

QUEENSLAND BRANCH COMMITTEE

MEETING

9.00 am – 10.00 am

Wednesday 15 July 2026

via Zoom

MINUTES

1. Welcome and apologies

- i. **Attendees:** Lacey Webb, Gayle Sloan, Tatiana Samuel, Amy Bartowski, Colin Kangas, Steve Cosatto, Matt Glavina, Joshua Evans, Giles Perryman, Tobi Spencer, David de Jager, Alexander Kanaar, Ashleigh Saunders, Richard Taylor, Jason Grandcourt, Richard Haward, Chris Hambling, Pawan Govind and Lisa Lepore.
- ii. **Apologies:** Trevor Evans, Tony Stapleton, Christine Blanchard, Matt McCarthy, Hayley Page, Evan Lockhart and Justin Eccles.

2. Previous minutes and actions arising

i. Previous minutes

The meeting minutes of the 10 June 2026 Branch Committee Meeting were confirmed as a true and accurate record.

Moved: Pawan Govind *Second:* Chris Hambling

ii. Actions arising:

No actions arising.

3. National advocacy (CEO)

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) – No Time to Waste Bill

- The Bill is scheduled for debate in the Senate on 13 August 2026.
- WMRR provided evidence to the Senate inquiry in Canberra.
- The Bill, introduced by Senator Peter Whish-Wilson, is based on rolling out federal framework akin to the NSW *Product Lifecycle Responsibility Act*.

Battery Stewardship

- South Australia is progressing a Cabinet submission to adopt battery regulations aligned with the NSW Product Lifecycle Responsibility framework.
- In NSW, procurement for the Battery Product Stewardship Organisation (PSO) is expected to commence in October 2026, with at least five competitive bidders identified.

Solar PV Stewardship

- NSW continues to lead the development of the national Solar PV product stewardship scheme and Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS), with the proposal expected to be considered by Environment Ministers at the EMM in September 2026.
- This work is being undertaken by a different government team to the battery stewardship reforms

Carbon policy

- A national carbon roundtable will be held next week. WMRR will seek to progress emissions reduction opportunities for the sector beyond landfill gas.
- WMRR is advocating for greater recognition of materials productivity and circular economy measures as emissions reduction strategies and is engaging with Minister Bowen's office ahead of COP31, where halving waste is expected to be a key agenda item.

PFAS and packaging

- APCO is seeking stakeholder feedback on proposals to phase out PFAS in packaging.
- There is concern that this consultation appears disconnected from the existing IChEMS regulatory framework already in place for contaminant (including PFAS) management.

4. QLD Issues

i. Regulatory and policy updates *including:*

Waste Strategy – Less Landfill More Recycling

- The Branch discussed the workshops held this week by DETSI to do a 'page turn' of the key elements of the strategy, with the following points raised.
 - the sessions raised more questions than answers, despite the strategy taking a year to finalise since consultation closed. For example, funding guidelines are still to be determined.
 - The implementation plan and actions will be crucial. There is still a watching brief on the Statewide Waste Infrastructure Roadmap and actions.
 - There is no working plan yet to address problematic materials i.e. mattresses.
 - DETSI's response to questions about progressing batteries regulations was to indicate that the state wouldn't be taking action on stewardship at all – pushed back responsibility to the Commonwealth, referencing the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) in development. CEO highlighted that the IGA is about aligned, state-led action.
Action: Letter from WMRR to DETSI is needed to push state led action on batteries regulation.
 - The strategy does not change the actual outcomes within the previous strategy – rather the titles and targets have been renamed.
 - The targets are based on the 2 EfW facilities in SEQ getting up and running.
 - There has been a four (4) year forecast of levy and payments:
 - For Metro areas, the Annual Advanced Payments (AAP) will be dropping to 30% by 2029 and then stagnated. Levy increases for Metro will be \$10 a year.
 - For Regional areas, AAP down to 50% and levy going up by CPI.
 - Noted that metro councils were not forewarned of the intention to increase the levy rate beyond CPI and had not planned for it given government signals around cost of living and "Tax" sensitivity.
 - The stability of levy forecasting a positive as it will help with financial modelling.
 - It was noted that previous communication from DETSI indicated that the AAP would be linked to increased performance in increased recycling, but this wording seems to have been removed.
 - Anecdotally, reviews of the AAP top up payments have been rejected on advice that there will be 'plenty of funding available'.
 - Toowoomba and Somerset have been rezoned from 'Metro' to 'Regional' after next year.
 - The Resource Recovery Boost Funding (RRBF) recipients were announced alongside the strategy and revised AAP settings. This is problematic for many funded councils as funding only covers

30% of investment, and the business case upon which the funding was awarded now needs to be evaluated again in line with the revised settings. I.e: DETSI asked for business cases earlier this year and then moved the goal posts with the new strategy.

- Gayle highlighted that DETSI did not seem to understand that investment settings have changed with the strategy. Sector won't get there on boost funding and MSW targets – and the strategy seems “backward looking”. Green bin rollouts and FOGO business cases without set contaminant levels is another example of this. i.e. Gladstone have just rolled out a new green bin. Their business case for funding assumed AAP.

Waste levy exemptions and daily cover

- Discussion focused on Queensland's review of waste levy exemptions under section 44, including proposed changes to the use of materials as landfill daily cover.
- Treatment of residual materials used for daily cover is becoming increasingly challenging. DETSI is concerned about the growing number of levy exemptions and is seeking to tighten the framework by closing perceived loopholes.
 - DETSI appears to be assessing On Site Operational Purpose (OSOP) approvals primarily through the lens of the landfill levy value, despite OSOPs being intended to recognise legitimate operational uses rather than foregone levy revenue. i.e.: Government is not necessarily “losing money” by granting exemptions and that the issue should not be characterised as missed revenue.
 - Noted that NSW has capped the daily cover levy exemption at 20%, suggesting Queensland may now be reassessing whether its current arrangements have been too generous.
 - Colin also noted that DETSI has approved the use of green waste under OSOP arrangements, but only where the material is sourced from an external supplier, rather than generated and reused by the landfill operator itself.
 - Lacey advised she would seek clarification on the implementation timeframes of proposed changes, as none have yet been provided.

Statewide Waste and Recycling Infrastructure Plan (announced and expected in 12 months)

- WMRR is on this working group, but awaiting Terms of Reference, with no further meeting dates or actions at this stage.

Update on liaison with DETSI re PFAS/organics

- Minister Powell is also Minister for Olympics – which may see this item lower in the priority list. No further clarity on where this is sitting as supposedly with the Minister.

Swanbank stakeholder group feedback (Matt Glavina)

- Second meeting coming up later today and should have update at next meeting.

IBAA EoW Code

- Draft expected to be exhibited 20 July 2026
 - WA have raised issues with the testing protocol to date, causing challenges with releasing existing data.
 - Blue Phoenix have submitted their last testing results and are still hopeful for a draft EoW Code on 20 July 2026. WA is

The Queensland Audit Office's [Forward work plan 2026-2029](#)

- The “Managing Council Waste” performance audit report is planned for 2028–2029. It will assess whether selected local governments are efficiently and effectively managing household waste collection and landfill activities, and may also include how they plan and budget for landfill closure and capping costs.

ii. Regional Planning updates (all)

Central Queensland (Richard Haward)

- Central Queensland has been successful in securing Boost funding for the Gladstone region and remains committed to progressing the rollout of green bin services.
- The region is also reviewing the implications of the new Queensland Waste Strategy on its Regional Implementation Plan, which has approximately 12 months remaining.

Greater Whitsunday Region (David de Jager)

- Greater Whitsunday Regional Waste Management Plan has been granted an extension and is now expected to be presented in October.
- The region intends to seek funding for an energy-from-waste (EfW) solution and noted the Sovereign Development Fund [announcement](#) for Wildfire Energy’s pilot project – the Bulwer Island Biofuels Hub.
- He advised that the region does not support the introduction of an additional FOGO bin and expects significant discussion at the upcoming LAMWAC meeting regarding the proposed three-bin approach.

South East Queensland (Chris Hambling)

- Chris advised that the Council of Mayors South East Queensland (COMSEQ) is updating its Regional Waste Management Plan, with publication expected later this year. The plan is being revised to align with the recently released Queensland Waste Strategy.
- COMSEQ interim authorisation for EfW from ACCC is expected this month.
- Several South East Queensland councils have been successful in securing RRBf funding.

iii. Grants and funding opportunities / updates (standing items)

[Resource Recovery Boost Funding Program](#)

- Stream 1 and Stream 2 award announcements made.
- Program budget extended by another \$40M with DETSI indicating that the next funding window expected end of 2026 early 2027 – noting that this is the most difficult choke point for councils to get things approved.

[City Deals Organics](#)

- Closed Wednesday 1 July 2026.
- Projects to be delivered by end of March 2028.

Several funding opportunities were announced to support the release of the Strategy

- \$12.5M Residual Waste Fund – awaiting further details.

- \$11M Regional Recycling Transport Fund – awaiting further details.
- \$18.5M RecycleWise Education Fund – awaiting further details.
- \$11.7M Waste Technology and Innovation Fund – awaiting further details.

GROW FOGO Program

- Guidelines amended to include Home Composting Equipment Grants

Sovering Industry Development Fund

Wildfire's Bulwer Island Biofuels Hub funding [announced](#) last week.

iv. Submissions/consultation (for noting)

- [Climate Change Authority – 2026 Annual Progress Advice](#) (closing 9 August 2026)
Recent submissions
- [Expanding Australia's Right to Repair Framework](#) (3 July 2026)
- [Inquiry into the Extended Producer Responsibility Scheme for Packaging \(No Time to Waste\) Bill 2026 \(15 June 2026\)](#)
- [Proposed legislative amendments to reduce litter and boost recycling](#) (15 June 2026) – as discussed at the June Branch Committee Meeting.
- [Carbon Credits and Other Legislation Amendment \(Integrity and Transparency\) Bill Consultation \(25 May 2026\)](#)
- [Guideline for safe management of end-of-life lithium ion batteries \(15 May 2026\)](#)
- [2026 NGER Scheme Updates \(8 May 2026\)](#)

Submissions

5. Working group updates

i. RRMD – Matt Glavina

- Finished C&D series of presentations. Next series in planning.
- Potentially looking at the priority waste in the strategy, which mainly drives to putting pressure on the federal government action.

ii. Landfill – Colin Kangas

- Last meeting focused on landfill fires.
- Group also discussed that DETSI are drilling down into administrative details with compliance and levy.
- Also discussed the junior staff at DETSI which lack technical and operational understanding of landfills. Ie: Get a Show Cause letter, which then fades out without follow up action.

Action: Landfill Group to get some feedback for WMRR to liaise – Gavin Crawford at DETSI should be contacted with systemic issues to improve the quality of regulatory compliance.

iii. Energy from Waste – Joshua Evans

- Meeting coming up on 30 July 2026

iv. Waste Educators – (Evan Lockhart)

No update at this meeting.

v. Young Professionals – Amy Bartkowski

- Site tour of a textile recovery facility in planning.
- YPs Panel event at Arup offices in June was well attended.

6. Events and Training

i. [QLD Women of WARR Leadership Breakfast](#) (16 July 2026) SOLD OUT

- Members reminded to book early for events, noting that the Breakfast is sold out and has a long wait list.

ii. QLD WARR Forum (Brisbane Thursday 19 November 2026)

- Will also look to do a training day prior to deliver the *Foundations of WARR* training the day prior.

iii. Conferences for 2026

- [Australian Landfill and Transfer Stations Conference](#) 21-23 October 2026 (Brisbane).
 - [Abstracts open](#) until Friday 17 July 2026.

iv. Webinars

- Definition of Waste, Tuesday 28 July 2026 [registrations opening soon]
- [Australia's Circular Clothing Future](#), Tuesday 4 August 2026

[Confirmed WMRR events](#)

7. Other business

i. [State Branch Elections](#)

- Nominations close at 5pm Tuesday 28 July 2026.
- Noted that President Chris Hambling will reach the completion of his maximum four (4) year term so can not renominate. Steve Cosatto can elect to re-nominate for Vice-President or President positions.

ii. QLD Branch Priorities

The Branch Priorities table is provided as an Annexure – to be reviewed against the Waste Strategy.

8. Next meeting date

Wednesday 5 August 2026.

Meeting closed 9.57 am.

Actions arising from meeting:

Issue	Action	Status
4(i) – Waste Strategy workshop raised that product stewardship is seen as an issue for the Commonwealth to progress	Letter from WMRR to DETSI is needed to push state led action on batteries regulation.	Noted
5(ii) Landfill Working Group to gather examples of junior DETSI staff regulating landfills without consistency or appropriate operational knowledge.	Landfill Group to get some feedback for WMRR to liaise – Gavin Crawford at DETSI should be contacted with systemic issues to improve the quality of regulatory compliance.	Noted
7 (ii) Branch priorities – need to be revised against the Strategy (released July 2026)	Branch to reconsider priorities against Waste Strategy	Noted

Annexure A: Branch Priorities

The following table consists of the proposed branch priorities as of January 2026

Issue	Description of issue	Future state	Strategic response (how we get there) <i>Recent advocacy in italics</i>
Strategic direction	The Queensland Government is reviewing the WMRR Strategy (released 2019) and targets. This review needs to tie into levy settings, both in metro and regional Queensland, and align with targets that are achievable and meaningful, and supported with real policy and funding. The strategic direction and ambitions of the Queensland Government are not clearly articulated. There is also growing concern about the limits of discretion enjoyed by compliance officers whose delegated authority can lead to inconsistencies when regulating. An increased level of scrutiny is needed noting that DES does not have a Board (like other state EPAs) which provides continual oversight over its regulatory arms, nor is there a compliance strategy in place to put officers under some level of accountability for their decisions. The existing regulatory strategy is too high	The review and update of the WMRR Strategy, targets and associated policy is undertaken with open and transparent collaboration across government and industry to provide meaningful, measurable and supported pathway to significantly improve recycling and resource recovery rates, and that the outcomes of the WMRR Strategy update can be incorporated into regional waste management and resource recovery plans across Queensland. Mechanisms – such as a compliance strategy or Board – should be in place to have oversight over the regulatory arm to ensure that the discretion exercised by compliance officers is appropriate and can be scrutinised.	WMRR and members to contribute to advocate for earlier consultation to influence changes. WMRR and members to provide constructive and realistic feedback on proposed changes <i>The issues related to the strategy targets and levy settings are captured in WMRR's response to the Waste Strategy Review (26 June 2025).</i> <i>It was noted in that response that many of our (and QTC and other government agency reviews of the previous strategy documents) previous recommendations and comments have remained unactioned over the last decade.</i> <i>The issue of unscrutinized levels of discretion enjoyed by regulatory compliance officers was encouraged to be raised by LG members in the consultation for the Local Government Red Tape Reduction Taskforce. The Taskforce Report is due in August 2025.</i> <i>The July 2025 review of the EP Act was utilised as an opportunity for WMRR to confirm the concerns of EPA regulatory officer discretion and the need for more</i>

	level to provide accountability in this regard. Currently it is impossible to challenge a compliance notice or regulatory officer.		<i>certainty from the regulation about the standards required.</i>
Waste levy settings	The current waste levy settings (annual advance payment for local government and levy rate) do not currently promote and de-risk long-term investment in recycling or energy recovery technologies.	The Queensland Government presents a robust long-term plan for application of the waste levy across Queensland, including schedule of increases.	WMRR to contribute to consultation and provide key information for upcoming review. <i>Initial comments have been captured in WMRR's response to the Waste Strategy Review (26 June 2025). It was noted in that response that many of our (and QTC and other government agency reviews of the previous strategy documents) previous recommendations and comments have remained unactioned over the last decade.</i>
WARR Infrastructure	Queensland does not have a clear WARR infrastructure plan that identifies the need for critical transfer, recycling and residual waste treatment facilities across the state. This results in a lack of certainty for investment, as well as lack of guiding principles for funding and government support.	Queensland has a clear WARR Infrastructure Plan that demonstrates the type of infrastructure required to meet current and future waste arisings. This plan links to regional plan implementation. This extends to developing a Regional Commingled Infrastructure Plan and supporting establishment of both Metro and Regional AWT Infrastructure Plans.	WMRR and members to contribute to development (through consultation) and review of a formal WARR infrastructure plan, as well as specific plans for regional and metro Queensland. <i>This feedback was specifically provided in WMRR's response to the Waste Strategy Review (26 June 2025).</i>
End of Waste Codes	The End of Waste Framework was reviewed in 2023 with a series of recommendations adopted by the Queensland Government. It is unclear what progress (if any) has been made. The End of Waste Framework should be facilitating the use of IBA from EfW	The End of Waste Framework is refreshed as per the review and clarity is provided on "material no longer a waste" and mechanisms for this to be applied. An EoW Code is developed for IBAA that facilitates clarity for EfW investment in Queensland.	EfW Working Group convening a sub-group in Feb 2025 to look at supporting establishment of an End of Waste Code for reuse of IBAA. The IBAA EoW Code application from Blue Phoenix as of July 2025 is understood to be progressing well and is supported by industry. <i>The group has paused as Blue Phoenix await notification as to whether their nomination for a EoW</i>

	facilities as IBAA products for use in construction.	WMRR has become aware in August 2025 of the contaminant limits for the Approved Glass Fines EoW Code are difficult to meet and causing these products to be sent to landfill.	code has been successful. The key points from that nomination were shared with the IBAA group, and no additional needs for an industry code were noted. Continued engagement / interaction with Department on EoW Codes released for consultation. The Branch discussed issuing a letter from WMRR to remind of the timelines and get a commitment to the implementation of the recommendations from the EoW Framework Review. This was addressed by WMRR in the response to the Waste Strategy Review (26 June 2025).
PFAS and other problematic / emerging issues	The current approach to managing PFAS (and derivatives) in waste and waste derived products (e.g., compost) does not facilitate long-term investment in recycling and recovery technologies required to be consistent with the Queensland Waste Strategy and Organics Strategy. This means more material will go to landfill than necessary.	The Queensland Government presents an appropriate level of risk management / environmental protection whilst permitting the safe reuse of recycled material. Particular items of note include PFAS, batteries, CCA, microplastics and nano plastics, and household chemicals amongst other hazardous materials. <u>Generator obligation</u> to designing out hazardous materials like plastics also forms part of the future state to address this issue.	Urgent action needs to be taken regarding battery fires to address and promote the safe collection, processing and end-of-life management of batteries. WMRR continues to work with other industry groups to negotiate around risk values (e.g., EnRiskS report etc) to find pragmatic solution to facilitate safe and environmentally protective deployment of waste derived products. Commentary on this issue also included in the WMRR response to the Waste Strategy Review (26 June 2025). As of July 2025, will be no new limits applied to Environmental Authorities at this time. Instead DETSI will work collaboratively with industry to co-develop guidance, initiate monitoring programs, and appoint DETSI is looking to create a guideline which

			<i>has tiers of ranges and actions on testing and reporting. WMRR is proactively working with AORA and others to influence.</i> <i>WMRR issued letter to Minister Powell on 2 October 2025 seeking urgent action on batteries and embedded battery products.</i>
Market Development of Recycled and Recovered Materials	The importance of ensuring sustainable design for the market Development of recycled and recovered products (free of hazardous materials) is a key concern for industry and crucial for achieving circular economy and Net Zero targets.	End of Waste Codes are developed for suitable materials, mandated sustainable design guidelines are enforced for producers and recycle / recovered materials are preferences through government procurement processes over virgin materials.	WMRR continues to call for sustainable design to be enforced in concert with mandatory EPR schemes and to advocate for an equal playing field in market preferences for recycled and recovered materials to be equal to virgin materials. This complements decarbonisation initiatives. <i>WMRR called for recycle targets to be developed and enforced (particularly with upcoming Olympics) in the response to the Waste Strategy Review (26 June 2025).</i> <i>RRMD Working Group is exploring procurement of recycled materials from C&D in Q3 2025.</i>
Driving Generator Obligation	Current product stewardship and EPR schemes are largely underperforming, and do not provide fair and equitable coverage across Queensland. Ideal scenario would be a broader directives framework to underpin specific regulation and policy.	Product stewardship schemes are developed and executed and available in all parts of Queensland with mandatory levels of service throughout the state, with costs of collection and processing accounted for in product price. Designing out problematic, hazardous and single use materials are necessary for circular economy goals and needs to be urgently progressed.	Advocate for mandatory design requirements and generator obligations by all levels of government. Advocate for and promote product stewardship scheme development with appropriate financial support from product manufacturers and distributors, allowing for the additional challenges of operating schemes in regional areas.

			WMRR's response to the Waste Strategy Review (26 June 2025) , included the above points.
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