



**MARRA
WORRA
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ABORIGINAL
CORPORATION

Response to Customer Service Standards for the CDS collection network

Prepared for
Government of Western Australia, Department of Water and
Environmental Regulation

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Introduction and Relevant Experience

Marra Worra Worra Aboriginal Corporation was established in the late 1970s by members of the 5 tribes located in the Fitzroy Valley of Northern WA's Kimberley Region. Since its inception MWW has continued to develop diversified income streams enabling the corporation to support its own independence and better allow it to advocate on behalf of its members for better outcomes in Indigenous housing and employment policies. MWW currently travels to 33 town, remote and very remote aboriginal communities on a weekly basis to deliver 3 different State and Federal government programs (Community Development Program, In House Tenancy Support and the Remote Aboriginal Housing Contract) as well as maintaining a strong focus on individual and community based financial administration. Marra Worra Worra's area of operations extend from Jimbalakudunj, 110 kilometres to the west of Fitzroy Crossing, to Yiyili, 175 kilometres to the east of Fitzroy Crossing and all communities in-between.

Marra Worra Worra began providing a local recycling program for the businesses and community members of Fitzroy Crossing, in January 2018. The program involves self-separation of different recyclable materials at the source and will currently focuses on PET, HDPE, paper, cardboard, aluminium and e-waste. The program was developed with the intention of providing an alternative waste management service for Fitzroy Crossing as well as creating new employment opportunities for local community members. The program is currently diverting around 140m3 per month of recyclable waste from landfill.

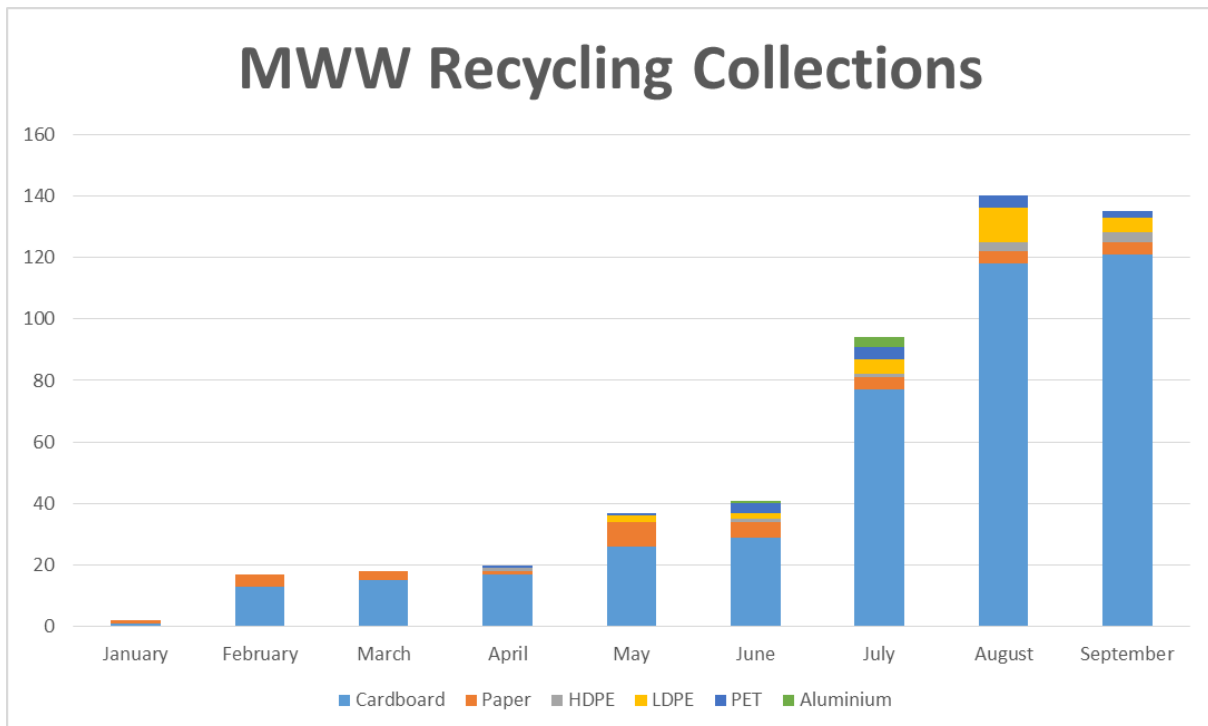


Table 1 – Recycling collection volumes since program commencement in January 2018

Context and focus of response

The content of this response will focus specifically on the implementation of the Container Deposit Scheme in the Fitzroy Valley Region of the Kimberley. This area should serve as an example to reflect the sorts of issues faced by remote indigenous (and non-indigenous) communities across the north of the state. It draws upon experience gained from operating in the region for a number of years, and the previous 12 months experience of starting a recycling program in Fitzroy Crossing as outlined above.

A consideration for the CDS Coordinator are the adverse weather conditions that affect the north of the state every year. In the Fitzroy valley for instance, some roads are impassable for up to 5 months of the year due to extreme flooding with others remaining only passable by high clearance, 4x4 vehicles operated by experienced drivers. This is particularly relevant to remote indigenous communities which are predominantly located great distances from any sealed road, with thousands of people affected by these floods every year, in the Fitzroy Valley region alone. Any program that is to deliver services to these remote areas should bear in mind these challenges and the additional costs associated with logistics and operational expenses of operating in the North of the state.



Image 1 - Christmas Creek Crossing – Road to Yakanarra, March 2017

Provision for a Mobile Outreach Program

Individuals residing in remote Indigenous communities (as well as stations, tourist's camps etc.) already pay enormous premiums on products they purchase in remote stores. This coupled with the large percentage of indigenous community members who currently rely on welfare payments, means the prospect of making trips up to **200kms** to deposit their used beverage containers, an unlikely one. Furthermore, many of the Kimberley's remote Indigenous community's residents do not possess a reliable means of transport and may actually lack the ability to deliver refundable items to a refund point, outside of their immediate area. An effective solution would be to include a Mobile Outreach Program for remote areas under the CDS.

This could be done so in a reliable and cost effective manner by using a simple 4x4 and trailer design, with the ability to store different materials in separate compartments. In order to further increase efficiency, these community visits could be run in conjunction with several other government programs already operating in the region and "piggy-back" existing outreach support programs such as the Federal Government's Community Development Program or the WA Department of Community' Remote Indigenous Housing Program. As one of the key objectives of the CDS is to reduce litter, implementing an outreach system would encourage members of remote Indigenous communities to collect litter in their immediate environment while at the same time providing an economic stimulus to some of the most financially disadvantaged people in the state.



Image 2 – Existing mobile collection unit currently used by MWW Recycling that could be used as part of an outreach program in the remote regions of the Kimberley

MWW has conducted an initial estimate of the cost to provide an outreach collection service to the 25 remote and very remote communities, including a 2 to 3 hour stop in each community for the Fitzroy Valley Region, refer to *Appendix A* for an overview of the Fitzroy Valley Communities and their estimated populations¹. A mobile outreach program in this area could be completed as three different service runs, based out of Fitzroy Crossing, as described below in *table 2*. Each service run would take an operator 2 days with an overnight stay in one of the remote communities. Should these mobile outreach service runs be conducted on a fortnightly basis it would cost the CDS approx. \$157,200 a year to cover all operating expenses.

Service Run Area	Distance Travelled	Communities Visited	Approximate People Serviced
North & West	552 km	7	400 +
South & Inner East	394 km	10	800 +
Outer East	478 km	11	500 +

Table 2 – Details of suggested mobile outreach service runs conducted in the Fitzroy Valley Region

As seen in *Appendix A*, actual estimated populations in the Fitzroy Valley is significantly higher than those used by “*Customer service standards for collection network*”.

Additional Flexible Refund Points

When looking at “*Customer service standards for collection network – Appendix 8: Refund point allocation by region*” there are several flexible refund points located in towns with small populations, such as Bremer Bay (pop. 231) and Coral Bay (pop. 214) that are both within 150km of another flexible refund point. There are two remote indigenous communities within the Fitzroy Valley that have similar populations and are located similar distances from Fitzroy Crossing (their nearest refund point). As such it is proposed that both Yungora (population of 409² and located 165km from Fitzroy Crossing) and Wangkatjungka (population of 254³ and located 110km from Fitzroy Crossing) are also included as flexible refund points. It is worth also noting that these communities are located on roads similar to the one shown in *Image 1*, and access can

¹ Given their transient nature, it is difficult to ascertain exact populations of remote indigenous communities. These estimated populations are based on Census data, Community Development Program (CDP) data, Remote Indigenous Housing Program data and the general experience of MWW delivering these and similar programs.

^{2,3} Data extracted from the 2016 Census (ABS data), note actual populations are likely higher than this see: <http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/Home/2016%20Census%20Community%20Profiles>

be very difficult for many months of the year, further increasing the need for a flexible refund point in the community.

The Mobile Outreach Program could be used to collect the bulk stored materials from the flexible refund points based in these two communities.

Reverse vending machines in remote regions

One of the key issues facing local residents of the Kimberley is the lack of employment opportunities and a lack of locally based industries. Implementing regional processing centres, in areas such as Fitzroy Crossing, would provide a new opportunity for local residents to commence work in a future growth industry. A CDS delivered to the Kimberley should seek to minimise the use of reverse vending machines or similar technology and rather, rely as much as possible on manually operated facilities to assist with providing employment opportunities and realise the CDS objective of increasing community participation. In addition, it should be noted that should reverse vending machines be installed in remote locations there will be a high cost associated with the scheduled and unscheduled maintenance of the units in order to guarantee the reliability of the machines.

APPENDIX A