

***Tasmanian Waste and
Resource Recovery Board
Operational Plan
2023-2024***

Waste and Resource Recovery Board
May 2023

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*In recognition of the deep history and culture of this island, the Board acknowledges
and pays its respects to all Tasmanian Aboriginal people; the past and present
custodians of the land.*

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Introduction

The Tasmanian Waste and Resource Recovery Board (the Board) was established in July 2022 under the *Waste and Resource Recovery Act 2022* (the Act). The Board is supported by the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania (NRE Tas). The functions and powers of the Board are set out in sections 12 and 13 of the Act.

The Board is required to develop an operational plan before the start of each financial year. The operational plan is to outline the anticipated budget and work plan for that year. The scope, development and approval of the operational plan is governed by sections 20 and 21 of the Act.

This *Operational Plan for 2023-24* (the Plan) is the first such plan prepared by the Board and focuses on establishing the systems, knowledge and relationships that will enable the Board to perform its role into the future. The anticipated timeframes for the completion of the related actions are outlined within the Board's broad work program.

The vision within the draft Tasmanian Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy (WRR Strategy) is that Tasmania is 'a place where nothing is wasted'. A new management regime is being established for waste and resource recovery across Tasmania, and it is important that this particular operational plan is placed within this context.

The operational plan will form the basis of the Board's future annual report which will reflect the Board's progress and achievements throughout the previous year.

Context

The Board is a key part of the Tasmanian Government's policy to reduce waste going to landfill and increase resource recovery. The Board also plays a major role in advising the Government on the direction for waste management,

resource recovery, and the circular economy in Tasmania.

The Board has a number of functions and powers, including to:

- provide advice and recommendations to the Minister,
- prepare and assess the effectiveness of a waste strategy and operational plan,
- promote and support resource recovery activities across the State,
- promote market and local infrastructure development, oversee the use of waste levy funds, and
- administer several assistance programs as specified in the Act.

The imposition of the landfill levy is intended to encourage people to reduce waste, and to re-use or recycle materials instead of sending materials to landfill and is a concerted drive towards the development of a circular economy within Tasmania.

The Board continues to evolve in the current establishment phase. The work completed by the Board in the last 12 months has focused on creating essential administrative arrangements and processes, the development of systems and associated databases, developing various external relationships and establishing future investment priorities.

The Minister for Environment and Climate Change, the Hon Roger Jaensch, issued a Ministerial Direction (as per section 14 of the Act), in July 2022 that set out the Government's priorities for the Board. In addition to essential 'start up' arrangements, these priorities have formed the focus of the work completed to date.

The priorities within the Ministerial Direction include:

- the preparation of a draft WRR Strategy in accordance with sections 18 and 19 of the Act;

- an assistance program for charitable recyclers as per section 12(2)(j) of the Act;
- an assistance program for resource recovery facilities as per section 12(2)(k) of the Act,
- an assistance program for public authorities to deal with rubbish dumping and littering as per section 12(2)(l) of the Act,
- a support program for regional waste organisations as per section 12(2)(h) of the Act,
- a support program for remote councils as per section 12(2)(g) of the Act,
- exceptional circumstances and adverse impacts support on a case-by-case basis, and
- an introductory levy rate adjustment to support landfill operations.

This work has been funded by the landfill levy and carried out in conjunction with NRE Tas.

The Board, in conjunction with NRE Tas, will continue to develop formal procedures to guide the future allocation of levy funds.

Applications for grants, programs and initiatives will be considered and supported that are consistent with the final WRR Strategy, and which will advance the circular economy within Tasmania.

Fair, transparent and accountable processes will be applied when dispersing money through mechanisms such as grants or rebates. Such processes will be in place early in 2023-24 and will be applied when considering future funding requests.

The WRR Strategy is the central and most critical guiding document for the Board. It will be used when assessing applications or considering future proposals. The initial Strategy will focus on the current establishment phase during the next few years. It will also set up what is necessary for the development of a more ambitious

and transformational longer-term Strategy. This will be implemented by a broad network of stakeholders all aiming to achieve circular economy outcomes across Tasmania.

During 2022-23 a broad understanding of the current waste management and resource recovery situation in Tasmania has been established.

Data sourced directly from landfill and resource recovery facilities will support analysis, establish seasonal and long-term trends, and inform an evidence-based approach to reporting and future planning. NRE Tas will further develop the landfill levy administration including supporting Class B resource recovery facilities to comply with requirements under the Act as of 2024.

Data collection, analysis and research has already begun, particularly in the development of frameworks for the reuse of organic material and in understanding the need for future waste and resource recovery infrastructure. Such work will continue in 2023-24 and will help inform future decisions of the Board.

Collaborative arrangements with NRE Tas are in place that enable the Board to focus on its core roles under the Act. Corporate support is provided in accordance with a Service Level Agreement.

NRE Tas is also implementing a range of related and complementary programs:

- introducing a Container Refund Scheme ('Recycle Rewards'),
- the phasing out of certain Problematic Single Use Plastics (PSUPs),
- providing funding support for improved organics composting and processing of end-of-life tyres and plastics, and
- establishing a state-wide litter survey in line with new national standards.

Engagement

During 2022-23, there was broad engagement on the development of the draft WRR Strategy and there will be actions within that Strategy that encourage further engagement and stakeholder collaboration.

This year the Board will engage with industry stakeholders, local government and the broader community to establish effective functions and delivery of programs. Sector and stakeholder engagement, over time will further increase our understanding and inform our planning for investment in this space. Much more is yet to be done, but the groundwork is in place.

The successful implementation of the WRR Strategy will require strong collaborative relationships working towards the common goal of a truly circular economy and building the essential relationships and synergies necessary to achieve the Strategy's objectives.

In accordance with the Ministerial Direction, and complementary to last year's visit to Flinders Island, the Board will visit one of the very remote councils in 2023 and another in 2024.

The Board will act with integrity and transparency in all its operations and activities.

The Board has its own website – www.wrr.tas.gov.au – on which key information is communicated. Information is included about the Board, legislation, actions being taken, industry support programs, planning and reporting, useful links and items of interest.

While the Board will be limited to some confidential deliberations (e.g. assessment of commercial-in-confidence business funding applications and requests), the Board will make

appropriate information publicly available on the existing website.

A key Board initiative for 2023-24 will be 'mapping' the circular economy within Tasmania. This will provide a better understanding of material flows and organisational relationships. It should also assist in identifying knowledge gaps or blockages that need to be addressed. This will help in achieving the Board's vision of Tasmania being "a place where nothing is wasted".

A particularly important stakeholder group is that of the three regional waste authorities (North, Cradle Coast and South), together with the *ReThink Waste* communication platform. Discussion has begun to establish how the Board can best support this initiative and optimise the groups collective effectiveness and their shared objectives. Coordination, consistent messaging and complementary programs aligned to the WRR strategy are essential to delivering the shared outcomes of this key stakeholder group and maximising the potential for WRR Board collaboration and support.

Future engagement will leverage the strong public desire to reduce waste and optimise efficient product and material use.

The Board will set up a process to identify the many circular economy initiatives already being pursued or being developed and assess their merits.

There will be a "registration of interest" program in 2023-24 that enables the Board to increase their awareness of relevant programs and projects.

The Board's ongoing role will be to encourage collaborative relationships and increase community appreciation and support of the processes, benefits and practicalities of a circular economy.

**Together we will deliver, with and for,
the Tasmanian community.**

Budget

Section 20(1)(b) of the Act states that the operational plan set out the budget of the Board for the financial year, including estimates of its income and expenditure for that period.

Revenue

Revenue from the landfill levy is determined by the amount of waste disposed into landfill. The 2023-24 levy rate is 12 fee units at \$1.78 per unit, equalling \$21.36 per tonne.

Based on data collected in 2022-23, the projected total revenue for 2023-24 is predicted to be approximately \$8 million. In 2024-25, the levy rate will be raised to twice the fee unit amount of the previous year.

The *Waste and Resource Recovery Regulations 2022* allow for the prescribed spending of levy funds by the Secretary, NRE Tas.

This means that of the levy revenue raised in 2023-24 approximately \$6.4 M is expected to be available to the Board.

At the commencement of the 2023-24 financial year, an estimated \$3M in unspent levy revenue is expected to carry over from the 2022-23 financial year.

Based on these estimates, total projected revenue available to the board for 2023-24 is **\$9.4 million**

Table 1: Revenue

Item	Fee Unit Amount	Amount (\$)
Starting Balance		3,000,000
Revenue (levy funds)		8,000,000
Illegal dumping compliance contribution to EPA	303,031	539,395
Levy implementation, regulation and data management (by NRE Tas).	606,061	1,078,790
Total (amount available to the Board)		9,400,000

Expenditure

Fixed expenditure

Fixed costs are those related to salaries, operational costs, associated corporate costs, the CEO and supporting NRE staff.

Table 2: Fixed Expenditure

Item	Expense (\$)
Board salaries	137,444
CEO and NRE support staff	643,594
Board operational costs (including one visit to a remote council)	40,000
NRE Corporate support services	47,730
Total	868,768

Support Programs

Under the Act and the Ministerial Direction, the Board is required to undertake special assistance programs.

The programs for regional authorities, remote councils and charitable recyclers have been established. An estimate for the first of these two can be made fairly accurately but no claims have yet been made by charitable recyclers and the allocation is generous to ensure sufficient funds exist for this program.

Future special purpose support programs will be hard to budget ahead of time, as will the cost of exceptional circumstance exemptions.

An allocation has been made for identified but not yet implemented support programs. These are nominally \$500,000 for resource recovery facilities support and \$400,000 to support public authorities with litter and dumping. A further \$2,657,540 has been allocated for 'industry development and other grants programs', this is intended to cover any grant or rebate program established in accordance with the Investment Priority Program which is to be developed early in this 2023-24 financial year. In reality it will likely not be limited to industry requests due to the expectation that community-based applications would also be sought. Sponsorship of various awards will also be considered.

Table 3: Support Programs

Item	Expense (\$)
Regional Authority payments (N, NW and South)	3,000,000 ¹
Remote Council Support (Flinders, King Island and West Coast)	172,460 ²
Charitable Recyclers Support Program	100,000
Resource Recovery Facilities	500,000
Public Authorities Litter and Dumping	400,000
Exceptional circumstances	500,000
Industry development and other grants programs	2,657,540
Awards sponsorship	20,000
Total	7,350,300

Discretionary Expenditure

Funding allocation for other miscellaneous items of discretionary expenditure associated with the Board's operation and implementation of its work program are also provided for. In certain circumstances, assistance will be required from consultants to plan or commence actions in the work plan.

The Board will continue to review skills and the professional development of Board members that contributes to their role on the Board through attendance at specialised conferences, events and annual memberships with relevant bodies (e.g. WMRR).

This discretionary expenditure is therefore expected to be:

Table 4: Discretionary Expenditure

Item	Expense (\$)
Consultancies	100,000 ³
Memberships	5,000
Conferences	20,000
Circular Economy network forums	10,000
Public relations and promotion	100,000
Total	235,000

¹ This is an approximation based on a committed minimum of 1,972,316 which will be made up to 4.4118 fee units (\$7.85) per tonne of actual landfill tonnage received.

² This is projected based on levy paid from July 2022 to March 2023.

³ Of which \$38,075 is already committed.

Cash flow

Estimated expenditure for 2023-24 therefore totals \$8,453,768. As the estimated revenue available to the Board is \$9,400,000, there will be a predicted surplus for the year of approximately \$946,232.

However, it should be noted that given prescribed timeframes for submission of landfill data (6 weeks after the end of each month) and the payment of invoices (30 days), levy receipts for each calendar month may be paid up to 10 weeks after the end of each month. Additional delays to payments have been evident over the Christmas and Easter holiday periods.

Therefore, there can be a significant lag time between landfill data being received and revenue being available for spending. Maintaining a healthy surplus amount in the account will ensure that there is no overspend and that this lag time is adequately managed.

Table 5: Budget Overview

Item	Expense (\$)
Starting Balance	3,000,000
Revenue	6,400,000
Fixed Expenditure	868,768
Discretionary Expenditure	235,000
Support Programs	7,350,000
Total Expenditure	8,453,768
Closing Balance	946,232

Work Program

The Board's 2023-24 work program is aligned to the priority actions of the draft WRR Strategy. Public consultation on the draft Strategy closed on 24 February 2023. Finalising the Strategy will be the immediate priority of the Board this year.

The timeframe for implementing WRR Strategy priorities is expected to extend over successive financial years. Therefore, for the purposes of this Plan, the Board has based its planning on the current draft WRR Strategy, available data and the current understanding of waste and resource recovery in Tasmania.

The Board's focus will be:

- finalising and publishing the initial Tasmanian Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy,
- implementing the remaining support programs prescribed by the Ministerial Direction,
- establishing the most appropriate systems for allocating levy funds,
- obtaining accurate and useful waste, resource recovery and circular economy information,
- developing collaborative relationships,
- building community, government, and industry awareness.

The work program for 2023-24, as outlined below, reflects these focus areas and prepares the Board for performing its statutory role in subsequent years. As well as the actions listed below, the Board will also be responsible for the day-to-day administration of its activities (monthly meetings, staffing, sub-committees, external liaison etc).

A broad outline of the work program by month is shown on the following page.

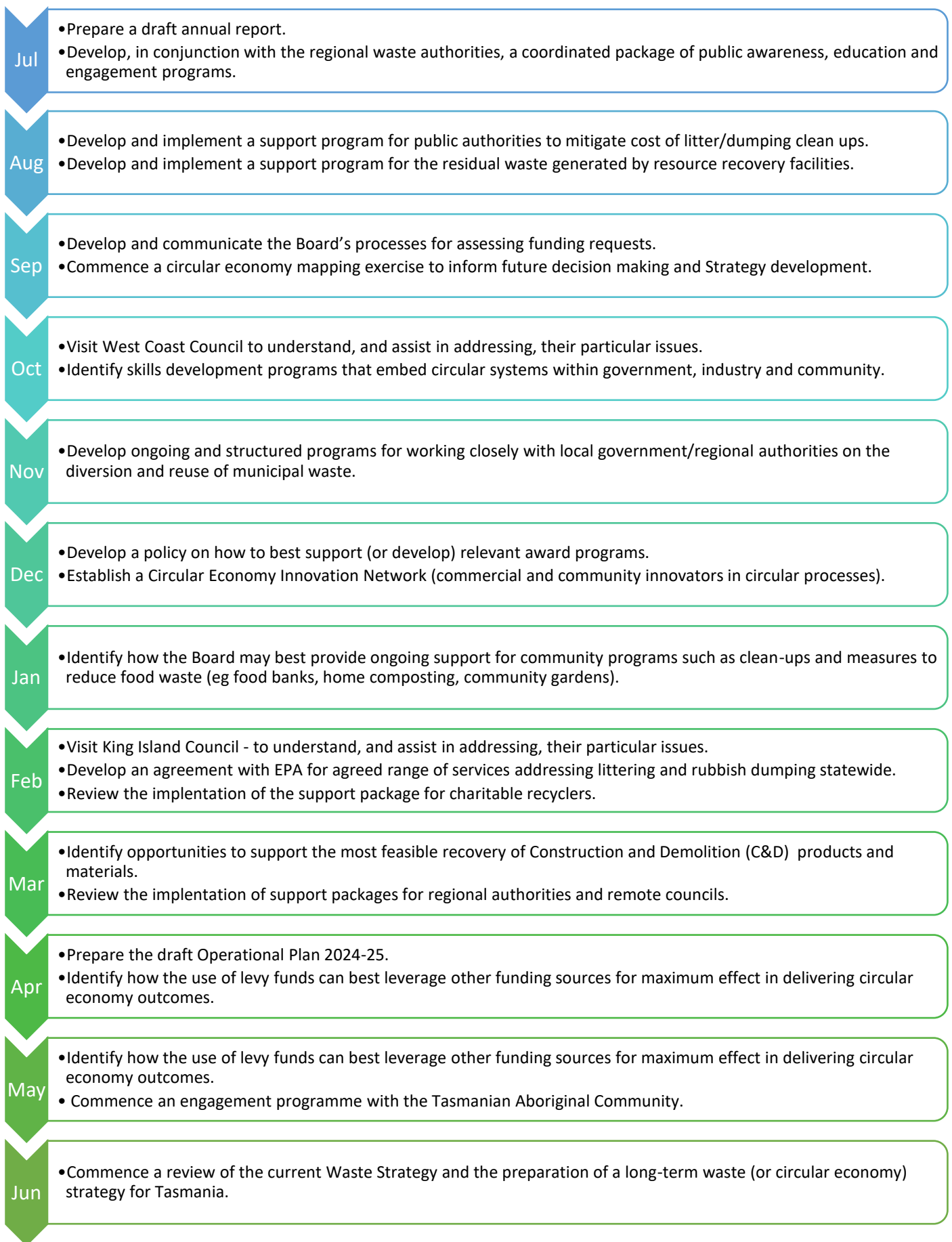


Figure 1 Summary of WRR Board Work Program 2023/24

Further information

Waste and Resource Recovery Board

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Web: wrr.tas.gov.au

The Board is supported by the Department of Natural Resources and Environment
Tasmania