

2024 AusLSA SUSTAINABILITY PROFILE



Hicksons Lawyers
Headcount: 224 (FTE)
Floor Area: 3,400m²
Number of Offices: 2.0

Hicksons Lawyers (Hicksons) is a commercial law firm who assist government, organisations and individuals throughout Australia and in Asia to create sustainable value by delivering legal and commercial advice, services and solutions. Our breadth of expertise is reflected in our diverse practice groups and complemented by our industry and sector focus. We work across geographies with smart technology to keep connected to our clients. We have two office locations; Sydney and Newcastle.

We pride ourselves on our energy and authenticity to drive client solutions, attract and develop talent and serve our broader community. With over 70 years in practice, we are visionary thought leaders who have harnessed our history and experience, emerging as a market leading advisory business.

Our legal and business advisory services span across various sectors, the firm assists its clients within the areas of commercial disputes, property, planning, construction, health, general insurance, workplace relations, wills and estates, migration assistance and workers insurance. The advisory practice includes advising C-suites through 'better boards', HR advisory services, migration and strategic negotiations. The firm services the community through its offering of pro-bono services, student sponsorships, traineeships and commitment to sustainable business practices.



OUR PEOPLE SUMMARY AND HIGHLIGHTS:

Part of the firm's growth strategy is a program of continuous improvement, to 'Be our Best'. It is underpinned by the firm's value sets of Excellence, Respect, Integrity and Responsibility which are embedded into the firm through strong leadership and people programs. The firm prides itself on fostering an environment which creates client solutions, attracts and develops talent and serves the broader community.

The firm promotes organic growth, providing education systems, training and development to support internal progression, and enhance engagement. Senior leaders play a crucial role in preserving the culture by way of encouraging an open-door policy, presenting in regular forums, participating in business updates and internal committees.

Performance and recognition are supported by policies, systems and practices to enable employees to reach their full potential. The people strategy is an end-to-end solution, including selection, acquisition, on-boarding, development, performance monitoring, progression and success planning, all of which form part of the firm's talent management model.

In addition to a number of people programs, HR practices include providing mentoring support, employee assistance programs, employee benefits program and learning and development opportunities to ensure people are supported to be their best. The detail of these programs are transparent and readily accessible.

GENDER EQUALITY

55% FEMALE PARTNERS
66% FEMALE LEGAL STAFF
82% FEMALE NON-LEGAL STAFF
80% FEMALE SENIOR PROMOTIONS

INITIATIVES:

- International Women's Day
- Employer of Choice for Gender Equality
- Female advancement, mentoring and coaching
- Training - Gender awareness unconscious bias
- Gender sensitive promotion and recruitment
- Internal D&I networks or committees
- Equal pay controls
- Showcasing gender diversity experiences
- Women on Boards

INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE

INITIATIVES:

- Recruitment and promotion for D&I
- Internal D&I networks or committees
- Membership - DCA
- Training - Awareness and unconscious bias
- Staff Surveys - D&I
- Gender pronouns promotion

FLEXIBLE WORKPLACE

16.0 WEEKS PAID PARENTAL LEAVE PRIMARY CARER
16.0 WEEKS PAID PARENTAL LEAVE SECONDARY CARER
100% RETURN TO WORK AFTER PARENTAL LEAVE

INITIATIVES:

- Flexible work hours
- Part time options
- Job sharing
- Remote working tools and systems
- Support for flexible working
- Time in lieu
- Unpaid leave
- Carer's leave
- Study leave
- Volunteering leave
- Purchased leave
- Carer breaks
- Adjusted KPIs after absences
- Sabbaticals
- Domestic violence leave

PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING

INITIATIVES:

- Minds Count -TJMF Guidelines
- R U OK? program
- Psychological support/ EAP
- Mental health first aid training and support
- Mental Health Awareness Week
- Training - Mental health awareness and management
- Salary continuance
- External mental health programs hosting
- Mental health office champion

PHYSICAL WELLBEING

INITIATIVES:

- Ergonomics program
- Flu vaccinations
- Internal exercise sessions
- Gym memberships
- Team events
- Massages
- Wellness awareness and promotion
- Subsidised health insurance
- Onsite fruit and healthy catering
- Life & TPD insurance
- Health EAP

OUR ENVIRONMENT SUMMARY AND HIGHLIGHTS:

Hicksons proudly maintains office spaces at One International Towers in Barangaroo and Darby Plaza in Newcastle.

The Barangaroo precinct, including Tower One, boasts numerous prestigious certifications and ratings. These include Climate Active, WELL International, Active Score "Gold", NABERS, and Green Star. The building is also recognized for its waste management and recycling programs, with comprehensive reporting and Australian Government Carbon Neutral Certification. Tower One is equipped with cutting-edge smart building infrastructure, featuring occupancy and environmental sensors.

Darby Plaza, a newly constructed smart building operational since June 2022, is actively developing its greenhouse gas emissions policy and carbon offset strategies. It currently implements water recycling and power reduction initiatives for non-essential equipment, with plans to transition to 100% green power.

Both office locations are committed to sustainability, participating in annual NABERS reporting through the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment. The Sydney office has achieved an impressive 6/6 rating and is ranked 1 out of 27 tenants for the lowest energy intensity in Tower One. Both offices are equipped with advanced lighting and movement sensors, as well as timed air conditioning systems, reflecting our dedication to energy efficiency and environmental stewardship.

CLIMATE ACTION

GHG SCI. BASED 2030 INT. DEVT
GHG IMPROVEMENT TARGET
ACTION PLAN PUBLISHED
POLICY PUBLISHED

INITIATIVES:

- Telecommuting
- National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting (NGERs) compliant reporting
- Teleconferencing facilities and training
- ECO-Buy
- Earth Hour
- End of trip facilities
- NABERS Energy Rating
- Climate Active - Carbon Neutral
- Efficient building and lighting automation
- Renewable Electricity
- Voluntary Carbon Offsets

GROSS EMISSIONS 162t - 0.72t per employee

BUILDINGS 62% 0% 0.22% 100t 62%

TRAVEL 3.3% 34% 1.1% 61t 38%

GREEN ENERGY 0% 0% **CARBON OFFSETS**

NET EMISSIONS 162t - 0.72t per employee

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

INITIATIVES:

- World Environment Day
- CitySwitch Green Office

RECYCLING OFFICES

100% 100% 100% 100%
 % office availability

PAPER USAGE

5,170 0%
 2024 employees 100% recycled content

INITIATIVES:

- Paperlite office program
- Follow me printing

PAPER CERTIFICATION:

- Other Certifications

OUR COMMUNITY SUMMARY AND HIGHLIGHTS:

Hicksons is dedicated to advancing its CSR strategy, through a range of initiatives aimed at making a positive impact to the community and the legal industry. Our key efforts include:

- Providing pro-bono legal services and acting on behalf of NFP organisations and volunteering at the University of Newcastle Legal Clinic.
- Offering sponsorships to students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Partnering with institutions such as Western Sydney University, Neuroscience Research Australia, and the NSW Government to deliver traineeship programs.
- Supporting Indigenous students through sponsorships and career opportunities provided by CareerTrackers and the Nanga Mai Awards.
- Endorsing the NSW Premier's Hicksons Lawyers Health, Education, and Wellbeing Scholarship.
- Committing to the NSW Police Legacy and sponsoring the NSW Police Legacy Child Safety Handbook.
- Our Graduate Program which focuses on cultivating the next generation of leaders and fostering their professional growth.

Hicksons actively participates in various organization-led initiatives, including STEPTember, R U OK? Day, Jeans for Genes Day, and Australia's Biggest Morning Tea, reflecting our support for important social causes. The firm demonstrates involvement through contributions on social media and hosting events to engage staff and clients. We are continually exploring new opportunities to deepen our involvement and enhance our contributions toward meaningful change.

INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION

INITIATIVES:

- Cultural awareness training
- NAIDOC Week
- National Reconciliation Week
- Internships and employment
- Scholarships and student mentoring
- Pro bono support
- Funding and donations
- CareerTrackers participation

NON LEGAL VOLUNTEERING

INITIATIVES:

- NFP Boards
- Organised staff volunteering
- Student tutoring and mentoring
- Secondments to NFPs
- Community volunteering

CHARITABLE GIVING

INITIATIVES:

- Firm donation program
- Charitable foundation
- Workplace giving
- Matched funding for employee donations
- Internal appeals and collections
- External charity events and appeals
- Host external charity events

LEGAL PRO BONO

These icons provide limited information about the firm's legal pro bono commitment. More extensive information is reported by the Australian Pro Bono Centre and on individual firm's websites.

[Click for further information from AusLSA:](#)

OUR GOVERNANCE SUMMARY AND HIGHLIGHTS:

Hickson's governance structure is the cornerstone of its business model, deeply rooted in the firm's culture and values. Our model emphasizes four strategic pillars: client development, attracting and retaining top talent, delivering exceptional services and solutions, and achieving operational excellence. To realize our strategic goals and vision, we implement a variety of programs and initiatives aligned with these pillars. Hickson is dedicated to continuous improvement and the creation of sustainable value. The firm is guided by a Board of Directors and supported by the Managing Partner and Chief Operating Officer. Additionally, several board-appointed committees, including those for Risk and Compliance, Remuneration, and Finance, play crucial roles in ensuring our success.

CODE OF CONDUCT /RISK MANAGEMENT

INITIATIVES:

- Code of Conduct Training
- Complaints & Grievance Mechanism
- Risk Management Plan
- BCP OR ERP

SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

INITIATIVES:

- Both Current and New Suppliers
- Modern Slavery Program
- Federal Legislation Participation

SUPPLIER STANDARDS COVER:

- Human rights
- Fair labour practices
- Fair consumer and competition practices
- Indigenous inclusion
- Gender equality
- Modern Slavery
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Fraud bribery & corruption

SUSTAINABILITY REPORTING

REPORTING COVERS:

- Standalone ESG/ sustainability report