

Victorian Water Corporation: Turning Energy Targets into a Programme

Canonical: <https://northmoregordon.com/case-studies/victorian-water-corporation/>

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From a target to practical measures

Northmore Gordon's June 2022 case study describes work with an unnamed regional Victorian water corporation serving more than 300,000 residents across over 250 water-treatment, wastewater-reclamation and pumping sites.

The organisation needed an energy-management approach that connected its targets with practical improvements across a dispersed estate. The published account records targets of 100% renewable energy by 2025 and net-zero emissions by 2030. Those are the targets reported at the time; the case study does not establish their subsequent achievement.

Assess the largest users and organise the opportunities

Northmore Gordon worked with the corporation's energy team to act on a review of its energy-management approach and assess the 14 highest-energy-consuming sites. The source reports more than 65 improvement opportunities.

The work included prioritising and scoping opportunities, developing a coordinated implementation plan and establishing an integrated organisation-wide Energy Management System. It also included support for relevant project implementation through the Victorian Energy Upgrades project-based activity pathway.

This connected site-level controls and technology opportunities with organisational decisions about responsibilities, priorities and investment.

Read the published figures at the right stage

| Measure | What the source reports | How it is treated here | | --- | --- | --- | | Organisation-wide energy opportunities | 10% energy savings identified. | Identified potential, not a verified achieved percentage. | | Annual financial opportunities | Approximately \$500,000 per year identified. | An opportunity estimate reported by the company. | | Projects under way | Approximately \$120,000 per year in savings associated with projects under way. | A reported project figure without a supplied post-project verification record. | | Assessment coverage | 14 highest-energy sites and more than 65 opportunities. | Reported scope of the engagement. |

The opportunity estimate and projects-under-way figure should not be added together as a verified combined annual saving.

The source also reports that the Energy Management System had been developed and was being incorporated across major departments, with new efficient technologies adopted at key sites. It does not provide a site-by-site record of measured outcomes.

Make energy management part of ongoing decisions

For another utility, the useful lesson is how an assessment can become a managed programme. Give each selected opportunity an owner, an investment stage and a next evidence requirement. Keep the opportunity register current as projects are assessed, approved, implemented or deferred.

Performance measures should reflect the site's operating conditions. Changes in throughput, service requirements or operating hours can affect energy use, so a lower bill alone is not enough to attribute a saving to an upgrade.

Plan the measurement approach before equipment changes remove baseline conditions. Record what was installed, when it was commissioned and how the result will be reviewed. Where certificates are part of the business case, assess the current method and evidence requirements separately from the engineering savings estimate.

Related services and guidance

Identify opportunities through an energy audit

Plan evidence and verification

Build an implementation programme

Connect projects with transition planning

Build a brief for a multi-site programme

Bring together the site portfolio, available energy records, operating priorities and existing opportunity list. Identify the decisions already made and any proposed equipment changes. This helps establish which sites need investigation first and how the programme will be governed.

Energy audits can establish priorities, while measurement and verification can help assess project performance. Contact Northmore Gordon to discuss the scope for your organisation.

How much of the corporation's estate was assessed?

The original account describes a corporation with more than 250 sites and an assessment focused on its 14 highest-energy-consuming sites. It reports more than 65 improvement opportunities from the programme.

Does the case study prove that a 10% reduction was achieved?

No. The source reports 10% organisation-wide savings identified as opportunities. It does not supply the post-project measurements needed to present that percentage as a verified achieved reduction.

Should the two references to \$500,000 be added together?

No. The original page repeats the annual opportunity figure. The draft treats it as one reported opportunity estimate, not two separate financial benefits.

What was the role of the Energy Management System?

It connected opportunities across sites with an organisation-wide approach to decisions and implementation. The source reports that the system was being incorporated across major departments, alongside technology improvements at key sites.

What should another utility take from this example?

Use the process rather than assuming the same savings. Assess priority sites, assign opportunity owners, maintain an action register and plan measurement early. Evaluate any certificate pathway against current project-specific requirements.