

MINISTER'S LOCAL GOVERNMENT FORUM

WASTE MANAGEMENT

July 2003

Background

As previous Forum meetings have noted, waste management as an intergovernmental issue has been growing in South Australia for some years, and is currently the subject of significant reforms. These reforms respond to a number of pressing issues, including the imminent closure of the Wingfield landfill, potential regulatory changes and the overall lack of a state wide strategic plan for waste management in South Australia.

Current Status

At the 11 March meeting, the Forum noted the five strategies adopted by the State Government to drive waste management reform. These strategies are currently being implemented.

The State Government is in the process of creating Zero Waste SA, a statutory body that will drive waste management policy. There has been considerable consultation with Local Government over the creation of the new body. The Executive Director of the Local Government Association is a member of the steering committee overseeing the project team responsible for the implementation of the reforms. The LGA Standing Committee on Waste – Future Policy Directions has also had considerable input into the development of the new body and other changes.

Legislation to create Zero Waste SA is currently being drafted, and is expected to be introduced to Parliament in the near future. Both the Office of Local Government and the Local Government Association (LGA) provided comments on a draft Zero Waste SA Bill. Pleasingly, most issues raised have now been addressed.

The new body will be funded by an increase to the solid waste levy by at least \$5.00 a tonne in metropolitan Adelaide and \$2.50 in country areas. This increase takes effect from 1 July, 2003. The allocation and application of funds from the levy including to the Waste to Resources Fund has been a matter of significant debate. A constructive meeting was recently held involving Ministers Hill and McEwen and the LGA President. The current objective is to reach agreement that can be reflected in a consultation draft Bill that the LGA can support as being suitable for public consultation. The circumstances involved mean that the issue is seen by the LGA as having broad significance for the standing of State and Local Government relationships and from this perspective it is important that every effort is made to find a solution that is acceptable to everyone. An update on this particular issue will be provided to the Forum meeting.

In advance of the legislation, an interim Zero Waste Board will be appointed as a Ministerial Committee. The LGA has just completed its process and forwarded a list of nominees to Minister Hill for his consideration. It is anticipated that an interim Board will be appointed shortly.

Recommendations

- That the Forum note the ongoing development of Zero Waste SA and the continuing involvement of Local Government in this process. A verbal update on progress can be provided by the Minister for Environment and Conservation and the President of the Local Government Association. With the benefit of this update any issues that the Forum may be able to add value to can be identified and progressed.
- That the Forum receive a further report at its next meeting, which is expected to be after the public consultation process on a draft Bill and the appointment of the interim Board. By this time it should be clear if there are issues still to be resolved and if so, what role the Forum may be able to play in arriving at solutions.