

NSW BRANCH COMMITTEE MEETING

8.00 - 9.00am

Tuesday 10 February 2026

Via Zoom

MINUTES

1. Welcome and apologies

Attendees: Gayle Sloan, Richard Collins, Jason Sweeney, Mark Glover, Ark Du, Andrew Pearce, Nicole Greenwood, Shaun Devine, Alex Morris, Miles Mason, Brad Searle, Sam Swain, Ron Wainberg, Phil Carbins, James Barwood, Brad Searle, Andrew Kosciuszko, Michelle Mandl and Lisa Lepore.

Apologies received: Jennifer Hughes, Drisya Pavithran, Alarik Wong, Ed Nicholas, Shaun Rainford, Garth Lamb.

2. Previous minutes and actions arising

i. Previous Minutes

The minutes of the 9 December 2025 NSW Branch Committee meeting were confirmed as a true and accurate record.

Moved: Shaun Devine *Seconded:* Ark Du

ii. Actions arising:

a. Review of branch priorities

Ahead of the WMRR Board's refresh of the strategy at their March 2026 Board meetings, the committee contributed what they believe are the key concerns for their sector this year:

C&D:

- Continue advocacy focus from 2025 with EPA on definition of waste, review of supply chain and asbestos. These priorities have not materially changed since last year.
- In terms of asbestos, the OCSE report has made headway. Asbestos management and supply chain waste classification could be brought together under the one priority as inextricably linked.
- Clarity is needed over the definition of waste – and this potentially needs its own initiative.
- Noted that the current review of the RRO/Es also ties into these priorities linking materials testing, definition of waste and asbestos management.

Landfill:

- The sector continues to focus on progressing the guideline review and levy review (particularly regarding engineering material exemptions).
- PFAS CCO implications is front of mind (consultation currently underway) and yet to see impact of any set enforceable limits /compliance measures.
- Emissions monitoring from landfill is gaining traction.

RRMD:

- The working group is looking to take more of a circular economy focus moving forward – focused on designing out waste rather than recycling outputs.
- The group is looking to explore market development to support new and existing infrastructure (which links back too RRO/E framework)

EfW

- Mythbusting EfW remains a focus - including concerns around PFAS in IBAA also being discussed across industry.
- Heads of EPA group should get some consistency for IBAA (EoW code or similar) but there may be challenges for APCr.

- Sector is pushing back on carbon capture (parasitic energy load and cost prohibitive – in UK/EU it is funded by government for research phases to make implementation more viable) . However, if mandated here, it will prevent viability of EfW projects.

Organics

- Ongoing challenges of FOGO mandate and contamination
- Continue the advocacy in being proactive in Mythbusting about the industry – advocating for clean streams at the front end . In particular, there is a need for further public education about the supply chain impacts of what we put into waste streams .

Generator obligations

- “Mandatory stewardship” is conflated with EPR . EPR starts at the beginning, but government conversations are focused on end of life. Genuine producer responsibility must be promoted. Solar PV is an example of this. Smart Energy is a recycling program and is not promoting design for recoverability. We don’t want to set up recycling for existing outputs– instead we need to be talking about generator obligation to design for circularity and long-term use (design out waste).
- Similarly, packaging regulation without design will not be effectual. There is a real risk that the RaWR Act review potentially will keep focusing on end of life rather than generator obligation.
Action: Mark / Richard /Gayle to meet offline to consider messaging around this priority. The concept of “fully informed self-interest” was raised in terms of generating producer buy in.

b. WMRR to invite EPA to present to the Branch on the progress with the RRO/E and the RRF

EPA not ready yet to present as awaiting finalisation of restructure which has halted some progress on the Wilkinson review.

- EnRiskS are reviewing the levels of contaminants and inclusions as a broader class, and a general review of the general orders and exemptions should progress thereafter (noting the general orders have not been reviewed since 2014). Branch members noted that it will be a positive to have an evidence-based, science-led review.
- Acid Sulfate Soils RRO/E gazetted in December.
- Asbestos response to OCSE report should be progressed this year.
- The definition of waste still to come. The classification of waste and end of waste code work should be legislated this year.

Action: WMRR will invite the relevant EPA representative to present to the Branch once the restructure is finalised.

c. WMRR CEO to liaise with EPA to make the EfW requirements clear and that that the correct requirements are visible.

This is especially the case regarding the Table 4 on the 2021 EfW Policy regarding Resource Recovery Criteria.

- This is still progressing with EPA staff indicating the material was updated and old content removed, however this has not yet been completed and old reference material is still available.

3. National advocacy (CEO)

i. Batteries regulations

- NSW Consultation undertaken last year has progressed to draft regulations. Feedback has been incorporated and the regulations are expected to be gazetted shortly.
- A procurement process is being developed for the appointment of a Producer Responsibility Organisation (PRO). The Request for Tender (RFT) for the PRO is expected to go to market mid-year, with the objective of the scheme being operational by the end of the year.
- SA progressing (understood to be aligning with NSW) but also going to election in March will stall progress. VIC may be delayed due to election in November. No news from WA or QLD.

ii. Solar Panel Stewardship

- Federal solar panel grants are currently government-underwritten rather than PRO-led. It was noted that this approach does not appear to reflect a sustainable, long-term producer responsibility model.
- NSW agreed to develop Solar PV RIS at the EMM and has indicated it will proceed independently if national action does not occur by May this year.

iii. NSW Advisory Committees

- The Minister's FOGO Advisory Committee and Circular Economy Advisory Committee are both active, with WMRR CEO serving on both committees.

iv. Packaging Reform

- Packaging reform was discussed during Senate Estimates this week.
- Minister Watt is reviewing the Recycling and Waste Reduction (RaWR) Act, with reforms expected to progress in the first half of the year.

v. Energy from Waste (EfW)

- NSW EPA's EfW information remains out of date. It was noted that outdated information was referenced during the recent NSW inquiry.
- ARRC (Gold Coast) is going to EOI in coming weeks.

vi. Planning and Infrastructure

- Quarterly planned meetings between WMRR and Chris Ritchie (DPHI) will commence this year.
- Discussion noted ongoing concerns regarding streamlining planning approvals via the Development Coordination Authority and the impact of delays on the industry.
- Infrastructure NSW is expected to deliver a new infrastructure strategy this year; however, current delays are being experienced at EPA and local government levels.

vii. Alternative Waste Treatment (AWT) Method

- The AWT method is progressing, with the Australian Resource Recovery Council (ARRC) acting as the proponent.

viii. Container Deposit Scheme (CDS)

- The NSW EPA went out to market in December for a CDS Network Operator.
- NSW Scheme expansion is due by 30 June 2027 (aligned with SA and NT). WA by July this year.

4. Issues

i. Regulatory and policy updates

a. Infrastructure update

- EPA not too far away with finalising the approach for regional NSW for stage 2 of the *Waste and Circular Infrastructure Plan*.
- Materials flow work is sitting with the EPA and expecting feedback until end of March or April.
- The material flow analysis dashboard is expected for release in April – showing material flows by fate and geography.

ii. Submissions/consultations (NSW/National)

- [Chemical Control Order for landfills and STPs](#) (closed 10 February 2026)
- Select Committee on productivity in Australia (20 February 2026)

- NSW Strategic Planning discussion paper (27 February 2026)
 - The committee raised that the document notes the challenges of greenfield development do not consider essential WARR infrastructure.
- RFI Solar Panel Recycling pilot (3 March 2026)
- Inquiry into microplastics (6 March 2026)
- Inquiry into Solar PV reuse and recycling (23 March 2026)

Recent [WMRR submissions](#)

iii. Grants and Funding

[Circular Markets Grants](#) (compost buy back for local councils) – closing 23 March 2026

5. Working group updates

(i) C&D – Jason Sweeney

- Meeting with EPA late last year was positive. Discussion covered testing methodologies and considering options like WA (with declarations from generators of material and accreditation of waste classifiers). Discussions are now focusing on the frequency of testing – and looking at commingled and source separated material operator risks. The meetings have included representation from the asbestos diseases council.
- Also working on the RRO/E framework as discussed above in relation to branch priorities (item 2(ii)).

(ii) Landfill – Ark Du

- Working Group has a 4th March site visit to Lucas Heights Landfill.
- The group is awaiting the landfill design guidelines, following consultation in November 2025.
- There have been conversations around landfill gas capture and incentivising investment in regional landfills given the revised LFG Method with lower baseline.
- Levy revision won't be this financial year. However, we understand that EPA is considering ADC to site outside exemption framework.
- Transportation of waste to Gunnedah is also being looked at closely by the EPA – uncertain whether another out of state levy zone will be considered (as per Queensland model).

(iii) RRMD – Nicole Greenwood

- Planning for 2026 meeting with focus on driving circularity, as outlined in branch priorities (at 2(ii))

(iv) EfW – Miles Mason

- Awaiting the outcome of NSW parliamentary inquiry – then will book in time for the next meeting.
- Parkes project consortium now includes Cleanaway (so proposed Wallerawang precinct no longer progressing).
- The information on the EPA website is still incorrect and confusing, as discussed above in item 3.

(v) YPs – (Alarik Wong)

No update this meeting.

(vi) Waste Educators – (Claire Mahendradatta)

No update this meeting.

6. Events & Training

- i. **Webinar:**
[Is there a role for AI in WARR data and operations in Australia?](#), p.m., Tuesday 24 March 2026
 - ii. **Bite Size Learning**
 - Our new training offering – lunchtime learning (commencing 16 March 2025)
 - Session 1: Community Engagement with Rachael Stapleton-Jansen. Details online soon.
 - iii. **NSW WARR 101 (Face to Face Training)** – Tuesday 31 March 2026 (venue TBC)
 - iv. **Ministers' Breakfast (TBC)**
Currently investigating whether there will be availability for the Minister to keynote a leadership breakfast in the coming months.
 - v. **WMRR AGM**
 - 22 June 2026 (Adelaide)
 - vi. **NSW Women of WARR Leadership Breakfast** (Thursday 13 August 2026 TBC)
 - vii. **NSW Forum** (Thursday 17 September 2026 TBC)
 - viii. **NSW End of Year Drinks** (Thursday 26 November 2026)
 - ix. **Conferences for 2026**
 - **ENVIRO Conference** – 23 & 24 June 2026 (Adelaide)
 - **Australian Landfill and Transfer Stations Conference** - 14 & 15 October 2026 (Brisbane/Noosa TBC)
- [Confirmed WMRR events](#)

7. Next meeting date

Tuesday 10 March 2026

Actions arising from meeting:

Issue	Action	Status
Branch Priorities: Reinforce Generator Obligations	Mark / Richard /Gayle to meet offline to consider messaging around this priority. The concept of “fully informed self-interest” was raised in terms of generating producer buy in.	Taken offline
EPA Status update - RRF and RRO/E implementation	WMRR will invite the relevant EPA representative to present to the Branch once the restructure is finalised.	On hold until restructure finalised
Branch priorities	Outlined in meeting. Finesse for inclusion as appendix document for future Branch meetings	Noted.