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Email: waste.updates@epa.nsw.gov.au

Draft revised NSW Energy from Waste Policy Statement based on NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer's recommendations

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft revised *NSW Energy from waste policy statement*. Local Government NSW (LGNSW) is the peak body for local government in NSW, representing all NSW general purpose councils and related entities.

LGNSW welcomes the revisions that reflect the air emission recommendations of the Chief Scientist and Engineer. While we are not technical experts and are not providing comment on the actual air emission limits, we appreciate the adoption of international best practice standards and controls to protect human health and the environment.

LGNSW recommends, for transparency, the policy statement reflect:

- Improvements to Table 1 to make it clearer what the minimum emission standards are.
- The review's recommendation that air quality limits to be reviewed within three years and thereafter at five yearly intervals; and that data will be made publicly available through an online portal.
- That the operating conditions in any Environment Protection Licence for approved facilities will be updated to include any revisions to air quality limits identified by any review of the policy statement.
- Where the emissions monitoring should be undertaken (e.g. direction on appropriate selection of suitable sampling locations or monitoring sites) or make clear this information will be provided at approval stage.
- That higher value resource recovery outcomes are maximised prior to the separated waste streams detailed in Table 5 being used at an energy recovery facility.

LGNSW has been calling for, and continues to recommend, a full public review of the policy statement that would include:

- Establishing clear rules to guide development and operation of these facilities.
- Building community support and social licence to operate (including NSW Government's role in this) to overcome barriers to investment and innovation.
- A ban on co-generation plants (or energy recovery plants) in the Greater Sydney Area.
- Strategic funding pathways for regional energy from waste facilities.
- Facilitating research and engagement on waste to energy options in line with the waste hierarchy.
- Greater clarity around the resource recovery criteria, given the expected rollout of food organics, and food and garden organics recovery from households in greater metropolitan Sydney and the desire for joint procurement. For example, it is unclear if a

council has 50% FOGO, whether only 50% of their residual waste can go to energy recovery. And is food organics treated in the same way as food and garden organics?

- Consideration of the role the waste levy plays in directing residual waste between energy from waste and landfill disposal.

Landfill capacity is running out and LGNSW has been calling for the NSW Government to develop and implement a strategic waste and resource recovery infrastructure plan and road map that would address this shortfall. The plan should include forecasted need and strategic pathways and funding for residual waste solutions such as energy from waste.

Consistency in the environmental outcomes required across residual waste treatments should also be considered. For example, currently there are vast differences between the level of resource recovery required prior to residual waste treatment in landfills (eg no requirement to separate recycling) versus energy from waste (governed by Table 4).

If you would like further information on LGNSW's position, please contact Liz Quinlan Senior Policy Officer – Waste on 02 9242 4095 or liz.quinlan@lgsnw.org.au.

Yours sincerely



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