

Estimates Committee 2012
Questions Taken On Notice

(12/06/2012 to 21/06/2012)

Date: 14/06/2012

Output:

Sub Output:

Subject: Cost estimate to accredit dumps

From: Mr Willem Westra van Holthe to Hon Malarndirri McCarthy
Local Government and Regional Services

5-7

Question: On a council-by-council basis, what are the cost estimates to bring the tips that are not accredited up to accreditation standard?

Answer:

Answered On:

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

Questions Taken on Notice

Date: 14 June 2012 Output Group: Local Government, Regional and Community Services

Output: Local Government

Subject: Refuse tips operated by councils

From: Mr Westra van Holthe MLA To: Hon Malarndirri McCarthy MLA
Department of Housing, Local Government and Regional Services

Number: 5.07

Question: On a council-by-council basis, what are the cost estimates to bring the tips that are not accredited up to accreditation standard?

Answer:

The *Waste Management and Pollution Control Act* requires that premises operating for the disposal of waste by burial servicing more than 1000 persons must be licensed.

There are a number of shire councils with communities greater than or approaching 1000 people currently operating a landfill without a licence. These include: Ngukurr, Mililingimbi, Maningrida, Gunbalanya, Gapuwiyak, Tennant Creek and Galiwinku.

Licence applications have been received from several of these communities and are being processed by the Department of Natural Resources, Environment, the Arts and Sport (NRETAS). NRETAS is also in discussions with shire councils with regard to the licensing requirements for the remaining facilities.

The licensing of facilities storing or disposing listed wastes depends on how those wastes are received and what charges, if any, are applied. To assist licensees with their legislative requirements, NRETAS has adopted a continuous improvement approach to the licensing requirements of landfills. This approach recognises the time and cost associated with improved environmental management and seeks to condition licences in a manner that enables licensees to improve environmental management over the course of several licences. A licence is typically for two years.

Each shire and landfill may face a range of challenges associated with environment and human health risks. Shire councils are simultaneously considering short term costs of improving certain aspects of environmental management, such as improving the storage, transportation and treatment of waste in operating landfills, while also considering long-term costs of the relocation to an appropriate site. In this context it is not possible to provide a total cost for each shire, per landfill, to bring landfills up to a particular designated standard.

For communities with populations substantially less than 1000 people, the Local Government Association of the Northern Territory, in consultation with NRETAS, developed best practice guidelines to assist with waste management in small and remote communities.

