

Investigation into the Transport of Waste into Queensland

Submission no. 0019

Name City of Gold Coast

Date: 26 September 2017
Contact: Matt Fraser
Location: Karp Court Bundall
Telephone: 07 5581 6373
Your reference: ITWQ0004/17
Our reference: #64499672

Sylvie Garner
Acting Director, Secretariat
Investigation into Transport of Waste into Queensland

Dear Ms Garner

City of Gold Coast Submission for the Investigation into Transport of Waste into Queensland

The City of Gold Coast (the 'City') appreciates the opportunity to provide a submission to the investigation into the transport of waste into Queensland. As requested, specific data relating to interstate waste disposed at City landfills is provided with this submission. The City requests that all data specific to the City's waste operations provided in this submission remains confidential.

The City considers the transport of waste into Queensland by commercial operators for the purpose of avoiding higher landfill disposal fees in NSW as a practice that is creating adverse environmental outcomes and is not in the interest of the Gold Coast community or in the state or national interest for the following reasons:

- The interstate transport of waste is at odds with the basic waste management principal known as the 'proximity principle' whereby waste should be disposed as close as practical to its source;
- It removes the incentive for the community to implement or participate in preferred waste management actions such as waste avoidance, resource recovery and recycling and consequently limits any overall reduction in waste disposed to landfill in Australia;
- Interstate waste is a major contributor to the depletion of landfill air space in South East Queensland;
- It undermines efforts taken by South-East Queensland residents and businesses to reduce waste to landfill;
- Heavy vehicles hauling waste to Queensland landfills contributes to traffic congestion in South-East Queensland;
- The high number of long haul heavy vehicle movements to and from NSW is resulting in unnecessary increased levels of fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

The information contained below is provided as a response to the specific questions posed by the investigation.

Questions: Please provide information on:

(a) the types of waste from New South Wales that you receive at your facility?

- Green waste, concrete and general mixed waste.

(b) the volume of waste from New South Wales that you receive and how this has changed over time, preferably from 1 July 2009?

- Interstate waste disposed at City facilities has only been recorded from 2013-14 onwards.
- Weights and number of transactions recorded are outlined below (Table 1) (no volumes available)

(c) how much of that waste is recycled and the proportion that is disposed to landfills?

- All the interstate green waste and concrete received is recycled (ranged from two to nine per cent of interstate waste by weight in last two years)
- More than 90 per cent of interstate waste received was landfilled in the last two years (97 to 98 per cent by weight landfilled between 2015 and 2017).

(d) your current pricing and how this has changed over time, preferably from 1 July 2009?

- An Outside City Limits (OCL) fee was introduced on 1 July 2017. Prior to this fee, loads from other Council areas and interstate waste were charged at the same rate as City of Gold Coast customers (Table 2).

Our data shows that our landfill waste pricing over the last five years has attracted mostly small loads from interstate customers. Up until 2014-15, the overall interstate waste disposed at City landfills was modest (averaging less than 1000 tonnes annually).

However, in 2015-16 and 2016-17, one NSW commercial customer significantly increased the level of interstate transactions and tonnage received. If this account is removed from the calculations (Table 3), there is only a small upward trend in interstate landfilling in the past two years.

Following the introduction of the Outside City Limits landfill disposal fee on 1 July 2017, where the general mixed waste landfill disposal fee was effectively doubled, and green waste disposal fee almost quadrupled, the City has experienced a dramatic drop off in interstate waste for all waste types (Table 1).

It should be noted that it is probable that small quantities of NSW waste disposed at City of Gold Coast facilities has not been accounted for, due to limitations at the weighbridge to determine the source of all customer loads.

Yours faithfully

Matthew Fraser
Manager Waste Management
For the Chief Executive Officer
Council of the City of Gold Coast