

Submission

No 20

INQUIRY INTO MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT IN NSW

Organisation:

Name: Mr Ian Williams

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Ian Williams

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Inquiry into Municipal Waste Management in NSW

Dear Sirs,

I wish to make the following submission to the Inquiry:

Effectiveness

I have visited the recycling area (buy-back) at Eastern Creek as I was curious as to what was available. It was disappointing to see that for a population of well over 1 million there was less than 800 square metres devoted to a Buy Back area. To me this was appalling as it reflected how little effort was focussed on the opportunity to recycle at this site. In reflection of days prior to legislation it would not be uncommon to see tens of people scavenging amongst any site, I am aware of the legislation however it was disappointing to see that opportunity to buy back was so small and considered a necessity rather than a viability.

My Observation was that if Eastern Creek was anything to go by, then it would be merely an exercise in compliance with additional legislation being introduced.

Also there was a limited area for parking at the Eastern Creek Centre and whilst I was aware that the area was a disposal site, I had to travel *between* visiting vehicles the vast majority were trucks and this involved a danger to access the area.

I wrote a letter to the Waste Manager of the Sydney region (Including Menai, and Sydney tips) and I was informed that it was '*not possible*' to provide a buy back facility at Menai although it was mentioned that rubbish was recycled. I observed one truck arrive and dump over one hundred working Televisions into Sydney land-fill (Menai tip). It was explained in the letter (attached) that it was 'too hard?' to resell such items, however, it was heard to be said, that it was too much effort by *that* person within the position and no incentive to add another so-called Buy Back area.

Whilst I was at Menai disposing of my own domestic waste (approximately 40 minutes), I watched many sellable household items dumped into the skips for burial and that motivated me to writing the letter.

It seems that whilst Menai disposal depot is the largest in the Sydney Basin, (In fact I suspect Australia), it does not offer the public opportunity to purchase recycled products. The waste (what is recycled) is commercially sold. (Hence the majority becomes land-fill. With only sorted items being recycled) A very disappointing observation.

I believe that an *operating* Buy Back Centre within most waste disposal centres would add to best practice for waste management.

I am very pleased to say that My Council, Shoalhaven City Council, does and excellent job of recycling.

Best Practice

I live in the Shoalhaven and am very pleased that Shoalhaven City Council very successfully manages a buy back area within each depot. The Nowra depot, for example, employs about three people in the buy back area and is privately operated. As an objective secondary example, Wagga Wagga waste centre is of a similar standard, and, so is Ballina Disposal centre.

Minimising harm

It also appears to be uncommon practice to place items out for bulk pick up by councils. Also it would be good policy to gazette unclaimed motor vehicles in newspapers to allow claim or purchase rather than disposal. This would also give opportunity for members of the public to 'claim' items prior to pick up.

I would suggest that these dates be more widely gazetted/promulgated. A few reasons:

- a. As an observation it is that many members of the public tend to 'raid' these bulk disposals.
- b. By Advertising, the bulk disposal is widely known, and if items can be recycled then they would not find their way to land-fill (essentially recycling)
- c. Provides members of the public to profit, and also reduce waste disposal.

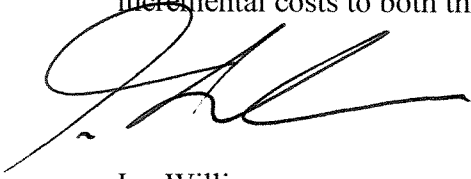
Also as an incentive to reduce waste, a 'kilo for kilo' recycled amount could be used as an incentive to recycle products? Dollar for dollar? All saleable or recycleables should be free from a weighbridge fee as applies in the Shoalhaven.

Development of New Technology

Lastly if all waste was ground up into small particles and not dumped it would result in a slower fill of sites. Mainly because there are small significant pockets of trapped air and void spaces in each waste load. By grinding all rubbish it would be possible to recycle all waste by chemical, biological, heat and separation processes. Or it would at worse, take up less space than merely bulldozing it into the ground. I realise that this may be currently an expensive proposition however I believe it will become less expensive as time passes.

I suspect that it may be viable to pursue the option of recycling existing waste areas which have been closed (Simply put, tip mining.) and I suspect that millions of tonnes of materials are thrown away without considering recycling of this nature, Prior to the 1980's little or nothing in most depots was recycled, and the opportunity to 'mine' an asset may lead to a growth in dumping 'real estate' to be reused or allowing land to be reclaimed.

I have offered these submissions as I believe that some may provide lower incremental costs to both the user, and the provider.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Williams', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Ian Williams