NSW Government Office Accommodation

Workplace Design Principles

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Contents

> **VISION: Workspaces that enhance inclusion, collaboration & flexible work practices though leading edge design & digital capability**

1.   Purpose

This document articulates the required workplace fit-out design principles for new or upgraded Government commercial office accommodation in response to the Whole of Government Office Accommodation Policy approved by Government on 31 May 2018.

The Housing & Property (HAP) Group manages the State's significant property portfolio and places. On behalf of the Minister for Water, Property and Housing, Property NSW (PNSW), as part of the HAP Group in Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE), will seek to ensure that accommodation usage across the government sector supports wider government service delivery objectives and complies with workplace office accommodation standards. Commercial Development (ComDev), a part of the HAP Group, manages the design and delivery of workplace office accommodation.

Agency and/or Departments (refer to as Agency within this document), are to apply these *Workplace Design Principles* to all new or upgraded office workplace accommodation, unless demonstrated not possible (financial benefits assessment) with a justified exemption and agreed by the HAP Group, the WofG Workplace Leaders Forum (WLF) or the Property Strategy Collaboration Committee (PSCC).

2.   Government priority and objectives

The NSW Government's clear direction is to create consistent, efficient, flexible, agile and dynamic workplaces across the whole of Government. This document will support:

- Premier's Priority of world class public sector - Implement best practice productivity and digital capability in the NSW public sector;
- State Priority of delivering strong budgets;
- Commitment to making all government sector roles flexible – "Works for me, works for NSW"
- Government policies relating to accommodation and real property including the Whole of Government Office Accommodation Policy;
- Governments desire to deliver flexible WofG Touchdown Space.

Government workplace strategies are designed to consolidate workplaces across fewer buildings, in the same location and creating hubs and workspaces that are contemporary, flexible and encourage collaboration. Best practice is achieved by providing inspiring work environments that enables our people to work effectively whilst delivering quality services for the people of NSW.

Flexible accommodation is about choice – a flexible workplace is about providing a great environment that enables people to work in a way that suits them, their organisation and the task they are undertaking. Creating a working culture that embraces flexibility and mobility in the way people go about their work will empower teams. It supports employee collaboration, learning, interaction, and ensures that workspaces operate at maximum effectiveness delivering the needs of government, the Agency and the individual.

New office accommodation is to target a PCA Grade A building as measured by the Property Council of Australia as a benchmark.

3. Accommodation and workplace principles

All new leases or renewals of existing leases and construction of owned buildings, for office workplace accommodation must comply with all relevant government policies and principles, including:

- **Efficient utilisation of government owned and leased assets**:
  - o All new fit-outs for office accommodation must not exceed the workplace density of 12m² per workpoint with circulation and accommodation to allow for social distancing measures.
  - o PNSW will consider ways to drive whole of government cost savings across the portfolio and align with Whole of Government key performance indicators, when responding to agency accommodation requests.
- **Sydney CBD:** Location of office accommodation must consider the Government target to reduce Government agencies Sydney CBD office space noting that any Sydney CBD proposal must include a business requirement justification.
- **Accommodation:** Agencies must as a minimum comply with Government policies relating to property, such as PM2012-20, Strategic Land and Property Framework, Community Use Policy, Whole of Government Office Accommodation Policy.
- **Active living principles:** Decisions on the location and fit-out of office accommodation must comply with the government's active living principles.
- **Sustainability:** Office accommodation must comply with NSW Government's Resource Efficiency Policy February 2019 (GREP) in relation to specific environment and sustainability targets, including Greenstar and NABERS ratings. WELL health and wellbeing rating principles to be considered.
- **Car parking:** Spaces will only be provided for official government vehicles, unless approved by the Secretary of the relevant Agency. Car parking provision must be in line with the Motor Vehicle Policy for NSW Government Agencies. Regional buildings will be assessed on a case by case basis.
- **Activity based working / flexible working arrangements:** Agencies must actively pursue and develop plans for office accommodation that is suitable for activity based working and flexible working arrangements.
- **Hubs & Co-location:** A multi-agency tenanted building where all agencies will co-locate with other agencies into Hub buildings (Hubs) within key centres to drive efficiencies and take advantage of economies of scale and shared facilities (e.g. meeting rooms, reception etc) (unless functions or operational requirements does not permit co-location and/or sharing of office space with other agencies where there is a statutory, legal or government policy that restricts co-location of agency accommodation).
- **Sharing of common facilities:** Common generic office building facilities (e.g. training rooms, large multi-use town hall spaces, meeting rooms, staff drop-in areas, concierge/reception, security etc) within Hubs to be shared by all government occupants.
- **Accessibility:** Design to be industry leading in responding to the NSW Government's Accessible Office Design Performance Framework. Align with Government's policy "Jobs for people with disability: A plan for the NSW public sector" - an implementation plan for the NSW public sector to create more inclusive and accessible workplaces to improve retention and reduce exit rate of employees with disability.
- **Touchdown Space:** workspace established to support flexible work practices for all Government employee's who need access to a workpoint for a set period of time. The space will include a variety of workspaces for individual work, quiet and focused areas, informal group/team/collaboration/workshop area, wi-fi, printing, hydration/teapoint.

Consistency of accommodation across Government is key and is reflected in a number of principles that should be adopted within all workplace accommodation projects, such as:

- Workplace design to ensure ability for future flexibility of a changing Agency business and/or co-locating with other Agencies, thus minimising fit-out churn.
- The use of technology including the latest video/virtual technology systems is key as it allows for the reduction of personal and business related travel.
- Enclosed offices are not supported and should only be provided for a specific operational requirement (detailed justification required), otherwise layout is to be open plan.
- Flexible workspace/desk sharing is encouraged including a clear desk policy.
- Appropriate hygiene points to allow safe work and health practices for staff, consideration of contactless technologies minimising touch points/surfaces particularly in common areas.
- Finishes palate: authentic, natural & earthy themes for the workplace, finishes to have a neutral tone and palette, a mixture of tones and materials, any bold colours should be easy to change in future such as furniture, consider extending the base palette across the building stack and villages.
- Adoption of environmental good practice is a requirement of all workplaces.
- End of Trip facilities for staff including secure spaces for non-motorised / mobility scooter transport to be provided.
- All agencies are to be digitising all documents and utilising off-site archiving instead of storing locally.

Other workplace considerations include:

- Indoor air quality
- Thermal comfort
- Use of natural light
- Lighting
- Acoustics
- IT/Wi-Fi connectivity
- Minimising touchable surfaces in common areas

- Breakout space
- Collaboration
- Group project work
- Quiet space
- Drop-in desks/tables (non-bookable)
- Stand up workspaces
- Circulation space
- Amenity
- Low toxicity finishes

- Energy management
- Waste and recycling systems
- Use of recyclable materials
- Water management systems
- Records and information management
- Hygiene control stations

All fit-outs, material changes to fit-outs, and make good of premises undertaken by Agencies must comply with all government policies on workplace fit-out.

All workplace fit-out works will require prior approval by PNSW/ComDev and the Lessor or their appointed design/engineering consultants.

4. Appropriate space planning models

In seeking to respond to Agency needs for flexibility, responsiveness, and collaboration, all new Government accommodation projects will adopt Activity Based Working and planning – customised but shared modular workplace.

Other important considerations when planning spaces are:

- A variety of workpoints such as collaboration desks, team clusters, focus or quiet areas
- Collaboration hubs – project and cross business work to promote collaboration, social connection and networking opportunities
- Bookable and non-bookable spaces including workpoints (both individual and for teams), meeting rooms, project rooms and – specific secure project war rooms or tender rooms
- Touch down work-point (bookable) – for those only need a short term stay
- Primary circulation routes should ideally be 1.5m wide, with a single circulation route between the core and perimeter preferred for greater efficiency (and with compliance to allow for AS1428.1 disabled access throughout)
- Workplace layout and density must consider social distancing practice.
- Open plan individual workplaces should have access to daylight and aspect
- Informal meeting areas should be centrally located to encourage interaction across the workplace
- Acoustic treatment to surfaces to suit the appropriate workspaces to ensure user comfort
- Enclosed areas are to be located centrally with desks at perimeter to maximise natural light into the workplace
- Ensuite bathrooms are not to be provided in any circumstance
- Layouts must be adaptable over time and suitable for a variety of different business lines, consideration of tea point location to maximise future flexibility with change of user groups
- All work points should be considered as being available for use by others when not occupied
- Consideration of grouping visitor meeting facilities in a single location and at an entry point that allows visitors to not travel throughout the building.

5. Teamwork settings

Item	Description
Collaboration hub	Centrally located, multi-use space for working, socialising, eating and holding meetings.
Open meeting table	Gathering space with screening to create a sense of privacy
Enclosed small meeting room	Bookable or non-bookable meeting room for up to 4 people. Can be used to hold teleconferences and interviews.
Enclosed medium meeting room	Bookable or non-bookable meeting room for up to 10 people. Can be used for client meetings.
Enclosed large meeting room	Typically bookable large meeting room to accommodate 15-20 people. Used for presentations or meetings. Consider operable walls if very large function spaces are required

Item	Description
Wellness/support room	Typically used for short periods of time for activities that require privacy. Discreetly screened to avoid visual distraction. These include religious rooms, or first aid room.
Whole of Government Flexible Work Spaces (Touchdown)	Reserved for staff visiting the office on a short term basis. They are bookable and must be left empty when vacated.
Utility area	A local support space that provides access to copying, faxing, printing, layout/collation and recycling. Typically located with collaboration hubs to promote ad-hoc interaction.

Another group of work settings exist, being the public interface areas such as reception, shopfronts, training, meeting and hospitality spaces. A suggested benchmark is that this should not account for more than 20% of the overall area occupied by the Agency (excluding shopfronts).

6. Security and access control

The level of security and access control required by each Agency will vary according to the specific service delivery factors. These may include location, times of operation, nature of te business conducted, amount of public interface and sensitivity of the data held.

A general principle is to adopt three levels of secure access based upon the following:

1. **Public Space** is accessible to all staff, visitors and general members of the public without passing through security. Public areas typically include a reception desk zone and lobby/waiting areas. These areas should provide an intuitive entry from the street, an inviting and comfortable, professional lobby/reception space/concierge desk and security provisions as appropriate for the facility.

2. **Invited space** is accessible to staff and invited visitors only when accompanied by staff. These areas typically include a consolidated set of meeting spaces suitable for meeting with external visitors or clients without giving access to the private workspace itself. This space is an opportunity to focus design attention on a concentrated series of spaces that will regularly be used by visitors to create a managed experience for visitors.

3. **Private space** is accessible only to staff members and is physically secure from Public and Invited spaces (by way of smart digital technology and proximity card security access points). The general workspace areas, including most individual work points, internal meeting spaces, breakout spaces and kitchen/lunch rooms will exist within the secure private space.

   Once inside the secure perimeter of this space, staff should be able to move as freely as possible throughout the workplace without additional security access points or any other unnecessary physical barriers, to allow maximum accessibility and transparency across the organisation. In large, multi-story workplaces, this freedom of movement should include ease of vertical movement between floors by eliminating physical/security barriers at each level, providing open and accessible stairs as well as lifts, and creating visual connections between floors wherever possible.

Typical areas that should be secured include perimeter doors, main computer rooms and unique security facility rooms.

The Agency security and access system is to be compatible and integrated into the base building system allowing for effective and flexible coverage whilst maintaining control.

7. Mandatory requirements

Under the PCA Office Quality Grade Matrix and government policies and standards, the following workplace fit-out metrics must be adopted:

Workplace Requirement	Compliance	Notes
Funding, procurement & management of fit-out activities	Property NSW will be responsible for leading the capital funding bid for office fit-outs of all Hubs.	Agencies are to fund, procure and manage their fit-out activities in non-Hub buildings.
FTE Utilisation and Operational Planning	10m²/FTE With office occupation to be based on a 60-80%* allowance of FTE * % subject to business justification	Accommodation planning (office accommodation strategy) is to be undertaken by the Agency at a rate of 10m² for each full-time employee to occupy generic office space. Desk utilisation survey to be undertaken to inform brief. Specialist operational space, if required, is to be separately justified and accounted for within the planning process.
Workplace density	12m²/workpoint	Target 11m²/workpoint. Include diversity of workpoint types with consideration to hygiene and distancing choices.
Space Planning Model	Activity Based Working and planning	Generic office space is to be designed based upon activity based planning principles. Operation space is to be designed based upon specific specialised functional requirements.
Workstation screen height	Not to exceed 1200mm above floor level. Consider lower or non in project/collaboration areas.	Height allows for controlled line of sight when seated but retains an open plan environment and assists with air flow/air quality.
Workstations	Min 70% to sit to stand	Ergonomics key for all workpoints
Lockers	Ratio of 1.4 per workpoint	Consider portion to be day use.
Shared facilities	To optimise space utilisation, all opportunities to share facilities are to be implemented on an 'if not, why not' basis.	Shared facilities include, but are not limited to, meeting/training rooms, reception/concierge, security, drop-in & breakout space, health and wellbeing spaces, town hall spaces, mail room, etc.

Workplace Requirement	Compliance	Notes
Equality of access (disability)	Design to respond to the NSW Government's Accessible Office Design Performance Framework with design to be industry leading and deliver beyond the code requirements of AS 1428.2.	Workplace design to be exemplar, and support "Jobs for people with disability: A plan for the NSW public sector"
Enclosed offices (by exception)	Not permitted.	Open plan, agile workplace configuration is mandated. Appropriately located small meeting rooms to be used for confidential discussions, ie for Secretaries and nominated critical roles (eg. Head of HR and Legal) subject to Property NSW's explicit approval.
Wellness/support rooms	Health & wellbeing is to be integrated into the workplace.	Examples to be considered are: - adjustable/sit-to-stand desks - lean rails in meeting rooms - breakout lounge spaces. - wellness / counselling rooms - multifaith rooms - parents room - multi-use rooms where possible
First Aid Room	Codes and legislation to be adhered	Designed in accordance with WH&S guidelines. First aid room (required when staff greater than 200 on premises)
Storage	Limited physical storage to be provided. Field equipment, where required, to be accommodated in a general storage room (basement where possible)	Tenants of Hubs are expected to implement paper-lite measures in advance of relocation. Limited physical storage will be provided on floors (in favour of electronic filing and data management solutions) with secure centralised/shared storage offered as a standard (refer NSW Digital Government Strategy). Service delivery functions heavily reliant on paper due to industry practice, regulation or legislation (e.g. court and tribunal functions) are to be considered for exemption from this requirement on a case by case basis.

Workplace Requirement	Compliance	Notes
ICT program	The building information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure will be designed and provided with future flexibility as a priority. This will be achieved by installation of both a flexible uniform structured cabling system throughout the floors, and a secure Wi-Fi network. All vertical and horizontal cabling will be multi-platform compatible. As such, this will support the varying IT platforms across Agencies to allow for changes in accommodation requirements arising from, as an example, machinery of government changes. Visitor and access management, and shared meeting room facilities are to have a single common AV solution for use by WofG. Active Information and Communications Technology equipment such as the networks, servers, computers, etc. are to be provided by the agency.	Ensuring Agency's ICT systems and hardware are aligned with current industry practice is a 'business as usual' refresh process. Agency's ICT program is a separate activity to fitout work. Relocation or expansion of Agencies within the building will be possible without extensive, invasive, or operational limiting changes to the existing building cabling. A simple plug and play focus for a simple user experience is key.
Lighting Design (applicable to new fit-outs and if scope requires a lighting upgrade)	Nominal lighting power density should be below 5 W/m^2 or 1.5W/ 100 lux while meeting Australian standard illuminance requirements for nominated use. All lighting should be sensor integrated LED luminaire with at least 5 and preferably 10 years product warranties and at least 3 years labour warranties.	Minimum Standards
Electrical Appliances	Refer to GREP Guidance Note – Electrical Appliances (E3)	Minimum Standards
Water fittings and fixtures	Refer to GREP Guidance Note – Water Appliances (W3)	Minimum Standards
Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)	Refer to GREP Guidance Note – VOCs (A2)	Minimum Standards
Air Balancing	Conduct pre and post fit-out air balance measurements to ensure they are in line with overall building design.	Minimum Standards (to be signed off by Property NSW and/ or landlord representative).

Workplace Requirement	Compliance	Notes
Tenancy metering and utility account setup	NSW government has whole of government metering and utility contracts which are mandatory.	Landlords and tenants should Refer to Guidance Note – Key Whole of Government Contracts and setup services appropriately.
Waste Management	There should not be any desk bins in the fit-out. Source segregation bin islands should be setup at convenient locations throughout the floor plate. Minimum three streams Recycling/ Commingled, General/ Landfill and Paper should be set-up. Waste management systems should consider touchless design principles by staff.	Regional buildings will be assessed on a case by case basis. This will be based on the type of waste recovery facilities available in these regions.
WHS	Codes & legislation.	Part of workplace design.
End of ~~journey~~ trip facilities (~~min to Council's DCP/LEP~~)	Specification will require the maximum outcome under the Green Star building rating system. Maximise bike racks.	Shared facilities, part of base building. Building selection criteria to include end of trip facilities.
Security	CCTV - Main public areas, main lobbies, loading docks, goods lifts and all entry/exit points including fire exits.	A security assessment should be undertaken by the Agency or on behalf of the Fit-out PCG for occupying agency tenancies and prior to the workplace design process being undertaken.
Car parking	For fleet vehicles only. Regional buildings will be assessed on a case by case basis. Parking for motorised scooters.	Consideration to be given to electric charging stations Disabled access parking provided in accordance with Agency requirements.

Depending on the nature and size of the Agency, some other function specific rooms or spaces may be considered and where possible these rooms should be designed as multi-use rooms.

Other common usage includes:

- Conference rooms/boardrooms
- Large shared multi-use town hall space
- Training rooms (including computer related training)
- Kitchen and break room, tea points, day lockers
- Additional toilet facilities (ie ratio of male-female staffing, consider unisex/gender neutral).

8. Sustainability

A workplace which integrates sustainability considerations in its planning, design and operation can result in reduced running cost, more efficient use of resources and a healthier working environment for its occupants. A growing body of research also shows that sustainable workplaces are associated with greater productivity and occupants' satisfaction. This includes better staff recruitment and retention, lower levels of sickness and absence, and higher quality work.

The Government Resource Efficiency Policy (GREP) outlines how the Government will lead by example in sustainable energy and water use, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, waste and fleet management and sustainable purchasing. The policy aims to reduce the operating costs of NSW Government agencies and ensure that they provide leadership in resource productivity.

The GREP policy requires Agencies to:

- incorporate resource-efficiency considerations in all major decisions
- focus on the challenge of rising costs for energy, water, clean air and waste management
- seek to leverage purchasing power for resource-efficient technology and services
- publish annual statements of their performance against the policy.

All tenancy workplace fit-outs in government owned or tenanted office buildings over 1,000m² are to achieve and maintain a NABERS 5 Star tenancy energy rating (without Greenpower) in Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong regions with new buildings requiring a NABERS 5Star tenancy energy rating (without Greenpower). Regional tenancies to achieve 4.5 Star tenancy energy rating (without Greenpower).

Compliance with GREP is mandatory for all government Agencies on a whole-of-cluster basis, while local government, state-owned corporations, public trading enterprises and public financial enterprises are strongly encouraged to adopt the policy.

GREP replaces the NSW Government Sustainability Policy and supersedes the Waste Reduction and Purchasing Policy (WRAPP).

Agencies are to ensure the principles within the GREP are included in their detailed accommodation workplace brief and ongoing business management.

Recycled and recyclable materials to be considered as part of every design solution.

9. Space use types

Office	Space used for normal office functions. It would normally be occupied by workstations or desks, and could include reception areas, meeting rooms, conference rooms, amenities rooms, utility rooms and records/stationery areas where they are used by only the one agency, (i.e. space not shared with any other agency) in the course of its usual business. Office space includes space used for retail purposes where this is a minor function of the agency.
Operational Space	An area used to carry out specialised (non-traditional office type) functions as part of an agency's operational role. Examples that could be considered operational would be areas specially dedicated for use as: - A centre for directing/coordinating responses to emergency situations/crises - An extraordinary need for many interview rooms ie client facing services - A laboratory - Exhibition or function room space - Commercial catering kitchen (excludes normal Office kitchen facilities) - Large libraries - Secure interview rooms / Hearing rooms / Observation rooms / Testing rooms - Specialised front counter / reception that provides dedicated customer facing services - Secure weapons storage (not allowed in general Office space) Normal meeting rooms and staff kitchens are **not** classified as operational space. If in any doubt please contact PNSW.
Storage	An area used for storage and generally in a basement or similar space. Where storage, e.g. stationery, is incorporated in office space and is within the usual amounts associated with an Office function the space usage is regarded as Office.
Court Tribunal Room	An area which would otherwise be Office space, but which has been converted either permanently or temporarily to a court / tribunal facility. The area will include ancillary areas associated with the court function, e.g. public waiting areas.
Minister's Suite	A Minister's office, ante rooms, en-suite, kitchen, which are not used as Office space in the general sense of the term, and which are not occupied by support staff. The area occupied by support staff adjacent to the Minister's suite is office space.
Retail	Space used for retail purposes as the prime function of the agency. Where the sale of material is a minor function of the agency the usage should be recorded as office, e.g. some agencies provide an information service (including the sale of maps, books, etc.) as a relatively minor part of their overall operations. In this instance the space usage is Office rather than retail.

10. Reference documents

- Whole of Government Office Accommodation Policy approved 31 May 2018
- Premiers Memorandum 2012-20
  http://arp.nsw.gov.au/m2012-20-government-property-nsw-previously-state-property-authority-and-government-property
- Strategic Land and Property Framework approved 25 November 2019
- PNSW Base Building Performance Brief – June 2020
- NSW Premiers Active Living Principles
  https://www.activelivingnsw.com.au//
- Records Management Policy
  https://www.records.nsw.gov.au/recordkeeping
- Travel Management Policy
  https://buy.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/travel-and-transport-policy
- Government Resource Efficiency Policy 2019 (GREP)
  https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/sustainable-business-and-government/sustainability-in-government-agencies/government-resource-efficiency-policy
- National Australian Built Environment Rating Scheme (NABERS)
  https://www.nabers.gov.au/
- Property Council of Australia – A Guide to Office Building Quality 3rdEdition 2019
  https://www.propertycouncil.com.au/Web/Events___Services/Research_Services/A_Guide_to_Office_Building_Quality.aspx
- NSW Government's Accessible Office Design Performance Framework
- Jobs for people with disability: A plan for the NSW public sector
  https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/inclusion/disability/jobs
- Disability Access Standards AS1428
  http://www.disabilityaccessconsultants.com.au/australian-standards-as1428-suite/