

Investigation into the Transport of Waste into Queensland

Submission no. 0012

Name City of Ipswich

Your reference (1709 ICC interstate waste response v3)
Our reference Bryce Hines
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Queensland Waste Investigation
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25 September 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Independent Investigation – Interstate Transfer of Waste to Queensland

Ipswich City Council (ICC) would like to provide the following submission regarding the independent investigation into the interstate transfer of waste to Queensland. ICC has prepared the submission in accordance with the terms of reference provided. No part of ICC's submission is considered to be commercial in confidence.

In addition to the terms of reference responses, ICC would like to take the opportunity to highlight the unique waste disposal situation in Ipswich whereby there are only private landfills that operate in the local government area. As such, the movement and disposal of waste from southern states to privately owned landfills in Ipswich is considered to have a negative impact on the Ipswich community by creating a perception that Ipswich has become 'a dumping ground' for other state's waste. Whilst it is understood that private operators are entitled to receive the waste, there does not seem to be a genuine effort from other state jurisdictions to prevent the waste from crossing Queensland's borders.

ICC works to provide and protect resources and deliver access to essential services for Ipswich's community. However, there are impacts being felt by the neighbouring communities to Ipswich's landfills owing to increased activities and the associated noise, dust and odour issues.

The current waste disposal activities occurring in Ipswich are being perpetuated through the lack of a strategic coordinated approach between states and little or no support at the national level. ICC would like to seek support and cooperation with state and federal government entities to resolve the matter of cross-border waste disposal.

Please find ICC's specific responses to the investigation questions below.

1. Identify what are the financial, regulatory and other incentives for the movement of waste from other States to Queensland landfills?

Comment:

There are no financial, regulatory or other incentives and/ or gain for ICC regarding the movement of waste from other States to Queensland landfills.

2. Whether there are any regulatory frameworks in place that would inhibit or affect this movement of waste in state or national regulations?

Comment:

Not applicable to ICC.

3. Whether any other jurisdictions in Australia or internationally have dealt with similar movements of waste and, if so, what was the response?

Comment:

Not informed on this issue.

4. Examine whether regulatory and other reforms could limit or stop the cross-border movement of waste to Queensland landfills and make recommendations on these potential reforms including whether actions may be taken by:

Comment:

a. Queensland

- i. Consider reintroducing a waste levy in line with other states to deter waste operators from transporting waste to Queensland to avoid waste disposal charges in NSW and VIC. However, it should be noted that the reintroduction of a waste levy could impact Ipswich ratepayer's costs in the delivery of waste services.
- ii. If Queensland were to reintroduce a waste levy charge, a two tiered approach could be considered whereby there is a lower charge for municipal solid waste than for commercial and industrial waste. This could potentially alleviate the on-cost of the levy to Ipswich ratepayers.
- iii. Consider the option of giving local government the ability to charge any landfill operation including private landfills, an 'out of area' waste levy on waste transported from outside of the proximity area similar to Gold Coast City Council's waste disposal model.
- iv. Undertake an impact study on the effects of unfettered interstate disposal of waste in Queensland's landfill assets to understand the long term implications of meeting Queensland's community requirements in terms of equity and access to waste infrastructure. The impact study should consider sustainability measures regarding environmental, social and economic effects and account for externalities such as

carbon miles associated with the transport of waste and the economic and social burden that Ipswich may be presented with once access to landfills are exhausted potentially sooner than expected.

b. Local governments in Queensland

- i. ICC does not own or operate any commercial landfills.

c. The State where the waste was generated

- i. Review and amend State legislation to enable the enforcement of the proximity principle in practical ways.
- ii. Amend legislation so the waste levy is linked to the collection point where waste is generated and not at the point of disposal.

d. The Australian Government

- i. Provide a national regulatory framework that harmonises waste levies across Australia.

e. Relevant jurisdictions under a cooperative arrangement

- i. SEQ Councils collectively investigate strategic land use allocations for waste infrastructure for the medium to long term given increasing population pressures in the region and the ability to meet existing and future waste disposal needs. Incorporate the proximity principle into the strategic land use planning decisions.

Please contact me on _____ should you have any questions.

Yours faithfully

Bryce Hines

ACTING CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER (WORKS PARKS AND RECREATION)