



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Health**

Your Ref: WARR Act Review
Our Ref: F-AA-11918 EHB15/265
Contact: Vic Andrich
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WARR Act Review
Department of Environment Regulation
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Dear Sir/Madam

REVIEW OF THE WASTE AVOIDANCE AND RESOURCE RECOVERY ACT 2007

Thank you for the opportunity for the Department of Health (DOH) to provide a submission for this review.

Although the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery (WARR) Act 2007 is primarily concerned with the mechanics of waste and recycling management and the associated administrative structure, it fails to provide sufficient incentives for sustainable waste reduction and thus, indirectly impact upon public health.

The DOH believes a fundamental shift in the approach is needed. A focus on viable alternatives to disposal of wastes at landfill is required. Once the viable alternatives are established, the landfill disposal option can be removed.

To achieve viable alternatives requires the Waste Authority (or Waste Group) to invest in key recycling infrastructure that will enable satellite businesses to develop around that plant. That investment includes:

- owning the proven recycling technology (eg: tyre recycling plant, refrigerator recycling plant, electronic waste recycling plant, mattress recycling plant, etc);
- leasing the operation of the plant to the private sector;
- subsidising the recovery (collection and transport) of waste material (feedstock) to the recycling plant (so consumers do not have to pay), and
- provision of collection, sorting, bailing and storage facilities at regional and country urban centres (as feedstock to the centralised recycling plant).

It is essential that the Waste Authority (or Waste Group) own the facilities so as to prevent the private sector moving the facility out of the state as has happened with glass recycling.

To support the above infrastructure, the Waste Authority should

- invest in market research for the processed recycled materials specific to each of the waste streams;
- develop appropriate resource supply mapping and recovery strategy (to ensure adequate and consistent feedstock)

- provide guidance/requirements to landfill operators to sort, bail and store required materials (for recovery as feedstock).
- establishment of a mechanism to require the use of a percentage of the recycling plant output (eg: 30%) by government agencies/local government. This is to prevent non-recycling companies from undercutting the market. These 'mechanism' to remain in place until the recycling market is firmly established. The percentage (eg: 30%) requires the plant operator to market the remainder (eg: 70%) and thus keep the product price competitive.

Once the above structure is in place, those particular waste streams can be banned from landfill thus removing any potential public health risk.

The WARR Act should be reviewed (as appropriate) to facilitate the above.

Should you have queries or require further information please contact Vic Andrich on 9388 4978 or vic.andrich@health.wa.gov.au

Yours sincerely



Richard Theobald
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ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DIRECTORATE

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