Submission to Productivity Commission
Issues Paper (Dec. 05)

Inquiry into
Waste Generation & Resource Recovery

Submission
by
KESAB *environmental solutions*
(Keep South Australia Beautiful Inc)
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Leaders in Environmental Action and Education since 1966

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KESAB Background

KESAB is a not for profit environmental organisation delivering a range of waste education programs in partnership with government, commerce and industry, and the community.

KESAB is incorporated in South Australia (1966) and is a Member of Keep Australia Beautiful National Association.

Core business is the development and facilitation of community environmental education initiatives. Key focus includes litter abatement, recycling, waste minimisation and resource recovery, waste eduction, and implementation of best practice programs.

Programs include Tidy Towns community action, Clean Site Building a Better Environment, Road Watch, Wipe Out Waste Schools education, Better Bag Plastic Bag reduction, and Please Butt It, Then Bin It.

KESAB is recognised throughout Australia, leading community engagement to embrace environmental protection through individual action at the local level.

Programs and activities are supported by resources materials, interactive waste education in partnership with government and industry, train the trainer programs, development of curriculum based student lessons, and supporting community groups.

KESAB has conducted regular research and litter counts for 20 years. The methodology has recently been adopted nationally through a partnership between Dept Environment & Heritage and Keep Australia Beautiful National Association.

KESAB operates in South Australia, the only State or Territory in Australia to regulate Container Deposit Legislation (CDL).

Social and environmental benefits are clearly demonstrated through CDL, although South Australia is subject to an ongoing campaign of misleading information and “segregation” by specific industry sectors and associations in their efforts to negate possible similar legislation being introduced in other States.

The above is one example whereby industry could improve resource recovery through proven initiatives, and implement consistent approaches across Australia.

National based strategies to treat waste as a resource will encourage improved cost efficiencies, and better environmental and social outcomes.

This submission responds to some questions in the Productivity Commission Issues Paper “Waste Generation and Resource Efficiency”.

The submission highlights the need for increased community engagement through stakeholder collaboration if resource recovery, associated cost efficiencies, and social benefits are to be achieved nationally in the future.

Response to Specific Questions

Q

To what extent is the lack of disaggregated data (that is, the lack of information about quality and composition of waste) a problem?

A

The past decade has seen significant change in waste industry practices and how the community has responded to resource recovery challenges throughout Australia. Given that most of Australia's industry and population are in large cities and regional centres, data in the main is focused on high population areas, with city and metropolitan waste data setting the baseline.

The waste industry has progressed rapidly and diversely in this period (1990 – 2005). ABS as a primary source for data is inadequate given the complexity of the solid waste industry, and need for up to date localised resource recovery information relative to volumes collected, processing and technologies, transport, and community understanding and participation in waste recovery systems.

Data is a valuable tool assisting planning and development of waste strategies albeit it is often used selectively depending on the stakeholder;

1) Data collected by industry to argue **against** potential regulation or new Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR).
2) Data collected by Government to argue **for** regulation or new initiatives encouraging stronger or more rapid take up by industry in response to waste management strategies.

Significant research on financial implications and resource recovery trends are undertaken by State and local government, and industry across Australia providing indicators of the composition, costs, and potential to more efficiently manage waste.

There does however appear to be gaps in researching and identifying the potential to improve resource recovery through new practices, technologies, and systems.

Litter stream trends, volumes of recyclables collected, plastic shopping bag reduction strategies Container Deposit Legislation, Construction and Demolition waste, and green organics and composting waste processing are some examples wherein data supports change of practice and increased resource recovery.

Councils, waste transport contractors, and resource reprocessing industry conduct research and collect data recording volumes recovered. KESAB is unsure if the same level of research is demonstrated by other commercial and industrial sectors.

Resource recovery volumes can improve, but an economy of scale must be considered in the context of cost efficiencies against "real" attainable outcomes.

KESAB believes stronger focus on researching and identifying resource recovery options and markets for E-waste eg; white goods, TV's, PC's, mobiles etc., should be undertaken by government as a priority.

Many products escape the loop of resource recovery and continue to be dumped. Stronger environmental sustainability principles should be encouraged, and research and data will assist to progress future strategies.

Q
What are the advantages and disadvantages of using the waste hierarchy approach to waste management?

A
The “Waste Hierarchy” approach is clearly one of aspiration. It is a guide of preferred management options and sequence to facilitate goals and strategies supporting waste reduction and avoidance.

Setting targets to achieve waste reduction and recycling demand a common platform to direct regulators in building strategies. The waste hierarchy provides guidance and rationale to prioritise the process.

As a leading community waste educator and committee member of the National Waste Educators Working Group (NWEWG) KESAB embraces waste hierarchy principles which are built into schools and community litter and waste education programs.

Different sectors (community, industry, education agencies) may work to all or part of the hierarchy. In more recent years there has been a stronger approach by State based educators to adopt an integrated environmental sustainability approach embracing waste, water, energy, and bio-diversity.

The problematical issue of Australian States being “7 countries in one”, with lack of cross border waste education conformity and consistency, highlights the value of the waste hierarchy guiding the broader community to adopt new practices and respond to waste issues with increased understanding of long term scenarios.

The disadvantage of the waste hierarchy is that it is not the panacea, and there remains a high percentage of the community who fail to understand or use its’ guiding principles as part of day to day work place and lifestyle practices.

This is demonstrated by findings from community attitudes and behavioural research, and data showing community reasons for not participating in recycling and resource recovery. * Source: working with the community report ZWSA Oct ‘05

It could be argued that a wider combination or Regulatory and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) are desirable to improve industry take up of the hierarchy and ensure increased community engagement supporting reduced waste generation.

Such approaches would ensure industry has a real onus to increase community understanding and participation in environmental sustainability initiatives, and encourage behavioural change needed to achieve improved resource recovery and efficiencies benefiting the community as a whole.

The waste hierarchy may provide the underpinning principles of such change, but a range of additional support strategies and actions are required to ensure best outcomes.

Q
What role can web based exchanges play in promoting the efficient disposal of waste and the recovery of recyclables?

A
Information and education is imperative to engage the community to reduce waste generation and improve resource recovery efficiencies.

Whilst an active environmental education movement exists in primary and secondary schools, there is a clear void in some community, household, and industry sectors in accessing and using electronic information resources.

The pre-emption by many private and public stakeholders that learning about waste and resource management issues is achieved simply because an education module or resource exists is open to question.

KESAB contends that generational education, learning and awareness will ultimately encourage longer term attitudinal and behavioural change resulting in better resource use and recovery efficiencies. To reach such outcomes however will require local action, support regulations, and on ground action resources.

The above principle applies to web based exchange and education. It should not be assumed the all the community has access to the web, is user trained, or friendly with the web, speaks the English language, or knows where, what, or how to tap into information sources.* Source: ZWSA working with the community Oct '05 - 26% seek information through internet

There are numerous examples of State and local government based web sites available to the broader community in addition to many industry based resources. There is also a significant network of local government and industry web sites links.

The most frequent places where the community seeks information is local council (78%), followed by the Internet (26%), and then government agencies (4%).
* Source: ZWSA Source: Working with the community Oct '05

Message consistency delivered to the community is often lacking and the community is generally seeking information at the local level relative to their household, council area, and what can be done in in their "own back yard"

The issue of the community's ability to understand "waste speak" may also be challenging and impact on community reach and take up of information.

The above assumes that the community is fully supportive of reducing waste, will participate in being more efficient, and cares about the environment.

Current levels of recycling, versus potential volumes to be recovered suggest that the community is responding to resource recovery, albeit on their own terms based on time availability, ease of participation, and information available to them.

To achieve higher volumes of resource recovery and improved efficiencies will be more difficult as the range of products expands, and higher expectations are placed on the community. It is vital that messages and communications supporting change in resource recovery practices are consistent, promoted, and more visible.

Q
How large a problem is illegal dumping and littering? What types of waste cause most of the problem?

A
Illegal dumping
The incidence of illegal dumping in South Australia is increasing.

Findings extracted from a current joint research project between Zero Waste SA (ZWSA), Local Government Association (LGA) and KESAB highlights key issues in metropolitan and regional councils throughout the State of South Australia.

Some incidents of illegal dumping are linked to social and economic factors.

Victorian and New South Wales reports indicate that illegal dumping is also on the increase. Specific strategies are being trialled by agencies to reduce the incidence of dumping, or increased ability to identify and prosecute offenders.

South Australian data shows increased illegal dumping being reported over a three year period. Increases reported vary from 80% (metro) to 250% rural)
Source: Draft Illegal Dumping Survey Metro & Rural Councils (SA) Dec 05
Metro 4723 reports from 9 councils + 80% from '03, Rural 716 reports from 14 councils +250% from '03

Illegal dumping costs councils and governments millions of dollars each year to remove and dispose of waste, and in extreme cases the potential for ongoing environmental harm is also an issue.
Metro $600k cost 7 councils Rural $100k cost 14 councils
* Source: Draft Illegal Dumping Survey Metro & Rural Councils (SA) Dec 05

Illegal dumping varies from a plastic bag of garden waste, trailer load of building or trade waste, or truck loads of tyres or construction waste disposed of in public places instead of transfer stations, landfill, recycling depot etc.
Household furniture etc. 27%, - Domestic waste 20%, - Hazardous. Demo.& Industrial 20%, - garden waste 18%
* Source: Draft Illegal Dumping Survey Metro & Rural Councils (SA) Dec 05

Main locations identified where illegal dumping takes place are roadsides, charity bins, council litter bins, multi unit dwellings, public parks, and highway rest stop areas.

In the case of public place charity collection bins, one organisation in South Australia states that the cost of disposing contaminated and illegally dumped materials from their collection bin sites exceeds $200k per annum.

In the instance of multi dwelling units councils report a significant increase in this type of "dump and run" offence, and currently strategies are being developed to identify links between regular household hard refuse collection provided by councils, and illegal dumping practices in residential areas.

Acts of illegally dumped waste whereby large volumes are disposed deliberately, seek to avoid or by-pass a licensed waste receiving facility. Hazardous waste is often detected in such waste which requires special removal, adding to the cost.

Where perpetrators have been proven guilty of such offences significant penalties have been applied in addition to clean up costs. However in most cases detection and prosecution is difficult.
* Source: Dumping Rubbish Knows No Boundaries - Regional Illegal Dumping Squad Wester Sydney Region May '04

Councils are reluctant to budget expense for surveillance or resources to counteract illegal dumping.

Recent strategies in NSW, Vic. and SA point to stronger enforcement measures evolving. Installation of surveillance in hot spot areas often leads to vandalism with equipment damage, and therefore potential additional expense incurred by councils.

Urban development and sprawl has placed considerable strain on semi rural councils adjoining built up areas as illegal dumping increases, with fringe councils often the least able to respond having limited resources, their need to manage a large geographical footprint, and failure to work to best efficiency with neighbouring councils.

Increased cost of waste to landfill levies, limited access to disposal sites, cost of council transfer station fees are often given as the reason for illegal dumping.

Anecdotal evidence points to local residents, Do It Yourself (DIY) type activities, and low socio/economic rental dwelling areas attracting increasing levels of illegal dumping, especially furniture and household goods..

Extreme cases of large volume illegal waste disposal (tyres, C&D waste etc.) are usually much better and logistically organised in fringe urban areas.

In recent years many local councils have commenced regular "hard waste" kerbside collections as a service to rate payers (old furniture, white goods, timber and shed clean out etc.). This provides increased resource recovery, diversion from landfill, and a number of benefits to rate payers.

One unfortunate outcome of hard waste collection is that some householders take the view that as council picks up hard waste as part of a regular (once or twice per annum) structured collection system, that all waste deposited on the kerbside at any time will be picked at council expense.

Items such as engine parts and oils and paints are included in illegal dumping resulting in addition pollution to the environment.

Several Adelaide metropolitan councils quote clean up costs of illegally dumped furniture and household items in excess of $200k per council per annum.

Q
What are the main costs of littering and how substantial are they? What sort of litter is the most costly and problematic to deal with?

A
Litter
KESAB is at the forefront of litter abatement action, education, and awareness campaigns in Australia.

State based Keep Australia Beautiful National Association offices jointly budget an estimated $4 million per annum towards litter, waste reduction and environmental education programs across Australia.

Income is derived from partnerships, sponsorships, memberships and grants from a range of sources. The Australian Government contribution to KAB is minimal, if and when available is linked to more general (non litter) grants funding criteria.

The Australian Government does not have a national litter policy and does not facilitate or fund litter reduction programs.

KESAB has delivered extensive litter awareness campaigns and information workshops throughout Australia in partnership with industry and State government agencies.

Information gleaned provides an excellent understanding of litter issues and current situation analysis, especially community behaviour, litter trends and impacts of convenient take away consumer products.

KESAB maintains the only litter data records in Australia counting a basket of items at 150 sites across South Australia since 1978. The data records litter type, location, and trends. Data separates beverage containers embraced by Container Deposit Legislation in South Australia.

The methodology is monitored regularly by independent assessors and was recently adopted by Dept. Environment & Heritage Australia in partnership with Keep Australia Beautiful National Association to undertake national litter analysis.

The first national count was conducted in Nov. 05 with data due early Feb. 06.

Litter costs councils and agencies millions of dollars each year to manage and remove. Source KAB Litter Management Research Oct 1994

Litter is any form of waste deliberately thrown or inadvertently entering the environment.

Litter items by count:

1)	Cigarette Butts	40%	
2)	Plastic	25%	confectionery, bottle tops, takeaway
3)	Paper/board	19%	cigarette packs, take-away, junk mail
4)	Metal	7%	beer cans, take-away, can pull rings
5)	Glass	2%	beverage containers (non CDL)
6)	Misc	6%	ice cream sticks, nappies, tyres, clothing

* Source KESAB Litter Count (SA) Wave 31 Nov '05

During 2005 KESAB introduced a volumetric conversion count process providing cubic metre litter estimates of items counted. Source: Wave 31 KESAB Litter Strategy Monitor Nov 05

Litter is an indicator of social attitudes and behaviour. Contrary to perceptions that young people are core litter's, the incidence of littering cuts across all demographics.

Chewing gum is not included in the data collection. However this item is regularly reported to KESAB by councils highlighting the impact on amenity and cost of removing chewing gum pollution from footpaths.
* City of Adelaide quotes tens of thousands of dollars per annum to remove gum

Litter type and location is generally consistent throughout Australia.

However in South Australia CDL reduces beverage containers in the litter stream, underpins Australia's highest beverage container recovery rate, and provides local economic and social benefits to the community.

Roadsides are the worst littered areas in Australia.

Litter reported in this category can be thrown from cars and trucks, illegally dumped, or falls from uncovered loads.

Littering locations:

1) Roads & Highways 46%
2) Car parks 15%
3) Industrial areas 12%
4) Shopping Centres 9%
5) Retail areas 7%
6) Residential 4%
7) Beaches 4%

* Source KESAB Litter Counts Wave 31 (SA) Nov '05

Despite ongoing targeted litter campaigns, current research findings show a slight upward trend, reflecting changes in community behaviour, increased population, reduced council and government services, changes in smoking regulations, and increased consumer purchasing of takeaway / convenience food products.

Councils provide the bulk of litter management and clean up services in the community. Often councils cite lack of resources, limited budget, and poor State based regulatory support as reasons for not implementing a strong litter policy.

Keep Australia Beautiful National Association (KABN), and KESAB deliver Australia's core litter education and awareness programs. These are often a collaborative approach between State and local government (councils) and various industry funded strategies working with schools and the community. Clean Up Australia Day conduct an annual Clean Up Day in March each year.

Funding for activities by KABN, KESAB and CUAD is subsidised through corporate sponsorship or partnership arrangements but is tokenism in the context of conducting sustainable mainstream national litter reduction campaigns embracing the wider community.

The Australian Government does not support KAB or KESAB with funding for litter abatement initiatives despite significant cost efficiencies delivered by the community.

Criteria for funding through NHT, NPC, or similar government based programs restrict potential to implement litter education and facilitate community based litter and resource recovery initiatives.

In 2005 the Grants for Volunteer Environment & Heritage Organisation (GVEHO) Grants process was reviewed and funding to peak environment groups reduced by the Australian Government. This funding assists with administration costs of peak environmental groups and does not support education resources or campaigns.

Less than $70k was granted to KAB National from GVEHO in 2005 demonstrating the low priority the Australian Government places on litter reduction and value of KAB community programs.

KESAB estimates over $100 million dollars and 2-3 million volunteer hours and effort is generated by KAB and KESAB programs each year through community litter reduction, recycling, and environmental improvement programs.

This submission by KESAB to the Industry Commission Inquiry into Waste Generation and Resource Efficiency re-affirms that whilst the GVEHO Grant assists in KAB operational and administration costs, individual KAB States or KESAB do not receive funding to implement litter abatement initiatives under the terms and condition of the funding.

The GVEHO Grants program is not structured to support and facilitate litter abatement, education, and public awareness campaigns required to meet lifestyle and waste generation impacts associated with increased take away food consumption, increased tourism, and transport movement along national highways and transport corridors.

The Australian Government must consider new initiatives in consultation with KABN to ensure the community remains engaged and supportive of locally based programs driven through Keep Australia Beautiful and KESAB, and adequate funding be allocated to drive and underpin national litter reduction initiatives.

Other factors identified impacting on increased litter and clean up costs include implementation of new regulations.

An example is the new smoke free hotel and restaurant regulations imposed by governments. The changes have resulted in a significant increase in cigarette butts in the litter stream outside hotels and high density entertainment areas.

The clean up cost, reduced stormwater quality, and run off into creeks and marine environs cause significant additional environmental pollution.

New regulations resulting in potential behavioural change must be considered in all contexts at development stage, and appropriate response or management mechanisms integrated to cover issues that may arise prior to implementing new regulations.

Q

Are local governments sufficiently aware of best practice approaches to waste management that would suit their circumstances? What institutional constraints are preventing the adoption of best practices?

A

Urban growth provides an opportunistic case study of local government and best practice approaches to waste generation and resource recovery efficiencies.

The 2003-2005 period building boom in SA has contributed to increased litter, illegal dumping, and waste to landfill, but has also provided potential to improve resource recovery efficiencies and compliance management by councils.

In South Australia a forecast 9,000 home starts will commence in 2006. Much of the estimated 5 tonne per site (50,000 tonne per annum) of waste created is un-treated as a resource and is dumped in landfill. There are also hundreds of thousands of tonnes construction and demolition (C&D) waste created each year.

Whilst there are increased volumes of C & D waste resources being processed commercially, adding value to resource recovery and re-use, significant waste is still dumped to landfill or disposed of illegally. Councils could be more proactive driving best practice and resource recovery.

Costs are incurred by councils to manage building site litter and waste due to lack of on site containment and council enforcement. Other impacts include stormwater run off and erosion, and the strong Do It Yourself (DIY) market which often contributes to poor building waste disposal and resource recovery practices.

From a social perspective one of the most common complaints received by KESAB from the community is litter escaping from adjacent building sites as construction phases progressively commence.

The KESAB Clean Site program works with the Housing Industry Association and Master Builders Association with objectives to encourage and implement best practice on building sites. The program operates in SA, Vic, WA, NSW and Qld and sets a high standard of best practice.

The building industry is generally slow, even reticent, to adopt improved waste and recycling practices stating repeatedly that added costs of waste / recycling bins on site cannot be factored into building costs.

Historically councils and the building industry have a love / hate relationship when it comes to development approval processes, implementing environmental best practice, and meeting compliance conditions.

The lack of “level playing field” by councils and regulators is often cited as a reason by industry stakeholders not to implement improved environmental practices. This response is unreasonable and obstructs best practice waste reduction and resource recovery from building sites.

Councils and industry should embrace common best practice performance standards.

Increased illegal dumping in new housing development areas is an additional impediment to having recycling bins on building sites and demonstrating best outcomes between council and industry.

Local councils performance in compliance and education specific to the building and construction industry is inconsistent, and is often reflected in increased litter and pollution entering the environment.

Local Government Acts and Bye--Laws vary significantly from State to State, as do other regulatory mechanisms including Environment Protection Acts.

Adding new or widening regulatory powers is often deemed to be the sole answer.

KESAB supports a combination of stronger compliance and improved education.

However it is often the case whereby Federal or State legislation/regulations place additional demand for services or budget considerations on local councils without having been fully thought through in operational, resource requirement, and implementation contexts.

Illegal dumping, littering, building and construction waste, resource recovery, and building development regulations are examples wherein local government is often “governed” under constraints created external to respective local government Acts, council policy, or contrary to local environmental management strategies.

In summary there is significant variance in individual council performance throughout Australia.

Issues include lack of resources, complex layers of regulations, compliance conflict, and inability to service the community across a huge range of social and economic issues that lack integration and consistency from state to state.

Q
What are advantages and disadvantages of extended producer responsibility (EPR) and product stewardship schemes?

A
Long term waste reduction and resource recovery efficiencies require collaborative partnerships. EPR is one practical mechanism that shares cost across the community and allows focus on specific industry sectors or products.

KESAB has significant experience working within EPR schemes with current examples being litter education, roadside pollution reduction, building and construction waste recovery, chewing gum litter behavioural research, plastic shopping bag reduction, and cigarette butt litter reduction.

Advantages
EPR schemes provide opportunity to engage industry relative to specific issues.

Joint EPR schemes enable integration of government policy into manufacturing processes and costs, in synch with consumer marketing, sales, purchasing and disposal awareness through promotion of community education and action.

Advantages of EPR schemes include an element of shared goodwill between government and industry, and ability to build brand and product awareness as part of good corporate citizenship in response to environmental management.

In the case of the heavily regulated tobacco industry, it is not about product branding, but about responding to litter abatement issues over and above the plethora of non waste generation regulations focusing on other industry elements and expectations from the industry by government.

Disadvantages
Threat to industry, either real or perceived, is identified as a disadvantage because of potential to reduce independence of that industry sector to implement a voluntary type EPR environmental improvement scheme. What may have been considered adequate and innovative by the industry may indeed be resisted or opposed based on intervention by “big brother” through an EPR agreement.

Joint government and industry EPR schemes often portray the perception of being top heavy with additional demand placed by government on the corporate commitment. This outcome may be negative in terms of collaboration and trade off in deliverables thereby reducing effectiveness or intention of the EPR.

Some industry sectors may take the stance that because an EPR scheme is induced there is no need to deliver more than basic requirements under the terms and conditions of the EPR agreement.

Alternative corporate strategies, if left to the industries own devices, may however not reach the mark at all, neither meeting government nor community expectation.

EPR schemes may often appear imbalanced in the context of what, where and who is driving the need for an EPR. This also applies to ability to engage the community

or target audience, set achievable targets, and ensure overall efficiencies, and outcomes within time frames.

Overall KESAB is of the view that EPR schemes are a practical approach to building waste reduction strategies and resource efficiencies, as the cost is shared by all stakeholders (business, consumer, govt, and the community).

EPR schemes provide a balance between no action by industry, or regulation by government, and engagement or participation by sectors that otherwise would not embrace waste reduction or resource recovery efficiencies that contribute to improved social, environment, and cost benefits.

Q
What are the advantages and disadvantages of container deposit legislation in reducing litter and increasing recycling? What part do they play in optimising waste management outcomes.

A
Container Deposit Legislation was introduced in South Australia almost 30 years ago (1977). A 5c deposit is paid by consumers on approved beverage containers at point of purchase.

Legislated by the South Australian government and administered by the EPA Container Deposit Unit, CDL is in the main managed by the beverage industry with minimal day to day bureaucratic influence or intrusion.

The Western Australian Government announced in Dec 05 that a form of CDL will be investigated in that State during 2006. The Northern Territory Government considered implementation of CDL in 2004 but subsequently changed direction following intense lobbying by the beverage industry.

The States of Victoria, Tasmania, New South Wales and Queensland have resisted implementing CDL following vehement opposition and lobbying by industry associations including Beverage Industry Environmental Council (BIEC) and Packaging Industry Association (PIA).

Findings from CDL research projects are often reported and promoted selectively by industry as part of the argument and ongoing lobbying against CDL.

Contrary to many misleading statements expounded by the beverage industry, there are well researched facts supporting effectiveness and value of CDL in South Australia.

CDL facts;

- South Australia has the highest beverage container collection and recycling rates per capita in Australia.
  - Aluminium cans 85%
  - PET 72%
  - Glass 82%
  - LPB 38% Liquidpaperboard only since 2003 expanded CDL Regulations
- South Australian litter statistics show less beverage litter in the litter stream than other states. *Source KABN National Litter Index Nov '05
- 94% of the South Australian population support CDL *Source EPA SA
- CDL creates employment (1400) working at resource recovery depots
- CDL recycling depots (130 in SA) provide drop off points and pick up services for business and community alike.
- CDL Depots receive and process significant volumes (tens of thousands of tonnes)of non CDL recyclables (paper, cardboard, metals, car batteries, etc).
- Beverage containers processed via South Australia are the cleanest in Australia attracting high market commodity rates.
- CDL provides feed stock for Australian re-processing, and export market.
- CDL and kerbside recycling collection systems are compatible and work along side each other in metropolitan and regional South Australia.

Beverage container return rates through the CDL system are higher than any other State in Australia;

Returns in SA equate to an estimated 450 million beverage containers per annum valued at almost $10million based on commodity prices.
* Source: Recyclers of SA Report 2005

Reasons given by interstate industry opponents of CDL appear to be based on;

1) industry being regulated
2) cost of implementation.

However the beverage industry has contributed an estimated $25million subsidising local government, community litter campaigns, and recycling initiatives in other States over the past 15 years. Outcomes of this process do not demonstrate the benefits achieved over the same period in South Australia.

Beverage Industry Environment Council (BIEC) facilitate funding grants supporting State based Keep Australia Beautiful Council litter reduction and community programs in all States and Territories.

However on the premise of CDL legislation operating in South Australia BIEC does not facilitate funding or support any litter reduction or recycling programs in South Australia.

Ultimately the consumer pays for both CDL and BIEC approaches.

In SA the user pays principle applies (if you litter the deposit is forfeited).

In other States beverage manufacturers build an amount into the sale price. Through BIEC this funds a range of resource recovery programs but fails to offer a visible or up front incentive not to litter and return empty containers for recycling.

Local government bodies throughout Australia publicly support CDL but have been unsuccessful in lobbying the Australian or State Governments to implement or encourage take up of the scheme.

Whilst other States struggle to increase beverage container recovery levels, South Australia expanded the range of products covered by the legislation in 2003, increasing volumes of beverage containers recovered, and further reducing litter.

“A downward trend in both the number and proportion of CDL litter remains evident since the January 2003 extension to CDL and also over the term of the monitor”.

“Data shows CDL items in the litter stream have reduced from 5.4% in Feb 03 to 2.6% of total litter in May 2005”.
Source: KESAB McGregor Tan Litter Strategy Monitoring Wave 29 May 2005

If the Australia government is serious about environmental sustainability and resource recovery, CDL provides an ideal platform and incentive regime that could be applied to a range of products from household laundry and kitchen items to mobile phones, batteries, fridges and TVs, to cars. It is after all a simple version of EPR.

Q
Do the benefits of community and business education programs on the creation and disposal of waste justify the costs involved? Which types of programs are more successful in this regard?

A
Community and business waste disposal and resource recovery education programs have wider implications than simply reducing litter and waste.

In the main waste programs are driven by governments to meet policy and environmental improvement needs. Programs are also delivered by councils and key industry stakeholders supporting kerbside waste and resource recovery infrastructure services.

Funding for education initiatives is a mix of government grants, corporate sponsorship, council rates, or working in collaboration with waste industry stakeholders.

Waste education programs focus on householders, business, school curriculum based learning, with new education programs being framed around environmental sustainability (waste, water, energy and bio-diversity).

In recent years there have been examples of business sectors embracing resource recovery (office paper, cardboard) and changes in work place practices relative to energy consumption and water use.

Community education and awareness is about changing behaviour and increasing understanding of the principles of environmental sustainability.

KESAB conducts a range of environmental education programs with strong focus on waste minimisation, resource recovery, and improved litter management.

Programs outcomes have direct correlation with consumer awareness, social and economic benefits, and increased understanding about lifestyle impacts and choices in day to day living. Dollars spent against benefits gained are difficult to measure.

Whilst most environmental education programs work to a time line, many in fact reach into other domains and cross over achieving extended time line and value added benefits.

Litter education programs include discussion on packaging types, options and recycling, pollution of ecosystems, threat to wildlife, and issues including remnant vegetation and habitat protection. These programs provide life long learning.

Resource recovery and recycling education embraces new technology and opportunities to change entrenched practices by focussing on environmental sustainability as the underlying factor to adopt change.

Overall benefits of community engagement and corporate citizenship combined with education and awareness often far outweighs initial program costs and is often difficult to quantity in dollar terms.

Three KESAB programs provide case studies of significant benefits returned to stakeholders and the community over and above initial dollar investment.

Tidy Towns Program (SA rural 2005)
Annual operating budget $130k

- 340 towns participated
- estimated 700,000 volunteer community hours
- 2,300 community groups involved
- environmental improvement and education in 234 schools

Outcomes Total value 2005 Tidy Towns $20 million
Source: KESAB *environmental solutions* Annual Report 04-05

Please Butt It campaign (Suburban beach side councils 2005)
Campaign operating budget $80k

- 7 metro councils participated
- reached 500,000 people
- considerable community interface and free media support
- strong stakeholder participation and awareness
- 15% reduction of butts in the litter stream
- campaign media and awareness

Outcomes: Total value $360k (3 months)
Source: KESAB *environmental solutions* Project report to Butt Littering Trust March 05

Road Watch Program (State wide SA)
Annual operating budget $70k

- 220 community groups participating
- reduction in roadside litter
- monitoring and reporting of illegal dumping and waste
- improved tourist amenity
- roadside care and improvement to remnant vegetation and habitat

Outcomes: Total value 2005 $360k
Source: KESAB *environmental solutions* Road Watch Report to Dept. TSA

Investment by KESAB stakeholders of $280k in the above three programs returned almost $21 million in environmental education and action 04/05.

Community participation and action is essential. Education programs encourage improved waste reduction and recycling performance through behavioural change.

Environmental education promulgates generational change, and is not something that can be simply lifted from a book and dropped into the community.

School based waste and environmental education is about hands on and interactive approaches, especially as resource recovery is not a specific curriculum subject.

Programs are also about training the trainer ensuring teachers are armed with appropriately researched resources, tools, and understanding of waste issues so that the informed and balanced information and message is imparted.

Value adding through community commitment influences best education and change, with outcomes being achieved through simplicity, encouraging active participation, and demonstrating community ownership.

Many government funded programs provide commendable objectives, but are unable to offer flexibility and scope of support and engagement for participants.

KESAB experience over 40 years of collaborative government and community effort shows balanced partnership programs between government, industry, councils and community stakeholders working in collaboration, can achieve outstanding results in program delivery cost savings, and environmental benefits.

Outcomes include increased community engagement, broader program reach, and development of a network that has capacity and drive to want to participate in future initiatives.

From a KESAB community perception this is significant because we do not have to rely on rebuilding a networks each time a new program or funding is announced. This assures ongoing commitment thereby providing a degree of continuum and support by the community that governments are unable to guarantee.

Q
Are government programs to reduce waste cost effective for the agencies concerned? Do they provide effective signals to the wider community?

A
Programs driven by government policy and funding often have different rationale and strategic thinking than industry or community driven waste programs. Much of this is to do with reaching the wider community and need for an holistic approach towards managing the total waste stream.

More often than not there is cost in-effectiveness with many government programs (waste or otherwise), but if government did not drive initiatives, be they for political or environmental reasons, no one else would.

The measure of effectiveness in the KESAB view is how a government agency works with funded partners, and supports the message/project delivery process.

It is difficult for an agency to deliver when they are not at the coalface, have possible alternate views or objectives than fellow government agencies, and respond through political expediency or short term goals based on once off funding options.

Delivering cost effective waste reduction programs and providing effective signals to the wider community do not always go hand in hand as the community can be fickle and non responsive subject to purpose and potential reach.

Plastic shopping bag reduction, composting and organics recycling, media driven awareness, or simple information campaigns are program examples fraught with potential not to be the most cost effective.
But they influence communities, are needed, and after all it is the taxpayer paying for their own environmental education and sustainability initiative.

Agency programs are in part difficult to measure, partly because agencies are distant from the community, and because government works to different rules and protocols sometimes setting up invisible barriers. This is supported by research in South Australia where only 5% of respondents advised that they would seek information from government agencies. * Resource: working with the community ZWSA Oct 05

Partnerships are a means of meeting agency objectives and maximising outcomes but are often governed by bureaucracy and inability of agencies to make quick decisions, making government funded programs a challenge to deliver.

Some community based organisations and business sectors do not have understanding or experience working with government agencies, and visa versa, further exacerbating potential program effectiveness.

However agency driven programs are necessary for a host of reasons, the most important being community engagement, underpinning environmental management, and influencing change through personal action.

Through joint agency, industry, and community stakeholders collaboration there are often added benefits and cost efficiencies that government would not otherwise achieve. This deliverable is not always measurable, but forms an important part of the framework and links at the community level to deliver key messages.

An example is the voluntary contribution of the Australian community and the hundreds of millions of dollars value and hours provided by them each year towards environment improvements including recycling and litter clean up programs.

Whilst government initiates special purpose programs for a raft of reasons they are really underpinning opportunities in the community that would otherwise not occur if agency funds were not available.

Local government and the waste management industry need this type of government agency support as programs often encourage new partnerships and opportunities in a sometimes inflexible and traditional waste industry.

Community education bodies such as KESAB could not perform without negotiating agency funding, and yet we are considered integral to delivering day on ground programs and working with community networks agencies have difficultly accessing.

Agency programs are imperative to support community action and underpin participation in environmental sustainability education and action.

To meet longer term national resource recovery and associated cost efficiencies the Australian Government must consider developing a strategy to underpin organisations delivering community based waste reduction education initiatives.

Cost savings of tens of millions of dollars to government, in addition to increased resource recovery and environmental improvement across Australia, can be added to social, economic, and environmental benefits.