



1) Could you please outline for the Committee what form of Indemnity Insurance and/or relevant compensatory mechanisms that your company has (or plans to have) in place if a primary producer's stock or produce are adversely affected by the emissions or operations from any of your proposed Energy from Waste Facilities?

Veolia maintains comprehensive corporate insurance coverage in accordance with statutory requirements, including public and product liability insurance. This approach is consistent with standard practice across all our facilities and regulated industries.

The Woodlawn ARC will comply with the New South Wales (NSW) Government's stringent air emission limits. Also, the Woodlawn ARC's publicly available Environmental Impact Statement¹ sets out how we will manage the facility and the plant in a way that complies with the NSW environment protection legislation.

¹ NSW Planning, 2022, [Woodlawn Advanced Recovery Centre Environmental Impact Statement](#)



2) In evidence relating to operations at the Woodlawn facility near Tarago, reference was made to “technical exceedances” occurring while operations were said to be conducted in accordance with licence conditions. How is the term “technical exceedance” defined for the purposes of environmental licensing and compliance under the Protection of the Environment Operations Act, and does it have any formal status in EPA compliance policy?

The term ‘technical exceedances’ was used as shorthand in the hearing to describe situations where the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* (POEO Act) requires reporting when any licence condition is breached. Reporting is required even if there was no material harm as defined by section 147 of the POEO Act.



3) In relation to the Woodlawn facility near Tarago, EPA-issued penalty notices have been publicly referenced in connection with licence exceedances. How are the issuing of penalty notices or findings of non-compliance reconciled with the assertion that operations were conducted in accordance with licence conditions?

The Woodlawn site has over 1,000 approval conditions across multiple regulatory instruments. This complexity means conditions can be breached, despite best efforts, such as during periods of very high and unseasonal rainfall.

It is important to distinguish between a breach of a licence condition and environmental harm. An exceedance of a condition does not mean air, land, or water pollution resulted.



4) In forming the view that no pollution of the environment occurred in the Woodlawn/Tarago instances, did that assessment include consideration of odour impacts, noting that odour can constitute pollution under the POEO Act?

The view was in relation to land and waterways.

Veolia acknowledges some odour events have occurred, and we are committed to addressing these. We are actively implementing technology solutions to monitor and mitigate these occurrences.



5) What evidence was relied upon to conclude that licence exceedances did not result in environmental pollution in the Woodlawn/Tarago situation?

The *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* (POEO Act) uses a broad definition of pollution (Chapter 56), with section 147 defining a pollution incident as those where there is material harm to the environment. The New South Wales Environment Protection Agency (NSW EPA), as the administrator of the POEO Act, is responsible for determining whether licence exceedances constitute material harm.

Veolia reports all exceedances to the NSW EPA in accordance with legislative requirements.



6) Evidence referred to compliance across international operations. Did that assessment include enforcement actions, penalties or regulatory interventions imposed by overseas regulators?

There is no evidence of environmental harm or human health impacts from Veolia's energy from waste facilities globally. This is supported by scientific studies and decades of operational experience. Reportable events do occur at facilities, as with all industrial facilities, but they are different to events that result in a material impact on environmental or health concerns.

Veolia is and will continue to be transparent in its operations, and will publish its operational performance in line with the New South Wales Environment Protection Authority's Energy from Waste Policy Statement¹.

¹ New South Wales Environment Protection Authority (2021) [Energy from Waste Policy Statement](#)



7) Beyond general statements of compliance, how are compliance issues at existing Veolia facilities - including breaches, enforcement actions or operational problems - formally incorporated into the assessment of risk, licence conditions or monitoring requirements for proposed facilities such as Parkes and Tarago?

In New South Wales, Veolia operates within a robust regulatory framework that ensures operational learnings systematically inform risk management and monitoring protocols.



8) Public statements have asserted that the proposed Tarago EfW facility will not release harmful emissions. What completed technical assessments or regulatory determinations support those statements, given that the project remains under assessment and further emissions-related information has been requested by the EPA?

The New South Wales (NSW) 2022 Energy from Waste Policy Statement¹ established air quality criteria, confirmed by the NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer² in 2025 as being among the most stringent globally.

The NSW Environment Protection Authority has stated it has no safety concerns about energy from waste facilities (see their Energy from Waste Factsheet³).

The Woodlawn ARC's Environmental Impact Statement⁴ included three technical reports relevant to emission impacts on the surrounding area:

- Air Quality Impact Assessment - Appendix O
- Human Health Impact Assessment - Appendix P
- Best Available Technologies Assessment Report - Appendix L(i)

These assessments concluded the facility can be safely operated. All reports are available on the NSW Planning's State Significant Development website⁵.

¹ New South Wales Environment Protection Authority (NSW EPA), 2022, [Energy from Waste Policy Statement](#)

² NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer, 7 April 2025, [Response to Minister Sharpe - International practice standards and controls for energy from waste facilities](#)

³ NSW EPA, [Energy from Waste Fact Sheet](#)

⁴ NSW Planning, 2022, State Significant Development [Veolia Woodlawn ARC Environmental Impact Statement](#)

⁵ Ibid.



9) In December 2022, the EPA requested further information in relation to emissions and other matters for the Tarago proposal. Which of those matters have been responded to, and which remain outstanding at the time of giving evidence?

Veolia's response to the New South Wales Environment Protection Authority's (NSW EPA's) 6 December 2022 request is being progressed. We are in communication with NSW Government agencies regarding the response timeframe.

Our response is being finalised to ensure comprehensive alignment with current regulatory guidelines, including those arising from the NSW EPA's Energy from Waste framework review¹ and Waste and Circular Infrastructure Plan².

¹ NSW EPA, 2025, [Energy from waste framework review](#)

² NSW EPA, 2025, [Waste and Circular Infrastructure Plan](#)



10) What process has been undertaken to respond to objector submissions and the additional matters raised by the EPA in December 2022, and what explains the absence of published responses to date?

Veolia is working through the process set out in the New South Wales (NSW) State Significant Development Guidelines¹ for responding to submissions. We remain in communication with the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure regarding the Submissions Report, and with the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) regarding the 6 December 2022 request².

The response timeframe reflects the need to address submissions comprehensively and to align with regulatory changes following the Chief Scientist and Engineer's review of air emission limits and the NSW EPA's Waste and Circular Infrastructure Plan³.

¹ NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI), 2024, [State Significant Development Guidelines](#)

² NSW EPA, 6 December 2022, Letter to DPHI regarding [Woodlawn Advanced Energy Recovery Centre](#) (SSD-21184278) Additional Information required following review of Environment Impact Statement,

³ NSW EPA, 2025, [Waste and Circular Infrastructure Plan](#)



11) Evidence referred to the management of bottom ash, fly ash and other residuals. What evidence demonstrates that heavy metals, dioxins and PFAS in residuals will not accumulate in soils, crops or water over time?

The New South Wales Environment Protection Authority (NSW EPA) regulates waste management to protect human health and the environment. Veolia will operate under and comply with the EPA licence conditions, policies and guidelines (e.g. Waste Classification Guidelines¹), and the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997*.

Management of bottom ash, fly ash and other residuals is the subject of the Woodlawn ARC amendment. Details regarding the scope of the amendment can be found in the Amendment Request Letter² and revised studies will be published when complete.

¹ New South Wales Environment Protection Authority, 2021, [Waste Classification Guidelines](#)

² EMM, 28 June 2024, [Amendment Request Letter](#) to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure



12) In overseas facilities cited as evidence as comparators - what publicly available emissions and residuals data exists from facilities with feedstock composition, operational scale and regulatory conditions comparable to those proposed in NSW, and how was comparability assessed?

The New South Wales (NSW) Energy from Waste Policy Statement¹ requires energy from waste facilities to demonstrate proven technology using a comparable reference facility. Veolia selected its Staffordshire Energy Recovery Facility (ERF),² which has been operating since 2014 as the primary comparator. This is because it is comparable in scale to the proposed Woodlawn ARC.

Relevant publicly available reports from the Woodlawn ARC Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)³, include:

- Woodlawn ARC EIS Appendix L(ii) Reference Facility Assessment Report, 2022 on facility design performance.
- Woodlawn ARC EIS Appendix L(i) BAT Assessment Report, 2022 comparing the proposed technology for Woodlawn ARC and its emissions performance.
- Woodlawn ARC EIS Appendix E Ash Management Study 2022 on Incinerator Bottom Ash and Air Pollution Control residues and management approaches. It also addresses feedstock composition.

Furthermore, the United Kingdom's Environment Agency publishes annual emissions monitoring reports⁴ for all operational energy from waste plants in England, including the Staffordshire ERF.

¹ New South Wales Environment Protection Authority, 2021, [Energy from Waste Policy Statement](#)

² Veolia, 2023, Staffordshire - Energy Recovery Facilities, <https://www.staffordshire.veolia.co.uk/staffordshire-erf/energy-recovery-facility>

³ NSW Planning, 2022, [Woodlawn Advanced Recovery Centre](#)

⁴ United Kingdom Environment Agency, 2025, [Incinerator Annual Monitoring Reporting](#)



13) In relying on overseas EfW facilities as evidence of safety and acceptability, what evidence has been considered regarding community response, including opposition, legal challenges, regulatory reviews, or facility closures or early retirements, and how was that evidence weighed in assessing long-term suitability for NSW?

The New South Wales Government is responsible for policy and regulatory settings for energy from waste facilities.



14) If an EfW facility becomes commercially unviable or ceases operation before the end of its design life, what obligations exist regarding site remediation, residual waste management, and protection of surrounding land uses?

The New South Wales Environment Protection Authority establishes decommissioning obligations through the environment protection licence, which apply regardless of the reason for facility closure.

Veolia has addressed decommissioning in Section 4.9 of the Woodlawn ARC Environmental Impact Statement.¹

¹ New South Wales Planning, 2022, [Woodlawn Advanced Recovery Centre](#)



15) EPA records show repeated Veolia environmental breaches at the Woodlawn facility across multiple reporting periods, including exceedances, operational failures and unauthorised releases. Breaches have included issues related to leachate management, odour emissions, contaminated surface water flows, landfill cell integrity, and failures in monitoring and reporting.

- a. **How does Veolia reconcile repeated EPA notices requiring corrective actions with a claim of strong operational performance?**
- b. **What governance or monitoring systems failed that allowed these breaches to occur?**
- c. **What independently verified NSW EPA compliance data is available to show improvement, if any?**
- d. **If Veolia systems are 'best available technology', how did breaches occur?**
- e. **If external factors contributed to breaches, what prevents similar failures at proposed energy from waste facilities?**
- f. **What community impacts resulted from these breaches?**
 - i. **If none, has this been verified by independent monitoring?**
 - ii. **If not, how can this be verified without independent monitoring?**

15 (a) How does Veolia reconcile repeated EPA notices requiring corrective actions with a claim of strong operational performance?

Veolia takes environmental compliance with licence conditions seriously.

The Woodlawn site is a former copper, lead and zinc mine, which had significant legacy issues. Veolia's management of the site has prevented serious environmental harm that would have occurred if the site remained as it was.

Most Penalty Infringement Notices relate to freeboard exceedances during three consecutive La Niña years with unprecedented rainfall exceeding the site's 2017 water balance model. Freeboard exceedances do not constitute environmental releases. The site has maintained zero liquid discharge with no overflows under Veolia management. All dams are now below the freeboard due to capital infrastructure improvements to manage and treat liquid volumes, including new containment facilities such as storage dams and tanks, and a reverse osmosis system.

Three verifiable container leaks occurred across 53,000 container movements between January 2023 and May 2024. These were minor drips with no evidence of environmental impact, as confirmed by independent creek water quality monitoring. A third-party engineer approved by the New South Wales Environment Protection Authority (NSW EPA) reviewed container maintenance practices in 2023. Veolia implemented the review's recommendations, including leak detection testing and modified inspection procedures for all newly purchased containers.

15(b): What governance or monitoring systems failed that allowed these breaches to occur?

Breaches primarily resulted from unprecedented rainfall during consecutive La Niña years (2020-2023, 2024-2025)¹. Strong governance and monitoring systems prevented overflows.

¹ Bureau of Meteorology, 2026, [Australian rainfall during El Niño and La Niña events](#)



Infrastructure investments including substantial containment tanks and reverse osmosis treatment have been implemented. These infrastructure investments are some of the largest in the sector.

15(c) What independently verified NSW EPA compliance data is available to show improvement, if any?

Independent Environmental Audits and Independent Odour Audits are required under the operating licence. These audits are submitted to the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (the Department) who provides them to the NSW EPA, and are publicly available on the Veolia Woodlawn [website](#).

These audits verify improvements including: no leaking containers observed since September 2023, odour levels consistent with background levels, and infrastructure investments preventing future freeboard exceedances.

15(d) If Veolia systems are ‘best available technology’, how did breaches occur?

Breaches resulted from unprecedented rainfall during consecutive La Niña years (2020-2023, 2024-2025) exceeding historical climate data used in facility design. NSW EPA has approved updated water balance models incorporating climate change projections².

15(e) If external factors contributed to breaches, what prevents similar failures at proposed energy from waste facilities?

Energy from waste facilities are not subject to the same weather-related operational challenges as landfills. The technology provides climate-resilient waste management infrastructure.

15(f) What community impacts resulted from these breaches?

i. If none, has this been verified by independent monitoring?

ii. If not, how can this be verified without independent monitoring?

We stand by our position that no material harm has occurred.

Independent annual audits provided to the Department and NSW EPA verify this position and are publicly available on the Veolia Woodlawn website.

² NSW EPA, 2025, [Environment Protection Licence - 11436](#)



16) In the event of an unanticipated release of air pollutants, what process will Veolia follow for immediate community notification and pollutant disclosure?

Veolia will comply with the New South Wales (NSW) Energy from Waste Policy Statement¹ requirements.

We have committed to developing a detailed communication and engagement strategy as outlined in the Woodlawn ARC Environmental Impact Statement².

All notification procedures will be established in accordance with statutory obligations under the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* and relevant NSW Environment Protection Authority policies.

¹ NSW EPA, 2021, [Energy from Waste Policy Statement](#)

² NSW Planning, 2022, [Woodlawn Advanced Resource Centre](#)



17) How will waste be separated to ensure no hazardous materials and recyclables are combusted?

Veolia will manage feedstock in accordance with the New South Wales Energy from Waste Policy Statement¹. The Woodlawn ARC Environmental Impact Statement² includes a Waste Acceptance Protocol whose two parts - a Sampling Analysis and Quality Plan and Waste Delivery Plan - set out how waste will be managed.

Veolia will contract with councils that meet the Energy from Waste Policy Statement's requirements. Source separation by waste generators is the primary mechanism to ensure hazardous materials and recyclables are not accepted at the facility.

¹ New South Wales Environment Protection Authority, 2021, [NSW Energy from Waste Policy Statement](#)

² New South Wales Planning, 2022, [Woodlawn Advanced Recovery Centre Environmental Impact Statement](#)



18) What guarantee will Veolia make that there will be no contamination to agriculture, environment or human health as a result of any future energy from waste facilities?

The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) licences the air emissions of all heavy industries in New South Wales (NSW). The Woodlawn ARC will be designed and operated to meet the stringent emission limits set by the NSW EPA using high-temperature controlled combustion and multi-stage flue-gas cleaning systems.

A comprehensive Air Quality Impact Assessment (AQIA) and Human Health Risk Assessment (HHRA) using this technology found that the Woodlawn ARC's air emissions would be within safe limits for agriculture, environment, and human health.¹ The AQIA was prepared in accordance with NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) requirements and the HHRA was prepared in accordance with the national enHealth guidance. These assessments are reviewed by multiple government agencies including NSW Health and the Department of Primary Industries.

Veolia will install real-time ambient air quality monitoring stations and implement a soil sampling program with baseline data collection for ongoing comparison throughout the facility's operational life. All operations will be conducted in accordance with EPA licence conditions and regulatory requirements designed to protect human health, the environment and agriculture.

¹ NSW Planning, 2022, [Woodlawn Advanced Recovery Centre](#) Environmental Impact Statement



19) In the hearing on 15 December, the EPA stated that energy from waste facilities “recover some materials... but they also generate heat and electricity. So if they’re anchoring a precinct of industrial processes it can be a very efficient way to capture heat, and that heat and that heat essentially doesn’t have to be generated a different way”. What, if any, neighbouring industries require heat input?

Energy from waste facilities can operate as large-scale combined heat and power systems. Internationally, the resulting low-carbon heat is captured and used in district heating, manufacturing, and food production. The electricity is either supplied to the grid or via a ‘behind the meter’ arrangement.

The Woodlawn site already uses waste heat from the landfill gas electricity generation units for aquaculture. The Woodlawn ARC proposal is to generate electricity for supply to the grid. Veolia will explore opportunities to export heat to co-located industries if feasible in the future.



20) What is the maximum amount of waste to be processed at the proposed waste to energy facility?

- a. Will there be capacity for the facility to process more waste in the future?**
 - b. Will transport of waste be limited to rail?**
 - i. If not, what other modes of transport will be utilised for the waste?**
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The Woodlawn ARC is designed with a limit of 380,000 tonnes of waste annually.

- a. Any increase beyond 380,000 tonnes per annum would require regulatory approvals including an amendment to the Development Consent.
- b. Transport arrangements are expected to remain consistent with current operations of approximately 90% rail and 10% road transport. Appendix T: Traffic Impact Assessment to the Woodlawn ARC Environment Impact Statement¹ contains more information on transport arrangements.
 - i. The Woodlawn ARC will use the existing rail and road transport arrangements.

¹ NSW Planning, 2022, [Woodlawn Advance Recovery Centre](#) Environmental Impact Statement



21) What process will be followed for the disposal of bottom ash?

i. Where will it be disposed of?

The Woodlawn ARC Environmental Impact Statement, Appendix E: Ash Management Study¹ Chapter 5.1 sets out the detailed process for managing and disposing of the bottom ash.

The bottom ash will be disposed of in the Woodlawn bioreactor.

¹ NSW Planning, 2022, [Woodlawn Advanced Recovery Centre](#) Environmental Impact Statement