

NSW BRANCH COMMITTEE MEETING

8.00 - 9.00 am

Tuesday 19 May 2026

Via Zoom

MINUTES

1. Welcome and apologies

Attendees: Shaun Devine, Miles Mason, Jennifer Hughes, Jason Sweeney, Ron Wainberg, Edward Nicholas, Andrew Pearce, Alex Morris, Brad Searle, Gayle Sloan, Vanessa Seaton, Ark Du, Mark Glover, Alarik Wong, Andrew Kosciuszko and Lisa Lepore.

Apologies: Katherine Dodd, Phil Carbins, Richard Collins, Claire Mahendradatta, Nicole Greenwood.

2. Previous minutes and actions arising

i. Previous Minutes

The minutes of the 14 April 2026 NSW Branch Committee meeting were confirmed as a true and accurate record.
Moved: Gayle Sloan *Seconded:* Andrew Kosciuszko

ii. Actions arising

- EfW Framework requires updating, noting that no emissions levels are publicly available yet on the website and EPA still have the 2021 policy online. This has been progressed with the [Energy from Waste Technical Note](#) released. (closed) .

3. National advocacy (CEO)

i. Fuel Supply Roundtable

- Tim Ayers and Murray Watt meeting today and plastics and recycling/ remanufacturing roundtable in Sydney, with WMRR attending.
- Strong sentiment that states will continue to move together on policy and regulatory initiatives.
- NSW Premier noted as playing a significant role in driving collective thinking and coordination.

ii. National Environment Ministers

- Next meeting is in August 2026, have agreed to look to establishing Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) as a mechanism to better understand and implement a state-based stewardship approach.
 - The model is intended to mirror the energy sector's jurisdictional approach, as seen in South Australia's role in driving national energy market reforms as state-led approaches are likely to achieve outcomes more quickly than federal processes and help overcome federal policy inertia. Noted that this approach should avoid "out-greening" one another through differing approaches which could create unnecessary complexity and inconsistency.

iii. Packaging Reform

- This activity is being led by the Federal Government.
- The kerbside recyclability framework is currently being revisited. Further details are expected as the review progresses.

iv. Recycling and Waste Reduction (RaWR) Act Review

Significant uncertainty remains regarding the RaWR Act review. The review outcomes did not align with APCO recommendations, leaving the future direction unclear.

v. Battery Stewardship and Regulation

- National Alignment Progressing with South Australia following the NSW battery regulatory model. Western Australia and Tasmania have also indicated they intend to adopt legislation based on the NSW framework. Tasmania may potentially be regulated through NSW arrangements due to limited state resources, with discussions ongoing. The newly appointed Victorian Minister has not yet clarified Victoria's position, though stakeholders remain hopeful of alignment. Queensland has not yet committed to a regulatory approach and is awaiting the outcome of its strategy development process.
- NSW to go to market in the near term on PSO for batteries
 - Concerns raised regarding recent disclosures and media coverage involving Ecocycle and the B-cycle scheme. Ecocycle currently holds the majority market share within the scheme. Public reporting has potentially damaged confidence in both B-cycle and broader battery stewardship efforts.
 - Questions have been raised regarding the scheme's ability to verify the activities of its major operator.
 - Strong emphasis on ensuring future stewardship schemes include robust governance, compliance mechanisms, and verification processes.

vi. Carbon and Emissions

- NGERS Review submission made which included WMRR broadly supporting the proposed Method 2 for site specific landfill emissions measurement.
- Alternative Waste Treatment (AWT) Method progressing with workshop held last week. Outcomes and next steps will be communicated as available.

4. NSW Issues

i. Industry feedback from Coffs Conference

The group noted it was an excellent networking opportunity however no one had any any discussions or presentations of note to discuss further.

ii. Regulatory and policy updates

- [NSW](#) EPA have updated [senior leadership structure](#)
 - Karen Mahler has taken lead of landfill guidelines and much of the active work held over from the Wilkinson review.
 - Landfill, EFW and Contaminants is all sitting under the new Director, Emma Whale.
- EPA progress on waste classification / Resource Recovery Framework
 - Lots of work done in the background around waste classification and genuine end of waste concept (to enable materials to exit the RRF) but it may not be released for consultation until end of June (after budget)
 - Updated chemical analysis coming from EnrRisks to look at RRO/Es and PFAS work to look at emerging contaminants of interest (PFAS, Bromides etc). There is also work being done to look at improving how they do testing and sampling – consultation expected soon.
 - Soil Order may be coming soon

- Expecting elections 13 March 2027 – moving to caretaker in early 2027 . As NSW currently preparing for Budget, it is leading to uncertainty.
- EPA have landed on the Queensland levy model for interstate levy zones – expecting announcement after the budget in June.
- The Waste and Circular Infrastructure plan stage 2 not progressed – but infrastructure committee is meeting next week and meeting with Minister the following week, so there should be progress soon.

iii. Submissions/consultations (NSW/National)

- [NSW statewide-community-participation-plan](#) (3 June 2026)
 - This consultation is focused on aligning local government public consultation timings. While the reforms are primarily aimed at speeding up planning processes and reducing duplication, they may also reduce opportunities for community input on some waste-related developments where proposals are considered compliant with existing planning controls. Ie - The proposed targeted assessment pathway would allow public exhibition requirements to be reduced or removed where issues have already been addressed through earlier planning processes.
 - Major waste facilities remain subject to public exhibition – Ie projects requiring EIS /SSID would continue to require public exhibition, generally for 28 days – noting that experience with Parkes ERF project was extended beyond the 28 days.
 - Noting this, WMRR will not be making a submission.
- [Environment Protection Reform Consultation](#): subordinate legislation (5 June 2026).
 - This consultation concerns the setting that support a smooth transition to the new National EPA on 1 July 2026. The consultation (via survey) closes very soon.
 - Generally noted that this consultation may not have strong interest from the group as WARR facilities don't usually have Commonwealth environmental approvals – with the new EPA focused on EPBC. The reforms transfer key regulatory functions under the *Recycling and Waste Reduction Act* to the CEO of the National EPA, including decisions relating to waste export licences.
 - For organisations involved in hazardous waste transport, treatment or export, the National EPA will become the primary decision-maker for hazardous waste permits and compliance actions.
 - There were no further comments on this consultation, and this may not be one WMRR makes a submission on.
- [Carbon Credits and Other Legislation Amendment \(Integrity and Transparency\) Bill Consultation](#) (22 May 2026)
 - WMRR will be making a submission on this consultation, which includes changes to the ERAC. Branch members invited to send any comments through to WMRR National Office.

Recent [WMRR submissions](#)

- [Guideline for safe management of end-of-life lithium ion batteries](#) (15 May 2026)
- [2026 NGER Scheme Updates](#) (8 May 2026)
- [Guarantee of Origin Scheme Amendment \(biogas, biomethane and iron ore\)](#) (27 April 2026)
- [Asbestos Framework Review](#) (26 April 2026)
- [Climate Change and Natural Hazards SEPP](#) (16 March 2026)
- [Inquiry into microplastics](#) (6 March 2026)
- [Inquiry into productivity in Australia](#) (20 February 2026)
- Management of legacy landfills by public landowners (targeted feedback from LF Working Group)
- [A New Approach to Strategic Planning](#) (27 February 2026)
- [Establishing the Development Coordination Authority](#) (DCA) (25 February 2026)

- [Proposed PFAS Monitoring Chemical Control Order](#) (9 February 2026)

iv. Grants and Funding

- [Go FOGO grants](#) now open - supporting councils to deliver new weekly food only (FO) or food organics and garden organics (FOGO) services (closing Thursday 2 July 2026).
 - The group comments included that \$10 for residents for council to use does not help on drive processing capacity. Noted that the Infrastructure Advisory Committee will be kicking off soon, which the WMRR CEO is part of, and which can raise opportunities for more targeted funding under the infrastructure strategy.
 - The [Low Emissions Industry Program](#) grant provides \$40 million to support mining and manufacturing facilities implement projects to reduce their emissions (closing 9 June 2026).

5. Working group updates

i. C&D - Jason Sweeney

- Asbestos - the OSCE Report is currently awaiting a response, expected by the end of June. Current indications suggest a workable asbestos limit is likely to be recommended. Further updates will be provided once the response is received.
- It was advised that the EPA intends to undertake audits of facilities to assess compliance with current Construction and Demolition (C&D) standards. It is anticipated that the audits will identify issues relating to interpretation and inconsistent application of the standards across facilities. Findings are expected to support the subgroup's proposed amendments to the standards. The subgroup will follow up with the EPA at the next meeting regarding the scope and outcomes of the audits.
- The IWTS framework has been suggested as a potential approach for managing rejected loads. Feedback on the proposal is currently being sought and remains outstanding.
- EnRiskS is undertaking work relating to chemical limits. Outcomes from this work are expected to inform recommendations on chemical limits for inclusion in the revised Resource Recovery Orders. Emerging chemicals of concern continue to be considered as part of the review process.
- The current C&D, Recovered Aggregates and Recovered Soils Resource Recovery Orders are proposed to be consolidated into a new Recovered Soils RRO. Updated orders are being developed as part of this process.
 - It was noted that, during the Energy from Waste (EfW) hearing, the OSCE indicated that EPA contamination thresholds are, in some instances, set below naturally occurring background levels.
 - It was confirmed that Excavated Natural Material (ENM) will remain classified as ENM.
 - A new category of "Processed ENM" generated through recycling facilities is proposed to have its own Resource Recovery Order.
 - The testing requirements for Recovered Soils are expected to be more stringent than those currently applied to ENM.
- The second tranche of the Resource Recovery Order review will focus on organics. Revisions are currently being progressed following previous consultation and review activities.

ii. Landfill - Ark Du

- Feedback on standing issues relating to levy and landfill guidelines
- 300ml leachate from the base liner is one of the key issues raised – seeking clarity on where it begins. Industry arguing that it should be top of the sump at '0' not the base of the sump (to ensure submersion) and it has been made more relevant because of recent court case in Tumut.
- Recycled materials for geomembranes given the supply crisis – the group has been discussing the challenges of using recycled content noting recycled content does not always meet the specification requirements for longevity for pipe work and may be best suited for capping.
- ALTS in Brisbane in October 2026.

iii. RRMD – (Nicole Greenwood)

- No update.

iv. EfW – Miles Mason

- Technical Note has now been finalised. While considered overdue, it was welcomed as a positive step forward.
 - The Technical Note is understood to be aligned with European directives, particularly regarding performance measures such as recycling rates, recovery targets and the proportion of material that can be processed through thermal treatment technologies.
 - It was noted that proponents of alternative Energy from Waste technologies, including gasification and pyrolysis, should engage directly with the EPA for further guidance on regulatory requirements and assessment pathways.
- Noted comments made by the NSW Chief Scientist during the EfW hearing that Energy from Waste represents a preferable outcome to landfill disposal.
- EPA responsibility for the Eligible Fuel Guidelines has transitioned from Rob Hogan to Lachlan Harris and Phoebe Ashe.
 - Discussion focused on the treatment of materials arising from FOGO mandates.
- Current settings prevent thermal treatment of these materials outside approved precincts.
 - The policy narrative appears to have shifted from concerns regarding safety and environmental performance towards a policy objective of removing facilities from certain locations.
 - Concerns were raised that designated precincts do not necessarily improve social licence outcomes, particularly in regional communities where EfW facilities may be concentrated.
- No significant policy updates were reported regarding PEF.
 - There remains discussion about relaxing PEF consumption restrictions in areas outside metropolitan Sydney.
 - It was noted that the current carve-out for PEF remains limited to gas replacement applications outside metropolitan areas.
- The potential for digestate from anaerobic digestion processes sourced from municipal waste streams is not being considered to be recognised as an eligible fuel. . Unsure if this exclusion is linked to the elevated ammonium content of digestate and potential impacts on NOx emissions during thermal treatment?

v. YPs – Alarik Wong

- Looking to arrange something soon for the group's next get together.

vi. Waste Educators – (Claire Mahendradatta)

- Earthpower site visit held at the end of April.

6. Events & Training

i. [NSW Breakfast with the Minister](#), Wednesday 3 June 2026 (Parliament House, Sydney)

- The tight schedule of no earlier than 7 am, start at 715 am.
- Focus to get some direction on the levy.

ii. Conferences for 2026

- [ENVIRO Conference](#) – 23 & 24 June 2026 (Adelaide)
- [Australian Landfill and Transfer Stations Conference](#) - 21 & 22 October 2026 (Brisbane, details TBC)

iii. WMRR AGM , 22 June 2026 (Adelaide)

iv. Foundations of WARR (Face to Face Training), Melbourne, Wednesday 10 June 2026.

- Pilot in Melbourne, with plans to roll out to other states.
- Looking to roll out alongside the NSW Forum and may look at rolling out sections online.
- Topics cover volumes, metrics, carbon, policy, regulation, supply chain.

v. SAVE THE DATES:

- **NSW Women of WARR Leadership Breakfast** (Thursday 13 August 2026 TBC)
 - **NSW Forum** (Thursday 17 September 2026 TBC)
 - **NSW End of Year Drinks** (Thursday 26 November 2026)

Confirmed WMRR events

7. Other business

i. Revised composting guidelines

The are being progressed following consultation last year, looking to rollout in coming weeks.

8. Next meeting date

Tuesday 9 June 2026