

Waste and Resource Recovery Portfolio Roles and Responsibilities

May 2019

Victorian Government Waste and Resource Recovery portfolio agencies work together to effectively manage and plan for Victoria's waste and resource recovery system, to protect public health, community amenity and the environment.

The portfolio agencies collaborate to reduce waste to landfill by working with local councils, industry and the Australian Government to increase the recovery of resources where possible, which in turn reduces the impact of waste on the environment and climate change, creates jobs and bolsters the economy.

The portfolio consists of the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Environment Protection Authority Victoria, Sustainability Victoria and seven Waste and Resource Recovery Groups (WRRGs).

The roles and responsibilities of the portfolio are outlined below.

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)

Departments form part of the Victorian Public Service and administer services and deliver programs on behalf of Ministers and government.

Key roles

DELWP develops statewide strategies, plans and policies to achieve Victoria's waste and recycling objectives in line with legislated requirements and Government commitments.

This includes:

- developing and implementing policy, strategies and specific programs, including new policy initiatives such as the circular economy policy
- developing and overseeing strategies to improve and strengthen Victoria's waste and resource recovery sector, including infrastructure development and job creation
- delivering the Recycling Industry Strategic Plan, with partner agencies, and specific actions in the Statewide Waste and Resource Recovery Infrastructure Plan
- working with portfolio agencies, industry and community in addressing the public health and environmental risks posed by waste
- oversight of the administration of the Sustainability Fund; and
- ensuring good governance across portfolio agencies.

Environment Protection Authority Victoria (EPA)

The EPA is a statutory authority established by the *Environment Protection Act 1970* (the EP Act). The *Environment Protection Act 2017*, which came into effect on 1 July 2018, has modernised the EPA's corporate governance structure.

The EPA is a public entity, independent from DELWP, and reports directly to a Minister of Parliament.

The objective of the Authority is to protect human health and the environment by reducing harmful effects of pollution and waste.

The EP Act also establishes the Victorian waste and resource recovery planning framework.

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Key roles

The EPA undertakes activities that are of a regulatory nature, to support compliance and enforcement of environment protection regulation relating to waste and resource recovery. This includes:

- applying legislation and regulations related to waste management and resource recovery
- works approvals and licencing
- developing technical guidelines and statutory rules
- waste education campaigns related to EPA activities (with Sustainability Victoria)
- advising on priority materials for market development (with Sustainability Victoria)
- collecting landfill data and levies
- reviewing landfill schedules in line with State Environmental Protection Policies and Waste Management Policies; and
- contributing to the development of policy, particularly from an operational and technical point of view.

The Statewide Waste and Resource Recovery Infrastructure Plan (SWRRIP), first published in 2015, is the first of its kind in Australia. It provides a long-term vision and roadmap to guide future planning for waste and resource recovery infrastructure in Victoria.

The vision of the SWRRIP is to develop an integrated statewide waste and resource recovery system that continues to provide an essential community service.

Sustainability Victoria

Sustainability Victoria's statutory objective is to facilitate and promote environmental sustainability in the use of resources. Established under the *Sustainability Victoria Act 2005*, Sustainability Victoria is a statutory authority with a board appointed by the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change.

Sustainability Victoria is also responsible for developing the Statewide Waste and Resource Recovery Infrastructure Plan (SWRRIP).

Key roles

Sustainability Victoria undertakes a key role in waste and recycling including:

- developing projects and programs to promote and facilitate the sustainable use of natural resources
- preparing and reviewing the SWRRIP and ensuring that it is used as intended
- supporting DELWP and the WRRGs in the implementation of the SWRRIP and Regional Waste and Resource Recovery Infrastructure Plans
- developing and coordinating state-wide implementation of the Market Development Strategy for Recovered Resources, Organics Strategy and Education Strategy; and
- facilitating investment in programs that support waste and resource recovery policy.

Waste and Resource Recovery Groups (WRRGs)

The seven waste and resource recovery groups in Victoria are statutory authorities established in August 2014 by the EP Act.

The objectives and functions of a WRRG are stipulated in the EP Act, including development of Regional Waste and Resource Recovery Infrastructure Plans, supporting local governments to procure waste and recycling services, undertaking regional resource recovery planning and educating businesses and communities on waste avoidance and reduction.

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WRRG's are the primary contact for local government and businesses regarding best practices for waste and resource recovery systems, infrastructure and services.

This includes:

- preparing, implementing and reviewing the Regional Waste and Resource Recovery Implementation Plans
- influencing local land use planning for waste and resource recovery infrastructure
- facilitating joint procurement of waste and recycling services on behalf of local governments
- integrating regional and local knowledge into State-wide strategies; and
- engaging with waste and resource recovery industries and managing grant programs to support local waste and resource recovery industry development.

The seven Waste and Resource Recovery Groups (WRRGs) consist of the Metropolitan WRRG and six regional WRRGs:

- Barwon South West WRRG
- Gippsland WRRG
- Goulburn Valley WRRG
- Grampians Central West WRRG
- Loddon Mallee WRRG
- North East WRRG

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