



MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

Government in apparent political rush to finalise CPRS

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA – Thursday, 12 March 2009: The Australian Landfill Owners Association (ALOIA) said today that it is disappointed at the Government's apparent need to rush through the CPRS legislation sacrificing consistency between the CPRS legislation and its accompanying commentary.

Both the CPRS draft legislation, and its accompanying commentary state clearly that once a landfill emits 25,000 tonnes or more of CO_{2eq} it will be included in the scheme. The draft legislation goes on to say that if "at any time during the eligible financial year, the landfill facility is within the prescribed distance of another landfill facility that is open for the acceptance of waste" its threshold for inclusion will be 10, 000 tonnes of CO_{2eq}.

However the accompanying commentary contravenes this, stipulating that the two landfills within a prescribed distance of one another need to be "competing landfills accepting the same classification of waste."

ALOIA spokesman Max Spedding said, "It is apparent that there is a rush to finalise this legislation and this has come at the expense of sound and consistent policy."

"Buried in the 392 pages of draft CPRS legislation there is a ticking time bomb for the landfill industry. It seems as if the nine months of consultation our industry has had with the Department of Climate Change has been largely ignored"

ALOIA is also concerned about the issues associated with measurement techniques which have not been addressed by the Government. Current world's best practice techniques for measuring the amount of methane gas emanating from landfill had a significant margin of error of +/- 30 per cent.

Spedding said, "The methodology of estimating green house gas emissions from landfills is still out".

Experts within the landfill industry believe it will take at least three years until measurement techniques are refined to a point where that margin of error can be driven down.

"By 2012, we should be able to accurately measure the greenhouse gas from landfills", Spedding said.

But until that methodology is proven there is no way of accurately knowing whether estimates are too high or too low, compromising the effectiveness of the scheme, and potentially unfairly penalising every man woman and child in Australia who generates waste.

ALOIA is also calling for legacy waste emissions to be fully excluded from the CPRS rather than partially excluded as proposed in the draft legislation.

Depending on climate conditions, organic material deposited in a landfill can take up to 50 years to fully decompose generating green house gas emissions throughout that period requiring the purchase of permits for emissions from this legacy waste means taxing current landfill users for emissions produced by decades of previous users.

“The inclusion of legacy waste emissions in the CPRS is akin to charging households today for the electricity generated for use by our parents. Owners of individual landfills could be stung with a carbon tax in the order of tens of millions of dollars each year as of 2018, without any revenue stream to pass on the costs.”

Some operators that cannot afford to pay will ultimately be forced out of business, sending their employees to straight to the dole queue.

ALOA said recently that it supports the Australian Industry Group’s call to suspend the start of the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme until 2012.

Media contact:

Max Spedding, ALOA, 0400 880 677

Josh Levin, 0412 533 382

About ALOA:

The Australian Landfill Owners Association (ALOA) is an incorporated entity comprising landfill owners across Australia sharing a concern for the future viabilities of the environment and their businesses.

Members of the Association receive and manage over half of the total solid waste generated in Australia. They provide services in waste disposal, waste treatment and resource recovery and employ over 12,000 people.

ALOA members operate a vast number of landfills across Australia and receive over 12 million tonnes of solid waste. These landfills employ state of the art technology to minimise any environmental impacts and generally capture methane generated by the decomposing waste to produce renewable electricity.