



RENEWABLE PROCESSES Pty Ltd  
Block 2022 Parkwood Recycling Estate  
Parkwood Road Macgregor ACT 2615  
3 rd June, 2011

Chairman of select committee on Estimates 2011-2012  
Mr. Brendan Smyth MLA  
Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Dear Mr Smyth,

We are writing to you as chairman of the appropriations committee to explain the situation we find our company in. We understand that the issue of recycling has been brought up in senate estimates. We have read the Hansard and write to clarify some issues.

Four years ago we ( Julian Purcell and Neris Pilka) approached the ACT Government, specifically ACT NO WASTE with the idea of recycling e-waste locally here in the ACT. Chris Horsly then head of ACT No Waste was kind enough to meet with us and was very encouraging of the idea. Explaining to us that there was plenty of e-waste coming into the Mugga and Mitchell refuge station, no formal arrangements were in place to dispose of this e-waste but the ACT government was paying Simms metal group in Sydney to take the Waste. At that point we applied to lease the large green shed at the end of the Parkwood Road Recycling Precendent to establish an e-waste recycling facility. Even though the green shed would have been ideal to recycle e-waste and had been empty for a long time ACT No Waste would not lease it to us say that they might need it in the future.

Even though we did not get the green shed, encouraged by Chris Horsly we pushed on and leased a vacant block in Parkwood which we had to clear and construct buildings before we could even start building the machinery to carry out the recycling. This set us back greatly in terms of time and finances.

We established Renewable Processes and started developing unique processes for handling e-waste. From the very beginning we did not want to be like the majority of

recyclers in Australia and just dismantle, shred and export overseas. We were misled by No-waste claims that they wanted to be the leading state or territory in Australia in the area of recycling. We were also given the impression that we would be given quantities of e-waste to process to help us develop our plant and that we would be supported by the ACT Government.

Over the past three years Julian and I have invested just under \$1,000,000.00 dollars of our own money and tens of thousands of hours in setting up our recycling plant which would be undoubtedly the most advanced and innovative e-waste recycling plant in Australia. We did receive an ICON dollar for dollar grant for \$25,000.00 which was greatly appreciated.

What we have needed is a steady flow of work, we have had great letters and media realises from the former chief minister. We have had various delegations from ACT No-Waste and the federal committee for stewardship do tours of our facility and received nothing but praise for what we have achieved. We have had the directors of Sims and Tess-Amm visit our facility and want to work with us and eventually do work for them. We have had a delegation from SERRROC (about 20 people) which is the group of 16 councils from southern NSW and they want to set up trials in their own shires using our processes.

In August 2009 the ACT government decided to put the recycling of computer e-waste out to tender this was a public tender and advertised Australia wide. This tender was awarded to Tess-Amm a Singaporean company that basically only has storage facilities in Australia. At the de brief that we requested they said that we did not lose the tender on price but in their opinion we were not ready, yet the selection committee did not even visit our plant. We asked if we could at least get some work especially as we were employing disadvantaged workers from the Salvation Army. We were told this was not possible as the contract was let. But that the contract was only for a year and we would be given a chance and considered very favorable in February 2011. After February we asked about the Contract with Tes-Amm but we can not get an answer.

Because of the drought and the floods in Queanbeyan the little work we were getting from councils in southern NSW dried up and we had to let the Salvation Army workers go.

In the begging of 2010 when televisions were banned from landfill, the ACT government did not even give us a chance to do the work they just tacked it onto the

Tess-Amm contract. After a few months Tess-Amm informed No –Waste that they could not keep doing the recycling of TV's as it wasn't profitable. We were still not contacted to see if we could do the work, presumably they just paid Tess-Amm what they asked. In September 2010 we were informed that an expression of interest to recycle the televisions would be sought. The expression of interest would be sought only locally but including Tess-Amm. We were told the whole process would take 3 to 4 weeks. We were led to believe that we had a better than good opportunity to get the work. We obtained some work from Wollongong and Newcastle, so in conjunction with Nexus employed 15 disadvantaged workers with the knowledge that in about 4 weeks we would be getting work from the ACT Government.

We submitted our tender in October 2010 and were told a decision would be made in a month. After 3 months we still had not heard anything. Then Chris Ware on a visit to our plant with members of the Stewardship committee informed us confidentially that we would be very pleased with the out come of the tender, that was March 2011, in April we were informed that we came second in the tender and the contract had been awarded to MRI a Sydney company who virtually passes on or exports every thing they collect. Ringing Chris Ware to find out what had gone wrong I was informed that we would get more work than we could handle and not to worry. My partner Julian was given the same assurance. Pursuing the mater. I was given the same assurance from two other people from no waste but nobody would commit it in writing.

Another two and half months has gone by and we still haven't heard anything. It has been over 8 months since we honestly, but stupidly believed we would be getting some work from the ACT government. We have been ringing procurement ever week to check what's happening. If we were told back in September 2010 that no decision would be made for at least 8 months we would have taken appropriate measures not to end up in this situation but every time we enquired we were told a decision was imminent.

What we are pleading for is to get some work immediately. We know that ACT No –Waste has the capability to do this. A while back Tess-Amm decided that about 18 tons of e-waste was too badly damaged and they refused to recycle it. ACT No-Waste rang us and asked if we could help then out as they couldn't find any body to take it. To help them out and prove our selves we took the e-waste, it was not a very profitable exercise for us but we were hoping to get more work.

From the very first conception we had of the recycling of the e-waste it has been my desire to help out and employ the less fortunate in our work force and we have always employed the disadvantaged using the Salvation Army and Nexus. We believed that this might be taken into consideration and help us get some work, especially when the then Chief Minister Mr Stanhope announced on the 10<sup>th</sup> June 2010 that all tenders in the ACT must take social enterprises into consideration. The tender for the recycling of TV's was not put out till September 2010.

Our vision for the company has been to set up an example for the rest of the nation to use the resources from e-waste instead of exporting overseas. To keep work and money locally, to reduce greenhouse gasses by eliminating the transport of waste all around the country and overseas. We believe that the processes and products we have developed could be used throughout Australia creating tens of thousands of jobs and keeping billions of dollars in the Australian economy.

Yours truly,

Neris Pilka