

# Climate Change Act 2017: Impact on Business, Community and Local Government

## Fact Sheet

Everyone—State Government, local government, businesses, individuals—has a role to play in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and preparing Victoria for the impacts of climate change.

**On 23 February 2017, the Climate Change Bill 2016 was passed by the Victorian Parliament to create a new Climate Change Act.**

The *Climate Change Act 2017* creates obligations to ensure the government prepares Victoria for the impacts of climate change and drives Victoria's transition to a net zero emissions, climate resilient community and economy.

It provides a platform for subsequent action by government, community and business and the long-term perspective and policy stability needed to drive innovation and investment.

The Act will also ensure the interests of those specific communities or industries either vulnerable to the impacts of climate change or central to Victoria's transition to net zero emissions are considered in climate change policy development.

### What impact will the Act have on businesses?

The Act will help position the Victorian economy to meet the challenges and capitalise on the opportunities presented by climate change. It sets up a clear policy framework and a pathway to net zero emissions by 2050. This will provide clarity and certainty to guide business investment, through the long-term and interim emissions reduction targets.

The Climate Change Strategy produced under the Act will also provide a mechanism to showcase business leadership in emissions reduction, where businesses prepare a voluntary business pledge.

The government will continue to work with businesses to assist in the transition to a net zero emissions economy and support innovation and investment.

### What impact will the Act have on the community?

The Act is designed to balance the needs of transitioning Victoria to a net zero emissions, climate resilient economy with supporting those regions and communities most vulnerable.

It will also inform the community of the risks Victoria faces from climate change impacts, and Victoria's progress towards meeting its emissions reduction targets. Mandatory reporting and publishing requirements for key elements of the Act will encourage greater involvement in climate policy by business and community, which will be supported by the Act's minimum requirements for community consultation.

By driving coordinated, proactive and strategic climate change policy development at the state-level, the Act will help ensure Victoria remains a healthy, prosperous, safe and vibrant place to work and live long into the future.

### What impact will the Act have on local government?

The Act will not impose any mandatory obligations on local government.

Through its strategic planning and transparency requirements, the Act will contribute to a consistent and stable policy environment able to support innovation and action by local councils. It will give local government the confidence to continue investing in measures to reduce their emissions and increase their communities' resilience to climate change impacts.

Local governments will also be encouraged to contribute emissions reduction pledges. These will be included in the Climate Change Strategy produced under the Act, and will allow local government to showcase their leadership in climate change action. If local governments do decide to provide pledges, the Act imposes certain minimum requirements, for example relating to how they will work.

### More information

The *Climate Change Act 2017* is available on the Victorian Legislation website:

<http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/>