

Estimates– 11 Oct 2010

Zero Waste

Mr PEDERICK: Minister, I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 4, Portfolio Statements, page 11.53. The only annual performance indicator is the annual reduction in waste to landfill. The estimated reduction in 2009-10 was about 40,000 tonnes, considerably less than achieved in 2008-09 which was 57,000 tonnes. Why is this, and what is the current total annual tonnage of waste to landfill?

The Hon. P. CAICA: I am advised that with respect to the 2009-10 estimated result we have done better, if you like, than we have from the 2009-10 target where we see a difference between 35,000 tonnes to 40,000 tonnes, bearing in mind the important word there is 'reduction.' I am advised that we are on target to meet our 2010-11 target and we hope that will certainly be the case.

Mr PEDERICK: Minister, how do you quantify the difference, though, between 40,000 tonnes and the 57,000 tonnes that was achieved in 2008-09? The 40,000 tonnes was the estimated reduction in 2009-10.

The Hon. P. CAICA: However, we do not have the figures. We would need the figures going back to 2007-08 to find out what the target was to achieve that actual. I do not have those figures here in front of me. I am happy to get back to you regarding what the targeted figures were for 2008-09. We only have the actual there and the target for 2009-10 and the estimated result for 2009-10 and then the target for 2010-11—are you with me?

Mr PEDERICK: Yes. If you can bring them back.

The Hon. P. CAICA: Yes, I will.

Mr PEDERICK: That will be good. Budget Paper 4, Volume 4, Portfolio Statements, 2009-10 highlights and 2010-11 targets. One of the highlights relates to incentive funding to major waste collectors in the commercial industrial sector. One of the targets in 2010-11 is to provide financial support for the metro recycling and resource recovery infrastructure investment program. Can the minister provide full details of what these incentives are?

The Hon. P. CAICA: Yes, I can and I am very pleased to do so. The Zero Waste SA Metropolitan Infrastructure Program provides assistance to industry. It is aimed specifically at increasing South Australia's capacity for local reprocessing of recyclable material to high value end-use products, and invests in infrastructure that enables greater re-use of waste materials.

In 2009, the South Australian Recycling Industry Investment Review was completed which assessed current recycling infrastructure capacity, recycling industry growth and priority investment opportunities. In line with the findings of the industry, investment review priority areas for investment for this program have been identified and included in the 2010-11 Metropolitan Infrastructure Grants funding call, which closed on 8 October 2010.

The 2010-11 funding call currently open is for \$1.2 million over two years but, by way of background, since its establishment Zero Waste SA has held four rounds of metropolitan infrastructure grants and has awarded funding for 16 projects totalling \$3.3 million, and the program has in turn leveraged approximately an

additional \$8.6 million in industry investment. We will continue to ensure that we use this in such a way that we are able to leverage, if you like, our investment from industry for those common objectives.

The other program that I will just briefly mention in the same context is the Zero Waste SA Resource Efficiency Assistance Program (REAP), which is helping businesses and government understand, develop and implement cost-saving resource efficiency measures and in doing so building their capacity to deal with a range of rapidly emerging environmental, financial and social consequences. Zero Waste delivers REAP in partnership with the Business Sustainability Alliance, which is a coalition of four government agencies: Zero Waste SA, the Department of Trade and Economic Development (that is Innovate SA), the Environment Protection Authority and SA Water. Zero Waste also works to help state government to improve management of materials, energy and water across its myriad of operations, including offices, hospitals, national parks, emergency services, correctional facilities, TAFE campuses and schools. The key elements of the REAP program are commitment from management, diagnostic evaluation training programs, in-house technical support, financial support in the form of resource efficiency audits and a wide range of support programs and opportunities for business, industry and networking.

Whilst I would never say that \$1 million here or there is not a lot of money—because it is—we certainly get a very good bang from our buck in regard to the incentives programs and indeed the behavioural change that is achieved through this particular expenditure.

Mr PEDERICK: I refer to Budget Paper 6, the Budget Measures Statement, page 143, and savings initiatives: cuts to the incentive and grants programs. Cuts of \$1.7 million are indicated for industry incentive programs, grants programs, research work and recycling campaigns. Does the minister have a list of all the programs that are to be cut?

The Hon. P. CAICA: Ultimately, Zero Waste SA's governance and arrangements are undertaken by a board and it will be up to the board to determine to a very great extent where those variations will occur in the future. I will give you an undertaking to provide you with that information once I am advised by the board as to where it will have its particular focus.

Mr PEDERICK: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 4, Portfolio Statements, and the 2009-10 highlights. One of the highlights was that there was a review of the regional implementation program to identify gaps in resource recovery. I will put the questions together: what did the review find and what are the barriers to resource recovery in regional South Australia?

The Hon. P. CAICA: I think our ongoing improvement in regard to this is really about how we can continue to build on and improve what we are doing. Your specific question was about the gaps, as I understand it?

Mr PEDERICK: What did the review of the regional implementation program to identify the gaps in resource recovery find?

The Hon. P. CAICA: What we have found is that dispersed population centres—and I know that you come from what could be described as a dispersed population centre—where fewer people exist and there is a lower rate base coupled

with considerable transport distances, create additional difficulties for achieving viable recycling outcomes in many regional areas. That is why many regional and rural communities are encouraging councils to provide more opportunities for recycling. Zero Waste SA will continue to work with those local councils in recognition of these particular difficulties. The draft South Australia's Waste Strategy 2010-15, recently put out for public consultation, does not set specific recycling targets for regional South Australia. That is to provide, I think, greater flexibility for rural councils because it is difficult out there, given the dispersed nature of the communities and the rate base they have. There are many other Zero Waste SA programs and activities, such as school and community grant programs and electronic waste collections. Members would be aware of our next challenge, that is, come 15 December, the transfer from analog to digital in regional South Australia and the impact that will have. Also, as I have mentioned, electronic waste collection and the household hazardous waste and the farm chemicals collection programs, amongst others, are also aimed at assisting recycling and improved waste management in regional South Australia. In particular, Zero Waste SA's regional implementation program supports local government regions to progressively implement waste reforms and improve the recovery of materials from country areas. Also raised with me, although I would not specifically have those figures in front of me, are some concerns that have been expressed by local councils in relation, again, to the tyranny of distance and the impact that has on illegal dumping. So, we are aware of that and we continue to work with councils on that matter. Most regional councils in South Australia have, with funding from Zero Waste SA, developed regional waste management plans. The plans provide a blueprint for commissioning and decommissioning of infrastructure, including landfill and services across the state. The implementation of these plans often requires considerable time to obtain development and other approvals. The program, as the member mentioned, has been subject to review and continuous improvement, and it is strongly supported by regional councils. I am very pleased with the way in which Zero Waste continues to engage our local councils in regional South Australia and, in turn, engage the local community.