



Waste Management Data & Information Management **Policy Statement**

PREPARED BY THE



MUNICIPAL WASTE ADVISORY COUNCIL
"Getting the Environment Right"

April 2010

Status of this Policy Statement

This Policy Statement has been prepared by the Municipal Waste Advisory Council and adopted by the Western Australian Local Government Association. The Municipal Waste Advisory Council is a standing committee of the WA Local Government Association with delegated authority to represent the Association in all matters relating to solid waste management.

The Municipal Waste Advisory Council has been formed through collaboration with Regional Councils who are not ordinary members of the WA Local Government Association. The resulting body effectively represents the views of all Local Government bodies responsible for waste management in Western Australia.

Policy Statements adopted by the WA Local Government Association represent a consolidated viewpoint from local government and may differ from the positions adopted by individual member organisations. The Municipal Waste Advisory Council and the WA Local Government Association will strive to promote this Policy Statement and to act consistently with its contents. Individual Local Governments and Regional Councils are encouraged to support them in this but are not bound by the document.

Policy Statements adopted by the WA Local Government Association are reviewed and new Policy Statements are developed regularly. The latest WA Local Government Association Policy Statements can be obtained from the website: www.wastenet.net.au

In-line with standard MWAC policy, this policy statement will be reviewed 6-months after its endorsement by the State Council. It will be reviewed again at least every 2-years subsequent to this; with any significant developments acting to instigate an earlier review.

The Municipal Waste Advisory Council's member organisations are:

City of Geraldton-Greenough

East Metropolitan Regional Council

Mindarie Regional Council

Rivers Regional Council

Southern Metropolitan Regional Council

Western Australian Local Government Association

Western Metropolitan Regional Council

Policy Statement on Waste Management Data & Information Management

Title:	WA Local Government Association Draft Policy Statement on Waste Management Data & Information Management – April 2010
Scope of Policy:	<p>This Policy Statement is intended to outline the WA Local Government Association (the Association) position on waste management data & information management.</p> <p>This Policy Statement covers data collection, reporting, review and audit, usage and retention.</p> <p>It is intended that this Policy Statement should identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The importance of consistent waste management data; ▪ The constraints on Local Government in producing data; ▪ Sector responsibility in regards to waste management data; and ▪ Key issues to be pursued in order to ensure reliable data.
Background of Policy:	<p>A background paper has been developed as a companion document to be read in conjunction with this policy statement. This paper is available online at http://www.wastenet.net.au/.</p>
Statement of Policy:	<p>Data Collection and Reporting</p> <p>1. Considerations for Data Collection</p> <p>a. Assessing when new data collection should be considered</p> <p>The following points should be considered before starting a new data collection process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What base data is already available? ▪ What is the primary function for the data collected? ▪ Who is the target audience for the data collected? ▪ Will the data become historic (ongoing), or is it a one off collection? ▪ Is the data collected consistent with other jurisdictions and is it transferable between jurisdictions? ▪ Is there funding available from national, state and local levels to assist the collection process? ▪ Are there any barriers to obtaining consistent data? <p>b. Support for data provision</p> <p>Local Government supports the provision of data to aid in effective decision making. Industry looks to State Government as a reliable source of data and information in order to undertake research and feasibility studies into waste management infrastructure investment. Without good data collection decision making is hindered substantially.</p> <p>Local Government is generally a good source of waste management data especially in the arenas of recycling, waste management and Alternative</p>

	<p>Waste Treatment facilities. Consideration needs to be given to who else is collecting the same data and how readily available it is.</p> <p>c. Understanding the metadata Local Government supports investigation, understanding and use of metadata. Understanding metadata is valuable as it provides insight into the potential limitations and best uses of the data.</p> <p>d. Support for resourced data collection Due to the demand on resources, and the inconsistent collection methods across the sector, Local Government recognises the need for funding to assist in setting up a scheme to aid the collection of reliable data.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to the following prior to the commencement of a data scheme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What funding and resources are available to assist waste management data collection? ▪ Where should funding for data collection come from national, state and local levels? ▪ Will the funding be ongoing or one-off? <p>2. Appropriate data reporting entity Local Government supports investigation into the identification of the best placed agency to report and collect Local Government waste management data. Local Government is impacted by multiple demands for waste management data, and recognises the need for an investigation into reporting times and whether or not legislative reporting requirements can be coordinated.</p> <p>Data Review and Audit Comprehensive data review and auditing to ensure accuracy</p> <p>3. Data Accuracy Local Government recognises the importance of having some knowledge of the data collection process and the audit process in order to verify whether the data is acceptable for the intended purpose. A certain degree of error is permissible in data collection however users of the data need to know that the data is sufficiently accurate for their purposes.</p> <p>Data Usage</p> <p>4. Support for information sharing Local Government supports data sharing and has a commitment to publicising findings. However, the protection of an original data source and intellectual property need to be considered prior to the release of any data.</p> <p>5. Support for evidence-based decision making Accurate data is essential for monitoring the movements of waste through the many processes it undergoes. Local Government supports the use of waste management data to inform government decisions and policy. The consistency and reliability of this data will influence decisions made.</p>
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	<p>Data Retention</p> <p>6. Support for long-term data management</p> <p>Local Government supports the long-term accessibility of waste management data. The storage and maintenance of data should be able to be available by the public and industry, and maintained by a central agency not affected by funding limits and changes to government.</p> <p>Once a record has been created the following should be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Duty of care – requirement of law; ▪ Evidentiary reason – record reliability; ▪ Disaster recovery – is there a disaster recovery program in existence; ▪ Historical value – what is the real or potential historic value of the record; and ▪ Responsibility – multi layered records retention framework.
Date of Adoption:	April 2010
Associated Policies and Documents:	
Definitions:	<p>Confidence intervals – is a particular kind of interval estimate of a population parameter. Instead of estimating the parameter by a single value, an interval likely to include the parameter is given. Thus, confidence intervals are used to indicate the reliability of an estimate.</p> <p>Data - A series of observations, measurements, information or facts from which conclusions may be drawn.</p> <p>Metadata – Metadata is structured information that describes, explains, locates, or otherwise makes it easier to retrieve, use, or manage an information resource. Metadata is often called data about data or information about information. Metadata is used to facilitate the understanding, characteristics, and management of data (data about other data). A metadata record consists of a number of pre-defined elements representing specific attributes of a resource. Metadata is found in many formats, library cataloguing is possibly the most commonly know example of metadata. ¹</p>
Reference:	National Information Standards Organization 2004 <i>Understanding Metadata</i>
	End of Policy Statement

¹ National Information Standards Organization 2004 *Understanding Metadata*