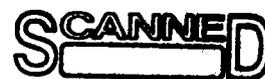




LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
Question On Notice

Tuesday, 8 May 2018



1257. Hon Robin Chappie to the Minister for Environment

(1) Regarding the Minister's comments on 4 April 2018 in an interview on 720 ABC, regarding the China ban on foreign waste imports and related comments on the recycling industry in Western Australia:

- (a) the Minister stated that a certain amount of recovered glass is used for road bases:
 - (i) how much glass is used; and
 - (ii) what is this amount as a percentage of all glass recovered in recycling facilities in Western Australia;
- (b) the Minister stated that there was quite a large amount of recycling being shipped to China:
 - (i) how much was shipped; and
 - (ii) where is it going now;
- (c) the Minister stated that he wanted to boost Western Australia's domestic re-manufacturing capacity:
 - (i) are there any current plans as to how this can be achieved;
 - (ii) if no to (i), why not;
 - (iii) if yes to (i), will the Minister publish any information on these plans; and
 - (iv) if no to (iii), why not; and
- (d) the Minister stated that a challenge of the recycling industry in Western Australia was no uniform system of waste collection existing across all Government and regional councils:
 - (i) are there any plans to standardise waste collection and processes in Western Australian local governments and councils;
 - (ii) if no to (i), why not; and
 - (iii) if no to (i), will the standardisation of waste collection across Western Australia be a future consideration?

(2) Regarding data collection on recovered glass:

- (a) is there any data collected on how much recovered glass is shipped, landfilled, and recycled;
- (b) if no to (a), why not;
- (c) if no to (a), are there any plans to start collecting this data;
- (d) if no to (c), why not; and
- (e) if yes to (c), how will this data be collected?

Answer

(1)(a)(i) As reported in the *Recycling Activity in Western Australia 2015-16* report, waste industry operators indicated that 42,300 tonnes of waste glass was recycled within Western Australia in 2015-16, predominantly for use in construction (including road base).

(1)(a)(ii) As reported in the *Recycling Activity in Western Australia 2015-16* report, waste industry operators indicated that 91 per cent of all waste glass was recycled in Western Australia in 2015-16, predominantly for use in construction (including road base).

(1)(b)(i) A recent report by Blue Environment shows the export of recyclables from Western Australia to China in 2016-17 as:

Recyclable material type	Tonnes exported
Metals	45,000
Paper & cardboard	32,000
Plastics	4,000
Total	81,000

(1)(b)(ii) Informal advice from industry suggests that in a number of cases local recyclers have been seeking to arrange for the sale of these recyclable materials into alternative existing markets. Some of these recyclable materials may still be exported to China if they meet the new restrictions.

(1)(c)(i)-(iv) A Waste Taskforce has been established to look at short, medium and long-term options to improve local recycling in Western Australia. The Taskforce will provide options to support local recycling to me as the Minister for Environment. I also anticipate that the revised Western Australian Waste Strategy, which is due to be released in the second half of 2018, will include strategies that encourage the development of resource recovery infrastructure to support the achievement of its targets.

(1)(d)(i)-(iii) The McGowan Government's \$20 million Better Bins program prioritises the adoption of three-bin colour coded waste service for Western Australian local governments.

Findings from the Waste Taskforce and ongoing consultation on the Waste Strategy will inform the McGowan Government's approach to improving Western Australia's recycling performance. This may include standardisation of local government waste services.

(2)(a) Data is collected about exported waste glass through the Australian Bureau of Statistics and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). DFAT reported to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) in 2017 that no waste glass had been exported overseas from Western Australia since 2008-09.

The quantity of glass recycled or exported to other Australian jurisdictions is captured through the Government's annual Recycling Activity in Western Australia survey of recyclers.

The quantity of glass landfilled across Western Australia is not directly measured. The National Waste Report 2016 estimated that 78,000 tonnes of glass were landfilled in Western Australia during 2014-15. This estimate was derived by applying assumed landfilling rates for glass from other Australian jurisdictions.

(2)(b) Not applicable

(2)(c) I have asked my department for advice on how we might better measure the composition of waste landfilled (including glass).

(2)(d) Not applicable

(2)(e) Advice from the Waste Taskforce and ongoing consultation on the Waste Strategy will inform the McGowan Government's approach to improving Western Australia's waste data.



Hon Stephen Dawson MLC

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT; DISABILITY SERVICES