



We have been fielding some questions about our operating hours and I thought I would clear it up. Some people have thought that we have recently been granted an extension to our operating hours at Crisps Creek and Woodlawn. This is not the case. Everything continues as normal.

Our Crisps Creek Environment Protection Licence operational hours, which are between 6.00am and 10.00pm, 6 days a week have been the same since 2018, when licence hours were updated to be in line with the 2012 approved planning approval for increasing local and Sydney-sourced waste.

The increase in operating hours was to accommodate a second train in the event of an incident that prevented it from getting to Tarago to deliver the approved tonnage on time. We were only running one train at the time. The extra hours agreed to in 2012 were to ensure that if trains were late, or there were any hold ups during the day, we would have enough time to manage the waste that arrived on that day.

However, even though we can start operating at 6.00am we chose at the time, in consultation with the local community, to maintain our normal starting time of 7.00am and we continue this today. On a normal day, with everything going as planned, the trains are usually empty by 3.00pm and by the time we finish the tipping, compacting and covering the waste it is usually about 4.30pm to 5.00pm.

Another question in relation to this was around a third train. There is no plan for a third train from Sydney as two trains are enough to manage our approved volumes from Sydney of 900,000t per annum.

ENERGY FROM WASTE

With Western Australia just months away from launching Australia's first two energy from waste facilities,^{1,2} and another approved in Victoria, we felt it would be timely to address the role that the Woodlawn ARC and more broadly energy from waste facilities will play in Australia's future circular economy.

Once these WA facilities go live it will allow Australians to have a first hand view of modern energy from waste plants in action. We are confident that this will dispel many of the myths and concerns about their impacts.

So why are energy from waste facilities so important for Australia and what do they bring to a circular economy? Let's start with perhaps the least talked about part of the ARC package, the energy it and other EFW plants produce.

At the time of writing, the Sydney Morning Herald has just reported that there is an urgent need to turbocharge green energy projects if we are to meet the 2030 renewable energy targets set by the Federal Government³. There is considerable concern that, as coal fired power stations

go offline, we won't have enough batteries in place to provide energy to the grid when it is under pressure for long periods of more than twelve hours and dispatchable power is needed (4).

The ARC and other energy from waste facilities are perfectly placed to step into this space as they produce power 24/7. They provide consistent baseload power to support the grid especially when it comes under pressure through heavy use, such as during heatwaves. The ARC, by itself, will consistently produce enough electricity to power 40,000 homes (5).

The other side of the sustainability coin is the waste the ARC uses to generate that power. A core part of the NSW and Federal governments' circular economy targets (6) is to divert as much waste away from landfill as possible. If the ARC gets up and running it will divert 380,000 tonnes of household waste away from landfill, the equivalent of 172 Olympic sized swimming pools (7). At the same time, it will recover metals for recycling and the bottom ash can be converted to be used in road base.

By keeping waste out of landfill, recovering formerly unrecoverable resources for recycling, and through making use of the ash as a constituent for road base (8) and potentially other useful products, the ARC will play a key role in our future circular economy – and so will Tarago.

With the inclusion of the ARC in the Eco Precinct we will see a rise in jobs, and opportunities for locals to expand the in-demand skills of the future in energy recovery facilities. While Sydney's rapidly growing population and a second airport will see its last green spaces consumed by rapidly growing suburbs, Tarago's rural landscape will remain while an entirely new, sustainable economy grows within the boundaries of Woodlawn.

Alvin Stone

- 1 East Rockingham Waste to Energy <https://erwte.com.au/>
- 2 Kwinana Waste to Energy <https://avertas.com.au/>
- 3 Grid needs more clean energy than federal scheme will deliver <https://www.smh.com.au/business/the-economy/grid-needs-more-clean-energy-than-federal-scheme-will-deliver-20240311-p5fbdk.html>
- 4 Not enough droughts and hefty network charges: the big barriers to grid storage (RenewEconomy) <https://reneweconomy.com.au/not-enough-droughts-and-hefty-network-charges-the-big-barriers-to-grid-storage/>
- 5 Woodlawn Advanced Energy Recovery Centre <https://www.veolia.com/anz/our-facilities/energy-from-waste/woodlawn>
- 6 Federal National Waste Policy Action Plan signed up by all States - 80% resources recovered from waste <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/protection/waste/publications/national-waste-policy-action-plan#>
- 7 Woodlawn Advanced Energy Recovery Centre <https://www.veolia.com/anz/our-facilities/energy-from-waste/woodlawn>
- 8 Woodlawn Advanced Energy Recovery Centre FAQs <https://www.veolia.com/anz/our-facilities/energy-from-waste/woodlawn/frequently-asked-questions>