



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Water and Environmental Regulation**

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Western Australia.*

Consultation summary report: written submissions

Local government waste plans resource kit

November 2019



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November 2019

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Acknowledgements

For more information about this report, contact the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation on 08 6364 7000.

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Executive summary

The *Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy 2030* (Waste Strategy) includes a headline strategy to “implement local government waste plans, which align local government waste planning processes with the Waste Strategy”.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) is intending to exercise his powers under section 40(4) of the *Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2007* (WARR Act) to, by notice, require a local government to include within its plan for the future¹ a waste plan outlining how, in order to protect human health and the environment, waste services provided by the local government will be managed to achieve consistency with the Waste Strategy.

The CEO of DWER will shortly be issuing a notice to all local governments and regional councils located in the Perth metropolitan region² and Peel region³, (Perth and Peel regions), and major regional centres⁴ informing them of the requirement to develop waste plans for the 2020–21 financial year; perform their functions in respect of waste management in accordance with their waste plans; and annually report on the implementation of their waste plans.

The purpose of these waste plans is to:

- align local government waste management activities with the Waste Strategy
- map current performance and establish a benchmark to achieve Waste Strategy targets
- monitor progress on local government achievement of Waste Strategy targets
- design programs and activities which will support the implementation of waste plans.

The CEO notice will set out the requirements for waste plans and will include a resource kit to assist local governments to prepare these. The CEO notice is expected to be issued in November 2019.

DWER has been consulting with local governments on a draft resource kit, including guidelines and waste plan and annual reporting templates, seeking input on how these resources might be improved to assist local governments to prepare their waste plans and annual reports.

DWER engaged ASK Waste Management and Elton Consulting to run workshops and webinars in July and August 2019 as part of the consultation process. The

¹ “Plan for the future” means a plan made under section 5.56 of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

² The Perth metropolitan region is the area defined by the Metropolitan Region Scheme (www.dplh.wa.gov.au/mrs).

³ The Peel region is the area defined by the Peel Region Scheme (www.dplh.wa.gov.au/prs).

⁴ Cities of Albany, Busselton, Bunbury, Greater Geraldton and Kalgoorlie-Boulder; and Bunbury-Harvey Regional Council.

feedback from this is summarised in a *Local Government Waste Plans Consultation Outcomes Report* submitted by the consultants.

DWER invited local government to provide written submissions on the resource kit. DWER received four submissions in total from the:

- Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA)
- City of Kwinana
- Shire of Kalamunda
- Shire of Boddington.

The submissions generally supported the implementation of waste plans and the resource kit as a tool to facilitate development. Feedback was provided on the following:

- the need to reduce the duplication and the administrative burden on local governments where possible
- integration with and recognition of existing local government waste strategies, plans and directions
- waste data and reporting
- potential opportunities to improve the resource kit
- the need to tailor the resource kit to reflect the circumstances of regional councils.

This report summarises the written feedback and sets out the Department's responses to these. DWER has revised the resource kit to take into account the feedback received. The revised resource kit will form part of a CEO notice to be issued to relevant local governments informing them of their waste planning obligations.

Out-of-scope feedback

The submissions raised some issues that were not within the scope of this consultation. These included:

- The Waste Strategy requirement for local governments in the Perth and Peel regions to plan to implement a FOGO (food organics, garden organics) collection system by 2025
- State Government waste management priorities.

As these issues are outside the scope of the waste plans consultation process, they have not been considered further in this report.

The Department thanks all respondents who took part in the consultation process.

1 Summary of submissions

#	Feedback	DWER responses
1	Improve readability and useability of guidelines	<p>DWER has made a number of amendments to the guidelines and templates to reflect feedback received. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revising the guidelines to be more succinct by focusing on only the information that local governments require to prepare their waste plans. • Improving cross-referencing between the guidelines and the templates. • Developing a waste plan template for regional councils that recognises their unique circumstances. • Incorporating suggestions to improve the templates and guidelines.
2	Consider alternative structure for waste plans, focusing on waste services provided by local governments (including combining the 'recover' and 'services' and 'performance' section of the template)	<p>A key objective is for waste plans to demonstrate how local governments align their management activities with the Waste Strategy. The structure of the waste plans template has been designed to align reporting of waste services with the targets and objectives of the Waste Strategy. DWER will consider alternatives to the current template when it reviews waste plan requirements in approximately five years' time.</p>
3	Clarify baseline year for waste plans and how the Waste Strategy targets apply	<p>The guidelines have been updated to clarify individual local government performance which will be calculated relative to their own 2014–15 baseline.</p>
4	Where Waste Authority better practice approaches do not yet exist or are under development (for example vergeside waste services), consider recognising alternative better practice approaches	<p>The guidelines have been updated to state that "in the absence of Waste Authority approved better practice approaches, councils are encouraged to report on WALGA, or other existing approved approaches and initiatives, where these are consistent with and complement the State Government and Waste Authority's policies, priorities and approved approaches". A link has been provided to the</p>

		WALGA Better Practice Guideline on verge collection services, which was funded by the Waste Authority.
5	Align 'better practice' and 'local government services' information in guidelines and templates	The guidelines discuss better practice guidelines and programs in the context of delivering improved waste management services. The template separates reporting on the two due to the varying nature of the information collected on each (quantitative for services and largely qualitative for better practice).
6	Improve information requirements related to littering and illegal dumping	DWER has made a number of amendments to the guidelines and templates to reflect feedback received. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that the definitions of illegal dumping and littering reflect those in the <i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i> and the <i>Litter Act 1979</i>. • Focusing reporting on activities that contribute to the Waste Strategy towards achieving the zero litter and illegal dumping targets rather than on infringement reporting.
7	Reframe litter-related actions (in light of potential review of the <i>Litter Prevention Strategy for Western Australia</i>)	The guidelines identify the <i>Litter Prevention Strategy for Western Australia</i> as a key framing/guidance document related to litter. The intention for local governments in developing their waste plans is to focus more broadly on actions that avoid litter and contribute to the Waste Strategy target of moving towards zero littering by 2030.
8	Improve information requirements related to waste management activities	DWER has made a number of amendments to the guidelines and templates to reflect feedback received. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring waste services are defined consistent with the local government waste and recycling census and mandatory waste and recycling data reporting.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarifying the information requirements that relate to the implementation of behaviour change programs. • Clarifying the information required in the summary table of the template.
9	Require reporting of financial data in waste plans to enable comparison with an average for similar councils	Each local government determines fees charged and costs of providing waste and recycling collection services autonomously. Further, due to the differences in the services local governments provide, it is difficult to determine the components of costs to be reported on and accurately capture this data. This information is not required for waste plans.
10	Acknowledge existing local government waste plans and strategies	<p>DWER recognises that some local governments and regional local governments may already have current waste plans or strategies in place. To avoid duplication, as long as the current waste plan or strategy meets the requirements of the waste plan self-assessment checklist, it may be integrated into the implementation plan section of the waste plan. Where this is the case, the local government should include hyperlinks and page numbers to relevant information in the implementation plan template, rather than duplicating reporting.</p> <p>Local governments will still be required to review and complete the services and performance sections of the template and the self-assessment checklist for this section. It is expected that by completion of the next Waste Strategy review (approximately 2023–24), all local governments will transition to using the waste plan templates provided by DWER.</p>
11	Simplify annual reporting requirements	The guidelines have been amended to clarify that, in their annual reports, local governments will only be required to report on activities undertaken and those committed to but not implemented in the preceding year, rather than on every action in each local government’s waste plan. This will be reflected in a draft

		<p>template for annual reporting, included in the resource kit, and will be built into the online reporting system to facilitate reporting on waste plans.</p>
12	<p>Improve accuracy of data and reduce double counting</p>	<p>DWER will use prefill/prepopulate individual local government waste plan templates with data reported under the 2017–18 local government waste and recycling census. This data has been checked by DWER and some of the data has been publicly reported on the MyCouncil website.</p> <p>From 1 October 2020, local governments and other entities will be required to annually report waste and recycling data under the <i>Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Regulations 2008</i> (WARR Regulations). This data will eventually underpin waste plans. Reporters are required to use approved methods and factors to complete their mandatory reports.</p> <p>This will assist in improving data accuracy and completeness. DWER is considering compliance mechanisms, potentially including audits, related to reporting under the WARR Regulations.</p>
13	<p>Clarify the data that DWER will prefill in the waste plans template</p>	<p>The data prefilled by DWER will be included in individualised templates provided to each local government that is required to prepare waste plans. DWER intends to provide the prefilled templates to local governments in November 2019.</p>
14	<p>Increase timeframe for DWER to consider and action consultation feedback</p>	<p>DWER has been gathering feedback on the waste plans resource kit since it was released for consultation in July 2019. The Department has considered and incorporated, where relevant and appropriate, feedback provided during the consultation process.</p>

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