

## WA BRANCH COMMITTEE

### MEETING

10.30am - 12.00pm (WST)

Thursday 12 February 2026

via zoom

**President: Jason Pugh**

**Vice President: Libby Eustance**

### MINUTES

#### 1. Welcome and apologies

Attendees: Paul Molony, Libby Eustance, Emma Baker, Jill Lethlean, Chris Stannard, Gayle Sloan, Janelle Osenten, Kelly Levisohn and Lisa Lepore

Apologies: Julie Baughan, Julie Brockman, Emily Tomsett, Jason Pugh, Conor Macgill, Hayley Rolfe.

#### 2. Previous minutes and actions arising

##### i. Previous minutes:

The minutes of 20 November 2025 WA Branch Committee meeting were confirmed as a true and accurate record.

*Moved:* Gayle Sloan *Seconded:* Libby Eustance

##### ii. Actions arising from previous meeting (20 November 2025):

- a. Lodged WMRR [Submission](#) on Waste Strategy (*completed*)
- b. [Waste Authority Annual report 24/25](#) (*Held over from previous meeting for discussion*)
  - A query was raised regarding the figure on page 9 which states waste generation at *2.5 kg per person*. It was suggested this should be expressed as '*2.5 kg per person per week*', noting that approximately ten years ago the average household generated around 12 kg per fortnight.
  - Members noted the report was helpful in outlining policy trigger points and providing context for recent regulatory and levy changes.
  - A question was raised regarding project expenditure detailed on page 58. It was noted there is a distinction between the operational budget and funding approved by the Minister. Clarification was also sought regarding the reference to "Supporting development of markets for recovered materials" and what activities this encompasses.
  - Waste generation overall continues to increase. While there has been significant focus on reducing Municipal Solid Waste (MSW), it was noted that Construction & Demolition (C&D) waste appears to be driving overall changes in diversion performance.
  - A gap in Commercial & Industrial (C&I) reporting remains.
  - The impact of mandatory reporting requirements is now evident in the data presented in the report.
  - Figure 2 (page 9) demonstrates a link between levy increases and behavioural change.

*Action outstanding – The Committee asked to review the data again ahead of the next meeting to see if there's anything further to discuss with the wider group.*

**iii. Consideration of the 2026 Branch Priorities (For discussion – held over from last meeting).**

The branch was invited to consider the branch priorities for the year so that these can be considered by the Board for their high level strategy review at the March Board meeting. The table provided at [Annexure A](#) captures the group's comments.

The group generally affirmed the existing priorities with money, markets and infrastructure the key priorities. In essence:

***PRIORITY #1 REMAINS***

The current priority wording is: "Advocate for a comprehensive review of waste levy to ensure it is utilised as the economic lever to place a price on material and divert it from landfill to return to the productive economy and create green jobs. A levy must reflect the real opportunity cost of building and operating infrastructure to resource recover, as well as mitigate carbon, in a more resource effective net zero economy."

***PRIORITY #2 REMAINS AND SHOULD BE UPDATED TO INCLUDE THE WORD "ACCELERATE"***

Suggested priority rewording: "Accelerate regulation to create markets for circular products"

***PRIORITY #3 REMAINS BUT MAY NEED REVISION POST STRATEGY RELEASE.***

The current priority wording is " Strategic investment on WARR infrastructure by government, focusing on priority materials"

However, priority materials may not be in the revised strategy and this priority should clearly articulate that infrastructure investment extends to weighbridges which are needed to manage and track material flows,

It was also discussed that this priority is closely tied to Priority #1 which calls for clarified levy hypothecation.

Organics are still top of with FOGO, along with:

- Batteries and solar panels
- Emerging contaminants
- Tracking C&I

### **3. National advocacy (CEO)**

**i. Federal government priorities**

- The Recycling and Waste Reduction (RaWR) Act is expected to progress in the near term. Government has indicated a comprehensive review inclusive of stewardship.
- The Productivity Commission Report into unlocking the opportunities in the circular economy disappointingly did not recommend an overarching regulatory framework for circular economy reform.
- The next Environment Ministers' Meeting (EMM) is scheduled for late March but WMRR does not anticipate WARR issues being on the agenda at this stage.

**ii. Solar Stewardship**

The Smart Energy Council is advocating for a government-underwritten solar stewardship scheme, rather than a Producer Responsibility Organisation (PRO)-led model. This may post a regulatory challenge for NSW progressing a solar PV RIS following discussions at the last EMM. NSW Environment minister Penny Sharpe has indicated that NSW will progress with its own regulations in May if no federal movement (as it has done with batteries).

Following this discussion, the practical issues were discussed regarding solar system upgrades and opportunities for solar PV recycling and re-use, led by the recent experience of Good Sammy implementing new panels in order to increase their solar capacity:

Existing PV systems cannot be expanded without decommissioning older components in certain circumstances. Combining old and new arrays may breach AS/NZS 5033 requirements (e.g. voltage/current limits, protection settings, DC isolator requirements), preventing expansion. Such configurations may void existing system warranties. It is understood that [Western Power](#) may not approve systems that combine old and new components (technical reasons to be confirmed). Reference was made to updated [installer guidance](#) and [new requirements](#) for solar and battery systems. This means that reuse and resale of panels may be more effective pathways than stewardship. *It should be noted that these issues are being examined through a Commonwealth inquiry.*

### iii. **Battery Stewardship**

NSW Battery Regulations are expected to be gazetted shortly.

Other state-based battery working groups are being coordinated by the Federal Government with WA and Queensland were noted as regulatory outliers in relation to battery stewardship (SA elections in March and VIC elections in November may stall those states' progress).

### iv. **Landfill Gas (LFG) Method**

A December update to the LFG ACCU Method has made the scheme more attractive to smaller and regional landfills.

## 4. **WA Issues**

### i. **Regulatory and policy updates**

- Waste Authority looking for nominations for 2 new Board members (closing 23 March 2026)
- From 1 January 2026, the Recovered Materials Framework will be known as the "Resource Recovery Framework". Targeted implementation for the RRF in late 2027.
- Jason and Gayle meeting parliamentary secretary on 24 February 2024 to discuss WA issues.
- The group was asked if there had been any further update following the 2019 Eclipse case around asbestos – lots of C&D were storing material onsite rather than saying it was waste. No known update at this stage.

### i. **Funding**

- \$2.7 million in funding to support Southwest local governments in maintaining Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) services. The rebate will be delivered through a structured, three-year program, commencing at \$75 per tonne. It is designed to offset transport costs for moving FOGO material to licensed processing facilities while a long-term, regionally sustainable processing solution is developed. Participating local governments will be required to verify transported tonnages and implement measures to reduce contamination, ensuring the ongoing integrity and effectiveness of the FOGO system.
  - The group discussed that this funding is essentially a transport allowance.
- The [Recycling Modernisation Fund \(RMF\) regional and remote local government authority stream](#) for local government authorities' infrastructure and equipment projects that recover or recycle material subject to waste export bans including plastics, mixed and unsorted paper and cardboard, and whole used tyres that will be operational by 1 June 2027. Closing 27 February 2026.

- The group queried how much of the funding delivered in 2020-2025 has been delivered, as onshore investment has not occurred in WA.

*Action – WMRR to look at RMF analysis of where the money went. (Project Officer Matilda undertook analysis on this in 2025)*

## ii. Submissions/consultations (WA and national)

- Select Committee on productivity in Australia (20 February 2026)
- RFI Solar Panel Recycling pilot (3 March 2026)
- Inquiry into microplastics (6 March 2026)
- Inquiry into Solar PV reuse and recycling (23 March 2026)

View [WMRR submissions](#) here

*Recent WA submissions:*

- [Regulatory Amendments for the expansion of the Container Deposit Scheme](#) (CDS) (17 January 2026)
- [Beyond WASTE 2030 - Waste Strategy Review](#) (16 December 2025)

## 5. Working group updates

### i. Landfill – Chris Stannard

No meeting yet. NSW may be first to get landfill guidelines, followed by VIC and QLD.

### ii. EfW – (Jason Pugh)

- Kwinana operational. KVI is understood to have reached a deal with Acciona, although nothing in the public area.
- ACCC issue with Acciona may recur as they will own both EfW Facilities.
- IBAA – looking at classicisation pathways to accept as a resource – with the Blue Phoenix nomination in QLD for an End of Waste Code for IBAA expected to progress to exhibition shortly.
- Noted that the National Landfill group is looking to build skills and knowledge in classifying APCr (Air pollution control residues) for disposal.

### iii. Circular Economy – Katelin Opferkuch

No update. First meeting still to be arranged.

### iv. Waste Educators – (Emily Tomsett) Kelly Levisohn

- Upcoming April meeting will look at FOGO Compost and PFAS. The recent January meeting was focused on food systems.
- It was noted that WALGA will be meeting soon to talk PFAS.

*Action: WMRR to see if we can share Queensland data showing PFAS is in both garden organics and FOGO. Subject to approval from DETSI.*

## 6. Events and Training

### i. Webinar:

[Is there a role for AI in WARR data and operations in Australia?](#), 1pm, Tuesday 24 March 2026

### ii. Bite Size Learning

- Our new training offering – lunchtime learning commencing 16 March 2026.
  - i. Session 1: Community Engagement with Rachael Stapleton-Jansen. Details online soon.
  - ii. Session 2: Product Stewardship Schemes (date TBC)

- The group discussed that education for our industry in Australia is somewhat lacking. There is Contract Management for council officers' course being offered by WALGA. However, in US and Europe there are chartered qualifications for the waste and resource recovery industry to show professionalism.

iii. **WARR 101 (Face to Face Training)** – Tuesday 31 March 2026 (Sydney, venue TBC)

*\*Pilot training event with a view to rolling out national delivery with sessions in each state.*

iv. **Landfill training**

- Will run again with more focus on landfill as capture this year. Dates TBC

v. **WMRR AGM**

- 22 June 2026 (Adelaide)

vi. **WA Women of WARR Leadership Breakfast** (Friday 1 May 2026)

The Hon. Cheryl Edwards will be one of the speakers.

vii. **WA End of Year Drinks** (Thursday 12 November 2026)

viii. **Conferences for 2026**

- **ENVIRO Conference** – 23 & 24 June 2026 (Adelaide)
- **Waste & Recycling (WA) Conference\*** – 10 & 11 September 2026 (Perth)
- **Australian Landfill and Transfer Stations Conference** - 14 & 15 October 2026 (Brisbane/Noosa TBC)

## 7. Next meeting date

Thursday 12 March 2026

### Actions arising from meeting:

| Issue                                   | Action                                                                                                                                        | Status                     |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>WA Data 2024-2025</b>                | Participants are asked to review the data again ahead of the next meeting to see if there's anything further to discuss with the wider group. | Review at next meeting.    |
| <b>RMF funding analysis - 2020-2025</b> | WMRR to look at RMF analysis of where the money went. (Project Officer Matilda undertook analysis on this in 2025)                            | In progress.               |
| <b>WALGA meeting on FOGO</b>            | WMRR to see if we can share Queensland data showing PFAS is in both garden organics and FOGO. Subject to approval from DETSI.                 | In progress. Taken offline |

**Branch Priorities (Working Document) – February 2026**

| Western Australia Initiatives |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Progress                                                                                                                                                                         | 2025 Comments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Feb 2026 comments                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1                             | <p>Advocate for a comprehensive review of waste <b>levy</b> to ensure it is utilised as the economic lever to place a price on material and divert it from landfill to return to the productive economy and create green jobs. A levy must reflect the real opportunity cost of building and operating infrastructure to resource recover, as well as mitigate carbon, in a more resource effective net zero economy.</p> <p>As part of the review industry requires greater certainty and transparent hypothecation of at least 50% to industry, to ensure a viable WARR sector in WA.</p> | <p>The levy increased by \$15 in 2024-25 (the first increase since 2018) and now moves with CPI, hitting \$88 in 2025-26. WMRR continues to advocate for a greater increase.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targets and waste strategy not moving – needs higher levy, move waste out of landfill, create infrastructure to process.</li> <li>There is a need for an increase in landfill levy and improved regulation and enforcement of it including incorporating portability and addressing zones; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunity for revenue - although there is a lot of pressure for no levy.</li> <li>Ideal is to give us (industry) more back and raise less government revenue – WMRR will put at least 50% back to industry.</li> <li>Extending the regulated area should be encouraged.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <p><b>PRIORITY REMAINS</b></p> <p>Infrastructure investment, clarification levy zones and levy hypothecation will be the key to driving industry success in achieving targets.</p> |
| 2                             | <p>Regulation to create markets for circular products.</p> <p><i>(This was updated in the March 2025 branch meeting with a view to merge</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <p>Advocate for the progression and finalisation of a consistent and certain resource recovery framework to ensure policy and regulatory pathways enable the</p>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The development of sustainable end markets for products and materials made from recycled materials needs to be prioritised; particularly</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <p><b>PRIORITY REMAINS AND SHOULD BE UPDATED TO INCLUDE THE WORD “ACCELERATE”</b></p> <p><b>Suggested priority rewording:</b></p>                                                  |

| Western Australia Initiatives                                                                                                    | Progress                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 2025 Comments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Feb 2026 comments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
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| <p><i>regulation and procurement thresholds driving circular markets into one goal or look to legislate for a framework)</i></p> | <p>circulation of secondary raw materials.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ DWER shared a draft recovered materials framework with WMRR in late July 2023 who have advised they wish to work with industry to finalise and implement. This will be a voluntary framework.</li> </ul> <p>Advocate for the procurement of secondary raw materials content at all levels of government and market development.</p> <p>Activate discussions with DWER and encouraged connection with EcologiQ.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Install recycled content targets.<br/><i>(This could be assigned to the CE Working Group)</i></li> <li>○ Noted that we need a risk-based framework (i.e. IBAA) rather than prescriptive standards like <i>Roads to Rehab</i></li> <li>● Risk of recycled material being taken on by the</li> </ul> | <p>recovered materials and end markets for FOGO.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Controlling contamination front end needs to be prioritised. The branch discussed burdening organic streams with packaging waste, noting it will limit markets for FOGO derived products.</li> <li>▪ Move away from wish-cycling and understand impact of policies throughout the entire system – i.e.: SUP bans impact on FOGO inputs.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Clarity is needed on whether the Resource Recovery Framework will be voluntary or mandatory.</li> <li>● Strong and informed, evidence-led policy development is needed, including real EPR (not simply collection schemes and bans); <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ BAU approach to achieving goals is not working.</li> <li>▪ Minister's office does not seem keen to take responsibility for</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <p><b>“Accelerate regulation to create markets for circular products”</b></p> <p>Regulation to create markets for circular products needs to be accelerated. Absence of clear standards and specifications is undermining quality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Development of the RRF is crucial and needs to be a mandatory (not voluntary) framework. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Currently, WA not looking at bulk (general) orders and exemptions, with these mostly applied to road and infrastructure building projects.</li> <li>○ There is a missed opportunity for organics.</li> <li>○ Developing markets is crucial</li> <li>○ Looking for beneficial reuse that is safe and widely accepted to get the level of recovery needed to meet targets.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Shifting focus to developing markets for circular products (rather than trying to find uses for end products) is integral.</li> </ul> |

| Western Australia Initiatives |                                                                                            | Progress                                                                                                                                          | 2025 Comments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Feb 2026 comments                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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|                               |                                                                                            | government needs to be considered - i.e. can they be warranted to last 50-80 years?                                                               | <p>compostables contaminating the FOGO stream (i.e.: they did not explicitly tell people to put them in the compostable bin)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Opportunities to leverage advocacy through the Consistent Communications Collective and FOGO Reference Group Meetings with WALGA and DWER.</li> <li>• Mandatory sustainable circular procurement at all levels of government is needed.</li> <li>• WMRR understands that DWER may be supportive of a national approach to consistency for PFAS in organics. WA was hoping to push for national consistency on testing at HEPA (but did not yet progress) – Minster is still being onboarded so may stall progress .</li> </ul> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 3                             | Strategic investment on WARR infrastructure by government, focusing on priority materials; | Systems approach – all aspects matter to get a quality product Needed in the WA market, particularly around FOGO processing. What can we be doing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for LGs to tender for long-term contracts to warrant investment. No one will tender to build and invest for a short-term contract. Creating additional</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <p><b>PRIORITY REMAINS BUT MAY NEED REVISION POST STRATEGY RELEASE</b></p> <p>Priority materials may not be in the revised strategy and this priority should clearly articulate that infrastructure investment</p> |

| Western Australia Initiatives | Progress                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 2025 Comments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Feb 2026 comments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
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|                               | <p>to advocate for this – using the data to show why we’re not hitting the targets?</p> <p>Noting the contamination management for FOGO particularly an issue – quality is the make or break with FOGO.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Eg: Current issue that 7% FOGO contamination - half of which is packaging. Noted that WA Government has brought the FOGO reference group back</li> </ul> <p>Importance of linking data over weighbridge by stream before taking next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What does best Practice look like – what examples do you have in Australia – do we want to?</li> <li>○ May be worth considering WMRR’s submission on infrastructure plan – link waste flows etc may assist in shaping this priority.</li> </ul> | <p>capacity requires long contract terms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grants can sometimes distort the market rather than accelerate the market by preferencing specific facilities/operators with large. There is not enough due diligence done on viability and end markets) – the state’s Infrastructure Strategy should address this.</li> <li>• Waste tracking and investment in the supporting infrastructure is needed (including IT and weighbridges).</li> <li>• Approval processes are lengthy – health check on development applications/approvals.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Greater emphasis on priority inputs – especially for FOGO</a> (letter issued to Minister Swinbourn in June 2025)</li> </ul> | <p>extends to weighbridges which are needed to manage and track material flows, This priority is closely tied to Priority #1 which calls for clarified levy hypothecation. Organics are still top of with FOGO, along with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Batteries and solar panels</li> <li>• Emerging contaminants</li> <li>• Tracking C&amp;I</li> </ul> <p><i>*Noted that in other states, the Retailers Association is looking at standardizing collection at supermarkets to get standardised communications in bin rooms etc. to promote clean streams.</i></p> |

| Western Australia Initiatives |  | Progress                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 2025 Comments | Feb 2026 comments |
|-------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
|                               |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Consider <i>Circular Cities</i> waste flow analysis (Emily Tomsett can connect)</li> <li>○ Waste infrastructure plan – data should be shared as an appendix to any government correspondence</li> </ul> |               |                   |

DRAFT