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Question 1 - What are the key issues facing the NSW waste system?

Uncertainty throughout all aspects of the industry leading to an uninviting investment environment and thus limited innovation/investment in required larger scale infrastructure

- Lack of definitive Governmental policy, strategy and regulation
- Shifting goal posts o Market uncertainty and lack of control o Lack of any sound regulation to develop appropriate markets

Fragmented system with not enough cohesion between all levels of Government:

- There is very limited State responsibility for infrastructure development, however there is a heavy state control and oversight on regulation (planning and licencing).
- Councils and/or private companies manage waste with not enough coordinated assistance from the State, who have much better resources than Councils with varying objectives.
- A significantly higher proportion of the Levy monies received need reinvestment back into the industry in a more consolidated approach to fund a structured program administered by the State Government for larger scale infrastructure development and service delivery improvement to effectively sort and process waste into a product that has a market. For example, funding regional AWTs, MRFs, Plastic, Paper and C&D processing facilities systematically located throughout the state to service the requirements of the surrounding local government areas (or further afield as required). Local Governments can then focus on streamlining collection services, transfer stations and education programs to provide these facilities with the correct feedstock materials to process into a product for which there is a market demand.

Question 2 - What are the main barriers to improving the NSW waste system?

Lack of sound Governmental long term policy, regulation and strategy

A significant lack of appropriate infrastructure to manage waste and recyclable material o Limited regional infrastructure for separation, secondary processing and remanufacturing of products with recycled content and little incentive for business to venture into investment in this sector

The multi tiers of government resulting in a fragmented approach to dealing with waste issues, planning and regulatory responsibility - There is a current fragmented approaches by individual under resourced Councils with no cohesive, appropriately resourced direction.

Question 3 - How can we best reduce waste?

Improved governmental regulation and policy that forces innovation focused on reducing the generation and production of packaging and products. Increased awareness and communication

Question 4 - How can we recycle better?

Revised approach with State Government funding the required large scale separation and processing infrastructure and Councils focusing on streamlining collection and education services. Ensure hard to recycle and composite materials and packaging are phased out through bans, incentives, and industry targets. Expansion of product stewardship schemes shifting the shift costs of recycling and/or disposal to those responsible for creating the waste.

Question 5 - What are the main opportunities for improving the NSW waste system?

Reinvestment of the waste levy back into the industry via the development of larger scale waste and recycling infrastructure where it is needed. Rather than each Council largely being left to their own devices to manage waste/recycling, there is the opportunity for the State to focus on increasing investment in larger regional facilities that service a number of Councils and thus reap the economies of scale that ensures on-going financial viability for such facilities. This development needs to be State Government led as it is very challenging to get agreement between multiple Councils without State Government oversight.

Question 6 - Any other information that you would like to contribute to the waste strategy initiative?