

QUEENSLAND BRANCH COMMITTEE

MEETING

9.00 am – 10.00 am

Wednesday 6 May 2026

via Zoom

MINUTES

1. Welcome and apologies

Attendees: Chris Hambling, Amy Bartowski, Evan Lockhart, Steve Cosatto, Gayle Sloan, Colin Kangas, Richard Howard, Pawan Govind, Michael O'Keefe, Tobi Spencer, Evan Lockhart, Richard Taylor, Joshua Evans, Lacey Webb, Gavin Crawford, Linda Nordin, Trevor Evans, Dilan Patel, Trinity Schabe, Ashliegh Saunders, David de Jager, Meagan Wheeler, Giles Perryman, Christine Blanchard, Alex Kanaar and Lisa Lepore.

Apologies: Tony Stapleton, Steffan Dittrich, Henry Anning, Jason Grandcourt and Hayley Page.

2. Previous minutes and actions arising

i. Minutes of 1 April 2026 Branch Committee Meeting to be confirmed.

Moved: Chris Hambling *Seconded:* Lacey Webb

ii. Actions arising

- *Landfill Working Group meeting with DETSI (following correspondence regarding OSOPs)*
Colin confirmed that he and Glen from Fraser Council would be meeting with DETSI, possibly with Chloe Rhoades (*item now closed*)
- *Export Restrictions for LDPE noting low domestic demand*
WMRR has received correspondence that DCCEEW are not inclined to lift restrictions (*item now closed*)

3. National advocacy (CEO)

i. National Environment Ministers

- Next meeting is in August 2026 wherein the ministers have agreed to look to establishing an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) to 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.

ii. 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.

iii. 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

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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.

iv. *Carbon and Emissions*

- NGERS Review submission due this week in which WMRR will broadly support the proposed Method 2 for site specific landfill emissions measurement.
- AWT method progressing with proponent led workshops via the Australian Resource Recovery Council.

4. L2 g

i. Regulatory and policy updates *including:*

Regulator roadshow (Gavin Crawford)

Whilst overall the roadshow was well received with positive feedback, it was noted that the Waste Crimes Unit and unlicensed waste sections of DETSI were not known by many participants.

DETSI is looking to present an abbreviated version at LAWMAC in Cairns.

- Group feedback
 - Deputations could have been more considered in the program
 - A helpful day in terms of how thought about industry issues. Industry sectors sharing what they do in front of DETSI staff provided a valuable learning opportunity for both sides.
 - Cash Sherman engaged well.
 - Some attendees would have liked more time on the workshops ie - beyond 15-20 minutes (PFAS, fuel and EOW Codes), and the group noted that they are keen to see how DETSI takes the feedback following the workshops to apply learnings and consistency in regulation and enforcement
 - Roundtables with DETSI staff was particularly welcomed – so the policy writers can hear the comments firsthand from operators.
 - The group noted the comments that the EOW legislation is coming.
 - The group commented on the DG's approach is to foster more 'true engagement' and the reciprocation with many operators offering DETSI site tours etc which was acknowledged and welcomed.

CDS Parliamentary Inquiry [Waste Reduction and Recycling \(Strengthening the Container Refund Scheme\) Amendment Bill 2026](#) (the Bill)

- Hearing on the Bill last week, with brewers, WRIQ, COEX, Lion, and WMRR giving evidence.
- Draft Bill is leaning more into the governance side of things rather than how the scheme can be supported by legislation.
- Committee is scrutinising the draft Bill. Noted it is unlikely to lead to anything largely different, with the expectation that the Bill will pass mid-year.
- Minister Kelly in particular was interested in how the scheme can increase take up in the earlier hearings.

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

- No update other than government moving towards procurement.
- Looking at codesign and setting up steering committee with kick off meeting expected soon.

Waste Strategy Review update / insights

- Resource Recovery Boost funding assessments progressing, and procurement for the infrastructure plan also likely progressing in the lead up to the release of strategy (unsure at this stage if this is the right order for the most optimal outcomes?)
- Expected that the overall target may not change but the regional targets may be revised in the revised strategy

Update on liaison with DETSI re PFAS/organics

- WMRR looking to meet with DETSI in coming weeks to progress.
- Guidance was developed by WMRR for DETSI with three(3) levels – but the level still undecided
- Clarification was received from iChEMS that ‘waste’ products can’t use the ‘unintended trace’ level. This raises the question as to how this will impact existing Environmental Approvals, which state ‘as low as practical’ – Will this be overridden? Or will they use a regulated entity report?
- Noted that WMRR has also been trying to progress this issue via the HEPA Waste Officers Meeting. WA expected to put this on the agenda to fastrack a national consistent level under NEMP 3.0 for compost (note the recent [WA issue with FOGO compost used at High Wycombe fields over weekend](#) which highlights the issue for small operators without guidance:

Swanbank stakeholder group commencing in May

- Matt Glavina representing WMRR in this group, which arose out of the parliamentary inquiry.

Upcoming DETSI [Illegal Dumping of Tyres workshop](#) (12 May 2026)

- Hoping to get a workshop at LAWMAC to replicate the workshop and finalise stakeholder input before regulation proceeds

IBAA code update

- Noted that this EOW Code was due to be on exhibition as a draft code on 31 March 2026.
- WMRR understands that Blue Phoenix still submitting data to DETSI

ii. Regional Planning updates (all)

FNQ (Steve Cosatto)

- Still focused on the fuel supply issues.

Mackay (David de Jager)

- Mackay keen to be first in regional council to pilot EfW - the region is watching funding initiatives with interest (\$12M government commitment and COMSEQ funding).
- Currently submitting implementation plans and seeking extension to submit regional plans which include feasibility for EfW - the region is aiming for 2030 to have something in place for EfW with strategic needs assessment to follow feasibility for delivery in 2032.

CQROC (Michael O’Keefe)

- Fuel issues top of mind – looking to get consistency across multiple contractors and have appropriate level of transparency especially across operating budgets for local governments.

- Strategy council resolution to pursue the development of a new landfill for Rockhampton – keen to talk to neighbouring councils if approved.
- Revamping organics business case for kerbside collection – seeking council resolution
- Gladstone getting close to rolling out green bins in coming months Richard Howard introduced himself as new regional coordinator

Wide Bay Burnett (Christine Blanchard)

- Progressing with Gympie landfill (land purchased) as currently at only one (1) year landfill life left.
- Consequently, business case may not stand up for organics – there is no economic incentive for the region as not SEQ or R7 so no advance payments.

SEQ (Chris Hambling)

- COMSEQ infrastructure plan is covered by the Waste Management Plan (to align targets). Noted that the draft updated Waste Management Plan won't be finalised until after the release of the state strategy and levy.
- SEQ City Deal organics funding will be releasing guidelines soon.
- COMSEQ ACCC application for 11 councils to procure for EfW – application progressing following closing of submission in April (no WMRR submission made)
 - DETSI gave \$1.49M to COMSEQ to move through the ACC process by September 2026. (Rumoured that COMSEQ is also seeking QTC funding of \$350M)
 - Question was raised as to how it may impact the ARRC procurement processes?
 - Also noted that Cleanaway's [Bromelton](#) (BERC) application lodged in March 2026 .

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

- \$130M Resource Recovery Boost Funding Program – Expecting Stream 1 announcements in April May. Stream 2 in June/July.
 - Progressing with questions to applicants.
- Behaviour Change Coordinator funding closed 16 March 2026.
- SEQ City Deal Organics funding guidelines expected soon.
 - Expectation for councils to partner with industry. Applies only to the 11 COMSEQ councils but they may partner with industry (and may be able to 'partner' with Gold Coast City Council)
- EfW funding expected to be announced around budget time.

iv. Submissions/consultation (for noting)

Open for consultation:

- [2026 NGERS review](#) (including Method 2 Landfill) (8 May 2026)
 - [National Guidelines on the safe management of end of life batteries](#) (15 May 2026)
- The group was asked if they had any feedback on this consultation as WMRR will be making a submission. It was raised that the guidelines include advice to stop vehicles to eject hot loads, which is not necessarily consistent with some councils' advice (as slow moving ejection may be deemed safe in some circumstances). Similarly, storage requirements should be considered against what is achievable.
- [Queensland Sunset Review of Biosecurity Regulations](#) (29 May 2026)

The group was asked if this was a concern to any operations, specifically, organics management and electric fire ants, particularly in the far north. Steve noted that this risk is well managed under existing practices. Given the lack of concerns, it is unlikely WMRR will make a comment on this review.

Recently submitted:

- [Guarantee of Origin Scheme Amendment \(biogas, biomethane and iron ore\) \(27 April 2026\)](#)
- [Asbestos Framework Review \(26 April 2026\)](#)
- [Inquiry into solar recycling and reuse \(27 March 2026\)](#)
- [Inquiry into microplastics \(6 March 2026\)](#)
- [Inquiry into productivity in Australia \(20 February 2026\)](#)
- [Inquiry into the Australian tyre industry \(23 January 2026\)](#)

5. Working group updates

i. RRMD – (Matt Glavina)

- Meeting coming up on 25 May with TMR.

ii. Landfill – Colin Kangas

- Subgroup formed to follow up OSOP as discussed in item 2.
- There has been significant discussion of landfill fires management and avoidance, following the Wagga Landfill fire presentation to LGNSW.

iii. Energy from Waste – (vacant)

- ARRC progressing with EOI as noted earlier in meeting.
- WMRR Webinar with Jackie Wright on Tuesday 5 May was well received.
- EFW NSW Hearing on Monday 4 May 2026 [Select Committee on Proposed Energy from Waste Facilities](#)
- The Chief Scientist gave evidence that EfW is better alternative to landfill.
- Victorian inquiry hearings commencing this month with WMRR giving evidence on 26 May 2026.
- The working group is looking to reconvene with new committee and chair.

iv. Waste Educators – Evan Lockhart

- March meeting with SPSA well attended. SPSA are doing considerable research around end markets and presented on the trials showing low contamination in kerbside soft plastics (separation at source fully funded).
 - The group discussed that Coles will not get involved with SPSA and soft launch with Woolworths in SA this month.
- Next meeting in June – call for ideas of projects that have been successful .

v. Young Professionals – Amy Bartkowski

- Planning panel discussion for success stories in Queensland, hosted by ARUP and will confirm a date shortly – after 21 May 2026.

6. Confirmation of Key Priorities the Branch in 2026 *(standing item – on hold)*

The Branch Priorities table is provided at [Annexure A](#).

These will be reviewed by the branch following the release of the Waste Strategy.

7. Events and Training

i. ‘Foundations of Waste and Resource Recovery (Face to Face Training)

- Pilot delivery in Victoria on 10 June 2026 covering data, terminology, circularity, licencing and facilities – provide broader systems thinking knowledge. Following the pilot, WMRR will look to roll out across each state.
- ii. **Upcoming Online Training (half day):**
 - Landfill Training Module 2 – [Leachate generation and management](#) (Wednesday 6 May 2026)
 - Landfill Training Module 3 – [Gas Generation and Management](#) (Wednesday 13 May 2026)
- iii. **WMRR AGM**
 - 22 June 2026 (Adelaide). Registrations close 15 June 2026.
- iv. [QLD Women of WARR Leadership Breakfast](#) (16 July 2026)
- v. **QLD WARR Forum**, Thursday 19 November 2026
- vi. **Conferences for 2026**
 - [ENVIRO Conference](#) – 23 & 24 June 2026 (Adelaide)
 - *Australian Landfill and Transfer Stations Conference* - 21-23 October 2026 (Brisbane)

[Confirmed WMRR events](#)

8. Other business

i. State of the WARR Report

This inaugural report from WMRR is in final draft stages, and working towards release at the AGM on 22 June 2026.

9. Next meeting date

Wednesday 10 June 2026

**This has been moved back a week from original timing due to WMRR NSW Breakfast with Minister.*

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 unacted 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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