



# **WSN Environmental Solutions Eastern Creek Waste and Recycling Centre**

## **Community Advisory Committee Terms of Reference**

**Adopted on 15 September 2005**



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## **1. Purpose**

These Terms of Reference define the role of WSN Environmental Solutions' Eastern Creek Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and provide a framework for its establishment and operation. All members of the CAC will be asked to agree to these Terms of Reference and sign the Participation Protocol (Appendix 1).

## **2. Establishment of Community Advisory Committees**

WSN Environmental Solutions has recently re-focused on improving the organisation's community engagement activities. One activity has been the introduction of the term Community Advisory Committee (CAC) to replace Community Monitoring Committee (CMC).

CAC reflects the broader nature of community forums; WSN Environmental Solutions wants to interact with community representatives as key partners who not only monitor the operations of the waste management facilities but in addition provide input on a wide range of resource recovery, sustainability and corporate citizenship topics.

These Terms of Reference set out the role and objectives of the Eastern Creek CAC, the protocols for participation and the procedures for operation of the CAC. They were prepared in consultation with WSN Environmental Solutions and CAC members.

## **3. Role of the CAC**

The CAC is a consultative forum where representatives of the community and WSN staff can discuss the operations of the Eastern Creek Waste and Recycling Centre (WRC). The role of the CAC is advisory - WSN Environmental Solutions will consider comments and suggestions made by the group, and provide responses to the comments and suggestions. The CAC will be asked to provide advice on a range of items brought forward by WSN Environmental Solutions and may bring forward matters of importance to members. This will assist WSN Environmental Solutions to make robust decisions in relation to its facilities.

The CAC is not required to reach consensus or express unified views on matters discussed. WSN Environmental Solutions believes that the views of each CAC member are valid and should be expressed and respected by the group.

### **3.1 Objectives of the CAC**

The objectives of the CAC are:

- To facilitate community awareness of the operations, environmental performance and any upcoming development of the WRC.
- To provide community members with the opportunity to raise any issues of concern related to the WRC.
- To foster understanding and cooperation between community members and WSN Environmental Solutions staff in minimising the impact of the WRC on the host community.
- To develop, implement and monitor a 'Good Neighbour Agreement'<sup>1</sup> between community members and WSN Environmental Solutions that outlines mutual expectations about the WRC.

The activities of the Eastern Creek CAC may include the following:

- Cooperatively addressing any issue related to the WRC, such as potential changes to the amount or type of waste processed, changes in access arrangements or changes to the impact on local amenity.
- Commenting on options for the future usage of the site.
- Providing advice on broader WSN Environmental Solutions initiatives, such as the shift to resource recovery or the introduction of an organisation-wide odour management program.

## **4. Membership**

Participation in the CAC is voluntary and open to any interested person who lives, works or has an interest in the vicinity of Eastern Creek WRC. Members may represent the following groups:

- Local residents.
- Local businesses.
- Local environmental groups and community groups (eg precinct committees and progress associations).
- Local Council staff.
- Local Councillors.
- Local Members of Parliament.
- Department of Environment and Conservation.
- Landfill Management Services
- Australian Native Landscapes
- Global Renewables Ltd
- Energy Developments Ltd

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<sup>1</sup> A Good Neighbour Agreement documents agreements between an organisation and local community members about aspects of that organisation's operations that may impact on the local community.



WSN Environmental Solutions staff including Centre Managers, Environment and Workforce Safety Officers, and the Manager Community Engagement regularly attend meetings. Other WSN Environmental Solutions staff will attend meetings to discuss particular topics.

WSN Environmental Solutions will, at the request of the CAC, undertake communication activities to attract new members to the group. The WSN Environmental Solutions website will always include information on how to get involved with the CAC. Regular attendance by members is requested as this supports continuity, more informed discussion and resolution of issues.

## **5. Protocol for participation in the CAC**

All members agree to:

- Undertake agreed actions within the timeframes specified.
- Advise the Independent Facilitator of proposed agenda items in advance of CAC meetings.
- Enable all members to be equally heard, not speak over each other and listen to all other members' points of view.
- Take all relevant information into consideration.
- Act reasonably, with honesty, in good faith.
- Refrain from any form of conduct that may cause a reasonable person unwarranted offence or embarrassment.
- Not to use confidential information, gained by virtue of membership, for the purposes of private benefit for himself/herself or any other person or organisation.

### **5.1 Independent Facilitator responsibilities and outcomes**

The Independent Facilitator's role is to facilitate the CAC meetings, with the outcome being a fair, inclusive and professional forum for the community representatives and WSN Environmental Solutions to come together to discuss issues of mutual interest, as outlined in these Terms of Reference.

The Independent Facilitator agrees to:

- Facilitate CAC meetings in a fair, unbiased manner conducive to open and frank and outcomes-focussed discussion.
- Ensure all members have an opportunity to make comments, ask questions and raise issues.
- Set a meeting agenda that is relevant to the CAC's objectives and addresses the needs of all members and circulate this agenda one week in advance of the meeting.
- Manage the meeting so that all agenda items are discussed within a reasonable timeframe and that meetings start and finish at the agreed time.



- Arrange for meeting notes to be prepared and distributed within three weeks of the meeting.
- Ensure that the Terms of Reference are met by all members.
- Address issues and facilitate the resolution of conflicts that arise.
- Provide an independent note taker.

An alternative facilitator may be appointed by WSN Environmental Solutions for a particular meeting, should the Independent Facilitator be unable to attend.

## **5.2 WSN Environmental Solutions responsibilities and outcomes**

WSN Environmental Solutions is a NSW Government-owned corporation established under the *Waste Recycling and Processing Corporation Act 2001*. It is responsible to the NSW Minister for the Environment.

WSN Environmental Solutions agrees to:

- Proactively inform CAC members of new developments, issues or decisions related to the WRC through a standing agenda item.
- Consider all recommendations made by CAC members and provide the CAC with a timely response
- Respond promptly to requests for information.
- Ensure attendance of appropriate WSN Environmental Solutions staff members at CAC meetings, in order to enable informative discussion, progression of issues and achievement of outcomes.
- Provide adequate resources to ensure the CAC functions professionally and effectively, including the engagement of an Independent Facilitator and note taker.
- Help promote the profile of the CAC both within WSN Environmental Solutions and within the host community.

The WSN Environmental Solutions *Community Engagement Policy* outlines how WSN Environmental Solutions seeks to interact with its host communities and other stakeholders.

## **5.3 CAC members responsibilities and outcomes**

CAC members are responsible for seeking and representing the views of the local community they represent concerning the operations of WSN Environmental Solutions' waste management facilities. Members are also responsible for providing input on a wide range of resource recovery, sustainability and corporate citizenship topics.

CAC members agree to:

- Attend meetings regularly and actively participate in discussion in accordance with these Terms of Reference.
- Put forward the views of the wider community in addition to their own views.



- Provide feedback from the CAC to the wider community.
- Focus on issues related to the operations of WSN Environmental Solutions.

## **5.4 Technical presentations**

Where information of a more technical nature, such as noise mitigation or landscape design, needs to be presented to the CAC, relevant experts will be invited to present at a meeting. This may also include representatives from relevant government agencies and specialist consultants.

## **5.5 Documents**

If community or business members distribute their own materials to other group members or to the wider public, this information must clearly indicate that it is not official WSN Environmental Solutions documentation issued by WSN Environmental Solutions. It cannot include any WSN Environmental Solutions logos or branding.

## **5.6 Differing views and consensus**

The aim of the CAC is to represent a diversity of viewpoints and stakeholder issues and concerns. It is not a requirement, or anticipated, that consensus will always be reached among members on the issues discussed. Where group members hold a range of perspectives on a particular issue, the differing viewpoints will be noted and taken into consideration.

## **5.7 Media protocol**

CAC members agree to speak to the media only on their own behalf. No member may discuss views expressed by another member without their knowledge and consent. If a CAC member receives an enquiry from the media regarding the operations of the WRC or a strategic or policy matter, they should direct that enquiry to the WSN Environmental Solutions Manager Community Engagement, Anna Mitchell who can be contacted on 02 9934 7029.

WSN Environmental Solutions will not publicly identify any CAC members in the media without their knowledge and consent.

## **5.8 Privacy**

All CAC members will be required to provide WSN Environmental Solutions with telephone and email/post contact details to allow for distribution of minutes and communication between meetings. WSN Environmental Solutions will not provide contact details to any other party, other than the Independent Facilitator, without the consent of the CAC member/s in question.

CAC members may wish to circulate their contact details amongst the group to facilitate interaction between meetings. This would occur by agreement of the group.



The meeting notes will contain the initials of CAC members who make comments during CAC meetings. These notes will appear on the WSN Environmental Solutions website once adopted by the CAC. A cover page with a full list of attendees and apologies will be circulated to CAC members with the minutes but will not appear on the website.

## **5.9 Resignation/termination from a CAC**

CAC members may resign from the CAC, and are requested to submit in writing their intent to no longer participate in the CAC to the Independent Facilitator. Members who have resigned may choose to continue to receive meeting notes.

Members may be asked to resign under the following circumstances:

- Performs ongoing and substantial breaches of the CAC Terms of Reference in the opinion of the Independent Facilitator.
- If an actual or potential conflict of interest arises in relation to a particular issue, he or she must, as soon as practicable, inform the Independent Facilitator and the members of the CAC about this conflict of interest.

At the discretion of the Independent Facilitator, he or she may be required to no longer attend meetings or to vacate the room during discussion of the relevant matter.

## **6. CAC meeting procedures**

### **6.1 Meeting frequency, timing and length**

The frequency of CAC meetings will be agreed by the CAC, in order to meet the needs of the members of the group. Future meeting dates will be set annually, at the last meeting of each year. The frequency of meetings will be revisited annually.

The Independent Facilitator may call a special meeting of the CAC if there is an important matter to be communicated to the group in between the scheduled meetings or if there is sufficient interest on a particular issue to warrant a dedicated meeting.

The time for CAC meetings will be agreed with CAC members. The Independent Facilitator will be responsible for selecting the day and time that best meets the needs of CAC members, given the differing personal and work commitments of each member. The timing for CAC meetings will be revisited annually.

WSN Environmental Solutions acknowledges that CAC members are attending the CAC in their own time. Therefore, it is important to ensure meetings run efficiently. In order to allow sufficient time for discussion of agenda items in a productive environment, it is suggested that meetings last for 2 hours.

## **6.2 Meeting agenda**

The Independent Facilitator will prepare an agenda for distribution to CAC members in advance of each CAC meeting. The agenda will be prepared with consideration of:

- Regular agenda items – agreement on previous minutes, report back on actions, site and environmental reports etc.
- Items proposed by WSN Environmental Solutions regarding developments at the site, issues and events.
- Items proposed by CAC members.

The agenda will be distributed two weeks prior to the meeting.

## **6.3 Meeting notes**

The Independent Facilitator will arrange for meeting notes to be taken at each meeting. The notes will summarise the discussion that occurred, agreements made and actions to be undertaken.

Meeting notes will not be a verbatim record of discussion. Attribution of comments to individuals will be recorded unless CAC members agree that they do not want comments attributed to individuals.

Draft minutes will be distributed to all attendees and regular CAC members within three weeks of the meeting. The minutes will be agreed upon at the next meeting and any changes required will be noted in the minutes of that next meeting.

Agreed meeting notes will be posted on the WSN Environmental Solutions website.

## **6.4 Actions and timeframes**

Actions agreed to be undertaken by the Independent Facilitator, CAC members and WSN Environmental Solutions staff will be captured in the meeting notes, together with the agreed timing for implementation. All parties are generally required to undertake those actions to which they have agreed within the timing specified unless a reasonable explanation for the delay is given.

A report back on actions will be a standing agenda item at CAC meetings. All parties will be required to report back on the actions assigned to them. If unable to attend a CAC meeting, the member should report back to the Independent Facilitator prior to the meeting.

Outstanding actions will be noted in the meeting notes and a written response shall be included in the meeting notes or the action item will be carried over to the following meeting.

## **6.5 Referral of items to the Sustainability Reference Group**



The CAC may refer items of a strategic nature to the Sustainability Reference Group (SRG) for their consideration. The Manager Community Engagement will be responsible for raising the item at the next meeting of the SRG and reporting the SRG's response back to the CAC.

The SRG may refer matters (such as operational and local issues) to the Eastern Creek CAC for input. The Manager Community Engagement will be responsible for raising the item at the next meeting of the CAC and reporting the CAC's response back to the SRG.

## **7 Evaluation**

CAC members will be asked to evaluate the effectiveness of WSN Environmental Solutions community engagement process, the CAC and the Independent Facilitator on an annual basis. The results of the evaluation will be made available to the CAC with recommendations agreed to address issues raised.



## **Appendix 1 - WSN Environmental Solutions Community Advisory Committee Participation Protocol**

I \_\_\_\_\_ agree, to my best endeavour, to undertake the WSN Environmental Solutions Eastern Creek Waste and Recycling Centre Community Advisory Committee Terms of Reference.

I give my permission for my name to be used in minutes of Eastern Creek CAC meetings and for comments I make during the meetings to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting and attributed to me. I understand that agreed minutes of the meeting will be distributed to CAC members and posted on the WSN website.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_