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## Media release

It has been widely reported in the media that an approx. 70,000 tonnes of waste per month is being transported from the greater Sydney area (also includes Newcastle & Wollongong) for disposal at SE Queensland landfills. It is likely that the key motivation for this is to avoid the payment of the \$138.20 per tonne for NSW landfilling of waste from the Metropolitan Levy Area. In some cases, it is being reported that this waste is being transported long distance to interstate recycling facilities to avoid the higher standards imposed on recycling outputs by NSWs' resource recovery regulations.

This volume of waste represents an estimated 1,800 truck movements per month, although some of the waste is loaded into shipping containers and transported by rail.

## Chain of responsibility concerns

In recent weeks NSW Police have notified WCRA of four truck accidents involving the long-distance transport of waste to interstate facilities (far North Coast, Karuah, Chipping Norton & this week Blacktown). In March 2017, there was an accident where a heavy vehicle loaded with waste (possibly containing some asbestos), allegedly had 20 defects, the Driver failed to stop when flagged into the Mt White heavy vehicle station and rolled the trailer on the Hexham Bridge. The transporter had no insurance cover.

Based on these reports from NSW Police, the community should be concerned that -:

- Drivers are being pushed to work long hours, fatigue management laws are being breached & speedometers are being tampered with;
- The trucks are defective and/or poorly maintained;
- In some cases, the trucks aren't suitably covered by insurance; and
- The facilities that order and load these trucks are not complying with Chain of Responsibility obligations for heavy vehicles.

The most troubling concern that we all should have is that with this high number of heavy vehicle truck movements and the alleged high level of non-compliance, it is only a matter of time before another a more serious accident occurs which results in fatality.

**The NSW Government must fix this problem along with the environmental issues and other concerns associated with the long-distance transport of waste.**

NSW waste management laws & regulations have not kept pace with the higher value of waste in NSW. The Government should consider the following-:

1. The practice of landfills exhuming waste & landfills acting as de facto transfer stations and claiming a waste levy refund of \$138.20 per tonne is very easily fixed by giving effect to the regulatory changes that the NSW Government promised industry in October 2016, (for a 1 March 2017 start). We note that revised draft standards were issued by the EPA yesterday (31<sup>st</sup> October 2017). Throughout the consultation period for these draft standards, we will be emphasizing the importance of closing the loopholes that allow these undesirable practices to take place;
2. Currently the NSW waste levy is payable at NSW landfills. There needs to be a review of the laws for the collection of the NSW waste levy making it payable at all waste facilities (landfills, transfer stations & on the waste fractions at recycling yards); and
3. The Government needs to review the capabilities of the EPA to ensure that the EPA has appropriate resources to regulate the waste & recycling sector.

The waste and recycling industry wants laws and regulations which are enforceable, provide certainty and support a level commercial playing field. The industry wants the issue of long distance transport addressed by the NSW Government, so that reputable businesses and organisations can confidently invest in recycling solutions and waste management infrastructure in NSW.

The industry is happy to assist the NSW Government to address the issue of long distance transport. It is not clear what the blockages are, but positive, prompt action needs to be taken by the NSW Government

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