

Media Release

For Immediate Release

16 August 2019

The real facts about recycling in Tasmania

“The Tasmanian Conservation Trust has today made incorrect assertions about recycling in Southern Tasmania” said LGAT President, Mayor Christina Holmdahl.

Here are the facts:

- In Southern Tasmania, recycling services are currently contracted to SKM Derwent Park.
- SKM also run operations in Victoria and SKM Corporate, which is one of a number of SKM businesses, is currently in administration and the other Victorian arms of SKM are not running.
- SKM Derwent Park has not been materially affected by the Victoria issues. It is still running, and Southern councils have consistently been advised that it is business as usual.
- Recyclables in Southern Tasmanian are still being collected and sorted.
- At their Derwent Park Materials Recovery Facility (MRF), SKM sort waste into four recyclable streams: glass, cardboard, steel and plastics.
- The glass from SKM’s Tasmanian MRF is processed in Tasmania.
- The Derwent Park SKM has established direct contracts for receiving steel and cardboard that do not go through their Victorian operations.
- For the short-term, plastics are being bailed and stored.
- No Tasmanian councils are burying recyclables in landfill.
- Only contaminated materials which are not suitable for recycling are sent to landfill after sorting.
- Southern councils are understandably concerned about the long-term viability of SKM Derwent Park and are monitoring the situation closely and developing contingency plans in the event that SKM stop receiving Tasmanian recyclables.
- North and North-West Councils have contracts in place with different providers, they will not be affected by any issues with SKM.

Mayor Holmdahl said “Southern councils have not misled communities at any stage. If the MRF managed by SKM at Derwent Park closes, the Southern Tasmanian Councils will be making every effort to ensure that recyclables do not go to landfill”.

“Should the situation change, like their Victorian counterparts, Tasmania’s councils will provide advice to their communities”.

“The reality is that Victorian councils are communicating their response to something that has happened whereas Tasmanian councils are actively monitoring something that might happen, but which is not yet an issue”.

LGAT has been working with the State Government and, through the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA), with the Federal Government to build a robust response to the changes in the recycling industry. Consequently, we have recently seen the State Government issue a Waste Action Plan for consultation and commit to a container refund scheme and waste levy. Further, just this week the Prime Minister committed to banning recyclable waste being exported overseas.

The Local Government Association has taken a leadership role in progressing a feasibility into State-Wide Waste Arrangement with a view to building a range of sustainable waste education, recovery and management approaches in Tasmania. Across the nation there is commitment to a circular economy with a dual focus on minimising the production of waste and recovering as much as possible from the waste stream.

Mayor Holmdahl emphasises, “It is important that ALL Tasmanians remain committed to recycling”.

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