



Briefing Note: Report back to Carbon Neutral Government Programme Ministerial Group

To:	Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education		
Date:	1 December 2021	Priority:	Medium
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Messaging seen by Communications team:	No	Round Robin:	N/A

Purpose of Report

This paper provides you with the final draft of the report back due to the Carbon Neutral Government Programme Ministerial Group in December 2021. The report-back contains options for emissions reporting that the Ministry of Education will undertake on behalf of the state schooling sector as part of the Carbon Neutral Government Programme.

Summary

- The Carbon Neutral Government Programme (CNGP) is a long-term work programme for CNGP organisations to:
 - a. measure, verify and report emissions annually;
 - b. set gross emissions reductions targets and longer-term reduction plans for the next decade;
 - c. introduce a phased work programme to reduce organisations' emissions; and
 - d. offset after gross emissions reductions are made to achieve carbon neutrality.
- In March 2021, the Cabinet Business Committee agreed that the Ministry of Education would undertake emissions reporting for Scope 1 emissions from fuel use and Scope 2 emissions from imported energy, on behalf of the state schooling sector [CBC-21-MIN-0030].
- The Ministry has, in consultation with the Ministry for the Environment, developed options for emissions reporting for the state schooling sector that supports the Government's environmental and educational objectives.
- The options seek to minimise the administrative burden on the state schooling sector, in line with the objectives of the Government's Reform of the Tomorrow's Schools System, while supporting the aims of the CNGP.

- The Ministry's report-back will be provided to CNGP Ministers for consideration as an out-of-cycle paper in December 2021. It is intended that the report-back will be formally considered for endorsement at the March 2022 meeting of CNGP Ministers.
- You will receive this report back in your capacity as the Minister of Education and as a member of the CNGP Ministerial Group, in your capacity as Minister for the Public Service.

Proactive Release

- a **agree** that this Briefing will be proactively released subject to any redactions necessary under the Official Information Act 1982 and following final decisions by Carbon Neutral Government Programme Ministers.

Agree / Disagree



Scott Evans
Hautū, Te Puna Hanganga, Matihiko

1/12/2021



Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister of Education

20/12/21

Background

1. Cabinet established the Carbon Neutral Government Programme (CNGP) in November 2020, which aims to make the government carbon neutral by 2025. At that time, Cabinet recognised that many School Boards were unlikely to have the capacity or capability to undertake comprehensive emissions reporting as part of the CNGP, and an alternative approach to emissions reporting may be required [CAB-20-MIN-0491].
2. In March 2021, the Cabinet Business Committee agreed that the Ministry of Education (the Ministry) would undertake emissions reporting for Scope 1 emissions from fuel use and Scope 2 emissions from imported energy, on behalf of the state schooling sector [CBC-21-MIN-0030].¹ It was outlined that this included emissions from coal and electricity use, as processes were already underway to collect these emission sources.
3. Cabinet noted that the Ministry, in consultation with the Ministry for the Environment, would undertake further work to establish which additional emissions sources could be collected centrally [CBC-21-MIN-0030].
4. Cabinet agreed that the baseline reporting year for the state schooling sector is 2022/23, with the first emissions reduction plan due in December 2023 [CBC-21-MIN-0030].

Report back on emissions reporting for the State schooling sector

5. The Ministry has, in consultation with the Ministry for the Environment, developed options for emissions reporting for the state schooling sector that supports the Government's environmental and educational objectives.
6. The options seek to minimise the administrative burden on the state schooling sector, in line with the objectives of the Government's Reform of the Tomorrow's Schools System.
7. The two options analysed in the report back are:
 - a. Option A: Report on emissions sources that can be efficiently and effectively collected centrally
 - b. Option B (Recommended): Report on emissions sources that can be efficiently and effectively collected centrally, and model the remaining emissions sources
8. The Ministry did consider the feasibility of reporting on all material emissions sources in the state schooling sector on their behalf. However, we quickly identified that collecting some emissions data was not practical and that schools will not be able to provide the level of information necessary to enable this, even if mandated to.
9. Based on our investigation, emission sources that can be collected centrally cover approximately 75% of emissions for the state schooling sector. The remaining 25% would need to be modelled based on a periodic investigation into a sample of schools.

¹ Scope 1 is direct greenhouse gas emissions and removals; Scope 2 is indirect greenhouse gas emissions from imported energy; and Scope 3 is indirect greenhouse gas emissions from transportation & indirect greenhouse gas emissions from products an organisation uses.

10. 9(2)(g)(i) [Redacted]
11. 9(2)(f)(iv) [Redacted]
12. The options are grounded in six key principles that align closely with the objectives of CNGP. We propose a reporting regime for the schooling sector that:
- a. has broad coverage across the state schooling sector and sufficient coverage to demonstrate Government leadership;
 - b. has a low compliance cost on schools;
 - c. focuses on the most significant emissions sources that can be reduced centrally;
 - d. delivers accurate data across emissions sources;
 - e. has a clear reporting boundary that reflects the Ministry's organisational reach; and
 - f. leverages the unique opportunities available through the Education system.
13. A centrally-led approach will enable the Ministry to take advantage of the highest impact emissions reduction opportunities across the state schooling portfolio and demonstrate leadership through the CNGP.
14. We have been advised by the Ministry for the Environment that several schools have approached the Minister for Climate Change directly, seeking guidance for how schools can contribute to the aims of the CNGP. With this in mind, the Ministry is working with the Ministry for the Environment and the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority to produce guidance to empower schools, staff and students to actively engage in operational carbon emissions reduction efforts. This guidance will equip all state and state-integrated schools with evidence-based strategies to enhance energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions from all sources.
15. By 1 July 2022, the Ministry will have produced guidance to support schools, and developed internal systems to enable the state schooling sector's reporting and emissions reduction contribution to the CNGP.

Operationalising emissions reporting

16. Work is already underway to collect the data necessary to undertake the emissions reporting recommended in Option A. We have also already begun work on the systems necessary to generate reporting from that data.
17. The Ministry already has an established process to gather electricity consumption data on behalf of schools. This means we already have information for electricity account

information for approximately half of state schools. We are continuing to work to refine this process to reduce the burden on schools.

18. We are already engaged with gas retailers and the third-party who support our electricity data collection process to try to leverage our existing processes to also access gas consumption information.

Risks and mitigations

19. Emissions reporting on behalf of the state schooling sector will require accessing new information and establishing new processes and systems. There is a risk that these are not established in time for baseline reporting for the 2022/2023 year.
20. This is mitigated by CNGP reporting not being due until after the 2022/2023 year. This means we will have time to add to existing processes and systems and establish new ones needed. This timeframe also mitigates risks to data collection from schools not providing information in time or delays in establishing new data collection processes.
21. These data collection risks are further mitigated by the ability to retrospectively capture the necessary information within the baseline year, if needed. This has been a feature of the existing electricity data collection process.
22. We will also be able to mitigate the impact of any data gaps in our centralised collection by modelling emissions based on school type, location, size and other information available, if needed.

Discussions with other CNGP Ministers

23. We have been advised by the Ministry for the Environment that CNGP Ministers are eager to see comprehensive reporting on the state schooling sector's carbon emissions through the CNGP. We are conscious that schools are seen by agencies and Ministers to represent a key channel to influence positive environmental outcomes. At the same time, we are conscious of the Government's direction to reduce the burden on schools to support a greater focus on pedagogical leadership.
24. Our recommended approach seeks to balance these objectives by managing emissions reporting centrally and providing enhanced guidance for schools to reduce their environmental impact and engage their students in the process.
25. As you know the Ministry is already active in reducing emissions in the state school portfolio including through programmes such as the Coal Boiler Replacement Programme which will replace up to 90 coal boilers and the replacement of lights with much more efficient LED lights. The Ministry expects to continue with centrally managed programmes to reduce emissions in the state school portfolio.
26. You may like to share an advance copy of the Ministry report-back with the Minister for Climate Change and Minister for Economic and Regional Development ahead of the paper being circulated with CNGP Ministers.
27. The final draft of the report back is attached as an appendix (as an Ed report). We will work with your office to send this to the CNGP Ministerial Group in mid-December, pending any final changes from you or your office.