Submission
No 93

INQUIRY INTO PROPOSED ENERGY FROM WASTE FACILITIES

Organisation: MidCoast Council

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MIDCOAST council

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Select Committee on Proposed Energy from Waste Facilities

Doc ID: 18149196
Enquiries: Person

6 Macquarie St,
Sydney NSW, 2000

Dear Members of the Select Committee,

Submission on Proposed Energy from Waste (EfW) Facilities

Energy-from-Waste (EfW) is used internationally as part of integrated waste management systems. Facilities operate in countries such as Japan, Denmark and Sweden, including examples located within metropolitan areas. These plants treat residual waste that remains after reuse and recycling, reducing landfill volumes and generating electricity and/or heat.

For the Parkes proposal, residual waste from Sydney would be transported approximately 362 kilometres. From a logistics perspective, locating EfW infrastructure within or near the Sydney Basin would place processing closer to the waste source and reduce long-distance haulage.

EfW and recycling can operate together when EfW capacity is matched to genuine residual waste and policy frameworks prioritise avoidance, reuse and recycling first. Jurisdictions with EfW and high recycling performance show that complementary outcomes are achievable when infrastructure is correctly scaled.

Australia's recycling capacity faces constraints, including limited processing infrastructure and disruption risks such as major material recovery facility (MRF) fires. Low-value or hard-to-recycle streams, such as soft plastics and textiles often lack viable end markets; in some cases, the cost of recycling these materials can exceed thousands of dollars per tonne. EfW provides a treatment pathway for residual materials until circular economy solutions become commercially viable.

NSW can support a modern, integrated waste system by applying evidence-based standards to EfW: clear safeguards aligned with the waste hierarchy, appropriate siting (including consideration of the proximity principle), robust emissions controls and monitoring based off Industrial Emissions Directive (IED, 2010/75/EU), which imposes Best Available Techniques (BAT) standards, transparent community engagement, and alignment with recycling and resource-recovery targets.

On this basis, EfW can be evaluated as a mature technology for managing residual waste in NSW alongside recycling and other recovery options.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this submission.

Yours sincerely,

David Rees

Waste Manager, E: M: