

Investigation into the Transport of Waste into Queensland

Submission no. 0007

Name Southern Downs Regional Council



Southern Downs
REGIONAL COUNCIL

Our Ref: DB:AB/2801002

22 September 2017

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Dear Sir/Madam

Investigation into the Transport of Waste into Queensland

Thank you for the opportunity to lodge a submission to the three (3) month independent investigation regarding waste transportation into Queensland.

I wish to advise that Council has considered the terms of reference and the content of the media release from the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef, The Honourable Steven Miles at a Meeting on 20 September 2017.

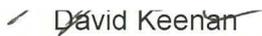
As a result of this, Council provides the following advice to the investigation:-

1. Given the Southern Downs Region abuts the New South Wales border, Council has not experienced any issues with commercial or industrial waste being deposited at any of Council's waste facilities from New South Wales.
2. Enquiries have been received in the past from commercial waste operators to dispose of commercial and/or industrial waste at Council's waste facilities. On every occasion the request has been refused and the waste operator has complied with this direction.
3. Given the proximity of some of the Southern Downs waste facilities to the adjacent Tenterfield Shire Council, Council does accept domestic waste from residents from the Tenterfield Shire. Southern Downs does apply a fee for the acceptance of this waste.
4. Southern Downs has recently commenced a review of its Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan. As part of the development of this ten (10) year waste management plan, an investigation will be undertaken into the feasibility of transporting waste from the Southern Downs Region to a regional waste facility for disposal. As these opportunities currently exist, it is prudent for Council to consider all options when managing waste.

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5. The waste disposal facilities in question are operated by commercial operators, not a local authority. The operators of these facilities are in the waste disposal business to make a profit, and as such they should be able to accept waste from a variety of sources that are prepared to pay the nominated disposal fees. This is subject to these operators ensuring that their sites comply with all environmental protection requirements.
 6. Council would support in principal the establishment of regional (i.e. cross border) waste management committee/s to improve the level of communication between all parties.
 7. Local Governments should not be penalised in the form of a waste levy as a result of commercial waste facility operators accepting waste from those who are prepared to transport and pay for the disposal of their waste to these regional and commercially operated facilities.

Should you have any questions in relation to this submission please contact Council's Manager Environmental Services, Tim O'Brien on 1300 697 372.

Yours faithfully


Chief Executive Officer