



SOUTHERN METROPOLITAN REGIONAL COUNCIL

MEDIA STATEMENT

SMRC surprised by Labor announcement

Date: December 17, 2012

The SMRC is disappointed and surprised to find that permanent closure of part of the Regional Resource Recovery Centre (RRRC) has become the subject of a Labor election promise. 'This has come out of the blue without any prior consultation or discussion with us' Chairman Cr Tony Romano said.

The RRRC diverts 63% of municipal solid waste (MSW) from landfill against a metropolitan average which currently languishes lower than any other mainland state at 36%. The State Government's new Waste Strategy targets are 50% by 2015 and 65% by 2020.

'We are leading the way in resource recovery and recycling and would welcome recognition and financial support for the good work we do instead of being used as a political football in a marginal seat' Chairman Cr Tony Romano said.

Closure of the Waste Composting Facility would result in the loss of over forty jobs and work for 100 local small businesses and contractors each month putting a big dent in the local economy.

The SMRC is nearing completion of a \$4million capital works programme designed to deliver significant and permanent improvements to the waste composting facility's odour management system.

'The only current alternative to processing kerbside collected waste from the green top bins and recovering the valuable organics at the waste composting facility is to send the waste directly to landfill as there are no existing alternatives.' Chief Executive Officer Mr Tim Youé said.

The SMRC's members carry a debt of \$35 million on the \$70 million waste composting facility and closure would mean this debt would still have to be paid off and additional money found to put the waste into landfill.

'The driver behind building the facility in the first place was to meet state government policy of no more landfill on the Swan Coastal Plain and zero waste to landfill by 2020, so we would be seeking compensation for our investment if we are unfairly forced to close' Chairman Cr Tony Romano said.

Research conducted in November 2011 shows that the vast majority of people feel very positively toward the RRRC waste processing methods:

- 86% positive about recycling and re-use of glass, plastics, paper and metals
- 83% positive about composting of organic materials
- 82% positive about green waste processing
- Importantly, these positive views toward RRRC waste processing techniques are shared by residents living near the RRRC.

By contrast, there are more negative views of the disposal of waste in landfill.

For more information on the Southern Metropolitan Regional Council visit www.smrc.com.au.

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Media backgrounder – About the SMRC

The SMRC is a statutory local government authority established by Local Councils in the southern part of metropolitan Perth. It is responsible for developing environmentally sustainable waste management solutions and climate change abatement measures for the communities of Cockburn, East Fremantle, Fremantle, Kwinana and Melville.

The SMRC is committed to assisting the State Government to work towards achieving its Waste Strategy targets by 2020.

Each year the SMRC diverts more than 60,000 tonnes of waste from landfill and prevents about 70,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide from entering the atmosphere which is equivalent to taking more than 16,000 cars off the road. Its Regional Resource Recovery Centre (RRRC) in Canning Vale produces more than 25,000 tonnes of compost each year for use in agriculture and soil amendment programs and recovers approximately 70 sea containers per month of recyclables.

The SMRC employs 69 staff and provides work for 100 local small businesses and contractors each month. This contributes more than \$20 million to the economy.

Recycle Right is a campaign by the SMRC which encourages and assists residents and businesses in the Southern Metropolitan Region to recycle, reduce their rubbish and buy more recycled products. To find out what goes in which bin visit www.recycleright.net.au