Submission – Waste Management

I have written to the Minister re this several times – and copies are attached.

I response to the feedback sought, Next steps 7.1.1, Getting Involved, the following apply:

Outcomes Sought

They are appropriate, yet seem deficient as they do not aspire to actively engage with the federal government as this will be critical in achieving the desired outcomes.

The latter involves establishment of a **national** framework for the funding and co-ordination of the infrastructure needed for collection and utilising of recycled materials, and generation of power from waste to energy.

Potential Actions

All are necessary.

As noted in my other submissions, Regional facilities are required to service the waste(“ resource”) opportunities.

This will require agencies such as the EPA to be less “dogmatic’ in respect to “dangerous stockpiles”.

Eg green waste – being stored in windrows for composting in rural areas.

Wales Initiatives

( why Wales is a bit of a mystery – why was it referenced ?)

The Policy tools noted are required.

However, if local authorities are required to do the work – then as noted, the State or Federal govt must fund them.

In Victoria, the EPA waste mgt/landfill levy fund should be used.

The biodegradable waste limit to landfill shouts out the need for waste to energy facilities in regional population centers.

Market design opportunities

Support these

Government Focus

There are many areas to work on – but one that must be paramount is that of consumer education.

When buyers start rejecting/ demanding suppliers for product stewardship – then issues such as excess packaging / product disposal can be alleviated.

Which Bin for which product education needs to be uniform across the State/ nation.

Opportunities for Materials / Infrastructure Types

Where I live, we have a landfill and transfer station.

The site has a resource recovery and resale “shed’ operated by a community group under contract with the local Shire. It was set-up to recover/resell useable items. It could increase turnover if more storeage space for goods was available and more items captured at the disposal skips.

We note that:

* a huge amount of Building/demolition material is going directly into landfill ( that has reuseable material or waste/energy potential )

It would require a means for dumping/sorting.

\* large amounts of re-usable ( bikes, furniture , household items) and recyclable items ( plastic. Metal, timber) going to landfill, because

 householders do not sort materials/load their trailers accordingly for disposal. ( there should be a discount incentive)

 \*there is insufficent scrutiny / direction by transfer station staff to ensure deposits of materials go into designated skips . ie. Landfill /metal/foam/paper &cardboard/ plastics ( see attached photo )

Legislative Barriers for reuse

I have little exposure to this matter, except for:

Compost

The EPA have limited the capacity of our local landfill to do on-site composting of green waste.

They have concerns of this being “a dangerous stockpile” and have required a $3m (?) concrete enclosure to handle the green waste volume that’s generated from this bushland area

As the site is in bushland and some 2 kms from any residential area, this “blanket” application of policy is onerous and unwarranted.

The EPA needs to be more “realistic “ and work to suit the local situation , and not blindly administer the “policy”.

General Comments

Container deposit / recovery must happen.

Much of the organic waste going to landfill ( from MSW . C&I, C&D ) could be converted into energy via thermal or bio-mass processes.

Facilities / power plants for these could be established within the Regional Waste Groups that service Metro Melbourne and regional Victoria.

J L Tutt