



Green Star SA – Retail Technical Working Group Brief

Introduction

The Green Building Council of South Africa (GBCSA) was established in September 2007 with the mission of promoting, encouraging and facilitating green building in the South African property and construction industry through market-based solutions.

To this end, the GBCSA is developing a suite of voluntary, market-based environmental rating tools for buildings, called Green Star SA. Adapted from the Green Star rating system in Australia, the Green Star SA tools evaluate buildings across several environmental categories, including energy, water and ecology. Green Star SA tools are customised for the South African context, taking into account existing codes and regulations as well as local climate and environmental issues.

The first rating tool developed was Green Star SA – Office, which evaluates the performance potential of actual office buildings as well as buildings still in the design phase. This tool was released in November of 2008 and is available to download from the GBCSA website at www.gbcsa.org.za. Additional information about Green Star SA and the certification process is also available on this website.

The next tool to be developed is Green Star SA – Retail, which similarly evaluates the performance potential of actual retail buildings as well as buildings still in the design phase. Once the tool is complete, the GBCSA will offer buildings the opportunity to become Green Star SA – Retail certified, as an endorsement of the project's environmental performance.

Green Star SA is a points-based system, with points awarded for various initiatives, known as credits, within each category. Weightings are applied to each category score to reach an overall score out of 100. Projects will submit the required documentation for each of the relevant credits for review by GBCSA Assessors. Projects will be awarded a Green Star SA certification based on the following scale:

- 4 Stars = 45-59 Points (Best Practice)
- 5 Stars = 60-74 Points (South African Excellence)
- 6 Stars = 75-100 Points (World Leadership)

Tool Development Process

The development of Green Star SA – Retail will be a collaborative process between the GBCSA Technical Working Group (TWG), GBCSA staff and a consulting firm selected to provide technical support.

The GBCSA Technical Working Group is made up of members of the GBCSA Board of Directors, GBCSA staff, industry representatives and environmental experts. The Technical Working Group brings market and environmental knowledge as well as a strategic understanding of the long-term goals of the organisation and will direct the final outcome of the tool.

GBCSA staff will manage the process, ensuring that it stays on track, that the research and benchmarking process have been thorough and that the final tool can be realistically and successfully implemented.

The consultant will perform the in-depth research and benchmarking, provide input for the Technical Manual to accompany the final tool and will be responsible for the energy and water calculators embedded in the rating tool.

Tool development will take approximately four months, starting end of May 2009. Once the GBCSA Board of Directors approves the Pilot tool, it will be launched for public use and comment for a period of at least 60 days. The GBCSA will encourage the use of the Pilot tool by projects in order to gain detailed feedback.

Once the public comment period has closed, the GBCSA and the TWG will review and finalise the rating tool based on feedback from projects and the public.

TWG Roles and Responsibilities

TWG Meetings

The TWG will convene at regularly scheduled, three-hour meetings. At these meetings, overall issues and individual credits will be discussed and decided upon. Key items to be addressed include:

- Applicability of the tool and tool credits to the South African market;
- Technical robustness of the tool and credits;
- Relevance of the tool to the green building leaders in the market, to which the tool is aimed; and
- Positive environmental outcomes.

The TWG may also have subgroups for each category that meet outside of the regular TWG meetings. These groups will go into depth on specific issues and report back their findings and recommendations to the main group.

Outside of meetings, TWG members may be asked to perform small research tasks in their area of expertise and will be expected to fully prepare for TWG meetings.

During the course of the tool development, one or two all-day workshops may be held to progress the agenda as quickly as possible.

- The first workshop, which is held near the beginning of the process, helps to define issues and set direction for each of the categories.
- Towards the end of the development process a second workshop is held, where a version of the draft tool is applied to relevant case studies in order to identify gaps and fine-tune credits.

TWG Deliverables

- Agreement on Aim of Credit and Credit Criteria wording for all credits;
- Agreement on documentation requirements for certification;
- Recommendations on final points and weightings; and
- Agreement on market relevance and applicability of the tool.

Pilot Feedback

The GBCSA strongly encourages TWG members to use the Pilot tool on their own projects and provide feedback to the GBCSA.

Tool Refinement

After the Pilot period has finished, the tool is then refined. Stakeholder comments are evaluated and presented to the TWG along with recommended changes. Once the TWG meets and agrees on the revisions, the GBCSA prepares the final tool and Technical Manual.

Meeting Schedule

Technical Working Group meetings are anticipated to be held on the following days, with some work by subgroups to happen in between. Provisional dates, subject to revision after selection of final TWG members:

29 May	1 st meeting
12 June	2 nd meeting
26 June	3 rd meeting
10 July	4 th meeting
24 July	5 th meeting
7 August	6 th meeting
21 August	7 th meeting (all-day case study working session)
10 Sept	8 th meeting
Jan 2010	Pilot feedback review meeting

Though not anticipated, more meetings may be added in order to meet the deadline of a mid-October launch of the Pilot rating tools.

TWG Member Commitments

The following commitments are requested from TWG members in order to successfully deliver this Green Star SA tool:

- Time – Members must attend at least two-thirds of all TWG meetings in order to remain on the committee. Regular meetings run three hours and there may be up to two all-day workshops.
- Consensus – There may not be unanimous agreement on various issues within the tool and decisions will be made in the spirit of cooperation and consensus.
- Transparency – To be successful, the Green Star SA tools and tool development process must be transparent. Decisions about the credits and the tools will be made using the best available science, and all credits should reference existing standards and legislation where possible.
- Confidentiality – Until the tools are finalised and ready for public review, the tool development process will remain confidential. All TWG meeting notes and materials, as well as draft versions of the tools, should not be distributed.