

# Response ID ANON-VAVM-U5JY-7

Submitted to **Review of the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2007**

Submitted on **2020-11-25 12:50:45**

## Introduction

### 1 What is your name?

**Name:**

Pia Coventry

### 2 What is your email address?

**Email:**

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### 3 Do you want to remain anonymous?

No

### 4 Do your view officially represent those of an organisation?

Yes, I am authorised to submit feedback on behalf of an organisation

### 5 Which of the following best describes the group or person you represent?

Government body

## Waste policy development

### 6 Please provide feedback on the roles and functions of the Waste Authority and the CEO and department under the WARR Act? What are the potential areas for improvement? What benefits or impacts may result from clarifying the department's role and responsibilities?

#### waste policy development question:

The Discussion paper explains the role of State Government (through the WARR Act) as being in waste policy development and key to this, having the responsibility for the preparation of the draft Waste Strategy to be submitted to the Minister for Environment for approval.

The Waste Authority is responsible for providing strategic advice to the Government, leading the delivery of the Waste Strategy, administering the WARR account and preparing the annual business plan that aligns to the Waste Strategy.

The City of Canning (the City) sees benefit in the Waste Authority being independent of the State Government and having responsibility under the WARR Act for the preparation of the Waste Strategy for approval, as this aligns to the strategic remit of the Waste Authority and allows for alignment between development and delivery of these strategic actions, as well as through policy and program implementation. The Department's responsibilities should remain largely regulatory. Having a clear delineation of the functions of the two bodies would assist in removing ambiguity around roles and responsibilities.

## Administering the WARR Account

### 7 Are there any potential issues arising from the proposed reforms to improve the administration of the WARR Account?

#### Administering the WARR Account:

The Discussion paper raises the proposed reform option of the administration of the WARR account to be allocated to the CEO under the WARR Act, as this already exists under the terms of the service level agreement (SLA) between the Waste Authority and the Department.

The City does not see any potential issues arising from this proposed reform. However, the City would like clarification as to how the Department intends to report on WARR account expenditure, and the level of transparency that will be provided on this in publicly available documents.

## Provision of services to the Waste Authority

### 8 Please provide feedback on the proposal to allow the Waste Authority to directly employ its own staff, or to enable the Minister for Environment or some other person to employ or appoint persons to work directly for the Waste Authority. Will this support the work of the Waste Authority and the department?

#### Provision of services to the Waste Authority:

The City understands that giving the Waste Authority the ability to employ its own staff would provide another level of independence for the Waste Authority from the Department.

Before providing an informed response to the proposal, the City would need clarification surrounding:

- The purpose of the employment independent to the Department
  - How the administrative overheads of the employment would be outlined and funded – would this still be done through the Department or any other State body?
  - How many full time employees (FTE) would the Waste Authority employ?
  - How clearly defined would the standalone remit of Waste Authority employees be?
  - How would it be ensured that the Waste Authority employees would not duplicate or add complexity to existing programs and structures within the Department?
- The City does not feel it can adequately address this proposal until the above matters are clearly explained.

## **Waste services**

### **9 What are your views about the proposal to enhance the capacity of the WARR Act to improve waste services? Do you see any potential issues?**

#### **Waste services:**

The City supports the broad intent to 'improve waste services' as indicated in the Discussion paper. However, the City cannot provide informed feedback on the proposed reform options to the WARR Act, including the below statement, without further clarification on the impacts of the proposal:

Market development for the sustainable demand for locally produced recycled products – such as compost from large scale food organics and garden organics (FOGO) processing – as well as the ability to ensure a management framework that supports a resilient waste and resource recovery sector with services to households that:

- o are cost-effective, safe and reliable
- o are informed by the State Government's environmental sustainability objectives
- o can adapt to and withstand market disruptions.

The City requires a clear explanation of the implications on how the above would impact on Local Government in terms of responsibility, financial impacts, potential operational impacts and potential enforcement action. The City supports the market development for locally produced recycling products, in line with a circular economy approach, however understands that in order for this to occur, works programs for infrastructure development and supply chain arrangement, from a variety of industry and government stakeholders will all need to be established. The implications for Local Government on the above proposal are not clear in the Discussion paper.

## **Waste legislative issues**

### **10 Are there any potential issues that may result from these proposals to improve operational and administration aspects of the CDS?**

#### **Waste legislative issues 1:**

The City understands the reasoning behind the proposed reform options and does not oppose the proposals.

### **11 Please provide comments on product stewardship plans or extended producer responsibility schemes, and if the WARR Act requires amendments to support their introduction.**

#### **Waste legislative issues 2:**

The City believes the WARR Act should be strengthened to focus on controls that encourage the management of waste higher up the waste hierarchy and in line with a circular economy approach, as detailed in the Waste Strategy 2030.

Product stewardship is a key policy tool in improving waste management, recycling and moving towards a circular economy, where producers take responsibility to reduce the impacts of their products throughout their life cycle. Many aspects of national product stewardship schemes in Australia are voluntary or industry led, and can include national targets rather than state based targets.

The City supports a greater focus on product stewardship and extended producer responsibility schemes in the WARR Act, particularly around those items that contain hazardous materials and can cause adverse environmental impact if they are not treated at their end of life appropriately (for example, tyres). There needs to be tighter controls and more done in terms of moving past diversion from landfill, to innovation in design through to procurement, to avoid the creation of waste in the first instance.

### **12 Please provide feedback on these proposed changes to support regulations that implement the waste management framework. Will increasing penalties under the regulations be effective in deterring illegal waste activities?**

#### **Waste legislative issues 3:**

The City recognises penalties as one aspect in being a possible deterrent against illegal waste activities. Before providing informed feedback, the City would like clarification surrounding:

- The level of monitoring and enforcement of illegal activities, and if there are sufficient staffing levels within the Department to ensure the penalties are enforceable and act as a suitable deterrent of these activities
- Data or reasoning behind the doubling of the penalty and how this relates to increased effectiveness of the deterrent and subsequent behaviour change.

## **Other**

### **13 Are there any other matters which should be considered as part of this review of the WARR Act?**

**Other:**

The City believes the circular economy model should be included in the WARR Act along with the waste hierarchy, as it is also the key guiding principle of the Waste Strategy 2030. There needs to be greater emphasis on the higher order of management controls (avoid, reduce) in the waste hierarchy within the WARR Act and subsequent policies and programs, with actions to support this.

The Waste Authority needs to be a body that can strategically influence and strongly advocate for policy implementation that focuses on moving measures higher up the waste hierarchy and in line with the circular economy model.

**14 How do you think the WARR Act could better support an innovative and thriving waste sector, and ensure that waste and recycling services are effective?**

**Other 2:**