

REGIONAL AND RURAL LANDFILLS AUDIT PROJECT

- The audit project has concluded and the resultant report, with accompanying information sheet, was released by the Local Government Association in April 2006. As agreed at the January 2006 Forum meeting, the report was distributed to Forum members “out of session”, with the information sheet.
- The Minister’s Local Government Forum initiated the audit project as a result of concerns expressed by some rural councils about anticipated costs of compliance with the revised Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Landfill Guidelines and timelines for implementation.
- The project was managed by the Local Government Association (LGA) and guided by a joint reference group comprising Office for State/Local Government Relations (OSLGR), EPA and Zero Waste SA (ZWSA). Project funding totalled \$87,000 (EPA 29%; ZWSA 23%; LGA17%; and OSLGR 31%).
- Six landfill facilities were selected to participate in the audit on the basis of landfill categories and geographic area. These landfills were in the council areas of District Council of Ceduna, District Council of Yorke Peninsula, Naracoorte and Lucindale Council, The Flinders Ranges Council, City of Mount Gambier, and, District Council of Karoonda East Murray. On-site assessments were undertaken with Hyder Consulting, EPA and council officers. Council officers were given the opportunity to review the relevant landfill data that each supplied to the consultant.
- A Total Cost Approach was used in the audit to assess costs, incorporating total costs incurred across the “whole of life” of the landfill (including land acquisition, landfill development, operation, closure) and as such is consistent with the recommendations of the *Local Government Financial Sustainability Inquiry* commissioned by the LGA.
- The report has been referred to the LGA’s Waste Committee to help firm up the draft LGA Resource Recovery and Waste Program for 2006 and also to the EPA’s Collaborative Working Party, which comprises LGA nominees, private industry, EPA and ZWSA representatives. Routine meetings between the LGA and EPA have been established to discuss issues of implementation timeframes and the guidelines’ technical requirements.
- With the conclusion of the audit project, the EPA, ZWSA, LGA and OSLGR have discussed wider waste management reform issues. A waste management alignment proposal has been developed to assess regional waste management plans and priorities against the *SA Waste Management Strategy* seeking to identify common themes emerging across regions and key strategic issues confronting country council.