

What is best practice monitoring and evaluation for Sustainability Victoria?

September 2010

A research project seeking practice knowledge and material to assist in the development of Sustainability Victoria's monitoring and evaluation framework.

Sustainability Victoria would like to acknowledge all the contributors to this report. In particular we thank the monitoring and evaluation representatives from a range of organisations who were interviewed as part of this research project and offered their considerable expertise and valuable insights. In the same spirit of cooperation and knowledge sharing we are making a version of this research publicly available.

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Interviews

Interviews were conducted with the following organisations. Note these abbreviations used throughout the report along with the abbreviation for monitoring and evaluation (M&E).

Organisation	Abbreviation
Department of Education and Training (Queensland)	DET Qld
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (Victoria)	DEECD
Parks Victoria	PV
Department of Justice	DOJ
Department of Sustainability and Environment	DSE
Melbourne Water	MW
Department of Primary Industries	DPI
Environmental Protection Authority	EPA

Interviews were sought with the following organisations but did not take place.

Department of Treasury and Finance	DTF
Department of Planning and Community Development	DPCD
Department of Human Services	DHS

Background and purpose

Sustainability Victoria seeks to develop and implement an organisational monitoring and evaluation framework. The primary purpose of this desktop and interview based research was to access practice knowledge and experience relevant to Sustainability Victoria's circumstances and needs to inform this framework.

This report outlines key research findings, insights and practice examples of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) approaches within the established research scope.

The research approach included:

1. A review of existing monitoring and evaluation activity at Sustainability Victoria with input from an internal Reference Group.
2. A review of Victorian government approaches and interviews with departments and agencies identified as having established frameworks and/or approaches.
3. Investigation into other government approaches nationally and internationally.
4. Investigation of private sector approaches.
5. A review of best practice methods from expert sources, academic journal articles and networks.
6. A summary of guides and references that could be adapted or inform the development of Sustainability Victoria's monitoring and evaluation practice guide.

Secondary but substantive benefits of this undertaking have been:

- Starting conversations, locally and internationally, and demonstrating that Sustainability Victoria is proactive and building its evaluative capacity.
- To start a knowledge base for the M&E area that can be adapted and further developed as an internal reference and resource.

The following areas were identified prior to the research as priority information areas. These areas were a major focus for the research and are examined in detail in this report.

1. **Purpose** of monitoring and evaluation frameworks implemented elsewhere.
2. **Timeframe** over which they are developed and implemented.
3. **Indicators** used within the framework.
4. **Methods** the frameworks are based on.
5. **Estimated cost** of implementing a framework at project and organisational levels.

A number of areas were identified during research scoping as potential sources of relevant M&E information and knowledge for Sustainability Victoria. A spreadsheet resource (M&E Research Data spreadsheet) was compiled and includes sources from Sustainability Victoria, other Victorian Government departments and agencies, other State and Federal Government departments, International Governments,

Private Sector, Not-for-Profits, Experts, Networks, Guides and other References. Not all of these received the same level of investigation if preliminary research yielded little of value to inform Sustainability Victoria's approach. The areas of highest relevance and information value were M&E at Sustainability Victoria (past and present), Government (departments and agencies), experts / networks and guides / references. The full version of the spreadsheet resource is the bibliography for this research report and could represent a first step towards a broader M&E knowledge base tailored to Sustainability Victoria's areas of activity and interest.

Whilst intellectual property and copyright laws prevent the public release of the M&E Research Data spreadsheet, this research report draws from this body of information and knowledge and where possible includes direct links to web sources and lists a selection of sources quoted in the report (see the References section at the end of this document).

References and information sources highlighted in this report are put forward as representing or including elements of best practice M&E that are relevant to Sustainability Victoria.

Executive summary

An extensive body of information on monitoring and evaluation exists but it was difficult to find worked examples of an *organisational* M&E approach or framework - the majority of examples are at the project and program level. One comprehensive and well researched example was sourced from Queensland's Department of Education and Training (DET Qld).

References and information sources highlighted in this report are put forward as representing or including elements of best practice M&E that may be relevant to Sustainability Victoria. This is a key point. Whilst there are many useful examples of M&E in action within government departments and agencies (locally and internationally); volumes of expert and academic advice; and an extensive range of guides and tools, it is important that the approach is constructed and implemented in a way that **fits with the evaluation purpose and culture of the organisation**.

The practice learning emphasis from the organisations interviewed and material reviewed was that building capacity and changing practice to accommodate M&E is an **educative and culture change process** and that in-house support and expertise; a common language; and good systems (in particular project management, data collection / storage and information / knowledge management) are necessary to achieving this.

The **value of relationships, partnerships and information sharing** was emphasised and built into practice by a number of organisations interviewed (see DET Qld, DEECD and PV). This includes participating more broadly in communities of knowledge and practice to facilitate collaboration, knowledge sharing, expertise exchange and leveraging opportunities. Sustainability Victoria's evaluation journey blog is aligned with this open approach and has been well received by those contacted and interviewed. The value of research partnerships (PV, DEECD) and formal processes around managing evaluation consultants to ensure optimum organisational engagement and knowledge retention (DET Qld, DEECD, DOJ) were also highlighted.

Many Victorian Government departments cited the Department of Treasury and Finance's (DTF) **Public Finance and Accountability Bill** and its emphasis on outcomes over outputs as an impetus for improvements to their existing M&E systems. Organisations seeking high level funding from DTF need to take into account their problem / solution / benefits investment logic mapping approach which is a funding requirement and as such Sustainability Victoria should consider how its chosen M&E approach can support this.

Monitoring and evaluation should be built in at the program, project or policy design stage. The research unequivocally puts **program logic** forward as the optimum approach to project and evaluation design. There is extensive material on the what, why and how of program logic, some of which has been included in the research data spreadsheet as of potential use or application within SV (in particular explanatory documents, training materials and templates). The M&E expert consultant engaged to develop M&E plans for a number of chosen projects within Sustainability Victoria will bring necessary expertise to determine the preferred program logic process.

An organisational M&E framework, **common set of values and principles** and standard program logic can be developed, but individual project evaluation design and **method will vary depending on the nature of the project** and desired outcomes. Decisions on evaluation design and methods are supported by the program logic building process. As a rule participatory methods (involving all relevant stakeholders) are put forward as the most effective way to develop an evaluation framework at the project level.

A combination of **quantitative and qualitative** data and methods are needed for a balanced evaluation. There is a trend to use qualitative evaluation methods to contextualise quantitative data in evaluating behaviour change programs. Qualitative data can provide valuable feedback to improve program design, capturing the process of change and any unintended consequences. It should be emphasised that subjective information can be measured either qualitatively or quantitatively depending on the purpose and methods of the evaluation.

Participatory approaches and the need for both a top down and bottom up approach to **indicator development** is emphasised in the material reviewed. Furthermore relevant indicators and indicator sets should inform decision making at all levels of the organisation (project, program, division and whole organisation). Demonstrating contribution to the “performance story” in order to show change in a positive and intended direction is one way to frame organisational indicators that may work for SV. This performance story is informed through project level indicators that are directly linked to project objectives articulated through the program logic and ultimately connected to organisational objectives.

Common issues and barriers

The following issues and barriers to successfully introducing an M&E system were identified through research and interviews. They are directly related to one or more of the following:

1. Evaluation perceived organisationally as *only* compliance and reporting.
2. Systems cannot support requirements of M&E and it is seen as a new burden.
3. Culture is resistant to change.

Retrofit evaluation

The 'retrofit' evaluation is commonly cited as an issue in organisations trying to achieve high quality and high value evaluation. A retrofit evaluation is not adequately planned or resourced and misses critical data points and insights, in particular the opportunities for pre- and post-testing to elicit hard data to validate whether change has occurred. For example the Department of Education and Training (DET) in Queensland quoted evaluations that are retrofitted to a program result in a lack of dedicated and appropriate resources, a loss of quality evidence to support judgements and decisions and are limited in their ability to assist in program improvement.

Data quality

Data relevance and quality are a core component of good evaluation and well planned and implemented monitoring systems are necessary to effective data capture. Poor data quality leading to poor quality evaluation can be evidence of the compliance / reporting approach to evaluation. Ensuring evaluation and data collection planning occurs at the planning stage of a project can overcome this issue so long as strong data collection and management systems are in place. The importance of data quality obtained through quality monitoring systems was a strong theme throughout the research with one interviewee suggesting that in some circumstances it should be approached as a project on its own. Data quality issues were also a theme that arose in reviewing Sustainability Victoria evaluations to date.

Am I being evaluated?

When M&E is introduced, project managers can feel that the focus is on their individual performance and this can be a barrier to genuine engagement.

Evidence of organisational commitment to the process (clarity of vision, values, principles and access to support systems) can help to overcome this issue. Also adopting positive and participatory methods (such as appreciative inquiry) and demonstrating the value of the process (for example showing how a program logic process can increase clarity in roles and objectives and improve internal understanding of the project) can also help to create a more open and receptive environment.

Organisational size and focus

Many of the organisations interviewed were large and some had an in-house research function in addition to an M&E function. Many adopted an in-house consultancy model to evaluation, assisting staff to build their evaluation framework and to source and manage external consultants. They also provided educative, capacity building and quality assurance functions.

Whilst organisational size and access to necessary resources is a key issue for Sustainability Victoria, there are also benefits in being a smaller agency. In particular there is the capacity for stronger staff engagement and ownership of the process. For example many project managers are interested in the pilot M&E planning process scheduled for June 2010 and would like this process for their projects which indicates a readiness to engage in M&E. Harnessing this interest is paramount.

It takes time and consultation to do it properly

Organisations interviewed emphasised successful culture change and supportive systems as a critical success factor to introducing M&E into an organisation, and like any change process this takes time and involves organisational learning along the way. For example DET Qld released their first organisational evaluation strategy in 2005 and the practice learning has informed improvements to their recently released Evaluation Strategy 2010 - 2014.

What is best practice M&E?

The organisations that are operating in the best practice M&E space have moved over time from seeing M&E as *only* a means to report – the accountability and compliance view – to viewing it as a way to learn from both success and failure.

Best practice monitoring and evaluation:

1. Reflects the context of the organisation, for Sustainability Victoria this means
 - a. Our vision - sustainable use of resources
 - b. Our purpose - to act as a catalyst for change
 - c. Our role - capacity building; policy influence; providing incentives; providing information; advice and tools; and demonstrating sustainable practices.
 - d. Our stakeholders - households, community, business and government.
2. Links an organisation's vision and goals to program and project delivery.
3. Is everyone's business - a core component of everyone's job.
4. Is built on a culture of inquiry, learning through success and failure, and adapting that everyone subscribes to.
5. Is evidence based and directly informs decision making at all levels.

What does this look like in practice?

Table 1: What does best practice M&E look like?

Note this table only includes select organisational examples highlighted through interviews and / or that are directly relevant to Sustainability Victoria.

FEATURE	WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE	SOURCE/ EXAMPLE
Leadership	High level and on-going commitment to an approach / strategy that includes agreed principles and values and appropriate support structures / processes	- DET Qld - DSE - PV - MW
Capacity building	- Dedicated time to plan for and enact M&E - Time to reflect and review on project results at critical points - Knowing how to work with evaluation consultants to ensure information needs are met	- DET Qld - EPA - DPI - DOJ - DSE - PV
Shared meaning (internally and externally)	A common planning and evaluation language that is spoken and understood and enables communication across stakeholder groups and sectors and across different levels of the organisation	- Many of the organisations listed in this table have developed internal guides and practice tools that include a glossary of terms and have adapted systems to reflect that language - One recommendation from Swinburne National Centre for Sustainability Show Me the Change literature review (2010) is to ensure language is understood in order to facilitate the collection of meaningful data that informs the evaluation
In-house expertise	Sufficient human resources, often in the form of an internal consultation or service model, to support M&E development and provide staff education	- DET Qld - DSE - EPA - DPI - DOJ - PV
Standardised M&E support systems and tools that are linked to program development and management	- Program logic for planning and evaluation - Guide and toolkit	- DET Qld - DOJ - DSE - PV - DPI
Data collection systems that support M&E	A single integrated, authoritative and accessible data collection and reporting system	- DET Qld - DOJ - DSE - PV - DPI - MW (Data warehouse) - DEECD (single source of data, data warehouse and intranet interface)

The key is building organisational capacity

Building the everyday capacity for an organisation to engage with monitoring and evaluation thinking and action is the key to success. A number of necessary elements or fundamentals to achieving this are examined in more detail below; this is not a complete list but emphasises some areas that the research suggests need particular attention. All of these elements can be placed within an organisational learning theoretical framework which provides a useful reference point for thinking about what is required and where SV is currently situated in terms of M&E capacity.

One such theoretical framework that integrates attention to evaluation inquiry, participatory approaches, evaluation capacity-building, organisational support, learning systems and evaluation utilisation has been developed by J Bradley Cousins. This framework can be accessed in his chapter “Operationalization of Process Use in Empirical Research on Evaluation” in the 2008 American Evaluation Society publication which he edited, [Process Use in Theory, Research and Practice: New Directions for Evaluation](#). The diagram can also be viewed on page three of the following PDF document available on the website - www.eval.org/aboutus/aea.example.nominations.packet.pdf

CONTEXT AND CULTURE

Organisational commitment and vision

Articulating the organisational commitment, vision and principles for monitoring and evaluation provides context and sends a message about where an organisation is going in terms of M&E and how it will get there. It provides context for the evaluation strategy or framework and all other aspects of the M&E approach and demonstrates leadership and ownership of the process.

Suggestion

- Develop a high level statement of values and principles that demonstrates Sustainability Victoria’s commitment and expectations. This could start as a draft that the internal Reference Group and project teams that develop M&E plans contribute to. Ultimately it needs to be formalised as an organisational commitment that staff have helped to develop.
- The DET QLD Evaluation Values and Principles and the “Key principles for the development of evaluation frameworks” (*Engaging Queenslanders: Evaluating Community Engagement*, 2004, p 7) are good starting points for the development of Sustainability Victoria’s values and principles. They will need to reflect that Sustainability Victoria is in the early stages of developing an M&E approach and as such may need to be framed as aspirational rather than actual. It should also reflect Sustainability Victoria’s vision, mission and values.

Generate and harness internal interest

Build interest in and demand for evaluation through an internal communications process timed with the release of tools, running of activities and piloting of M&E approaches. The key messages are that:

1. Monitoring and evaluation is valuable, useful and not hard to do
2. “Evaluation is everyone’s business” (DET Qld slogan)
3. You will be supported to achieve good quality M&E

There is a strong interest and desire amongst Sustainability Victoria staff to generate and access better data and analysis in order to know that their projects and programs are on the right track. Harnessing this interest is paramount in overcoming the counter perception that M&E is about measuring and managing the performance of the individual project manager and that an evaluation that shows something isn’t working is a negative as opposed to an opportunity to learn and improve.

SUPPORTING STRUCTURES – GOVERNANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Existing systems, policies and procedures need to be assessed and adapted if necessary to support monitoring and evaluation. This may include project management systems; data collection and management systems; and reporting systems. In time position descriptions, work plans and staff performance management systems should reflect M&E elements.

Suggestion

Develop a diagram (perhaps based on program logic) for Sustainability Victoria's organisational approach to M&E that shows how the evaluation vision will be achieved by the introduction of and interaction between various elements - in particular how it will impact on and work within existing systems. The diagram should demonstrate relationships between different elements and enable individuals to see where they / their project might fit.

Program Logic

The research unequivocally puts program logic forward as the optimum approach to project and evaluation design and says that M&E should be built in at the program, project or policy design stage. This overcomes the commonly cited 'retrofit' or 'bolt on' evaluation issue.

There is extensive material on the what, why and how of program logic, some of which has been included in Sustainability Victoria's version of the M&E Research Data spreadsheet as of potential use or application within Sustainability Victoria (in particular explanatory documents, training materials and templates).

Program logic is also commonly referred to as intervention logic, outcomes model, logic model, program theories of change and strategy maps. It can be defined as a "...set of interrelated assumptions, principles and / or propositions to explain or guide social actions" (Torvatn in Hurworth, 2008).

A visual representation (diagrams, flow charts, maps or 'trees') is the preferred approach in order to see how theory is linked to implementation and outcomes, and to check the alignment. It is "...a logical, graphically depicted series of statements that link a problem to the community that it exists in, the possible barriers to solving the problem, the activities and resources that are necessary to address the problem, short-term activities that result from these activities and the hoped for long-term outcomes of the program." (Linney & Wandersman in Hurworth, 2008).

It is useful to consider program logic diagrams as dynamic, living documents and there is an emphasis on participatory approaches to their development. This means consulting all stakeholders involved in or impacted by the project. "Such diagrams are considered particularly powerful if devised in conjunction with stakeholders and provide a way to clarify underlying assumptions and to reach group consensus." (Hurworth, 2008). New thinking in the development sector brings participatory elements into a method called Outcomes Mapping which moves away from assessing the development impact of a program toward changes in the behaviours, relationships, actions or activities of the people, groups, and organisations with whom a development program works directly ([International Development Research Centre website](#)).

Suggestion

The following program logic development resources should be reviewed by the consultant engaged by Sustainability Victoria to assist project teams to develop their M&E plans in order to arrive at the preferred model (or collection of models if this is appropriate) and education tools for staff. They could form part of an intranet resource for staff.

Table 2: Program logic development resources

RESOURCE	SOURCE	COMMENT
Program development and evaluation including logic model development resources	University of Wisconsin – Extension	* The word and excel logic model templates are in an 'Inputs', 'Outputs' 'Outcomes – Impact' format * There is an on-line self study module and teaching / training guide. * Note also the powerpoint presentation
Standards for drawing outcomes models	Dr Paul Duignan, Outcomes Central	Article outlining a set of standards for drawing outcomes models
Conventions for visualizing outcomes models	Dr Paul Duignan, Outcomes Central	Article outlining a standard convention for visualizing an outcomes model "...which should be generally suitable for any performance management, strategic prioritization, evaluation, monitoring, contracting or related outcomes system."
Video: Brief Introduction to Program Logic Models	Dr Paul Duignan, Outcomes Central	One of a series of on-line videos that could be used for informal or formal training.
DoView Software for developing program logic	Dr Paul Duignan, Outcomes Central	Outcomes and evaluations software that can be used with any orientation to logic modelling and help build visual evaluation plans.
Logic Model Development Guide	W. K. Kellogg Foundation	Orientation to the underlying principles and language of the program logic model so it can be effectively used in program planning, implementation and dissemination of results.
Outcomes Mapping	International Development Research Centre	It may be useful to investigate this method further, particularly in relation to behaviour change programs

Hands on expertise and support

Consultation and guidance for evaluation architecture is a necessary component and needs to come from a range of sources internally and externally including:

- A dedicated M&E resource in-house to provide consultation services, advice and encouragement; manage capacity building activities such as training; facilitate the development of M&E plans through the program logic process; and maintain networks and review materials for relevance / application within Sustainability Victoria.
- Evaluation champions – staff members in each team with hands on experience and knowledge that can provide advice and support. (This needs to be an acknowledged / formalised part of their position).
- An evaluation governance group comprised of program team members, evaluation team (in-house), target audience and other stakeholders as needed.

COMMUNICATION AND SOCIALISATION

A common language

There is diversity in M&E terminology with terms often being used interchangeably and certain terms being representative of whole systems of thinking and / or value sets. This appears to be related to the disciplinary or practice origins of the terminology - for example much M&E theory and practice related to social, cultural and behaviour change has evolved in the development and health sectors. There can also be confusion when the language of M&E enters and intersects with existing language of project management, business planning and performance management within an organisation.

Developing an agreed common language of evaluation has been identified through the research as a critical element in the successful implementation of M&E systems. In order to do this it may also be necessary to review and clarify the existing language around project management, reporting and organisational strategy, goals and objectives.

Suggestions

- Review and clarify existing language.
- Develop a glossary of M&E terms for Sustainability Victoria after a review of glossaries discovered through research including:
 - a. *National Centre for Sustainability (Swinburne) on-line evaluation toolbox* due for release in 2011
 - b. Department of Justice (developed in-house)
 - c. *NRM Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement Framework (MERI)* p 26
 - d. *Engaging Queenslanders: Evaluating community engagement* p 46
 - e. *Guide to using research in sustainability programs* - DECC Social Research Series
 - f. *AFG Evaluation Framework Draft* – DPI, p 22.
- See also Dr Paul Duignan's article [The Five Building-Blocks of Outcomes Systems](#) which includes an attempt to clarify the language.

Training

Training, professional development and coaching are necessary to build engagement and capability. A number of the organisations interviewed had developed structured introductory M&E training programs and one had also developed a master class. Internal and external support in program logic mapping is usually provided with M&E built in at this stage.

Suggestions

- Provide informal training channels that staff can access as needed or wanted before an M&E planning session and future M&E training is developed.
- Hold forums on project evaluations. These could be based on Sustainability Victoria programs evaluated previously (see 'SV' worksheet) and teams could present their program logic and M&E plan. This also serves as internal learning about different programs and projects.

Relationships, partnerships and information sharing

The value of relationships, partnerships and information sharing was emphasised and built into practice by a number of organisations interviewed (see DET Qld, DEECD and PV). This includes participating more broadly in communities of knowledge and practice to facilitate collaboration, knowledge sharing, expertise exchange and leveraging opportunities. Sustainability Victoria's evaluation journey blog is aligned with this open approach and has been well received by those contacted and interviewed.

The value of research partnerships (PV, DEECD) and formal processes around managing evaluation consultants to ensure optimum organisational engagement and knowledge retention (DET Qld, DEECD, DOJ) were also highlighted.

Suggestions

- EPA is an agency of similar size to Sustainability Victoria and is currently developing and refining its approach to M&E. This is a good opportunity to share ideas and resources.
- Join and monitor relevant networks and resources. Refer to the 'Networks' and 'Blogs' identified in the 'Experts and Networks' worksheet of the M&E Research Data spreadsheet.
- Research partnerships with universities and working with consultants to retain and build knowledge.
- Create Sustainability Victoria's preferred supplier list. Refer to DSE's selection process and DET Qld is soon to release a list which was developed through a rigorous process.
- Collaboration and information sharing appears to be a feature of the M&E domain and many contributors to this research project were interested in seeing the results. Whilst this research was conducted for internal purposes, permissions have been sought and the report adapted in order to provide it to contributors and post it to Sustainability Victoria's blog.

GENERAL

Resources

- The [Checklist for Building Organizational Evaluation Capacity](#) developed from case study data and an extensive literature review is a useful internal reference point.
- Note article Building the Evaluation Capability of Public Sector Organisations.

Suggestions

- Use the *Conceptual Framework of Evaluative Inquiry as an Organizational Learning System* as a reference point to show: (a) where all the necessary elements of best practice M&E fit; and (b) where Sustainability Victoria stands now in terms of organisational readiness and capacity. This is both a gap analysis to show where resources need to be allocated and a foundation to map out what will happen and when to build organisational capacity.
- Adapt the *Building Organizational Evaluation Capacity checklist* to Sustainability Victoria's current circumstances and put timeframes and actions around checklist items considered a priority and actionable in the short, medium and long term. The items selected could be used as indicators to monitor the evolution of M&E within the organisation.
- Explore appreciative inquiry* (AI) as a vehicle for communicating, exploring and encouraging ownership of Sustainability Victoria's M&E framework and approach.

* "AI involves, in a central way, the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system's capacity to apprehend, anticipate, and heighten positive potential. It centrally involves the mobilization of inquiry through the crafting of the unconditional positive question'..." [Appreciative Inquiry Commons](#) website.

Priority information areas

The following areas were identified prior to the research as priority information areas. These areas were a major focus for the research.

1. **Purpose** of monitoring and evaluation frameworks implemented elsewhere.
2. **Timeframe** over which they are developed and implemented.
3. **Indicators** used within the framework.
4. **Methods** the frameworks are based on.
5. **Estimated cost** of implementing a framework at project and organisational levels.

PURPOSE

The primary purposes for monitoring and evaluation are:

- A. **Needs assessment** – understanding the context for a proposed project, program or policy and what needs to be done to respond to a situation or address an issue.
- B. **Accountability** – providing transparency for the process and meeting reporting requirements for both process and results.
- C. **Process** – monitoring and evaluation throughout the project to better understand process elements (what tools and approaches work best) and enable adaptive management.
- D. **Outcomes / Impact** – finding out what happened in the short, medium and / or longer term as a result of various elements and as result of the project, program or policy as a whole.

The following purposes were quoted in interviews or identified through other sources during the research. All of these fit into one of the four primary purposes above, but are useful in that they provide insights into how M&E can be framed in different organisations and contexts. Note the emphasis here on organisational culture and learning.

- Reality check
- Determining effectiveness
- Understanding outcomes / impacts (environmental and social)
- Continuous improvement and learning
- Adaptive management
- Building morale
- Defining and communicating mandate
- Risk management.
- Valuing community contributions
- Understanding influence
- Assessing change
- Measure incremental change
- Change management (rather than compliance focus)
- Promote a culture of evaluation
- Consistency in approach
- Investment prioritisation

TIMEFRAME

This area received limited response in the interviews. It was interpreted both in terms of timeframes over which M&E is conducted and how long it has taken to develop an organisational response to M&E in the form of a strategy or framework and other resources.

The former varies depending on the nature of the project and resources available. In regard to the latter, organisations interviewed emphasised successful culture change and supportive systems as a critical success factor to introducing M&E into an organisation, and indicated that like any change process this takes time and involves organisational learning along the way. For example DET Qld released their first organisational evaluation strategy in 2005 and the practice learning has informed improvements to their recently released Evaluation Strategy 2010 – 2014.

Other responses from DOJ and PV indicate that the evidence base is established only with time and the building of internal capacity to plan and run monitoring and evaluation, and to analyse and interpret the results.. When there is a solid evidence base, built through attention to identifying the right type and quality of data at the outset, M&E has reached a new level of utility and value to an organisation. As one of the respondents commented, “One of the keys to successful M&E is to get to a point where you can see beneath the data to determine gaps, problem areas (in the program, policy and/or stakeholder group) and trends. This takes time but allows for the type of analysis and strategic input to decision making that gets results.”

INDICATORS

Indicators can exist at different levels (from the project to the organisational) and for multiple purposes and audiences or end users. They should reflect the type of work the organisation does and the results it wants to achieve. A combination of quantitative and qualitative* indicators is necessary for well rounded evaluation. Relying solely on qualitative indicators is not necessarily advisable but neither is it possible or useful to attempt to get quantitative indicators on everything.

* Note one of the respondents mentioned a University of Queensland study on the value and reliability of qualitative data.

Definitions

Indicators measure the state or condition of something. They are used to:

1. Compare current state against an ‘ideal’
2. Measure changes or ‘trends’
3. Establish best practice ‘benchmarks’

They are generally based on quantitative data and are either:

- A. Objective – measuring something tangible/ real
- B. Subjective – measuring a perception of something

Source: Engaging Queenslanders : Evaluating community engagement, 2004, p23

“Indicators should be selected according to the principles of **cost, simplicity, consistency** and **practicality** as well as their **capacity to deliver information** across the full jurisdictional scale. Indicators at the area of investment are necessary for monitoring the results of a specific activity. Indicators can be a combination of agreed national indicators and surrogate indicators. ‘**Surrogate indicators**’ are measures developed to monitor the performance of an activity where asset condition monitoring is non-existent or not appropriate.”

Source: NRM Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement Framework, 2009, p20

A performance indicator "...provides information (either qualitative or quantitative) on the extent to which a policy, program or initiative is achieving its outcomes. It indicates "distance to target". This is commonly expressed as a ratio, fraction or percentage. A simple indicator can be the ratio of just two data fields (e.g. number of program participants/total entities in sector), whereas a complex indicator can be a combination of metrics normalised to a benchmark level."

"Four categories of program effects plus program outputs have been defined for evaluation purposes:

- A. Physical impact: energy, greenhouse, direct energy-related economic benefits.
- B. Behavioural, attitudinal, capability change.
- C. Market outcomes.
- D. Significant non-energy effects including non-energy related economic benefits, health impacts, comfort, and productivity."

Source: *National Framework For Energy Efficiency – Development Of A Data Collection, Reporting And Evaluation Framework (D-REF) – Final Report, 2006*, p 13

Choosing effective indicators

The New Economics Foundation (NEF) has developed a simple method for choosing effective indicators – AIMS.

Table 3: AIMS approach to choosing effective indicators

A	Action focused	If there is no action that can be taken as a result of collecting data on a particular indicator, it probably is not worth using that indicator.
I	Important	Indicators must be chosen to be meaningful and important to stakeholders as well as evaluators.
M	Measurable	It must be possible to allocate data to the indicator.
S	Simple	So that collecting the data is relatively easy, and so that whatever data is collected can be widely understood.

Source: The New Economics Foundation, Proving and Improving Toolkit, [Develop Good Indicators](#) page

Indicator development

Participatory approaches and the need for both a top down and bottom up approach to indicator development is emphasised in the material reviewed. See the Reed, Fraser and Dougill (2006) article listed below and the [Social Return on Investment \(SROI\)](#) participatory process for helping organisations to understand and quantify the social, environmental and economic value they are creating. Melbourne Water has adopted a comprehensive key performance indicator system to manage its operating performance and to monitor progress in achieving its strategic goals. Responsibility for achieving corporate indicators is delegated to relevant staff within the business. Indicators can and should evolve over time (Reed, Fraser and Dougill, 2006).

Indicator Ideas

It was difficult to determine indicators of relevance to Sustainability Victoria at the organisational level. The available information on indicators is broad and context specific going from high level material on the development of national level sustainable development indicators to specific project level indicators to assess community engagement. Understanding the context and purpose are fundamental to indicator development.

Demonstrating contribution to the “performance story” in order to show change in a positive and intended direction is one way to frame organisational indicators that may work for Sustainability Victoria. This performance story is informed through project level indicators that are directly linked to project objectives articulated through the program logic and ultimately connected to organisational objectives.

The ideas listed below (Table 4) represent an initial attempt to determine indicators that may be of relevance to Sustainability Victoria. These could be tested through an indicator development process wherein sets of indicators (not just one set) are determined through an internal consultation process some at the program level, some at the divisional level and some at the agency level.

Table 4: Indicators of potential relevance to Sustainability Victoria

INDICATOR IDEA	APPLICATION	SOURCE
Knowledge or Intellectual Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Could be applied to knowledge capture and organisational learning * Research indicator / contribution to evidence base * Leveraged knowledge 	Bill Martin, Director Research, School of Business IT, University of Melbourne – journal article <i>Demonstrating Knowledge Value: A Broader Perspective in Metrics</i> Journal of Intellectual Capital Vol. 5 No. 1, 2004, pp. 77-91
Creation of a self supporting system / market / community / element of industry etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * This approach can help to answer questions like: How does a network evolve so that it is sustainable after initial funding ends? * This is well aligned with Sustainability Victoria 's stated purpose - "...we bring together the knowledge and capabilities of people, organisations and communities to deliver integrated social, economic and environmental outcomes." * Infrastructure changes * Market mechanisms * Contribution to policy instruments 	Todd Honeycutt - journal article <i>Making Connections: Using Social Network Analysis for Program Evaluation</i> Mathematica Policy Research Inc November 2009
Knowledge flow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Communication of outcomes, findings and insights - interpreting, sharing, reporting and responding to results * Using a social network model and applying it to knowledge flow 	Derived from the two sources above
Market development / transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Infrastructure changes * Job creation * Outcomes from social enterprises (often used as a model in the sector) 	Sustainability Victoria's Materials Efficiency Team
Indicator hierarchy	First, second and third order indicators	<i>Engaging Queenslanders:</i>

INDICATOR IDEA	APPLICATION	SOURCE
	(eg. social capital and capacity).	<i>Evaluating community engagement</i>
Public interest	Could be interpreted as the level of engagement from the target stakeholder set (who the 'intervention' is targeted to). Perhaps called 'stakeholder engagement'. Or interpreted as the importance/significance of the program outcomes. How do you define 'importance'? Is this based on the environmental issue being addressed, government policy priorities etc.	Transport Canada
Delivery complexity	To measure / capture complexity including multiple delivery partners and barriers to change	Transport Canada
Sample indicators – social, environmental and economic	See Sample Indicators Bank (social, environmental and economic) for communities and suggestions for measurement. Note more focused at the program level.	New Economic Foundation - Prove and Improve
Leveraged or matched funding	Tangible results from funding partner projects.	InterAct Annex A 'Examples of indicators and criteria' p12
Evaluation system as an indicator	Process indicators / improvement indicators (in addition to impacts).	No direct source

Resources

- *An adaptive learning process for developing and applying sustainability indicators with local communities* (Reed, Fraser and Dougill, 2006). This paper analyses the literature on developing and applying sustainability indicators at local scales to develop a methodological framework that summarises best practice.
- The spider diagram is a participatory stakeholder consultation technique for indicator development at the program level that is particularly effective in relation to behaviour change programs.

METHODOLOGY

An organisational M&E framework, common set of values and principles and standard program logic can be developed, but individual project evaluation design and methodology will vary depending on the nature of the project and desired outcomes. Decisions on evaluation design (including whether project performance, outputs and / or outcomes are to be measured) and methods are supported by the program logic building process.

"No single method can appropriately analyse complex social programs. A robust evaluation methodology uses both quantitative and qualitative approaches to inform the findings. Evaluations should also use existing operational data where appropriate." (DET Queensland, [Evaluation Values and Principles](#)).

“There is no one-size-fits-all process for evaluating community engagement or any other government activity. Each community engagement program requires an evaluation framework tailored to the purpose for which the evaluation will be used, the intended audience of the evaluation, the types of community engagement activities and the scale and significance of the activities.” (*Engaging Queenslanders: Evaluating community engagement, 2004*, p 6).

Most of the guides, tools and resources identified below (see Table 10) include sections on methods and how to select the most appropriate ones for an evaluation. For example *Engaging Queenslanders: Evaluation community engagement (2004)* lists the most common methods of data collection for evaluation as participant questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, observation, document analysis and population surveys, and provides an overview of each of these methods along with advice on selection. Participatory approaches such as Outcome Hierarchy and Most Significant Change are the most prevalent in the evaluation of behaviour change programs.

Quantitative v Qualitative

A combination of quantitative and qualitative data and methods are needed for a balanced evaluation. There is a trend to use qualitative evaluation methods to contextualise quantitative data in evaluating behaviour change programs (Show Me the Change – Draft Literature Review, 2009). For example staff opinion is expert opinion and is a reliable source of information, but should not be the only source. Qualitative data can provide valuable feedback to improve program design, capturing the process of change and any unintended consequences.

Specialist, targeted and complementary resources

A range of resources were found through the research which supports the design and development of behaviour change programs with monitoring and evaluation as a component including:

- *A Framework for Pro-environmental Behaviours* (DEFRA) and
- *Stocktake and analysis of household behaviour change programs in Victoria* (DSE).

There are also some useful resources that focus specifically on the monitoring and evaluation of environmental behaviour change programs and identify best practice such as:

- *Best Practices in the Monitoring and Evaluation of Program Impact* (Cullbridge for Environment Canada) and
- *Show Me the Change: A review of evaluation methods for residential behaviour change projects* (National Centre for Sustainability, Swinburne).

Some specialised evaluation resources exist that may be of relevance to some Sustainability Victoria staff including:

- *The Magenta Book: guidance notes for policy evaluation and analysis* (UK Government Social Research Unit)
- *Remotely Engaged? A framework for monitoring the success of stakeholder engagement in remote regions* (CSIRO)

Suggestion

Sustainability Victoria’s projects are currently being categorised by type (policy influence, capacity building, providing incentives, providing information / advice / tools and demonstrating sustainable practices) and common activity sets established for each type. It may also be useful to determine whether there is commonality in data sets used by each project type and if so whether it is useful to compile data collection methods and evaluation tools that are most appropriate to each.

COST

There is a consensus on 10% as the rule of thumb budget allocation for M&E but this will vary depending on the project. For example a pilot project is about proof of concept or approach and will often need a much higher amount whereas a big project with a large budget will not need to allocate 10%. See below for a list of sources and their responses on cost.

Table 5: The cost of evaluation

COST	SOURCE
Evaluation costs of the programs studied varied from 2 to 50%, with most clustered between 5 and 10%.	<i>Best Practices in the Monitoring and Evaluation of Program Impacts</i> - Cullbridge for Environment Canada, 2002
Between 5 to 8% of program budget should be allocated.	Evaluation consultant in international development field
Plus or minus 10% should be allocated.	Parks Victoria based on research in North America in particular. Parks Victoria also advised that outcome based monitoring and evaluation is very expensive.
International literature recommends that 6 to 7% of program expenditure should be spent on evaluation. Much of this cost is in data collection.	National Framework For Energy Efficiency – Development Of A Data Collection, Reporting And Evaluation Framework (D-REF) – Final Report (2006) p 18
Rule of thumb – 10 to 15% of a program or initiative budget should be set aside for monitoring and evaluation.	Department of Justice, Jann Milic, former Evaluations Services Manager at Department of Justice
Provide sufficient resources (staff and financial) to evaluation. As a general rule 10% of a program budget.	University of Tasmania referenced in Show Me the Change, Swinburne, p 2
10 to 20% should be budgeted	Kellogg Foundation
Managers should expect to budget 2 to 10% of the overall community engagement project budget for an effective evaluation.	<i>Engaging Queenslanders: Evaluating community engagement</i> - Queensland Government Department of Communities p 5

Savings will also be available if several different programs can share the cost of special surveys (which are always a major expense), by using the surveys to collect data relevant to each program; for example, it may be possible to use the survey to collect data about several different residential sector programs (NFEE – D-REF Final Report, 2006, p18).

Information sources

The research focused on a number of areas identified during research scoping as the most relevant sources of M&E information and knowledge for Sustainability Victoria. The data research spreadsheet includes the following worksheets - *SV, Vic Govt, State & Fed, Int Govt, Private Sector, NFPs, Experts and Networks* and *Guides & Refs* but not all of these received the same level of investigation if preliminary research yielded little of value to inform Sustainability Victoria's approach. As such not all areas are represented below and some are combined. The areas of highest relevance and information value were M&E at Sustainability Victoria (past and present), Government (departments and agencies), experts / networks and guides / references. This research data is potentially a first step towards a broader M&E knowledge based tailored to Sustainability Victoria's areas of activity and interest.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION AT SUSTAINABILITY VICTORIA (PAST AND PRESENT)

There are a number of examples of monitoring and evaluation that have already occurred or are planned within Sustainability Victoria and some of these are provided in the following table (refer to the 'SV' worksheet in the M&E Research Data spreadsheet for a full list and additional information).

There is a sense that more information on past monitoring and evaluation activity within Sustainability Victoria exists, and hopefully some of this will come to light over time and with increased emphasis on and cultural acceptance of M&E as part of core business.

Table 6: M&E at Sustainability Victoria

PROJECT / PROGRAM / TEAM	M&E	FEATURES / COMMENTS
Data Collection, Reporting and Evaluation Framework (D-REF) for the National Framework for Energy Efficiency (NFEE)	<i>Data capture and analysis</i> <i>Evaluation</i> Provide a comprehensive and consistent approach to evaluating national and, as far as possible, jurisdictional programs aimed at energy efficiency and associated greenhouse emission reduction.	- Emphasises program theory (logic) and classifies programs according to their logic - Includes material relevant and useful for Sustainability Victoria's evaluation approach (see below for more detail)
Customer and Community Service projects evaluation	<i>Data capture and analysis</i> An externally hosted website for everyone in the C&CS team to include their project data. The system generated report / aided analysis.	
Right Advice at the Right Place (RARP) program	<i>Data capture</i> Method for appliance rebate calculations	
Energy and Water Taskforce Project	<i>Data analysis</i> <i>Evaluation</i> Data analysis to determine impacts (reductions in resource use) and other outcomes (including social impacts such as	- Different consultants in 2006 and 2007 - Consultant comment on data: "...ongoing strategic planning for future activities relies on access to this data and the analysis of it."

PROJECT / PROGRAM / TEAM	M&E	FEATURES / COMMENTS
	skills and knowledge gained)	(p5) and proposed a methodology to ensure data integrity. (p27)
ResourceSmart Business Partnerships Evaluation Measure	<p><i>Data capture and analysis Evaluation</i></p> <p>Partners nominate measures relevant to their projects.</p> <p>Measures will be reviewed in collaboration with partners.</p> <p>Results will be evaluated by Partnerships Team.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developed in-house in response to stakeholders looking for guidance on what Sustainability Victoria wanted them to measure - GRI used to inform indicators - Purpose along with data capture is assessing effectiveness of the program model / reasons for success and challenges (See below for more detail)
5 Star Sustainability Self Assessment Tool (Government and Business)	<p><i>Data capture and benchmarking</i></p> <p>Interactive sustainability self-evaluation and benchmarking tool for government and business</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Potentially significant for Sustainability Victoria to use this data to monitor change / see improvement in organisational sustainability performance, particularly if it can track uptake of programs and initiatives (Sustainability Victoria and other)
Resource Recovery	<p><i>Data capture</i></p> <p>Funded projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Potential indicators: Behaviour change, job creation, outcomes from social enterprises that are often used as a deliver model in this sector and impact of OHS improvements.
GreenHouse Program	<p><i>Data capture and analysis Evaluation</i></p> <p>Provide an independent opinion on the replicability and the scalability of the pilots in achieving their objectives of behaviour change in high consuming households</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Logical Framework Matrix - Emphasis on communicating results to stakeholders - Comprehensive and well constructed evaluation using a logical framework approach - Looks to be an internal example of successful management of evaluation consulting contract, may be in part because a pilot and learning what works is one of the key objectives
GreenHouse League (previously ResourceSmart Hubs)	<p><i>Planning for data capture</i></p> <p>Sustainability Actions and Behaviours model</p>	Note the verification section - behaviours listed and a note about whether they are verifiable
Commercial Buildings program	<p><i>Planning</i></p> <p>Commercial Buildings Program Logic</p>	The Built Environment team have been through a program logic mapping process with a consultant

Using evaluation consultants

Generally external consultants have developed the evaluation plans and tools and conducted the monitoring and evaluation at Sustainability Victoria (the 'ResourceSmart Business Partnerships Evaluation Measure' outlined in detail below is a noteworthy exception). A number of sources (including DET Qld, DOJ, DEECD and DPI) offered advice around using evaluation consultants. The need for staff to have sufficient understanding of the evaluation objectives in order to manage the contract was emphasised. This helps to ensure ownership and capacity is built internally; knowledge building and retention; and that the findings can support

internal decisions. The GreenHouse Program evaluation appears to be an example of successful management of an evaluation provider, in part because it was a pilot and learning through monitoring and evaluation was one of the key objectives.

ResourceSmart Business Industry Partnership Evaluation Measure

The ResourceSmart Business Industry Partnerships Evaluation Measure was developed in-house in response to stakeholders looking for guidance on what Sustainability Victoria wanted them to measure. The Global Reporting Initiative helped to inform the indicators selected. The stated purpose, along with data capture, is *assessing the effectiveness of the program model* and understanding both successes and challenges implying adaptive management as an underlying purpose.

In addition to resource efficiency (GHG, waste diverted from landfill, energy saved etc.) there are indicators included to monitor behaviour change (improved knowledge, attitudes and behaviour; improved capacity; social, economic and environmental benefits). The evaluation model is being tested during 2010-11.

The practice learning comments below highlight the importance of efficient data collection and management systems (such as the data warehouse) and that strong support systems and tools are key to fostering an M&E friendly culture.

Quotes from the project manager

“Data is good when you can get it - not always easy to get.”

“Time to analyse and evaluate is underestimated - resourcing issues, varied project timelines, challenges in collecting some data.”

Data Collection, Reporting and Evaluation Framework (D-REF)

The Data Collection, Reporting and Evaluation Framework (D-REF) for the National Framework for Energy Efficiency (NFEE) is a comprehensive approach based on an international review of evaluation approaches for energy efficiency and demand side management programs (p43). The primary goal of D-REF is to provide a comprehensive and consistent approach to evaluating national and, as far as possible, jurisdictional programs aimed at energy efficiency and associated greenhouse emission reduction (p 5). Whilst some of the material is specific to the area, much is more broadly relevant to Sustainability Victoria's evaluation approach. For example:

- 'Evaluation Metrics and Indicators' section (p76) covers metrics and indicators for behavioural and other outcomes and for market and financial outcomes
- Requirements of an evaluation plan (p8)
- Evaluation process (p9)

Considerations

1. 'Sustainability Victoria Evaluation in Action' briefing series:

This list provides a potential source of practice case studies to be examined through a 'Sustainability Victoria evaluation in action' briefing series – part of the internal culture and capacity building program. It may also be a way to identify internal 'experts' and possibly 'evaluation champions'. If possible it would be beneficial for external consultants involved in evaluations to speak about the work they have undertaken (processes and results).

2. Data (access and integrity)

Comments about data availability and integrity came up in discussions with Sustainability Victoria staff and in M&E reports.

VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT (DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES) AND OTHER STATE GOVERNMENT

An Evaluation Community of Interest (ECOI) exists within the Victorian Public Service demonstrating a spirit of networking, information sharing and exchange that is prevalent in the M&E domain. In March 2009 some members of this group developed an overview of evaluation activity entitled 'Summary of Evaluation in the VPS' and whilst some of the information was out-of-date (at the time of writing this report) it provided useful context and background to interviews with some of the departments on the list.

Relevant information from the summary was included in the 'Vic Govt' worksheet and then updated if an interview was conducted. Interviews were conducted with eight of the 11 departments and agencies contacted and this was a rich information source.

Department of Education and Training, Queensland

One interview was conducted with an interstate government department – the Department of Education and Training (DET), Queensland. DET Queensland has developed a comprehensive approach to M&E articulated in their [Evaluation Strategy 2010 - 2014: Strengthening our commitment to performance improvement](#) which is based on three priority areas:

1. *Governance* – Ensuring timeliness and rigor to inform decision making.
2. *Capability* – Building the department's capacity to conduct successful, systematic evaluations.
3. *Relationships* – Making connections across the department to foster leadership and commitment, and with other organisations to leverage capacity and share learnings.

Note the Values and Principles that inform this strategy.

Under each of these key elements are structures, tools and activities that build and support them. DET Queensland's vision is to build a culture where staff understand the value of evaluation, see it as an opportunity for professional and corporate improvement and feel supported during the process. The strategy and a range of support documentation are publicly available through the DET Queensland website.

It is important to note that DET Queensland first developed an evaluation strategy and program in 2005 and has been learning what works best and refining the approach over time. A journal article written about the implementation of the strategy (Hanwright and Makinson, 2008) stated that if (internal) social change had not been considered the strategy would not have succeeded and the interview with the current Manager Evaluation Services reinforces this perspective.

DET Queensland's new version of the strategy is based on building a committed culture of evaluation across agency and a shift from a compliance-orientation towards higher quality evaluations that are owned by the accountable area and used to inform decisions and future directions. It takes a collaborative approach of robust review and performance improvement which incorporates education and on-going practice research.

INTERNATIONAL

Following are the most relevant international practice examples of M&E for environmental programs found.

Table 7: International practice examples of M&E in sustainability programs

ORGANISATION	M&E
UK – Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)	<i>A Framework for Pro-environmental Behaviours</i> Setting the broad social marketing framework and looking at high level change based on implementation of a range of programs. Developed in 2008 and M&E elements proposed.
UK – Energy Savings Trust	A well established not-for-profit with strong links with and support from UK government. Currently finalising and having their methodology peer reviewed and published.
INT – Cullbridge Communications for Environment Canada	<i>Best Practices in the Monitoring and Evaluation of Program Impacts</i> Reviews best practice in monitoring and evaluation of behaviour change elements of environmental programs. Identifies and profiles best practice elements of a number of programs.

PRIVATE SECTOR

The private sector can subscribe to a number of reporting frameworks and adapt or establish data collection, monitoring and management systems and process guidelines to enable reporting against these frameworks and indices. The focus is on social license to operate and corporate social responsibility performance and the monitoring and measuring of impacts, framed in terms of risk mitigation in the same way that financial risk is managed.

The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) is one such sustainability reporting framework. A GRI base now exists in Australia (the St James Ethics Centre). The GRI was one framework that fed into the development of the 5 Star for business accreditation and the ResourceSmart Business Partnership Evaluation Measure developed by the Industry Partnerships team. GRI is mandated by some governments including Denmark and Sweden.

EXPERTS AND NETWORKS

The following references stand out as the most relevant conceptual and theoretical frameworks for SV at this point in the development process.

Table 8: Conceptual and theoretical frameworks for M&E

FRAMEWORK / THEORY	DESCRIPTION
Bennetts' Hierarchy	Measures incremental change during the program / causal links between the steps from inputs to outcomes and where along the continuum of change an extension program reached or was likely to reach in its funded life.
John Owen's five forms of evaluation	A matrix that classifies different types of evaluation as proactive, clarificative, interactive, monitoring, and impact . Identifies methods / approaches that align with each type. The matrix is available in the latest edition of the book Program Evaluation: Forms and Approaches by John M Owen* <i>*Note John M Owen is Principal Fellow at the Centre for Program Evaluation at the University of Melbourne</i>
Outcomes Theory knowledge base, Dr Paul Duignan	A conceptual basis and a common language for discussing the diverse terminology, thinking, disciplinary foundations and contexts in which outcomes systems are found. Note article entitled The Five Building-Blocks of Outcomes Systems , which puts forward five types of evidence which can be offered to show that a program, policy or any intervention 'works'. Note the diagram summarising the five building blocks – The 5 Building-Blocks of Any Outcome System in the conclusion section of the article.
Social Network Analysis	About adaptive management; understanding influence; and assessing change. This model potentially lends itself to the way Sustainability Victoria operates and what it is trying to achieve. It can be applied to people / communities and knowledge.

GUIDES AND REFERENCES

There is an extensive range of guides and tools available and some useful examples are listed in the table below.

It is interesting to note that most of the government departments and agencies interviewed developed an M&E guide and / or toolkit for staff *before* developing an organisation wide M&E framework. A number are now in the process of developing an organisational framework.

Table 9: Guides and references

GUIDE	SOURCE	COMMENT
Guide to Evaluation	VIC Department of Treasury and Finance	A concise guide that includes characteristics of best practice evaluations p. 9; common methods / approaches p. 10; and further references p. 13
Does your project make a difference?	NSW Department of Environment and Conservation	A guide to evaluating environmental education projects and programs, targeted to local government
Evaluation Step-by-Step Guide	VIC Department of Planning and Community Development	This is a good program level resource. Note the worksheet templates
Guide to using research in sustainability programs - DECC Social Research Series	NSW Department of Environment and Conservation & VIC Department of Sustainability and Environment	Note comprehensive list of resources and references for methods p 33
Engaging Queenslanders: Evaluating community engagement	QLD – Queensland Government Department of Communities	Designed to assist public officials at all levels to evaluate community engagement activities. A good quality resource that is directly relevant to behaviour / social change programs.
<i>Show Me the Change: A review of evaluation methods for residential sustainability behaviour change projects</i>	VIC – Swinburne, National Centre for Sustainability	Research examining evaluation methodologies previously used in behaviour change projects to inform development of an on-line M&E toolbox. Note: The document is still in final draft and requires several changes prior to release. It is not publicly available.
On-line M&E toolbox to help people plan and evaluate their projects	VIC – Swinburne, National Centre for Sustainability for DSE and local government	To be released in 2011
<i>AFG Evaluation Framework Draft</i>	VIC – Department of Primary Industries	Note appendices, in particular evaluation and data collection planning considerations and material. This document is not publicly available.
Building Capacity in Evaluating Outcomes	US - University of Wisconsin	Potentially a useful resource to access when developing an

GUIDE	SOURCE	COMMENT
(BCEO Resource) An online course Applied Environmental Education Program Evaluation (AEEPE)		internal training program
Institutionalising Impact Evaluation within the Framework of a Monitoring and Evaluation System	INT - World Bank Independent Evaluation Group	For the development sector but some useful insights and provides a comprehensive overview of impact evaluation (definitions p 10, designs p11, models p12, institutionalizing IE p 14, data collection and analysis for IE p34, baseline data p36, using mixed method approaches p36)
Impact/outcome evaluation design types	Dr Paul Duignan Duignan, P. (2005-2009). Seven possible impact / outcome evaluation design types. Outcomes Theory Knowledge Base article No. 209).	Lists seven possible outcome / impact evaluation design types which can be used to prove that changes in high-level outcomes are attributable (proved to be caused by) a program or intervention (note diagrams).
Program Evaluation: Forms and Approaches	John M Owen Principal Fellow at the Centre for Program Evaluation at the University of Melbourne	The book authored by John M Owen (listed above for his evaluation classification matrix) includes suggested methods and approaches that align with different types of evaluation.

Sustainability Victoria's evaluation guide

Sustainability Victoria's Evaluation Guide

Sustainability Victoria is developing an evaluation guide and tool kit as one component of its evaluation support material for project managers to utilise when building in monitoring and evaluation elements to their projects. Following are some suggestions for the approach based on the research.

Table 10: Sustainability Victoria's evaluation guide

INCLUSION	POSSIBLE SOURCE	WHY
Vision, values and principles	DET QLD Evaluation Values and Principles and the "Key principles for the development of evaluation frameworks" (Engaging Queenslanders: Evaluating Community Engagement, 2004, p 7	Demonstrate organisational commitment to process and support
Program logic for Sustainability Victoria's M&E approach and how all the elements work together to achieve the overall evaluation vision	Program logic development tool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide clarity and show organisational commitment ▪ Show staff where all the disparate elements fit (links to existing documents) and when support material will be developed (a way to track progress)
Performance monitoring framework	Under development	
High level overview of how the evaluation process will work at Sustainability Victoria. (It doesn't need to be complete)	DET Qld's Evaluation at a glance is clear example	
Common language	See list of existing glossaries	Improved communication, understanding and information flow
Program logic – generally and specifically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training presentation ▪ M&E planning consultant provide advice on best methodology ▪ Sustainability Victoria M&E plans See Table 2 outlining program logic development resources	This is potentially the primary tool for project and evaluation planning. Staff need to understand what it is, why it is important and how it can benefit them/ their project.
Guides	See sources in Guides and References table above	
On-line training	See sources in Program Logic Development Resources and Guides and References tables above	Informal training that staff can pick up as needed or wanted before M&E planning session and future M&E training is developed
Managing data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explore data collection and management systems. 	Access to relevant data sets (primary and secondary) was

INCLUSION	POSSIBLE SOURCE	WHY
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In the first instance set up a process to collect all existing data sets in the one place (off local drives and disks) to create a collective data pool that everyone can search and draw from. Ultimately will need a cataloguing process / protocol around it to frame it / show where it is from (source), why it was collected (purpose), how it was collected (methods) and what it was used for (application). 	<p>identified as an essential element of good quality evaluation.</p>

Suggestions

- Develop a specification of inclusions for an Sustainability Victoria guide, tool kit and informal training program based on research findings.
- Review reference lists identified through research and ensure all relevant guides are included in the 'Guides and Refs' worksheet.
- Review resources identified above and additions based on reference lists and identify relevant elements.
- Develop an outline structure with signposts to existing content noting any reproduction of material permissions.
- Determine the format and platform for the guide, tool kit and training material
- Explore the on-line M&E toolbox developed by Swinburne's National Centre for Sustainability in terms of adaptability for Sustainability Victoria's internal needs.

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Note the chapter by J Bradley Cousins, "Operationalization of Process Use in Empirical Research on Evaluation"

Cullbridge Marketing and Communications for Environment Canada (2002) *Best Practices in the Monitoring and Evaluation of Program Impacts* [This document is not publicly available]

Department of Education and Training Queensland website (accessed June 2010), Evaluation Values and Principles,
<http://deta.qld.gov.au/publications/strategic/evaluation/vaules.html>
Note there are a range of publicly available documents on this website including their [Evaluation Strategy 2010 – 2014](#), and [Evaluation at a glance](#) (note the [flowchart](#))

Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (2009) NRM MERI Framework: Australian Government Natural Resource Management Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement Framework, Commonwealth of Australia

Department of Evaluation Services, Transport Canada (2007) "A Program Manager's Guide to Preparing a Results-based Management and Accountability Framework" accessed via Transport Canada website <http://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/corporate-services/des-143.htm>

Duignan, P, Outcomes Central website, <http://www.outcomescentral.org/>
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