-Inventors Competition*

Achievements
Objective 1 ➤ switchyourthinking.com redeveloped to a responsive and integrated website ➤ E-newsletter subscriber list increased by 258 percent from 118 in 07/2012 to 423 in 03/2015 ➤ E-newsletter transferred from <i>My Link</i> to <i>Mail Chimp</i> to realise cost savings and increase functionality
Objective 2 Curriculum links related to the <i>Young Re-inventor of the Year Competition</i> identified and promoted to participants in 2014 and 2015
Objective 3 Online schools water conservation directory developed in partnership with the Water Corporation and launched in October 2014 <i>*considered a duplication of other available resources and removed during website upgrade</i>

Objective 4 The following resources were developed and distributed for rollout to Switch your thinking Councils:

- 22 Do-it-yourself Home Sustainability Audit Kits
- 19 National Water Week Display Kits
- 12 Family Rhyme Time Activity Kits
- 7 Seedling Activity Kits
- 18 Do-it-yourself Water Audit Kits
- Workshops delivered at participating libraries to promote the resource kits
- Training provided to other LGA staff to facilitate the rollout of community activity kits
- Sustainability Audit Kit provided to CSIRO Carbon Kids for use in local schools

Objective 5 Online delivery of *Young Re-inventor of the Year Competition* piloted in 2014 and continued in 2015

Iconic and Innovative Regional Projects

The key activities scheduled for completion between 2012 and 2015:

1. Large scale renewable energy generation projects
2. Methane flare at the City of Armadale landfill and recycling facility

Achievements

Object 1

- 36kW system installed by Serpentine Jarrahdale at their Administration Building
- 36kW system installed by Armadale at their Administration Building
- 30kW system installed by Gosnells at their Administration Building

Object 2 The City of Armadale commissioned a landfill flare at the Hopkinson's Road Landfill and Recycling Facility in July 2014. The flare will reduce GHG emissions by an estimated 72,500 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent over the next seven years (till 2022).

Council Policy Review and Development

The key activities scheduled for completion between 2012 and 2015:

1. Assist partner Councils to meet obligations under the Clean Energy Legislative Package and identify opportunities to leverage support - including GHG reporting obligations
2. Assist partner Councils to participate in federal government greenhouse mitigation programs, for example the Carbon Farming Initiative

Achievements
<p>Objective 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Supported the City of Armadale to meet reporting obligations under the 2011 Clean Energy Act (now repealed) ➤ Supported the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale with the application, implementation and acquittal of Local government Energy Efficiency Program funding (Mundijong Football Club Solar Hot Water System Installation) ➤ Supported the City of Armadale with the application, implementation and acquittal of the Community Energy Efficiency Program funding (Champion Centre LED and Insulation Retrofit) ➤ Received Low Income Energy Efficiency Program funding for the development and delivery of Switched on Homes
<p>Objective 2</p> <p>The Hopkinson Road Landfill and Recycling Facility flare qualified under the federal government's Carbon Farming initiative and was registered on 4 July 2014 under the Emission Reduction Fund. The City plans to participate in the government reverse auctions to sell the carbon credits created by the landfill flare project. Switch your thinking has assisted the City's Environmental Services Manager to coordinate these activities.</p>

Behaviour Change Projects

The key activities scheduled for completion between 2012 and 2015:

1. Switched on Homes - A project trialling the provision of energy-use feedback to low income households via SMS
2. Neighbourhood composting program - an initiative that provides low-cost compost bins and training to residents that agree to assist their neighbours to learn how to compost

Achievements
<p>Objective 1 Switch your thinking won an \$880,000 Department of Industry and Science grant to develop and deliver the Switched on Homes Energy Efficiency Trial. The trial is being conducted from 1 January – 31 December 2015. The results will be analysed and reported on by 30 June 2016.</p>
<p>Objective 2 Completed in partnership with Satterley Property Group. 22 community members from the Heron Park area participated in workshops, phone coaching and subsidized equipment purchase.</p>

Appendix D

Financial Review 2012/13 – 2014/15

The below table shows program income and expenditure between 2012/13 and 2014/15:

Revenue	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Carried Forward Unspent Funds (Syt)	42,735	33,632	37,840
Carried Forward Unspent Funds (SOHO)	0	0	67,365
Sub total	42,735	33,632	105,205
Council Cash Contributions			
City of Gosnells	63,429	65,649	67,365
City of Armadale	48,692	50,396	52,160
Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale	23,089	23,923	24,760
Sub total	135,210	139,968	144,285
External Revenue			
Sponsorship + IP License Fees	71,636	75,825	59,218
Fuel Contributions + Misc.	2,100	7,100	2,150
Switched on Homes /other grants	10,236	201,623	208,100
Sub total	83,972	284,548	269,468
Total	261,917	458,148	518,958
Expenses			
Switch your thinking	228,226	213,685	238,626
Switched on Homes	0	132,635	439,234
Total	228,226	346,320	677,860

Note - the Switched on Homes funding agreement allows for the project budget to be overspent in 2014/15 and will be returned to surplus by grant payments in 2015/16.