

WASTE DISPOSAL - COMPOSTING

5541. Hon Paul Llewellyn to the Parliamentary Secretary representing the Minister for the Environment

I refer to the Government's promise to 'implement new standards for compost derived from municipal waste' on page 10 of Labor Plan for our Environment, and ask -

- (1) Given that these standards will be vital for the community to have any faith in the compost product -
  - (a) when will they be released; and
  - (b) when and how will they be implemented?
- (2) What level of Government/Waste Management Board funding has been provided to 'develop markets for waste-derived compost' in Western Australia?
- (3) What markets have been developed as a result of these grants?
- (4) How have other local Government bodies/Government and industry benefited from this expenditure?
- (5) Given the level of Government expenditure, when will a peer reviewed, full scientific study of the compost trials and the market outcomes be released by the Government?

Hon SALLY TALBOT replied:

- (1)
  - (a) A draft interim Standard for Organics Applied to Land was released for public comment in July 2006. The Standard is being reviewed based on further investigation and consideration of submissions received during the comment period.
  - (b) The Government will consult with stakeholders on the best way to implement the Standard, once the review has been conducted and the Standard published.
- (2) One grant of \$800,000 over three years has been allocated from the Waste Management and Recycling Account specifically for a "Compost Market Development Project" for waste-derived compost, conducted by the Southern Metropolitan Regional Council.
- (3) It is understood that the Southern Metropolitan Regional Council has entered into a contract with a third party for the further development of markets for the use of waste-derived compost from its facility. The exact nature of this contract is commercially confidential.  
  
The Government remains committed to the development of markets for compost derived from all sources, and is actively engaging with industry in fulfilling that objective.
- (4) A comprehensive report entitled "Compost Market Development Project for Municipal Solid Waste" was prepared as part of the funding provided to the Southern Metropolitan Regional Council. This report includes detailed cost-benefit analyses for a range of applications. The report is available to compost manufacturers, including industry and local government, to use in their business planning and market development activities.
- (5) The project was managed by a highly qualified and independent consultant, and overseen by a steering committee that included Western Australian experts in the field of use of compost in agriculture. The results of the study were consistent with similar studies completed and currently in progress elsewhere. It is not considered necessary that a peer review be conducted at this time.