



victorian
waste management association®

MEDIA RELEASE

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VWMA calls on Government support of industry to build more resilient waste and resource recovery system

The VWMA has called on Victorian Energy, Environment and Climate Change Minister Lily D'Ambrosio to support a VWMA (industry led) initiative that will identify the issues, challenges and barriers for the Victorian waste and recycling system, and propose appropriate solutions and interventions for the Government to consider.

The Victorian waste and resource recovery sector is an important pillar of the economy, generating revenue of over \$2.2 billion and employing over 8000 Victorians. The largely privately run sector is responsible for managing the 11 million tonnes of waste (and rising) that Victoria generates each year.

In addition to managing Victoria's increased waste volumes, the sector also faces a number of other challenges including rising insurance costs, recent import/trade restrictions, urban planning (including medium and high rise apartments), increased regulation and public perceptions on the sector. These challenges need to be discussed and broken down, and solutions generated by the organisations and people that are most impacted. Regrettably, this hasn't been the current approach adopted by the Victorian Government.

Victoria's waste and resource recovery system is an interconnected network and includes kerbside collection, transport, consolidation, processing, recovery, landfill and export. This system works best when all components are working together and in the same direction. The current challenges brought about by Chinese import restrictions hasn't just impacted the recycling components of the system, but impacted the sector as a whole.

The current situation presents an opportunity to bring industry and other key stakeholders together to break down the various components of the system, identify the challenges and barriers at each stage, and formulate a consolidated position back to government about the changes that are needed to build and strengthen Victoria's waste and resource recovery system to become Australia's most resilient. The VWMA has provided the Victorian Government an opportunity to better consider the sector's position on these challenges through its proposal to create an industry-led **Waste and Resource Recovery Industry White Paper**. We believe this process would provide an evidence base to support the development of the State's waste and resource recovery policy which has been absent over the last few years.

Comments attributable to VWMA Executive Officer Mark Smith:

We have an opportunity to establish Victoria as Australia's most resilient state [with regard to waste and recycling management].

The private sector owns and operates the bulk of waste and resource recovery infrastructure and services in Victoria and should be front and centre in proposing solutions.

The Victorian Government has had a closed door/invite only approach with regard to formulating responses to the current recycling issues. We'd like to make things more transparent.

- Ends -

About the Victorian Waste Management Association

The Victorian Waste Management Association (VWMA) is one of Australia's oldest waste and recycling associations representing Australia's largest membership of waste and resource recovery businesses including collection and transporters, processors, recycling facilities and landfills. For more information on the VWMA please visit:

<http://www.vwma.com.au/>

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