

VOLUNTARY REGIONAL WASTE GROUPS JOINT SUBMISSION TO STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS INQUIRY INTO MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT IN NSW

BACKGROUND

The Voluntary Regional Waste Groups (VRWGs), supported by the Department of Environment & Conservation (NSW), develop and implement regional waste management and resource recovery plans with councils in rural and regional New South Wales. These plans focus on a range of issues including:

- Landfill rationalisation and management planning
- Tailored transfer stations to boost resource recovery and improve waste management
- Viable resource recovery systems/drop off centres
- Education and litter management
- Infrastructure sharing
- Audits of residual wastes in municipal, commercial & industrial, concrete & demolition streams to evaluate opportunities for improved resource recovery

There are eight (8) Voluntary Regional Waste Groups established in rural and regional areas, covering 90% of New South Wales, with membership of 99 councils (*refer to Attachment 1 – Map of Regions and Member Councils*).

Work on programs across this range of issues is also supporting changing attitudes in rural and regional areas in NSW. Communities are starting to understand there is a choice to be made. Material collected in town can be buried in a hole or be used as valuable organic product on the farm, or replace expensive virgin material for a small business.

The regional approach has also meant outlying areas gain access to services previously not offered because they were not economically viable. There are now regional waste contracts for a range of materials, including: metal; hazardous chemical; plastic; agricultural drum; silage plastic; and green waste.

In cooperating this way, many parts of local government are sharing lessons learned. As a result, better practices adopted in one part of the State have been customised and implemented in another.

Regional Partnerships are proving to be a success story for the Voluntary Regional Waste Groups across the State. They are showing the way with better materials management, and ultimately, creating more sustainable communities.

Successful outcomes are highlighted below (*refer to Attachment 5 – Program Outcomes*):

- Regional issues are resolved effectively at a local level. These issues range from landfill rationalisation, joint collection contracts for resource recovery, aggregated processing, partnership building with government and industry bodies, transport logistics through to regional education programs.

- Remote areas accessing services previously not offered because they were not geographically and economically viable for example regional contracts for green waste processing.
- Quantifying data on rural and regional diversion rates in line with reporting to the NSW Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy.

The Vision

Strong, effective and coordinated regional waste groups, working proactively to achieve highest value resource conservation and best practice waste management in rural and regional New South Wales.

Waste Groups and local councils working together to achieve sustainable waste and resource management through:

- Strong regional partnerships
- Effective communication and education
- Integration of projects with other agencies
- Effective and focused projects
- Integrated sustainable resource management
- Adequate and equitable resourcing to achieve maximum efficiency

Aims & Objectives

- Sustainable regional resource conservation programs that achieve a balance between the regions' social, economic and environmental needs
- Resource and information sharing, team work and cooperation between groups for the overall benefit of their regions and NSW
- Member councils have a greater collaborative influence in marketing and purchasing related activities
- Collaborate with bordering regional waste groups for mutual advantage

THE EFFECTIVENESS AND APPROPRIATENESS OF CURRENT MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT

The Voluntary Regional Waste Groups consider the effectiveness and appropriateness of current municipal waste management is best serviced by local government. Each of the VRWG areas has similar needs but dissimilar means. Solutions need to increase the effective capacity to manage waste as appropriate to their needs. For example, the Coffs Harbour City Council contract with Bellingen & Gloucester includes an AWT component, whereas the Orange City Council, Cabonne Council, Blayney, Parkes & Forbes Shire Councils Regional Waste and Recycling contract focuses on recycling and localised diversion into the existing landfills (*Refer to Attachment 2 – Netwaste - Regional Waste and Recycling Collection Contract*).

Local councils, especially in rural and regional New South Wales, need flexibility to develop collaboration with stakeholders according to their needs and in order to provide effective and appropriate service delivery. The solutions are affected by the economies of scale – distance, transport costs and planning constraints.

Cross subsidising between larger population and smaller collaborative partners can cause other implications on effective collaboration, as there are costs that might not otherwise be carried by the larger councils.

Municipal waste management cannot be delivered as a one size fits all approach. In rural regional communities, where waste management services must accommodate both the large community centres as well as the small rural villages, systems may include kerbside collection but also provide alternatives such as drop off centres where a kerbside collection is not feasible or economic.

Due to the non regulatory areas managing their own waste facilities they have responsibility for the perpetuity for the longevity of these landfills, where as the landfills servicing the Sydney Metropolitan area, are owned and operated by a state owned corporation and in some cases private enterprise.

These cross-regional costs for public good, give support to the continuation of the existing moratorium on levy payments from the non-regulatory areas. Equally, given difficulty associated with obtaining economies of scale, opportunities to meet state diversion targets are minimised. It would be inequitable to apply a levy where it is impossible to meet diversion targets.

The reality is that there is no true cost arrangement of resources provided by rural and regional areas eg food, wool, cotton, wine etc.

IMPEDIMENTS AND INCENTIVES TO BEST PRACTICE MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT

The Voluntary Regional Waste Groups focus on providing best practice municipal waste management. In regional areas it is essential that premium affective and appropriate services be provided so that councils are not competing against local businesses

Due to the impediments and incentives, listed below, the capacity to effectively meet mandated targets is reduced and is very costly. Rural and regional councils need to deal with more for less.

Impediments

- Distance; low rate base; waste volumes required to maintain viable services.
- How to achieve best practice, satisfactory service standards and cost effectiveness for rural / regional councils.
- How to access markets for recyclable products.
- Lack of regional opportunities for value-adding or processing of recyclable material.
- Lack of interest from industry in regional areas.
- Private sector providers and contractors look at higher charges due to lack of economies of scale.

Incentives

- Community expectations.
- Quantities collected from regional collection contracts for scrap metal, green waste, waste oil, agricultural chemical drums and hazardous household and agricultural chemical waste.
- Establishment of well-managed regional landfills, which allow for the closure of smaller, unsupervised sites or conversation of these sites to transfer stations.

BEST PRACTICE METHODS, INCLUDING COST EFFECTIVENESS, OF PLANNING AND PROVIDING MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

The Voluntary Regional Waste Groups have established themselves to ensure that best practice methods, including costs effectiveness, of planning and providing municipal waste management services are delivered in rural and regional areas of New South Wales. As mentioned previously the regions have similar needs but dissimilar means.

Implementing best practice relies heavily on voluntary arrangements, where councils can maintain their independence but for appropriate service delivery and programs, can work an interdependent way with other councils in the non-regulatory area. Working across council boundaries for planning and delivering services is proving effective.

The VRWGs develop their own Regional Waste Strategies in line with the NSW Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy to achieve set targets and diversion rates. Representatives from each of the VRWGs form the Regional Waste Forum to assist and inform the Department of Environment & Conservation on waste issues in rural regional areas and advance solutions.

This has led to the development of a number of voluntary self authorising waste collaborations that have undertaken joint contracting for service delivery, education programs, regional resource recovery facilities (high tech landfill), capacity building including specialisation and sharing by certain council in particular skills.

(Refer to Attachment 2 - NetWaste - Regional Waste and Recycling Collection Contract, Attachment 3 NetWaste - Practical Solutions for Regional NSW and Attachment 4 – Midwaste - Coffs Harbour, Bellingen and Nambucca Regional Collaboration Program).

THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW TECHNOLOGY AND INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATED WITH WASTE MANAGEMENT

In regional areas AWT will only be sustainable if other drivers can be linked to them eg. Bio-fuel where import sources can be commercially developed to compliment waste stream diversion.

Some regions need to take a guarded approach to new technology and industry. The scale of waste generation across some areas is such that the scale of the new technologies is outside of the volumes of waste produced. In addition the cost of the technologies is outside that which councils are able to afford.

The lack of a clear resource recovery outcomes, combined with the financial risk and long term contractual arrangements associated with AWT means that most councils do not have the resources or expertise to explore these options, instead preferring to continue to improve the management of their landfill sites.

The regional contracts that currently exist have a proven track record for effective cross regional collaboration and are moving towards other resource and reuse management contracts such as concrete crushing for use in road base (which councils have control).

The primary target is to identify and implement strategies that improve diversion rates. One example is in the NetWaste region, where a joint venture agreement between Cabonne Council and Orange City Council to develop a waste management and resource recovery facility known as "The Hub". The Hub has the potential to deliver a positive environmental impact for the Councils, particularly in regard to resource recovery. [REDACTED]

MINIMISING HARM TO THE ENVIRONMENT IN THE PROVISION OF WASTE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Capacity building exercises between large and smaller councils and shared learnings is driving the change towards better environmental management. The closure of unsupervised landfills and the redirection of waste to a regional well-managed landfill in easy reach of large centres is contributing to reduced environmental harm.

This is partly driven by better pricing policies in larger centres and better management of smaller landfills. Remote supervised landfills are improving their practices and are monitored. They now have resource recovery systems in place, where previously this was not practiced.

Regional activities in drumMUSTER, ChemClear and similar projects have been possible because councils perceive to have ownership through the Voluntary Regional Waste Groups. The imposition of aggregated or external service delivery historically would lead to a reduced participation rate.

For example:

- Regional councils, through the Voluntary Regional Waste Groups, are making improvements in the recovery of resources (organic waste, C&D and commercial waste) leading to reduced environmental impact.
- Some councils are preparing Sustainability Plans leading to a greater focus on council activities that impact on the environment, including waste management.
- Training of Landfill Operations Staff is improving landfill management and reducing environmental impact.
- Older, small and unsupervised landfills have been closed.
- Councils are using best practice landfilling methods when opening new cells/expanding landfill operations. Access to quality information via conferences assists in this process.
- Establishment of transfer stations in remote areas in place of unmanned landfills. This has been an important step towards reducing illegal dumping at closed and unmanned rural landfills.

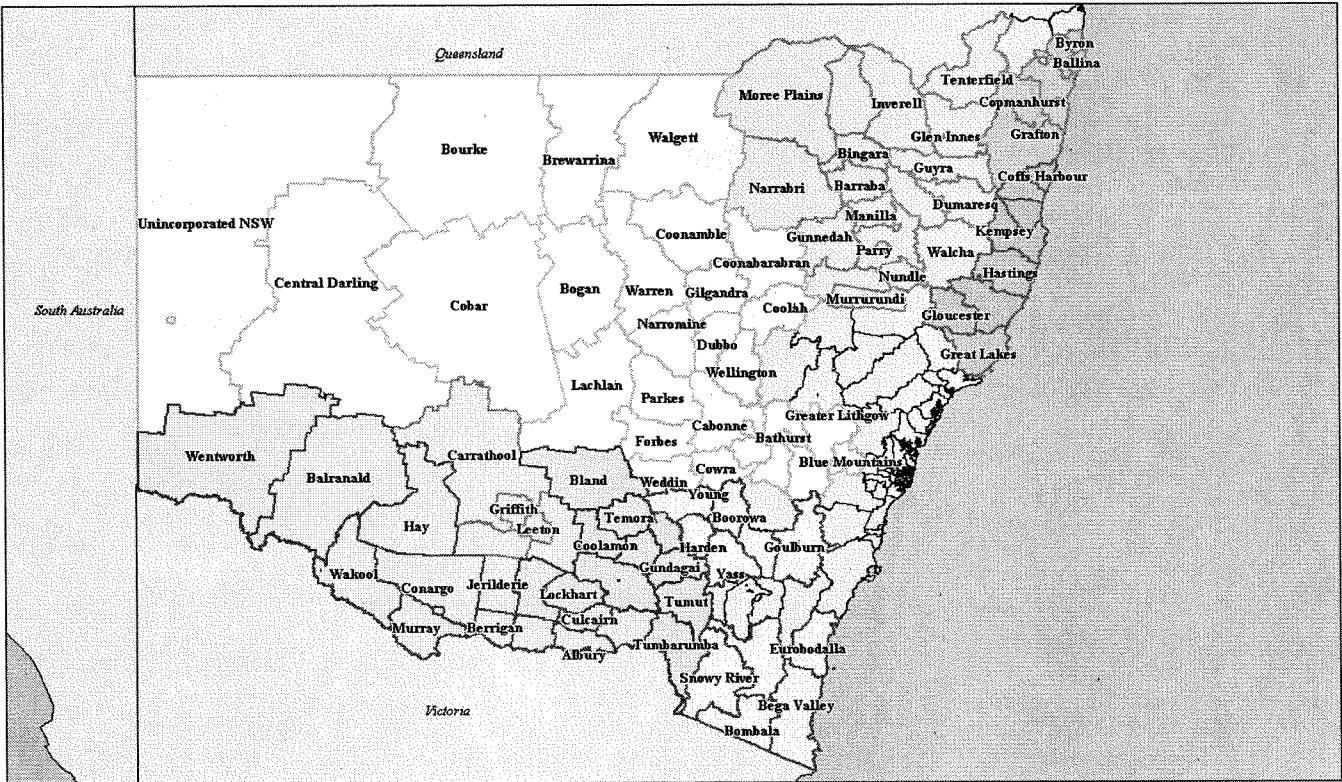
CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Voluntary Regional Waste Groups appreciate the opportunity to address the issues being investigated by the Public Inquiry into Municipal Waste Management in NSW. Unlike the regulated areas waste management is a major issue for councils in rural and regional New South Wales, which utilizes enormous resources. As mentioned earlier, the Voluntary Regional Waste Groups consider the effectiveness and appropriateness of current municipal waste management is best serviced by local government.

The Voluntary Regional Waste Groups have been successful at developing collaborative waste management projects and programs in a cost effective manner with councils maintaining control over waste management issues.

ATTACHMENT 1
MAP OF REGIONS AND MEMBER COUNCILS

VOLUNTARY REGIONAL WASTE GROUPS THROUGHOUT NSW



NORTH EAST WASTE FORUM (NEWF) – 7 COUNCILS

- Ballina Shire Council
- Byron Shire Council
- Clarence Valley Council
- Lismore City Council
- Richmond Valley Council
- Kyogle Shire Council
- Tweed Shire Council

NORTHERN INLAND REGIONAL WASTE (NIRW) – 13 COUNCILS

- Armidale Dumaresq Council
- Glen Innes Severn Shire Council
- Gunnedah Shire Council
- Guyra Shire Council
- Gwydir Shire Council
- Inverell Shire Council
- Liverpool Plains Shire Council
- Moree Plains Shire Council
- Narrabri Shire Council
- Tamworth Regional Council
- Tenterfield Shire Council
- Uralla Shire Council
- Walcha Council

MIDWASTE – 8 COUNCILS

- Bellingen Shire Council
- Coffs Harbour City Council
- Gloucester Shire Council
- Great Lakes Shire Council
- Greater Taree City Council
- Hastings Council
- Kempsey Shire Council
- Nambucca Shire Council

RIVERINA WASTE GROUP (RIVROC) – 7 COUNCILS

- Carrathool Shire Council
- Griffith City Council
- Hay Shire Council
- Jerilderie Shire Council
- Leeton Shire Council
- Murrumbidgee Shire Council
- Narrandera Shire Council

NETWASTE – 28 COUNCILS

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| ▪ Bathurst Regional Council | ▪ Coonamble Shire Council | ▪ Oberon Council |
| ▪ Bland Shire Council | ▪ Cowra Shire Council | ▪ Orange City Council |
| ▪ Blayney Shire Council | ▪ Dubbo City Council | ▪ Parkes Shire Council |
| ▪ Blue Mountains City Council | ▪ Evans Shire Council | ▪ Walgett Shire Council |
| ▪ Bogan Shire Council | ▪ Forbes Shire Council | ▪ Warren Shire Council |
| ▪ Bourke Shire Council | ▪ Gilgandra Shire Council | ▪ Warrumbungle Shire Council |
| ▪ Brewarrina Shire Council | ▪ Lithgow City Council | ▪ Weddin Shire Council |
| ▪ Cabonne Shire Council | ▪ Lachlan Shire Council | ▪ Wellington Shire Council |
| ▪ Central Darling Shire Council | ▪ Mid Western Regional Council | |
| ▪ Cobar Shire Council | ▪ Narromine Shire Council | |

MURRAY WASTE GROUP (MUROC) – 12 COUNCILS

- | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| ▪ Albury City Council | ▪ Corowa Shire Council | ▪ Jerilderie Shire Council |
| ▪ Balranald Shire Council | ▪ Deniliquin Shire Council | ▪ Murray Shire Council |
| ▪ Berrigan Shire Council | ▪ Greater Hume Shire Council | ▪ Wakool Shire Council |
| ▪ Conargo Shire Council | ▪ Hay Shire Council | ▪ Wentworth Shire Council |

RIVERINA EAST WASTE GROUP (REROC) – 12 COUNCILS

- | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| ▪ Bland Shire Council | ▪ Gundagai Shire Council | ▪ Tumbarumba Shire Council |
| ▪ Coolamon Shire Council | ▪ Junee Shire Council | ▪ Tumut Council |
| ▪ Cootamundra Shire Council | ▪ Lockhart Shire Council | ▪ Urana Shire Council |
| ▪ Greater Hume Shire Council | ▪ Temora Shire Council | ▪ Wagga Wagga City Council |

SOUTH WASTE REGIONAL GROUP (SEROC) – 12 COUNCILS

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ▪ Bega Valley Shire Council | ▪ Eurobodalla Shire Council | ▪ Snowy River Shire Council |
| ▪ Bombala Council | ▪ Goulburn Mulwarree Council | ▪ Upper Lachlan Council |
| ▪ Boorowa Shire Council | ▪ Harden Shire Council | ▪ Yass Valley Council |
| ▪ Cooma-Monaro Council | ▪ Queanbeyan Council | ▪ Young Shire Council |

ATTACHMENT 2
NETWASTE – REGIONAL WASTE AND RECYCLING
COLLECTION CONTRACT

INTRODUCTION

The advantages of regional contracting will be explored using the recently implemented NetWaste Regional Waste and Recycling Contract. This contract involves Orange City Council, Cabonne Council, Blayney, Parkes and Forbes Shire Councils (collectively known as NetWaste Central).

In December 2005, the Councils commenced a joint waste and recycling collection service, with Blayney Shire's collection service to commence in 2008. The services are delivered under contract by J R Richards, with recyclate processed at the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) located in Orange.

BACKGROUND

NetWaste is a collaborative waste management project sponsored by the NSW Department of Environment and Conservation, Central West (CENTROC) and Orana Regional Organisation of Councils (OROC), located in central and western NSW. The region comprises 28 Councils, covering a total area of 317,942 km² and has a population of over 300,000 people.



Since mid-2000, NetWaste has been working to share resources and knowledge, and co-ordinate the planning of waste issues at regional and sub-regional levels. Whilst acknowledging the benefits of individual Councils retaining control over waste management issues, the NetWaste approach has sought to develop collaborative waste management methodologies and projects that are achievable within individual localities, whilst having regard for existing geographical, economic and environmental constraints.

A major aspect of this effort has been the development of sub-regional waste management plans by R.W. Corkery & Co and Nolan-ITU. This has involved extensive consultation and participation by community and industry within the

planning process to develop practical strategies to improve the delivery and planning of waste management services across each of NetWaste's four subregions.

The outcomes from this process have been the staged implementation of an increasing number of successful programs and projects designed to address waste management priorities in a co-ordinated and cost-effective manner, whilst minimising long term risks to individual Councils.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

The NetWaste Central Subregional Plan developed in 2001 provides direction for ongoing management of waste services, identifies collaborative interaction opportunities and serves as a resource across the whole NetWaste region¹. Specifically, the Plan identifies five key areas to progressively and sustainably minimise the amount of waste deposited to landfill and maximise resource savings through avoidance, reuse, recycling and litter reduction. These are:

- Regional Profile and Waste Characterisation
- Council Services
- Waste Management and Infrastructure
- Litter Management
- Education

The actions recommended under the Council Services programs relating to Waste and Recycling collection included:

ACTION S1: Align timing of waste collection contracts as existing contracts expire.

ACTION S3: Investigate the potential for Councils to participate in a joint waste collection contract and the associated benefits.

ACTION S7: Investigate expansion potential for the Ophir Road Resource Recovery Centre to process recyclables from other LGA's.

¹ 2001 Nolan ITU Netwaste Subregional Waste Management Plan

WASTE COLLECTION CONTRACT DEVELOPMENT

Orange City Council, Cabonne Council, Parkes, Forbes and Blayney Shire Councils subsequently commenced investigation into a collective tender for domestic waste and recycling collection services, to commence on 1 July 2005. This action was undertaken with the support of the NetWaste Executive and funded with NetWaste allocations from Department of Environment and Conservation sponsorship monies and matched with shared funding between the participating Councils.

A Waste and Recycling Contract Committee was formed and engaged the services of a specialist waste management consulting company, Impact Environmental Consulting Pty Ltd (IEC) to assist in the development of the new waste and recycling contract and tender documentation. IEC were also supported with specialist legal advice from the law firm Donovan Oates Hannaford. Chris Foley, the NetWaste Project Officer, coordinated the tender process with support from the participating Councils.

PROCESS

The waste contract development was conducted in six stages.

Stage 1 - Strategic Development

This commenced with an inception meeting between IEC and the NetWaste Committee to establish the parameters of the project and to clarify the scale and extent of the proposed contracts. Other actions undertaken at this stage included background analysis, information gathering from Councils, decision on the Governance Structure, adoption of an action plan and time line.

IEC sought legal advice in developing possible governance options for the five participating projects. These included:

Option 1 Lead Council Contract

Under this scenario, the lead Council holds the contract with a Contractor, with the remaining Councils participating with a Memorandum of Understanding between the Lead Council and themselves.

Option 2 Company Contract

Under this scenario, a separate Corporation is formed by the member Councils which enters into a contract with the Contractor.

Option 3 Separate Contracts

Under this structure each council tenders collectively or independently under the Local Government Act and has it's own contract with the Contractor.

Probity: It was considered important in a project of this size that a probity officer be appointed to oversee the process involved in the development of the tender and contract documents. Orange City Council nominated their Administration Manager as Probity Officer and this was supported by the working party and the Consultant.

Following consideration of a detailed report on these matters the five councils resolved to participate in the joint NetWaste waste and recycling tendering process on the basis that each participating Council holds individual contracts as described under option 3.

Stage 2 - Consultation

A wide range of stakeholders were consulted during the contract development process including various commercial and industrial groups, Waste Contractors Association and the Department of Environment and Conservation. During this stage meetings were held with IEC to discuss the structure, timing and content of the contract documents. The participating Councils were consulted in order to establish aims and objectives that the contract was seeking to achieve such as customer service levels, waste minimisation and minimal contamination.

Different collection systems were evaluated and it was agreed to specify the 2 bin system with an option to include a third bin for organics. The organics bin option depended on affordability and a viable end use for this product. Tender documents were to request a price for provision of both a 140 litre and 240 litre bin for waste collection and a 240 litre bin for commingled recyclables. Decisions were made on litter bins, bulky waste cleanups, public place and special event recycling.

Analysis was also conducted in regard to upgrading/replacement of the MRF at the Ophir Road facility at Orange and to capacity and maximum contamination levels to be specified.

Two Bin System



Red Lidded - Waste



Yellow Lidded - Recycling

Stage 3 - Preparing tender documents

Data was collected from Councils in order to finalise contract documents. Discussions were held with IEC as to the form of the contract and it was decided that a performance-based contract be formulated, incorporating latest best practice and integrating Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) for the contractor. Aspects such as community education, auditing for recycling stream, and an Occupational Health and Safety Plan were to be included.

Stage 4 - Tendering process

The tender documents were developed and advertised in December 2004. A pre-tender meeting was held at Orange City Council on the 1 February 2005. The tendering process was undertaken in accordance with the Local Government Tendering Regulation.

Stage 5 - Evaluating Tenders

Two tenders were received for the services and these were assessed by the five participating councils and the Consultants IEC in accordance with the assessment criteria contained in the tender documents. Weightings were applied to these criteria prior to the tenders being viewed.

As part of the tender process, a probity officer was nominated from Orange City Council to oversee the tendering process.

The assessment panel concluded that JR Richards & Sons was clearly the preferred tenderer to undertake the NetWaste central Waste and Recycling Collection Contract.

The five participating Councils all considered a report on the tender during March 2005 and resolved to award the Contract to JR Richards & Sons to perform waste management and recycling services for a ten year period, commencing on the 3 October 2005 for the following Councils; Cabonne Shire, Orange City, Parkes Shire, Forbes Shire, and for a period of approximately seven years and ten months for Blayney Shire commencing on the 1 January 2008.

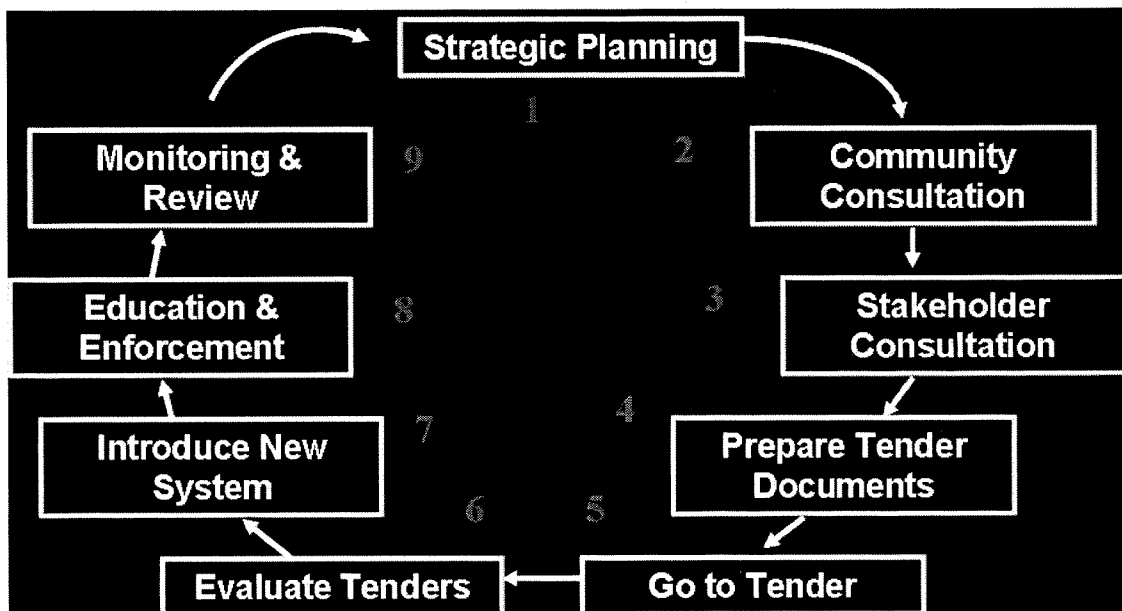
As part of the development of the contract it was decided by the participants that a document should be developed that showed the commitment of the Councils to each other. This document which was named a Memorandum of Agreement was signed by the General Managers following adoption of the report.

Stage 6 - Implementation

The Councils worked together with NetWaste staff and the Contract Manager on implementation issues including:

- Provision of property information for bin deliveries.
- MRF development.
- Service commencement.
- The establishment of the Regional Waste Management and Recycling Contract Management Committee.
- Development of the Recycling and Waste Minimisation Education Strategy.
- Monitoring of Key Performance Indicators.

THE WASTE PLANNING CYCLE



MAIN OBSTACLES TO PROCESS

1. MGB delivery time.

Following consultation with MGB manufacturers the IEC advised that there were some 10 Councils likely to be ordering bins for a start date of 1 July 2005. This represented a total of some 460,000 bins and could be a risk of delaying the start of the contract. The concern was more regarding bin delivery to residents than the actual supply of bins

A delayed start to October 2005 was recommended.

2. MRF continuity of service

A number of issues were identified with the leasing and upgrading of the MRF at Ophir Road in Orange.

This was partly due to the need to ensure continuity of service for the MRF and the possibility that the building may need upgrading or rebuilding.

This also presented a risk to the proposal start date and it was agreed to alter the date to 1 October 2005.

3. MRF expansion

Following acceptance of the tender and during the design of the MRF it was revealed that a boundary alteration and Development Consent would be required.

This resulted in a decision to further delay the start of the contract to 12 December 2005.

4. Delayed contract commencement

The delayed contract commencement did cause problems with the bin rollout due to some residents being on holidays. There were also some customer service issues but these were addressed by the contractor.

If the project was to be undertaken again more time would be allowed to avoid commencing the service during a holiday period. Consideration should have been given to a staggered start which may have assisted in a smoother implementation of the service.

BENEFITS OF REGIONAL CONTRACT

1. Financial

The contract provides financial benefits for all of the participating Councils. In the case of the smaller Councils this was a clear saving in collection costs as set out in the table below. The tender also offered an affordable high quality recycling service for Cabonne, Forbes and Parkes. This was not the case for Orange which had an increase in collection costs but gained the advantage of a state of the art Material recycling Facility.

The additional recycling services has allowed for the construction of a superior facility capable of providing a 90% recovery rate to the residents of Orange. The previous facility designed to handle half of the current service numbers had a waste figure of approximately 35%. This improvement will save approximately 1057 tonnes per annum of material to landfill. In addition the cost to provide a facility capable of achieving the outcomes of the new MRF would cost the residents of Orange approximately \$194,000 per annum additionally, if the costs of the facility were amortised using the Orange service numbers only.

Council	Service	Annual saving/cost
Blayney	Garbage	\$24,970
	Recycling	\$9,986
Cabonne	Garbage	\$63,426
Forbes	Garbage	\$64,217
Parkes	Garbage	\$69,900
Orange	Garbage	-\$14,153
	Recycling	-\$22,265

2. Consolidation of Infrastructure

The joint contract means the construction of one MRF which can be amortised over the term of the contract. Due to the additional volumes the facility can use better technology and recover a higher percentage of the material.

In addition the number of collection trucks and other vehicles were able to be rationalised. This should also ensure the continuity of service in the event of breakdowns.

3. Customer Service Centre

A modern and technologically advanced Customer Service Centre had been provided to deal with issues raised in an efficient and friendly manner. This system incorporates a 1300 number which is displayed on all vehicles and advertised in the community education program.

Email facilities are also available and appropriate software to meet the customer service reporting requirements of the contract.

4. Common Legal Contract

Contract documentation prepared by Donovan Oates Hannaford Lawyers who provided legal advice and formal contract documentation for all of the participating councils. The firm also coordinated the execution of contract documents and the legal costs were able to be shared between the councils.

5. Reporting

The contract places great emphasis on reporting on aspects of customer service and Key Performance Indicators (KPI). Call Accounting software is in use to manage calls, complaints and requests and to provide a high level of reporting. Systems are in place for reporting of quality management and OH&S.

6. Recycling and Waste Minimisation Education Strategy

The introduction of the new service has provided an opportunity to not only divert waste from landfill but to expand and raise the profile of waste management services in the council areas and engage the community through a comprehensive waste education strategy. JR Richards and Sons employed independent consultant EnviroCom Australia who has developed an education strategy in conjunction with the participating Councils. In addition the joint contract designates an annual contribution for reporting development and delivery of educational services.

The strategy objectives are :

- Increase resource recovery through improved recycling practices
- Minimise contamination within kerbside recycling collections
- Reduce waste generation at source through improved consumer behaviour
- Increase at-home organic waste recycling through composting and worm farming
- Reduce litter in public places

7. Regional Waste and Recycling Contract Management Committee

This group was formed to implement the contract and meets with the Contracts Manager on a monthly basis to consider reports on matters such as:

- Quantities of recyclables processed and market destinations
- Contamination levels
- Customer service statistics
- Implementation of Education Strategy
- Inventory of plant
- Risk assessment, Emergency plan and Quality plan report.
- Occupation Health and safety performance
- Contract implementation

8. Learning

The joint contract process has provided an opportunity for Council staff to actively learn about planning of waste management, contract development and administration. This will be an ongoing process and involve them in implementation of the education strategy, monitoring and annual review.

9. Best Practice Services

The joint contract has given participating councils access to a range of best practice waste collection and recycling services as follows:

Services

The participating Councils endorsed the following services for all of the Councils involved:

- Delivery of new wheelie bins for both mixed solid waste and recycling;
- Weekly servicing of a 240 Litre red lidded wheelie bin for mixed solid waste collection service (with an option of a smaller 140 litre wheelie bin);
- Fortnightly commingled recycling collection service in a 240 litre yellow lidded wheelie bin;
- Operation of the Material Recovery Facility at the Ophir Road Resource Recovery Centre (Orange City);
- Two annual source separated kerbside clean up services. One for bulky waste and one for greenwaste;
- Provision of the standard mixed solid waste and recycling collection service to Commercial and Industrial premises (wheelie bins only).

The participating Councils endorsed the following services for individual Councils:

Blayney Shire Council

- Provision of new wheelie bins for litter bins and servicing of these bins for the contract term.

Cabonne Council

- Supply and installation of new recycling wheelie bins to Mullion Creek;
- Collection of recyclables from Council's landfills.

Forbes Shire Council

- Provision of new wheelie bins for special event recycling, collection and processing of recyclables from special events, as required.

Orange City Council

- Collection of litter bin contents and public place recycling;
- Servicing of the Ophir Road Receiving Station Skip Bins;
- Provision of new wheelie bins for special event recycling and collection of recyclables from special events, as required.

Parkes Shire Council

- Provision and installation of new 140 Litre wheelie bins for litter bins and servicing of these bins for the contract term;
- Provision of new wheelie bins for special event recycling and collection of recyclables from special events, as required;
- Provision of new wheelie bins for and collection of recyclables during Council's public place recycling trial.

CONCLUSION

Implementation of the right waste and recycling collection service across groups of Councils can help save dollars and allow residents access to state of the art recycling facilities and best practice services.

**ATTACHMENT 3
NETWASTE – PRACTICAL WASTE
SOLUTIONS FOR REGIONAL NSW**

Practical Waste Solutions for Regional New South Wales

Presented by



Stephen Sykes

NETWASTE

C/- Orange City Council
Byng Street, Orange NSW 2800
Telephone: (02) 6393 8770 Facsimile: (02) 6393 8772
Email: ssykes@orange.nsw.gov.au



Robert Corkery

R.W. CORKERY & CO. Pty Ltd

ABN 31 002 033 712
75 Kite Street, Orange NSW 2800
Telephone: (02) 6362 5411 Facsimile: (02) 6361 3622
Email: RWC@cww.octec.org.au



Euston Ling

NOLAN-ITU Pty Ltd

ABN 23 359 240 890
Suite 70, level 7, 104 Bathurst, SYDNEY NSW 2000
Telephone: (02) 9283 9361 Facsimile: (02) 9283 9362
Email: eling@nolanitu.com.au

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Part 1: Introduction

NetWaste is a collaborative waste management project sponsored by two regional organisations of councils, the Central West (CENTROC) and Orana Regional Organisation of Councils (OROC), located in the central and western region of New South Wales, Australia. The region comprises 28 councils and the NSW Unincorporated Area, covering a total area of some 412 000 square kilometres and having a population of more than 380 000 people.

The vision of NetWaste is to “establish a waste management model to ensure cost effective environmental best practice for participating NetWaste Councils”. This vision has been echoed by the region’s waste managers through their desire to have subregional plans, which:

- provide a way forward for the region’s management of waste through effective and affordable strategies;
- seek economies of scale through the cooperative sharing of facilities and resources;
- are consistent with individual Councils’ financial management plans; and
- receive community acceptance.

Since 2001, NetWaste has commissioned four subregional plans covering the Central Western, Mid-western, Eastern and Western Subregions. A joint consultancy between R.W. Corkery & Co. Pty. Limited (based in Orange) and Nolan-ITU (based in Sydney) was selected to prepare each of the plans.

Part 2: Consultation, Inspection and Data Collection

Plan Preparation

For each Waste Management Plan a similar pattern was followed in its preparation, amending it where necessary to meet the requirements of participating Councils. Data and information was collected from a wide range of sources including the following.

- (i) A comprehensive questionnaire compiled by Nolan-ITU sought information on Council Services, LGA statistics, services for green waste, recyclables and waste management facilities in each LGA. This information was supplemented by data compiled from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.
- (ii) All LGAs were visited which provided an opportunity to inspect a number of waste management facilities and to discuss with relevant Council Officers the current practices and the opportunities to improve those practices.
- (iii) A community consultation workshop was held in each LGA, and in some cases at two or three centres where distances between towns were substantial. These meetings provided an excellent forum to identify issues of importance to local communities and the attitudes to local people to improving waste management.
- (iv) Consultation with commercial and industrial enterprises involved either a separate workshop or a telephone survey for representatives to outline their current waste management practices and expectations / preferences for improvements.
- (v) State Government agencies were approached regarding their views towards waste planning in each subregion.

Each subregion experiences numerous common issues with a number of additional issues specific to the subregion.

Central West Subregion (2001)

(Blayney, Cabonne, Forbes, Lachlan, Orange, Parkes and Weddin LGAs)

- A common issue raised throughout this subregion was the lack of kerbside recycling. Those towns without kerbside recycling attracted the most attendees at community consultation workshops.
- A total of 28 of the 34 landfills in the subregion were open 24/7 at the time of the survey.
- Practices at local landfills varied from very good to very poor. A number of landfills are poorly sited and virtually no monitoring is conducted to understand environmental impacts.
- The opportunity was identified for the sharing of waste collection services to reduce costs and improve the recovery of recyclables from the waste stream.

Mid-western Subregion (2003)

(Coolah, Coonabarabran, Coonamble, Dubbo, Gilgandra, Narromine, Warren and Wellington LGAs)

- Tyres are a common problem throughout the entire region, particularly in the Mid-western Subregion. Gilgandra Shire Council has “inherited” 4 000 tonnes of tyres from a failed commercial venture.
- A big success story in this subregion is the Narromine CDEP, ie. a recycling program conducted under the Commonwealth Development Employment Program. This program was funded for many years by ATSIC to employ predominantly Aboriginal persons – up to 75 persons were given work each week. The materials recovery facility provided an opportunity for many small towns to participate in recycling.
- One of the towns participating in the recycling program based at Narromine was Gulargambone – a town with an enormous pride and committed residents. The town has won many tidy town projects and the residents were instrumental in setting up its recycling service based on the fortnightly bag collection.
- Another feature developing in the Mid-western Subregion was the use of rural transfer stations – many of them with key access for 50 to 70 local residents. Early abuses in the use of the stations disappeared after threats of closure.

Eastern Subregion (2004)

(Bathurst*, Blue Mountains, Cowra, Evans*, Lithgow, Mudgee*, Oberon and Rylstone* LGAs) * Prior to amalgamation

- Throughout the subregion, waste management facilities varied substantially with some Councils with high quality facilities and innovative practices and others simply very basic landfills open 24/7.
- Mudgee operates a central landfill and 12 transfer stations (1 supervised) with all wastes / recyclables hauled back regularly to Mudgee.
- Consultation with the building industry initiated actions encouraging builders to recycle building wastes – both through education and financial incentives.
- Councils were spending substantial funds on signs whereas others weren't able to because of the cost.

Western Subregion

(Bogan, Bourke, Brewarrina, Broken Hill, Central Darling, Cobar and Walgett LGAs and the NSW Unincorporated Area administered by DIPNR)

- The lack of people and funds was a striking factor in the Western Subregion. Population levels are decreasing as economic conditions deteriorate.
- There is often an interest in recycling and better waste management but the large distances to major centres introduces large transport costs. Broken Hill, Wilcannia and Tibooburra are the only towns allowed to participate in the South Australian Container Deposit scheme.
- Burning wastes is still a common feature of many western landfills – keeping plastic bags under control and maximising the duration of disposal in each trench.
- Many State Government agencies use local waste management facilities at no or little cost and could contribute to resolving local management issues by contributing both financially and in kind.

General Observations

In general, the larger centres like Orange, Bathurst, Dubbo and Broken Hill are managing wastes in a satisfactory manner with Council personnel assigned to both management and operations.

Waste management at the moderate sized centres varies from good to poor, whereas the smaller LGAs offer only a basic service and are honestly not coping. Few funds are available for Council personnel to manage or operate the waste management facilities – one person is often managing many Council services with as low as 5% of one officer's time spent on waste-related matters.

Throughout the entire region, there is an overwhelming willingness to participate in NetWaste initiatives, eg. plastic bag replacement, milk run chipping contracts and contracts for waste steel. There is considerable support for NetWaste to organise contracts for other recyclables.

Variations in the standard of waste management not only reflect funds available but the commitment of Council staff (and Councillors) and communities with a high degree of social pride.

Part 3: Development of the Subregional Plans

Unique Constraints

Rural Councils face a unique waste management challenge in that not only are they required to provide waste collection and disposal services to their constituents, but they are usually required to own and operate the disposal sites receiving their wastes. Further, these Councils must be able to accommodate wastes which are not under their direct control, generated by local businesses and industrial enterprises in their vicinity. This creates further pressure on long term assessment management.

Whilst this situation was once shared by many NSW metropolitan Councils, rural Councils have always faced the additional burden of long transport distances which have traditionally been addressed through the creation of a number of small disposal sites scattered through Council areas. The result is an increased level of potential long term environmental risks within communities which have low population densities, low ratepayer bases and of more recent times, severely impacted income bases.

In addition, responsibility for waste management services often falls within a Council officer's wider environmental duties which in turn are part of a wider role. often taking in such areas as roads, parks and sewage. Therefore, in developing the four NetWaste subregional plans, emphasis was placed upon developing actions and recommendations to assist regional waste managers by identifying potential synergies, mitigating risks and drawing on existing opportunities.

Actions / Recommendations

Accordingly, actions and recommendations were formulated according to the areas of:

1. Regional profile and waste characterisation;
2. Council Services;
3. Waste Management and Infrastructure;
4. Litter Management; and
5. Education.

Regional Profile and Waste Characterisation

Actions falling within the category of **regional profile and waste characterisation** are aimed at gaining a better understanding of the unique geographic and waste characteristics of each subregion and indeed each Council. It includes:

- Appointing NetWaste staff to promote greater waste knowledge and drive initiatives;
- Mapping of infrastructure throughout the NetWaste region;
- Collection of waste data;
- Research in to regional waste and infrastructure to identify "nodes" or potential synergies;
- Benchmarking and monitoring ongoing performance; and
- Investigating, developing and promoting regional business opportunities including niche or boutique markets.

Council Services

Actions and recommendations relating to **Council services** are aimed at enhancing existing services and implementing new or waste services within each subregion. Accordingly, action areas include:

- Co-ordinating waste collection systems across local government areas and indeed subregions to capitalise on any potential synergies or common service requirements; and

- Enhancing existing services or developing new services for such streams as:
 - kerbside recycling,
 - council clean-up;
 - bulk steel,
 - construction and demolition rubble;
 - commercial and industrial wastes;
 - tyres; and
 - agricultural waste such as spent grain, offal and carcasses.

Waste Management and Infrastructure

Actions and recommendations relating to **waste management and infrastructure** are primarily geared towards consolidating regional resources and assisting regional waste managers to minimise environmental risks. Accordingly, actions relate to:

- reviewing the current landfill situation in each subregion;
- rationalising landfills;
- developing of generic LEMPs and EMPs for use by Councils;
- developing operational and rehabilitation plans for existing landfills and transfer stations;
- investigating transport logistics; and
- monitoring developments in alternative waste treatment technologies.

Litter Management

Litter has been identified as a significant environmental pollutant that imposes high maintenance costs for local governments associated with clean-up efforts, damage to ecosystems and reduced visual amenity. As a result, **litter management** actions are aimed at establishing education and prevention programs based on:

- researching local issues such as litter types and hotspots;
- the type of existing resources used to tackle litter;
- allocation of additional litter prevention resources;
- developing prevention programs such as fines; and
- sharing information and resources amongst NetWaste Councils.

Education

Community and industry education is essential support for Council waste management initiatives, promote waste avoidance, maximise source separation and raise awareness of the various waste management options within rural areas. Therefore, actions and recommendations relating to **education** include:

- appointment of a NetWaste Education Officer;
- researching education programs and resources already available for use;
- establishing and prioritising local education requirements;
- development of an education strategy; and
- development of a communication strategy to increase community and industry awareness.

Examples – Regional Actions

As each subregional waste management plan has been produced, it has included actions on both a regional level and subregional level. Moreover, as strategic actions have been formulated for each successive subregion, they have been largely applicable to most (but not all) of the Councils throughout the NetWaste region. For example, the Eastern Subregion is vastly different from the Western Subregion.

Central West Subregion

Being the inaugural subregion, the main focus of this plan was to lay a foundation upon which other plans could be structured in a cohesive fashion. As a result, some of the key focuses of this plan was the securing of funding for the appointment of permanent NetWaste officers to ensure the co-ordination and longevity of regional efforts. Also of importance was the initial focus placed upon capitalising on significant regional infrastructure.

Mid-western Subregion

The mid-western plan sought to obtain further administrative support for NetWaste while extending regional recycling services to outlying communities. Also contained within this plan were initial recommendations to initiate development of common resources which are able to be utilised by other regional Councils. This included mechanisms to assist Councils to minimise or mitigate their potential environmental liability.

Eastern Subregion

Further emphasis was given to developing common resources within the Eastern plan. This included such actions as leveraging NetWaste's scrap metal collection contract and seeking greater commonalities across regional Councils.

Western Subregion

Perhaps the most challenging plan to date has been the fourth and final Western subregional waste management plan. Being by far and away the largest and remotest subregion, the focus of this plan was obtaining additional support and resources to help Councils implement service improvements such as recycling services, which currently remains largely unviable in the subregion.

Conclusion

The development of waste management plans on a subregional basis in the manner conducted has proved very effective in drawing out a wide range of practical actions for the ongoing collaborative approach to waste management "over the mountains".

ATTACHMENT 4
MIDWASTE – COFFS HARBOUR, BELLINGEN AND
NAMBUCCA REGIONAL COLLABORATION PROGRAM

Bellingen and Nambucca councils have signed an agreement with Coffs Harbour City Council to provide the waste from the Kerbside service for the next 20 years.

The rationale for the development of the facility were:

- Diminishing landfill space
- Environmental impacts of landfilling
- Escalating costs of landfill management
- Increasing landfill regulatory controls and risks
- Policy shift to resource conservation
- Market and regulatory risks for recovered products
- Emergence of technology solutions
- Councils could benefit by working together
- Greener community expectations

The local principals are:

- Maximise resource recovery
- Source separation
- Highest resource value outputs
- Utilise technology solutions
- Reduce waste to landfill
- Regional collaboration via Midwaste and alliance of Nambucca Shire Council, Bellingen Shire Council and Coffs Harbour City Council
- Must be economically viable eg garbage charges
- Must be socially acceptable eg convenient

The waste will supply sufficient quantity to service the CCRRF Biomass Plant, which will process the waste to produce compost. The plant should be completed by September/October 2006.

The contract will be between Coffs Harbour City Council and the contracting company Biomass Coffs Harbour Australia.

LGA	COFFS HARBOUR	NAMBUCCA	BELLINGEN	TOTAL
Area (sq kms)	1,100	1,433	1,604	4,137
Population	60,000	18,000	12,000	90,000
Garbage Service	26,000	7,300	3,800	37,100
Landfills	1	1	2	4
Transfer Stations	3	Nil	2	5

The landfill stations will operate as transfer stations once the facility is completed.

The residual waste from the Biomass process will be landfilled at Coffs Harbour landfill. The residual waste from the process will be inert.

The estimated cost savings resulting from the regional arrangements are as follows:

- Coffs Harbour with Bellingen only an estimated cost savings of 10%
- Coffs Harbour with Nambucca only an estimated cost savings of 13%
- With all three councils involved the cost savings are estimated to be at 22% for processing the 55,000 tonnes pa.

The three councils have also jointly let a kerbside recycling contract with an organics collection included.

Until the facility is operational residents are using a red lid bin for garbage and a yellow lid bin for co-mingled recyclables. (Coffs Harbour also has a green lid bin for garden organics).

Once the facility is operational the residents will use a:

- Green lid bin for garden and food organics (including meat & bone) – this will go to the biomass plant through the green door for composting process;
- Yellow lid for co-mingled recycling – to the MRF;
- Red lid bin for the remaining mixed waste (such as – non-recyclable plastics, wrappers, nappies etc.) – to the biomass plant through the red door where the waste will be screen to extract any recyclables and then autoclave processed.

**ATTACHMENT 5
VOLUNTARY REGIONAL WASTE GROUPS
PROGRAM OUTCOMES**

Regional Programs, Cooperation And Outcomes

Voluntary regional waste groups have established themselves across NSW, supporting regional and local initiatives. The Department of Environment and Conservation has provided support to each regional group in the development and initial implementation of regional waste management and resource recovery plans. Details of the work of each group is provided below:

NetWaste	
Key Activities/Achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Four sub regional waste avoidance and resource recovery plans. ▪ Work has commenced on an overarching regional plan for the four sub regions. The plan will include a series of "templates" for the development of Waste Management Strategies particularly focusing on smaller Councils. Trials of the templates will be conducted by Narramine Shire Council as part of the evaluation plan ▪ Landfill database developed and mapped and rehabilitation plans prepared. ▪ Installation of used oil collection facilities in sixteen councils. Now developing a regional used oil management plan, incorporating joint collection contracts. ▪ Collective contracts in place for recovery of metals, and processing of household garden organics. ▪ Household chemical collection program undertaken annually. ▪ DrumMUSTER campaign July 2005, an increase of 34% of first time users of the regional service ▪ The joint waste & recycling collection involving 5 Netwaste councils of Orange, Forbes, Parkes, Cabonne and Blayney will save approximately 1,057 tonnes per annum of material going to landfill. The new service introduces recycling to householders in Parks and an expansion to the recycling services in Blayney, Cabonne and Forbes. Plus a state of the art upgrade for the Orange Material Recovery Facility (MRF) which will potentially provide a 980% recovery rate to Orange residents. (The old MRF recovered 35% due to its inferior technology) ▪ Investigations have commenced to introduce a kerbside recycling service to the Nyngan and Warren local government areas. Issues to be faced are volumes, distance and machinery costs ▪ Report on the Evaluation of a Kerbside Recycling Trial at Gulargambone has been completed. It recommends the recycling systems continue on the basis of the social and environmental benefits offsetting the operating costs. This report is available to other small centres to assist with progressing recycling in small rural towns ▪ Education programs such as Waste to Art, "Don't Waste Bathurst" and "Dougal the Garbage Dump Bear" have built partnerships with remote communities in Wilcannia and Bourke ▪ Small Landfill Management program is progressing with involvement from DEC in developing practical management guidelines for small regional landfills ▪ Establishment of an Environmental Learning Facility (ELF) in Orange

NORTH EAST WASTE FORUM (NEWF)

Key Activities/Achievements

- Regional Organic Mapping Plan Stage 2 to determine the likely sources and quantities of organic residues and products that will be collected, processed and reused within the NEWF region
- Installed Hazardous Waste Stores and on-going training of landfill staff in handling and inspection of hazardous waste. Clarence Valley Council and Lismore City Council are fully functional
- Implementing the C & I Waste Audit and Management Project with nominated businesses in the NEWF region. Businesses targeted - Byron Central Apartments, Grafton Correctional Centre and Acmena Juvenile Justice Centre, Lismore Shopping Square, Casino RSM Club and Alstonville Adventist Retirement Village
- Developing an Electronic Waste Research project aimed to quantify the problem of electronic waste across the NEWF region and conduct a review of the research available on the Internet and in printed literature about the issue as the basis for preparing a report outlining the opportunities for managing electronic waste on a regional basis
- Launched of "The Green House" Mobile Waste Education Unit. The unit has been developed to encourage the community to adopt waste-free lifestyles in the NEWF region. 25 events booked for 2005/2006
- Developing a Regional Education Plan, which will be adapted by other voluntary waste groups. The plan is designed to provide a strategic approach to regional education plans, incorporating State government policy and guidelines.
- Training workshops conducted on an annual basis for landfill and transfer station operators covering site management, hazardous waste, waste legislation, nuisance, waste separation, OH & S, leachate, landfill as and sharps disposal
- Established the North Coast Environmental Education Reference Group to support best practice education projects/partnership arrangements through networking and mentoring opportunities.
- Facilitation of the Eco-Friendly Youth Project on the North Coast of NSW to adopt sustainable practices, and act as a central eco-learning hub for clients and the community

Growth Of Resource Recovery Infrastructure

- Introduction of improved domestic waste management services:
 - Lismore City Council has a combined weekly organics and fortnightly waste collection
 - Clarence Valley Council has a combined three bin system (waste, recycling and organics)
 - Byron Shire Council has a combine variable pricing for waste services (80L, 140L and 240L) and expanded recycling service
- Member councils have implemented resource recovery services for commercial premises including co-mingled recycling and garden organic collections

NORTH EAST WASTE FORUM (NEWF)

Regional Consolidation Of Infrastructure/Resources

- Prior the amalgamation of the Clarence Valley Council a regional group was formed, Clarence Waste Solutions, to combine domestic waste, recycling and garden organics collections for the four councils (Grafton, Maclean, Prestine Waters, Copmanhurst). The councils closed a number of small landfills/transfer station sites, with the Grafton Landfill acting as the regional landfill for the group
- Ballina Shire Council Recycling Transfer Station now accepts material from Lismore City Council and Richmond Valley Council
- The groups is currently investigating a regional solution to organics management including the use of a regional facility
- A Regional Green Waste Shredding Service has been introduced into the region. Councils can still negotiate their preference in site location, frequency, quantities, contamination, size and quality of product
- Planning for regional contracts in metal waste, concrete & demolition recycling and tyre disposal has commenced
- Investigating a regional landfill/resource recovery facility.

RIVERINA EAST WASTE GROUP (REROC)

Key Activities/Achievements

- Completion of the regional plastics audit identifying the volumes and types of plastic waste products in the REROC region. REROC have commenced working with businesses in the region to encourage the development of a regional processing facility and examine opportunities to recycle silage wrap and e-waste.
- The Plastic Bags Exchange program provided people living in the REROC region with a way to recycle their unwanted plastic bags. 10,000 bags were distributed throughout the region and Councils collected approximately 20,000 plastic bags for recycling
- Installation of waste oil recycling facilities in landfills throughout the region and the commencement of a collection contract
- A Smart Gardening project promotes composting, reuse of green and kitchen waste, and less water usage in gardens. The project was successfully conducted amount 23 View and Garden Clubs, local councils and 31 nurseries in the region
- All member councils attended the DEC's industry assessment and cleaner production workshop. REROC is progressing its work with local businesses to improve recycling

RIVERINA EAST WASTE GROUP (REROC)

Growth Of Resource Recovery Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Partnership with NSW Department of Primary Industries and Charles Sturt University to conduct a City to Soil project in the Wagga Wagga region
Regional Consolidation Of Infrastructure/Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In conjunction with Kurrabung Recyclers - investigating infrastructure needs and collection of silage wrap and e-waste throughout the region after the results from the 2005 Plastic Audit ▪ The group are working closely with a local Wagga Wagga community group to educate residents on the risks of unwanted used sharps and the benefits of recycling. This has been relayed in a brochure outlining these issues ▪ A Green Waste Composting Trial is being conducted at Charles Sturt University of close the loop system green & organic waste processing ▪ A litter trouble spot hotline has been activated. The database is used for the development of a third regional waste strategy 2004/2005. In a targeted tourist/holiday campaign 2,000 personal ashtrays and 5,000 car tidy bags were distributed to residents, visitors and people travelling through the region. Driver Reviver teams and displays included stickers, postcards, car games and posters promoting the "Don't Be A Tosser" message

Mid Coast Regional Waste Group (MIDWASTE)

Key Activities/Achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Infrastructure cost sharing study completed with Great Lakes, Greater Taree and Gloucester to examine AWT options, shared recycling services and landfill improvements ▪ Program development with oyster farmers for the collection and disposal of bitumen coats oyster sticks that aims to phase out the use of tar or tar coated products within oyster leases ▪ Performance audits undertaken of the Great Lakes Materials Recovery Facility ▪ Implementation of the "Midwaste Trader", promoting recycling, reuse and repair businesses in the mid north coast region via the Midwaste website ▪ Development of Asbestos policies and procedures for waste management staff ▪ Investigation into true cost of landfilling has provided cost comparisons to support alternative waste technologies with the potential for substantial diversions of waste going to landfill
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Mid Coast Regional Waste Group (MIDWASTE)

<p>Growth Of Resource Recovery Infrastructure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shared contracts for mulching of green waste, collection of hazardous waste and collection of scrap metal have provided services that were not previously available to some areas due to high costs for individual councils, or remote facilities eg. Stroud. The Hazardous Waste Contract has enabled a much broader range of hazardous waste materials to be removed from the waste stream than previously in place. Further, the frequency of collection has enabled these services to be promoted at specific times thereby further increasing capture rates. A television advertisement about hazardous materials supports this program ▪ Tendering for Concrete & Demolition Recycling will commence before the end of the financial year ▪ Ensuring the provision of recycling services to all Primary Schools in the Hastings, Great Lakes and Greater Taree, therefore improving recovery of recyclables. Each Primary school is provided with tubs for each classroom and a free recycling service. It is likely this project will expand to other council areas ▪ The group aims to continue to increase resource recovery including expanding the range of recyclables and continuing investigation into new recycling schemes, for example e-waste recycling
<p>Regional Consolidation Of Infrastructure/Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coffs Harbour City Council, Bellingen Shire Council and Nambucca Shire Council have formed a regional partnership, becoming "Coffs Coast Waste Services", for collection of recycling, organics and other waste. Nambucca previously had no recycling service or organic service, and Bellingen was using a less effective recycling tub system and no organics. The three councils will share a new MRF at Coffs Harbour and a new AWT system to be opened later in 2006. Through this arrangement cost savings are estimated at 22% for processing 55,000 tonnes of materials from the waste stream per annum. The agreement will consolidate the regions infrastructure resulting in three of the landfills converting to transfer stations and the construction of a Biomass Plant for processing the regions food and garden organics stream. ▪ Kempsey Shire Council is now committee to send 2200 tonnes of recyclables per year to the new MRF currently being constructed at Cairncross in the Hastings. Currently Kempsey has no domestic recycling service ▪ Great Lakes Council, Greater Taree City Council and Gloucester Council all now share the one MRF located at Great Lakes. Gloucester Shire Council previously did not have a recycling service and Greater Taree City Council had a primitive system using tubs. Indications at this time are that recycling rates from Greater Taree City Council will double

Mid Coast Regional Waste Group (MIDWASTE)

Regional Consolidation Of Infrastructure/Resources

- A comprehensive study into infrastructure sharing for the southern region (Great Lakes Council, Greater Taree & Gloucester) will soon be completed. It has outlined potential benefits – economical, environmental and social – for sharing infrastructure and resources between the three councils, including investigation of AWT, landfill and service sharing for up to a 25 year time frame
- Tackling the problem of limited access to processing facilities and availability of markets for recovered materials. Port-Macquarie-Hastings Council undertook a contract with Remondis Organics Resource Recovery Facility (ORRF) that services the local agricultural area and household kerbside organics recycling collections.

NORTHERN INLAND REGIONAL WASTE (NIRW)

Key Activities/Achievements

- Completion of the Regional Litter Strategy that focuses on community awareness, knowledge and understanding of littering issues and how it impacts on the New England & North West of NSW.
- Completion of the Regional Organic Mapping Programs Stage one and stage two Feasibility Report highlighting the opportunities/directions from the results gained through Stage One is nearing completion
- Joint partnership with the Namoi Catchment Management Authority to conduct the Sustainable On Farm Waste Management Campaign. This program focuses on removing unwanted scrap metal and other waste from eroded gullies on rural properties and the rehabilitation of these sites. 65 farms registered for the campaign in the Namoi region
- Planning has commenced to conduct a regional computer recycling in partnership with the Armidale Computer Library. This will involve the expansion of the existing facilities for the Armidale Computer Library to enable the increase of unwanted computers from the regions landfills
- Completion of the Waste Education Trailer. The trailer has been designed to promote waste education programs conducted by NIRW throughout the region to the local community, schools and businesses. NIRW Member Councils are encouraged to utilise the trailer at field days, conferences and promotion days in the local government area
- 96,000 reusable bags were distributed throughout the NIRW Member Councils to promote alternatives to plastic bags
- Educational campaigns include Waste to Art & Design, Second Hand Saturday and Reel Waste

NORTHERN INLAND REGIONAL WASTE (NIRW)	
Growth Of Resource Recovery Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regional contracts for collection and processing of green waste, metal waste, drumMUSTER and hazardous chemicals have been in place for member councils since 2003 ▪ Inverell Shire Council have recently upgraded their MRF facilities to assist with and increase their processing capabilities
Regional Consolidation Of Infrastructure/Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Guyra Shire Council MRF is accepting kerbside recyclables from Gwydir Shire Council ▪ Programs such as drumMUSTER, Hazardous Chemical Collection and Used Oil Recycling have meant that appropriate storage facilities of such materials have been installed at landfills throughout the region
RIVERINA WASTE GROUP (RIVROC)	
Key Activities/Achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Kerbside recycling survey undertaken with residents from Griffith, Leeton and Narrandera Council areas has been analysed and currently progressing using Model Contract for recycling collections, developed by DEC. Investigating MRF siting at council waste facilities. ▪ Completion of the Regional Organic Mapping Plan Stage 1. The findings of the study indicated that most organic waste streams in the region were already being reused ▪ Facilitating an Industry Liaison Group to communicate and disseminate information between industry and local government. Bi monthly meetings are being conducted with the aim to develop into a strong lobbying group ▪ Event Recycling Kit comprising of recycling bins, 2 trailers and education material. The kit has been designed for the effective collection of waste at major events ▪ Plastic Bag Reduction Program resulted in 200,000 plastic bags diverted from landfill ▪ Schools Educational Kit to promote waste education programs throughout the primary and secondary schools in the Western Riverina region ▪ Community Information Newsletter providing information to the community on waste management initiatives in the local area. The newsletter is included in the Council rate notices (over 55,000) ▪ Role out of the Don't Waste the Riverina to educate the community and industry on avoiding litter and effective waste management ▪ Database development, mapping framework, cost benefit analysis of the opportunities available in recycling were implemented from the outcomes of a regional waste audit

RIVERINA WASTE GROUP (RIVROC)	
Growth Of Resource Recovery Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A collective tender for scrap metal between seven RIVROC councils has been contracted. The contract has the provision to extended into the MUROC region
Regional Consolidation Of Infrastructure/Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A Hazardous Household Chemical Collection and Regional Organics Waste Management Plan has been undertaken in conjunction with MUROC councils ▪ Options for processing organics from the wine and food processors in Griffith and surrounding areas are being investigated. Carbon Partners are doing a feasibility study on establishing a Biogas Renewable Energy Plant in the region

MURRAY WASTE GROUP (MURRAYROC)	
Key Activities/Achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Undertaken process identifying specific needs of the region. Issues of concern include vast distances, lack of infrastructure and due to its geographical location, the reliance of facilities across the border into Victoria ▪ Completion of the Waste Data Collection and Regional Waste Management Strategy Project. The appointment of a new officer in April 2004 assisted with the preparation of regional tenders for the collection was waste, organics and hazardous waste ▪ Stage 1 of the Regional Organic Mapping study completed. ▪ Stage 2 of the Regional Organic Mapping Study has commenced further to the recommendations from the Stage 1 study. The aim is to investigate establishing a central processing facility for organics in the Albury region ▪ Household Chemical collection program conducted jointly with RIVROC. ▪ Collective contract for recovery of metal. ▪ Investigating infrastructure consolidation.

SOUTH EAST RESOURCE RECOVERY REGIONAL ORGANISATION OF COUNCILS (SERRROC)

Key Activities/Achievements

- Establishment of the South East Regional Waste Group and commitment from Queanbeyan Council to administer funds and execution of regional plan. MoUs are being pursued with Bega Valley Shire Council, Bombala Council, Boorowa Shire Council, Cooma-Monaro Council, Eurobodalla Shire Council, Goulburn Mulwaree Council, Harden Shire Council, Queanbeyan Shire Council, Snowy River Shire Council, Upper Lachlan Shire, Yass Valley Council and Young Shire Council
- Promotion of recycling at community events through lightweight recycling lids
- Establishment of a rural community resource recovery model in Tallaganda Shire
- Joint project between DEC and Queanbeyan City Council trying to expand markets for household organic wastes through a series of soil improvement research projects on local farms
- Infrastructure protection/salinity abatement projects in areas such as Murrumbateman, and Wallendbeen as well as Wakool and Berrigan Shires