

Communique

Waste and Resource Recovery Board
20 July 2022

The Waste and Resource Recovery Board was established on 1 July 2022, and has begun the process of establishing itself and setting a clear strategic direction for its work. It has also started to plan the important task of developing Tasmania's first Waste Strategy.

The WRR Board is established by the *Waste and Resource Recovery Act 2022*, and formally commenced on 1 July 2022. The Board has a wide range of functions under the WRR Act. A key priority is the development of a draft Waste Strategy to provide to the Minister by the end of September 2022.

Producing a productive, sustainable, and liveable future for all Tasmanians is at the heart of this work. The Board plans to work closely with the State Government, local government, regional waste authorities, peak bodies, and with Tasmanian industry and businesses to develop this strategy. Providing the draft is an important starting point to meet the Government's plan to reduce waste going to landfill and increase resource recovery in Tasmania.

Board Members

The Members of the Board are:

Pam Allan (Chair)	Mat Greskie	Allison Clark
Glenn Doyle	Helen Millicer	Tony Ferrier

Supporting the Board are Alasdair Wells (interim Chief Executive Officer) and Jack Saward (Program Officer).

Setting the Scene

The Board met twice in July to commence the process of setting the right foundation for their operations, and understand the key issues facing Tasmania's waste and resource recovery sectors.

The Board has started a program of receiving briefings from key stakeholders to understand how the Board can best position itself in the Tasmanian business and community landscape. The Board particularly welcomed the opportunity to discuss directly with Minister Jaensch the Government's priorities and the broad strategic framework within which the Board would be operating.

The Board also intends to build upon the significant and valuable work already done across the State, and further afield. It is clear that the Tasmanian Government has an extensive program of activities already underway, and has invested significantly in developing waste and resource recovery business capacity in Tasmania.

The Board will be a strong advocate for circular economy principles in Tasmania. As an island State, there is an ideal opportunity to embed these important principles into all aspects of the Tasmanian community and economy.

Support

The Board is focussed on meeting their objectives in the most effective and efficient way, and has chosen to be supported by the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania for its corporate activities and operations. The Board has commenced the development of a suitable Memorandum of Understanding and Service Level Agreement to formalise the arrangements.

Where appropriate, the Board will seek the support of Departmental officers to undertake specific activities or projects. There is already a range of related work underway in the Department, and accessing this significant expertise will be more efficient and help to ensure a strong collaboration and coordination of work between the Board and the wider Government programs.

Strategic Direction and Waste Strategy

The initial focus of the Board is to quickly establish its own strategic direction, which will guide how it will achieve its functions and objectives. This will support the foundations for the vision and objectives of the first Tasmanian Waste Strategy.

The Board acknowledges that meeting legislative requirements for the first Waste Strategy are challenging, with a draft of the Waste Strategy required to be provided to the Minister by 29 September 2022 (six months from the commencement of the Act). It is the Board's intention

Contact

Postal Address: GPO Box 44, Hobart, Tasmania 7001

Phone: 0476 878 509

Email: enquiries@wrr.tas.gov.au

to work with key stakeholders to help develop an initial draft. It is anticipated that this will be made publicly available online, prior to submission to the Minister as required under the Act.

It is envisaged that the first Waste Strategy will be about establishing broader goals and objectives, and initial priority areas for action, rather than setting a detailed program of work. It will draw upon existing analyses and established Local, State and National objectives and targets. There is also recognition that until landfill levy funds have a chance to build up in the Waste and Resource Recovery Account, the Board will be required to take a prudent and prioritised approach to its financial management, and the programs of support and development it is able to implement.

Once finalised and adopted in accordance with the WRR Act, the Board will continue to develop and refine the Waste Strategy, providing details to the community as soon as they become available.

Data

Quality data on waste and resource activities, and especially on material flows through Tasmania's economy and society, is essential to being able to develop the right strategy and priority areas for action, and knowing whether our work is successful in reducing waste to landfill.

The Board is pleased to see the Department developing systems to achieve this goal and will support this process through its programs as they're established. It is recognised that very valuable snapshots on organic waste material and broader waste infrastructure have recently been commissioned by the Department. Further details of material flows collected under the requirements of the new Waste and Resource Recovery Act will significantly add to this, with more detailed and timely data being available.

The Board supports the whole of the Tasmanian community having ready access to as much detail as possible. Good information means good decision making, be it at the household level, or for major industry investment. The Board will work closely with the Department in steadily providing greater access to data and information as it becomes available.

Collaboration and Engagement

The Board welcomes the chance to engage with stakeholders and business and industry groups. The aim is for open and transparent engagement and communications wherever possible, while also recognising that the Board will also be dealing with commercially sensitive information.

While a specific website is being established for the Board, contacting the Board will be through interim arrangements on the NRE Tasmania website. For further information, please visit: nre.tas.gov.au/environmental-management/waste-and-resource-recovery-act/tasmanian-waste-and-resource-recovery-board.

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