



DIRECTIONS STATEMENT

The Waste Authority has a clear mandate to steer the management of waste towards improved resource recovery from all waste streams. This will involve implementing multiple outcomes and strategies refined by the Authority, local government and industry working in collaboration with and the support of the wider community.

While the strong historical focus has been on the diversion of waste from landfill as a worthwhile goal in itself, there is a need for a fresh focus on waste as a resource and reusing waste materials in substitution for virgin materials.

Western Australia generated an estimated 8 million tonnes of waste in 2009/10 and, while the recycling of 2.6 million tonnes was a significant improvement on previous years, it is clear that accelerated measures are needed to avoid major long term consequences for the Western Australian environment. This will require clear direction and support from the State Government and the need for government agencies to lead by example, in reducing their inputs into the waste stream.

The Waste Authority will work closely with partners, peak bodies and industry to develop action plans and recommendations to be implemented by Government through an overarching waste strategy. The Authority will ensure that the draft strategy proposes soundly based and achievable targets and actions reflects the feedback received from key stakeholders.

The new strategy document will be available for comment during November, with a view to final publication early in the New Year. The strategy will focus on achieving better outcomes for waste management through the application of practical actions and programs as well as laying a strong foundation to facilitate strategic investment in critical infrastructure.

Data is a critical element for gaining understanding the waste industry and insight into personal and institutional behaviours. It is also needed to support future planning decisions and to validate targets and outcomes. The Waste Authority supports increased data collection in a consistent format and its enhanced use and dissemination.

The great benefits of recycling construction and demolition materials are well understood. The Authority is committed to working with industry to deliver strategies for a proven approach towards recycling by both government and industry.

Setting a clear direction for increased recovery of commercial and industrial materials is more complex because of the diversity of waste types, collectors and processors. A reference group with representation from industry and the Waste

Management Association of Australia (WA) has commenced work to offer advice on measures to increase the diversion of C&I material from landfill.

After 10 years of relying on the Australian Packaging Covenant as the primary mechanism for promoting recycling of packaging waste, it is time to review progress and consider complementary options for increasing the rate of recycling of packaging materials and controlling litter. Meeting community expectations in this area is important and the Waste Authority will provide evidence based options and recommendations to Government for increasing the amount of packaging material to be being recycled and diverted from landfill.

To enhance the overall performance of the waste and recycling industry, there is a need to develop and assist with the implementation of best practice guidelines for landfill and AWT options to improve resource recovery.

A review of the landfill levy has been widely anticipated throughout the waste management sector, and the 2010 increase in the levy has had the positive effect of increasing recycling. The recent Hyder report on recycling for 2009-10 covers only the first six months of the increased levy but notes that 're-processors confirm there has been a strong increase [in recycling] across most materials'.

Any move to increase the levy should be signalled in advance to the sector to allow sensible planning and investment decisions to be made by local government and industry. Any future increases would be designed to close the gap between the cost of landfill and alternative waste technologies. It would also encourage innovation and investment in resource recovery, to counteract the social and environmental impacts of landfill in the metropolitan area, and assist in the progressive development of sustainable alternative facilities in the regions. The Authority advocates that all moneys collected from an increase in the landfill levy should be applied to initiatives to reduce waste to landfill.

The Waste Authority places a strong emphasis on continuous engagement with a wide range of interest groups, professional and peak bodies and government agencies with the aim of achieving mutually agreed outcomes for waste avoidance and resource recovery in Western Australia.



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CHAIRMAN
November 2011