

QUEENSLAND BRANCH COMMITTEE

MEETING

9.00 am – 10.00 am

Wednesday 5 August 2026

via Zoom

President: Chris Hambling

Vice President: Steve Cosatto

MINUTES

1. Welcome and apologies

- i. **Attendees:** Christine Blanchard, Tony Stapleton, Alix Baltais, Colin Kangas, Gavin Crawford, Hayley Page, Michael O’Keefe, Chris Hambling, Richard Haward, Rowan Cossins, Jason Grandcourt, Gayle Sloan, Matt Glavina, Pawan Govind, Ashliegh Saunders, Giles Prowse, Amy Bartkowski, Lilli Thannhauser, Joshua Evans and Lisa Lepore.
- ii. **Apologies:** Matt MacCarthy, Chris Aexander, Alex Kaanar, Steve Cosatto, Henry Anning, Lacey Webb, Trevor Evans, Steffan Ditrich, Justin Eccles and Evan Lockhart.

2. Previous minutes and actions arising

iii. Previous Minutes

The minutes of 15 July 2026 Branch Committee Meeting were confirmed as a true and accurate record.

Moved: Matt Glavina *Second:* Giles Prowse

iv. Actions arising

- WMRR to write again to the Minister to push state led action on batteries regulation– noting that the Waste Strategy indicates that the State is otherwise relying on federal led action (*actioned and closed*).
- Landfill Working Group to gather examples of junior DETSI staff regulating landfills without consistency or appropriate operational knowledge. This has been flagged with Jackie Mackeay. The group commented that the DETSI Roadshow was a good opportunity to get consistency and be proactive. Gavin Crawford at DETSI should be contacted with systemic issues to improve the quality of regulatory compliance. (*Noted for landfill group to follow up and closed*).
- Branch priorities need to be revised against the Strategy (released July 2026) Branch to reconsider priorities against Waste Strategy (*noted*).

3. National advocacy (CEO)

National EPA

- CEO met with CEO John Bradley PSM. He brings a strong background in waste exports, regulation and enforcement.
- The National EPA is still working through its operating model and relationship with DCCEEW.

- Circular economy and product stewardship policy remain separate from the EPA's regulatory functions. Key discussion included the Recycling and Waste Reduction Act (RaWR Act) framework and exemptions applying to waste exports.

Packaging

- Discussed Australia's insufficient packaging processing capacity and limited end markets. There is hope the National EPA can bring stronger data and regulatory intelligence into the packaging discussion.

Environment Ministers Meeting (EMM)

- The September EMM is expected to consider the Circular Economy Roadmap and intergovernmental arrangements, although packaging may not be included on the agenda.
- The Solar PV Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) is expected to be on the agenda. The national procurement process has stalled due to a complaint that is currently being investigated.

Packaging reform

- Minister Watt's office is reportedly finding it difficult to gain traction on packaging reform through Cabinet processes. APCO has argued that regulatory changes could be inflationary.
- WMRR's position is that the costs already exist within the system and are currently being borne elsewhere rather than being appropriately attributed.

Carbon

- Safeguard Mechanism: Further federal discussion on the Safeguard Mechanism is expected imminently following the CCA Progress Advice consultation this month (which also raised issues around Safeguard).

Competition and productivity reform

- The Australian Government has funding available through its National Competition Policy agenda to encourage states to reduce regulatory barriers and improve harmonisation.
- Treasury is particularly interested in reducing red and green tape that constrains business and national productivity, with financial incentives available to states undertaking productivity-enhancing reforms.
- WMRR should consider whether issues such as inconsistent organics standards or other regulatory inconsistencies could be raised through this process, although technically complex reforms may be less suited to the program.

4. QLD Issues

i. Regulatory and policy updates:

[Draft EOW code – Tanalith E treated timber and sawdust \(EOWC010004168\) \(ESR/2025/7251\) \(PDF, 449KB\)](#) (Closing 24 August 2026)

- The approved resource must only be used as a feedstock in the manufacturing of compost in accordance with the conditions of this EOW code - from the tanalith E treated timber EOW code
- Uncertain at this stage whether WMRR will put in a submission, noting that members invited to send comments to WMRR if relevant.

- This consultation may be relevant for SA's CCA timbers group. Noted that there is also treated timber work at the University of the Sunshine Coast (CRC) type group to find recycling and reuse options for treated timber.

Draft EOW code – Incinerator bottom ash aggregate (EOWC010004246) (PDF, 629KB) (Closing 31 August 2026)

- WMRR has engaged EnRisks to start review,
 - At initial review, the code seems heavy on downstream PFAS - with tight levels for compliance.
 - Seems to be input driven.
 - National EfW Meeting on 17 August will see EnRisks present on the basis of the reasonableness of the proposed levels – aim is to try and come from a scientific basis when finalising the code.
- May need to look at if we can review it for non sensitive uses
- Interim IBAA guidance from the UK will also need to be considered.
- The Code covers incineration – not gasification. Noted that the VISY (Solid Phase Combustion Products) Code may be more aligned to the Wilfdire type process.

Update on liaison with DETSI re PFAS/organics

- DETSI may be starting to monitor inputs and sources of PFAS – expecting certainty of this approach in next 6 weeks .

Swanbank stakeholder group feedback (Matt Glavina)

- Still trying to pull together an odour management plan ('tick the box' from outcomes and investigations in the final report)
- Operators should have been invited – reluctance from some operators to be involved as there seems to be an intention to put industry stamp on the process without actually getting industry input
 - Noted that Cleanaway and Remondis are not currently active in the group.
- The intention is to do more audits rather than new compliance – support and mitigate
- Looking at seasonally monitoring odour for the first 12 months - data to be summarised and released

Definition of Waste consultation closed in July (amendments to reduce litter and boost recycling)

- No update at this stage but expect to have an update from DETSI at the next Branch meeting.

Standing items for review/updates:

- Waste Strategy impacts
 - Announcements around changes to waste levy settings made with the Strategy release.
 - Funding for litter to the Bay initiative announced recently
 - Statewide Waste and Recycling Infrastructure Plan (announced and expected in 12 months)
WMRR just got asked to feedback on the SWRIP scope.
 - Estimates hearings held last week – nothing new came out from the hearings about our sector.

ii. Regional Planning updates (all)

NQROC – Hayley Page

- Four projects have received Boost funding.
- The organics tender is in its final stages.
- Batteries is a key priority for the region:
 - Currently running battery education through the College of Business, Law and Governance.
 - Approximately 2,500 battery-containing items have been collected, with vapes accounting for 47%. Despite this, there has been no visible reduction in landfill fires. This will be useful to continue tracking.
- E-scooters and e-bikes
 - NQROC was approached by QPSU regarding the potential acceptance of seized e-scooters and similar items, but is not currently looking to accept these materials.
 - A UK industry association has reportedly proposed a \$10 retail deposit as a potential approach to managing these products.

Whitsunday/Isaac – Jason Grandcourt

- Work is underway to have the regional implementation plan adopted by the three councils.
- A grant-funded project relating to vapes is being progressed.
 - Nous Group is examining options for a vape take-back scheme. The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has commissioned Nous to undertake a feasibility study into options for a national consumer collection and disposal scheme for vaping goods.
- Similar to NQROC, there is currently no appetite to accept seized e-scooters and related products from police without additional funding.

CQROC – Michael O’Keefe

- CQROC is working through issues associated with regional coordinator funding, which is due to end on 30 June 2027. The next Queensland election is not due until 2028.
 - The original intention was for regional coordinators to support implementation of the regional waste plans, with grant agreements tied to delivery outcomes. However, delays to the Queensland Waste Strategy and changes to funding arrangements, including the Resource Recovery Boost Fund (RRBF), have disrupted implementation.
 - The next funding round is not expected to be released until the beginning of 2027, creating concerns that projects will not be implemented by 30 June 2027.
 - There is a perception that the Queensland Government expects councils to continue implementation without ongoing DETSI funding, while the current government has not reaffirmed its commitment to the regional plans.
 - LGAQ is putting forward motions for consideration, although the contractual and funding position remains uncertain.
- Discussion noted that there was limited coordination when the regional plans were originally developed. A question was raised about whether analysis has been undertaken to demonstrate the benefits delivered by regional coordinators.

- Consideration should also be given to whether the regional plans could be linked with the Strategic Infrastructure Plan, building on the existing regional coordinator role rather than replacing it.

Action arising:

WMRR to follow up with DETSI regarding the future of regional plans and regional coordinator funding.

Wide Bay Burnett – Christine Blanchard

- Gympie has received \$3.5 million in Boost funding for transfer station infrastructure.
- Landfill airspace and future capacity are significant issues across the region. Gympie has approximately 10 months of remaining landfill capacity and has secured land for a new site, with discussions underway about its development.
 - Fraser Coast and Bundaberg are also considering options to establish additional landfill capacity, with logistics and transport distances presenting challenges.
 - Gympie is also considering waste-to-energy (WtE) opportunities associated with the new site.

SEQ – Chris Hambling

- CoMSEQ continues to develop its Waste Management Plan, which is expected to be finalised shortly. The current focus is increasingly on WtE and residual waste management.
- ACCC authorisation has not been granted for the proposed joint procurement arrangements covering large-scale combustion and two emerging technologies across the region.
- Recent funding announcements include support for the Gold Coast ARRC and Brisbane transfer station upgrades, among other projects.

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

- [Resource Recovery Boost Funding Program](#) –Stream 1 and Stream 2 award announcements.
- Program budget extended by another \$40M. Next funding window expected end of 2026 early 2027
- The SWRIP has been allocated \$2m.
 - [City Deals Organics](#)
- Closed Wednesday 1 July 2026 and will be announced in September 2026
 - \$12.5M Residual Waste Fund
 - \$11M Regional Recycling Transport Fund
 - \$18.5M RecycleWise Education Fund
 - \$11.7M Waste Technology and Innovation Fund
 - [GROW FOGO Program](#) Amended Guidelines (includes Home Composting Equipment Grants)

iv. Submissions/consultation (for noting)

- [Climate Change Authority - 2026 Annual Progress Advice](#) (closing 9 August 2026)

- [Proposed change to the soil organic carbon method 2021 supplement](#) (18 August 2026)
- [Review of Statutory Protections for Wastewater Treatment Plants under the Environment Protection Act 1994](#) (28 August 2026)
- [IBAA Code for Incinerator Bottom Ash Aggregate](#) (outlined above) 31 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)

[Submissions](#)

5. Working group updates

i. RRMD – Matt Glavina

- The Working Group has not met since the last Branch meeting. The next meeting date will be confirmed ahead of the September Branch meeting.

ii. Landfill– Colin Kangas

- The Working Group has not met since the last Branch meeting.
- Discussions are underway as noted above in item 2 regarding conversations with DETSI around improving the consistency of regulation from DETSI's compliance officers.

iii. Energy from Waste – Joshua Evans

- Greg Perkins from Wildfire presented at the August meeting on the Bulwer Island facility
- The group also received initial presentation on the IBAA EOW Code from Scott Blanchard (DETSI).
 - Noted that Wildfire (pyrolysis) are also keen to look at the IBAA Code despite it currently drafted to apply only for incineration -and not applying to thermal treatment facilities.
 - WMRR looking for national alignment in the WMRR response – with a national WMRR member meeting scheduled for Monday 17 August.
- Noted that the National Regulators Group met last week with a focus on trying to move alignment nationally on the regulation of products from EfW Residues. The focus at the moment is IBAA, and APCr will be next.
- The ALTS Conference will likely include a presentation focused on landfill management of APCr to date in the UK.
- ARRC EOI process ongoing with release of documents expected this week.

iv. Waste Educators – (Evan Lockhart)

No update. The next meeting for the group is on 10 September 2026.

v. Young Professionals – Amy Bartkowski

- The group is looking to volunteer at Save our Supplies on a Friday afternoon at the end of August (TBC). Details are currently being confirmed.
- The next event will be a site tour of the Salvo's Textile Recycling Facility in Brisbane, with further details to be confirmed.

6. Events and Training

- Review and feedback of the [QLD Women of WARR Leadership Breakfast](#) (16 July 2026) SOLD OUT
 - The branch acknowledged this was a successful event and very well attended.
- [Australian Landfill and Transfer Stations Conference](#) 21-23 October 2026 (Brisbane).
 - Workshops on gas and redeveloping sites planned for the day prior to the conference, with the program now being finalised. Noted that over 80 extracts were received.
- QLD WARR Forum** (Thursday 19 November 2026)
 - The schedule for the day is currently being progressed – Branch committee members are encouraged to email suggestions for topics they would like to see covered.
 - Noted that WMRR is looking to roll out its *Foundations of WARR Training* the day ahead of the Queensland Forum so that anyone travelling to Brisbane can make the most of training and attending the event with an overnight stay.

[Confirmed WMRR events](#)

7. Other business

- [State Branch Elections](#)
 - Rowan Cossins and Lilli Thannhauser introduced themselves as the candidates going up for election. Voting closes 18 August 2026.
 - The outcome of Queensland President election will be announced by the end of August 2026.
 - Noted that this meeting is Chris Hambling's last meeting as President after a successful four (4) years in the role.
- QLD Branch Priorities (for discussion)**

The [Branch Priorities table](#) is to be reviewed against the Waste Strategy – noting WMRR will be reviewing its overall Strategic Business Plan with the new President at the end of September.

The incoming President will lead the review of the priorities in the September meeting.

8. Next meeting date

Wednesday 2 September 2026

Meeting closed 10.01 am

Actions arising from meeting:

Action	Responsibility	Timing / status
Review the Queensland Branch priorities against the new Queensland Waste Strategy.	Incoming QLD Branch President / Branch Committee	To be led at the September Branch meeting.
Consider whether regulatory inconsistencies, such as inconsistent organics standards, could be raised through the Australian Government's National Competition Policy/productivity reform process.	WMRR	Noted for National Office. Further consideration required.
Determine whether WMRR will make a submission on the draft Tanalith E treated timber and sawdust EOW Code, taking into account member feedback.	WMRR / members	Consultation closes 24 August 2026.
Complete technical review of the draft Incinerator Bottom Ash Aggregate (IBAA) EOW Code, including the proposed PFAS limits and whether different requirements may be appropriate for non-sensitive uses.	WMRR / EnRiskS	Submission closes 31 August 2026.
Follow up DETSI's proposed approach to monitoring PFAS inputs and sources.	WMRR	Greater certainty expected within approximately six weeks.
Seek an update from DETSI on the outcome of the Definition of Waste consultation.	WMRR / DETSI	Update expected at the next Branch meeting.
Follow up with DETSI on the future of regional waste plans and regional coordinator funding, including the funding gap beyond 30 June 2027.	WMRR	Explicit action arising from the meeting.
Continue discussions with DETSI on improving consistency and operational knowledge among compliance officers regulating landfills, including raising systemic issues with Gavin Crawford.	Landfill Working Group	Ongoing follow-up
Branch Committee members to provide suggestions for topics to be covered at the QLD WARR Forum.	QLD Branch Committee members	For discussion at next meeting or via direct email to National Office.

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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