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The Research Director
Environment, Agriculture, Resource &
Energy Committee (EAREC)
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Sir/Madam

**Re: SUBMISSION – WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING BILL
DOWNS AND SURAT BASIN ALLIANCE OF COUNCIL (“DASBAC”)**

Attached is a copy of Council's Submission for consideration by the EAREC.

Please be advised that Council's Mayor, Councillor Graeme Scheu, will be speaking at the public hearing.

Could you please advise us of a suitable time for personal representation?

Yours faithfully



Mohammed Saleem
**DIRECTOR
BUILDING & ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**



GOONDIWINDI REGIONAL COUNCIL

SUBMISSION – WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING BILL 2011

History: The Goondiwindi Regional Council has made previous submissions by way of personal deputation with the then minister Kate Jones as well as a referral by the LGAQ which prepared a State-wide submission on behalf of councils.

The **LGAQ** submission suggested that the Goondiwindi Regional Council should be **totally omitted** from the Levy Area as there were no notable benefits in Goondiwindi Regional Council being included at this stage of the proposal. Goondiwindi Regional Council would be far better suited when an **“All of State”** approach is delivered.

There were no notable differences between Goondiwindi Regional Council and Maranoa Regional Council, which has been excluded. The noted difference is that Maranoa Regional Council has a larger population and is heavily involved in the current Coal Seam Gas population explosion. When both of these factors are considered, it only raises the question why Goondiwindi Regional Council is included and more so supports the LGAQ recommendation that Goondiwindi Regional Council should be excluded from the Levy area along with Maranoa Regional Council.

Mayor Graeme Scheu attended a personal deputation with the then **Minister Kate Jones** in March to discuss the position and opinions of GRC. That deputation was also attended by Josh Cooney and Tamara O’Shea. Unfortunately, Minister Jones retired from that Ministry and no firm decision was forwarded to this council. Subsequent meetings were held with LGAQ chairman Paul Bell, Minister Jones and Minister Darling and he was subsequently informed our request had been denied but no official advice was forwarded to this Council. The only correspondence in answer to our queries arrived in the form of a letter from Minister Vicky Darling dated August 4 with a number of options.

In the original deputation, Mayor Graeme Scheu put forward the argument that GRC should not be included at this stage due to the fact that the preparation involved would take a number of years to become fully operational. The point was made that Regional Councils were very different to the larger Urban Councils as regional councils have very isolated Waste Sites many miles apart. A transitional period was required to be at all realistic with this proposal.

Furthermore, GRC has many problems to overcome with the major Waste Facilities at Goondiwindi & Inglewood. By admission, the Goondiwindi Waste facility has for many years been a long way behind most other regional areas. GRC utilised some of the Federal RLCIP funding to upgrade the Goondiwindi Facility which has now been completed in July 2011. There are still massive problems that exist for GRC to make this transition by December 1.

The operation of the Goondiwindi facility has improved since the inclusion of a Materials Recovery Facility and Transfer Station for the customers which limits Public access to the Landfill. However there are major hurdles like power supply. For this new legislation to work at all power will need to be connected to the site, a weighbridge put in place and staffing arrangements finalised. This all

needs to occur before any Levy collection can be put in place. It is totally impractical to adopt this Risk based approach that DERM continually refer to.

Once GRC has the proper facilities at Goondiwindi installed and operating, we will be in a position to make the transition to a fully activated Waste Levy Collection Waste Facility on behalf of the State.

GRC also operates other waste facilities across our region and it was our suggestion that GRC submit a Waste Management Strategy which will indicate how the implementation of this levy will occur and a realistic timeframe of when they may be implemented. An example is at Texas, the council offers an unmanned Transfer Station and the waste is transferred weekly to the Inglewood Landfill. Our strategy will conclude just how this will work. Obviously, we need extensive Community consultation to explain why we are going to only open the Transfer Station on designated days and times. This all takes time and is totally unreasonable to expect regional councils to implement this by December 2011.

Landfills also operate at Talwood, Toobeah and other rural centres and a decision needs to be made as to how we approach these situations. Bear in mind that Goondiwindi is situated right in the middle of the Council area and it is approximately 1hour 30 minutes travelling to each boundary. Very few landfills if any fall within the 20 minutes 20 kilometres disposal that DERM refers to.

In support of the arguments, Council wishes to put forward the following points:-

1. **HARDSHIP**

- Collection of State Levy will have a dramatic effect on the costs of waste disposal to Council and the Community
- The State Levy will have a considerable financial impact on businesses who will need to pay the costs at Council's refuse disposal facilities.
- Goondiwindi Regional Council has 1 manned facility and 6 unmanned "rural" sites.
- It is estimated Goondiwindi Regional Council's ongoing annual operational costs for compliance with DERM Levy requirements would be around \$250,000.00.
- Council will have to procure and install necessary systems at the Goondiwindi Waste Facility (computers or PDA's/Software); including training and ancillary infrastructure costs at around \$100,000.00 (excluding DERM Phase 2 grant of \$67,000.00).
- Council will have to consolidate waste disposal sites and required to rationalise or change the type of facility to comply with DERM Levy requirements at enormous costs.
- Goondiwindi facility has no electricity supply to facilitate installation of a weighbridge. DERM has issued a Regulation Provisions Summary which proposes that sites licensed to accept 5000 Tonne or more of waste per annum must have a weighbridge.

2. **FUNDING**

Funding to prepare Council's waste facility levy ready including the provisions of weighbridge, electricity and ancillary works should be made available upfront.

3. FUTURE PLAN

Council would need a phased out time frame of at least 3 years to be able to fully comply with the Regulatory requirements.

- 12-18 months to fully prepare the Goondiwindi Waste Facility "levy ready".
- 2-3 years required to upgrade all other facilities.
- Prepare a "waste management and waste reduction" strategy highlighting priorities and time frames for implementation.