

South West Sustainability Waste Alliance:

Communique to SWA stakeholders

The Commonwealth National Waste Action Plan 2019 outlines the incremental export ban of paper, glass, plastic, and tyres starting from July 2020. The changing landscape of waste disposal is mapped out through a corresponding series of waste avoidance, diversion, and recovery targets to be implemented over the next decade. WA's policy framework aligns with the Federal targets through the State's Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy 2030 (WARRS) and the accompanying WARRS Action Plan 2030.

Waste, water and other environmental asset protection strategies need to be included in a coherent approach to future-proofing the region. The local consequence of failing to co-ordinate waste avoidance, recovery, recycling, and wastewater initiatives will see more than \$100m needed for future environmental protection initiatives.

The precipitous decline in economic activity due to COVID-19 has now led to accelerated government investment in infrastructure and policy interventions which can be implemented quickly and will deliver sustained jobs and growth. The \$852m Bunbury Outer Ring Road (BORR) project has been fast-tracked to contribute to the economic recovery process being launched by Federal, State and Local Governments. The State Government has committed to ensuring that BORR makes a significant contribution to this economic recovery in the South West of WA through achieving waste diversion targets by investing in local waste solutions, as well as regional and Aboriginal business development and employment opportunities.

The SWA Initiative requires effective collaboration, which will ensure that BORR will:

- Optimise the use of recycled materials;
- Report on the types and volumes of recycled products used;
- Give thought to sustainable water resourcing; and
- Provide streamlined governance and strong leadership between the SWA and the BORR Alliance.

The SWA Initiative Investment Business Case and associated requirement will be delivered as a co-investment of Government, industry and the community. It will set out optimal value for money options for investing in waste recycling initiatives in the Greater Bunbury Region and the broader South West.

This is just the start of several COVID-19 recovery initiatives designed to help businesses grow in new ways and create high-value jobs in the 21st century circular waste economy.

Current situation

A facilitated stakeholder engagement forum was held at the Dolphin Discovery Centre on Friday, 5 June 2020 to provide BORR proponents an opportunity to engage with SWA participants, local government representatives and Main Roads on the objectives and early findings with respect to waste diversion and recovery opportunities in the South West.

A number of priorities were identified for the South West waste sector and the BORR project, including opportunities to divert significant volumes of South West and BORR project waste from landfill into recovery facilities across the five focus areas identified in State and Commonwealth Waste Strategies, plus waste water.

A clear priority coming out of the forum is the establishment of a SWA Innovation Hub, hosted by the Bunbury Harvey Regional Council (BHRC), to fast-track market-testing and new specifications for products incorporating recycled waste streams into roads on BORR timelines. The local government roads component of the BORR project offers an established pathway for testing almost market ready products at scale, where a Main Roads specification has yet to be developed. Rapid development of the South West and broader WA waste market is seen as the most prospective means of harnessing BORR Project waste diversion targets to catalyse ongoing waste diversion and reprocessing outcomes for the transport sector and local government. The responsibility for industry and local government going forward is substantial, and the opportunity to capitalise on the value of reprocessed waste offers an economically valuable solution. Identifying effective strategies to stimulate the required capital investments by government and industry is a priority.

An opportunity to divert wastewater to the BORR project to avoid impacting the Yarragadee aquifer and Noongar water values was another widely shared priority. Opportunities are being explored to pipe water from nearby wastewater treatment plants to the BORR project, and possibly Kemerton, to provide an ongoing source of non-potable water. This aligns with a desire to expand waste recovery processes at Stanley Road to service the wider South West and catalyse development at Kemerton.

BORR proponents signalled interest in utilising as much food organic and garden organic (FOGO) compost as the expanded facility at BHRC can supply for rehabilitation of road reserves. Participants suggested the value of establishing recycled materials sorting facilities in the north, central and south, with the potential to generate 100 jobs. BHRC, reconfigured as required to incorporate the other South West local governments, offers a suitable location for secondary processing to produce economically valuable recycled materials for incorporation into roads through the SWA Innovation Hub.

Attendees agreed that a business case interrogating the benefits and costs of prioritised reprocessing facilities, and recycled road products for application through the Innovation Hub, offers a practical means of providing input to BORR Participant Alliance Agreement negotiations and contributing useful stimulus to the COVID-19 economic recovery effort.

Utilisation of ISCA's IS Rating Tool

Delivery of the BORR project will include application of the Infrastructure Sustainability Council of Australia's (ISCA) Infrastructure Sustainability (IS) rating tool for the design and construction of the project. The IS rating scheme evaluates sustainability initiatives and potential environmental, social and economic impacts and opportunities associated with infrastructure projects and assets.

The IS rating tool provides a link between project sustainability and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. BORR was subject to an IS rating during development and was the first major project to apply the IS Planning rating.

In past meetings, the SWA Leadership and Working Group has been made aware of the structure, principles of operation and most relevant categories and credits in the IS Rating Tool associated with Resource Efficiency.

A major principle in applying the IS Rating Tool is for proponents to strive to perform at least at a good practice level (Level 1) in all the Credits in the Scheme; strive for best practice (Level 2) in the more project-specific Credits, and truly aspire to World best practice (Level 3) in those Credits related to Resource Efficiency. To assist in this process, lead indicators will be developed and provided as input to the Business Case, and SWA expects that the Value Management Workshops will help in validating this approach.

SWA Program

SWA is currently updating its understanding of the State of Play in the South West waste sector, building on the work of the South West Regional Waste Group (SWRWG), comprised of the 12 South West local governments. This document will form the basis for a value management forum at the Lighthouse Inn, Bunbury on 26 June. This will include a broader cross-section of stakeholders to prioritise community, industry and BORR values and develop a long list of options. A Regional Development (RED) Grant is being submitted by 1 July to establish a SWA Innovation Hub to fast-track market testing and specifications for new waste streams into roads and beyond. This will be hosted by the Bunbury Harvey Regional Council. A SWRWG CEO Forum will follow on 3 July, to workshop findings and options with South West local governments. Long-list options will be evaluated using a value for money framework, including South West, local Noongar and Infrastructure Sustainability Council of Australia values. A final value management forum will follow on 17 July to review value for money findings and short-list options for benefit cost and economic analyses. The findings are being collated into a Strategic Asset Management Framework standard business case, with additional analysis provided about the wider economic benefits to the South West. This will be delivered to Main Roads by 14 August for inclusion in BORR Project Alliance Agreement negotiations.

Recommendations and action

- Note this initiative
- Establish preferred engagement protocols with SWA
- Determine who to send to the SWA Value Management Forums

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