

Enquiries: ASSIST
03 9209 6777
File Ref: E255/20



6 January 2020

Committee Secretary
Standing Committee on Industry, Innovation, Science and Resources
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

St Kilda Town Hall
99a Carlisle Street
St Kilda
Victoria 3182

www.portphillip.vic.gov.au

ASSIST Customer Service
☎ 9209 6777

Dear Committee Secretary

FEEDBACK ON TERMS OF REFERENCE INTO INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS IN AUSTRALIA'S WASTE MANAGEMENT AND RECYCLING INDUSTRIES

The City of Port Phillip (CoPP) welcomes the invitation to submit feedback to the House Standing Committee on Industry, Innovation, Science and Resources on their Terms of Reference to inquire into and report on innovative solutions in Australia's waste management and recycling industries.

In September 2019 Council declared a Climate Emergency, and has identified waste management and recycling as an essential aspect of our response to the emergency.

Climate change poses a significant risk to the people of Port Phillip and Australia, with sea level rise, more frequent flooding, and mass species extinction posing serious risks to our community and beyond.

CoPP strongly encourages the Australian Government to also declare a Climate Emergency, and to consider the impacts of climate change when considering waste management and recycling.

Our Council and community have a keen interest in supporting and engaging in progress towards an effective, nation-wide waste and recycling infrastructure network that is consistent yet regionally managed, and which supports a circular economy.

The City of Port Phillip is committed to moving towards a future in which zero waste is disposed of to landfill, and in which resource extraction is minimised through maximising the use of existing resources in the production of new products to create cleaner environments and healthier communities.

We hope this feedback on the four key themes of the Terms of Reference will be valuable in helping to shape your Inquiry:

1. Industrial, commercial and domestic waste

The City of Port Phillip supports a focus on opportunities to better manage resources deemed waste via movement towards a circular economy. This approach sees waste to landfill, from any source, a last resort, maximising use and reuse, and prevents unnecessary resource extraction.

Alongside this, we would like to see better national data collection and management to assist in regulating the waste and resource recovery sector, and track its movement through systems both onshore and offshore, with onshore management our preference.

2. Waste in waterways and oceans

The City of Port Phillip supports a focus on better managing waste so it does not escape our systems (litter prevention) and better management of that which does escape our systems (litter management). This includes support for national product stewardships schemes, particularly for plastic cigarette butts (Australia's most littered item), and other priority products.

We support working with the construction industry, manufacturers and industry partners to prevent waste from the source, including strengthening environmental laws and penalties for illegal waste disposal and littering.

Further, Councils and land managers across the country spend millions of dollars a year cleaning up litter, and impacts to our environment are no doubt substantial. The collective effort to educate communities about the impacts of litter are also substantial, and so Federal Government leadership in acknowledging the issues of materials such as microplastics is welcomed.

3. Landfill reduction

The City of Port Phillip supports a focus on landfill reduction, particularly on investment into innovative approaches to recycling technology, and welcomes investigation and action on areas where innovation is impeded, such as legislation or economic drivers.

We are keen to explore technologies associated with advanced waste processing, including energy production, and support engagement with market and industry to identify new approaches for managing waste, working in partnership to build up research and knowledge on the best approaches.

4. Other related matters

Other matters the City of Port Phillip wishes to see included in the scope of the Terms of Reference include:

- The classification of the waste and resource recovery sectors as an essential service, governed by an Essential Services Commission, potentially at the State-level.
- Significant investment in onshore processing and recycling of waste materials.
- Identification of target markets for increased and improved resource use and efficiencies, and significant investment to facilitate such innovation and change.

Please note that this feedback has been prepared by Council officers, in line with adopted Strategies and positions and is yet to be considered by Council. Thus, this feedback is provided without prejudice of Council's formal views on this matter.

Yours/sincerely



Damian Dewar
A/General Manager City Strategy & Sustainable Development