

Since lodging the application to extend the Melbourne Regional Landfill (MRL), a number of statements have been made in mainstream media and state parliament. Many of these statements have been factually incorrect and based on misinformation.

To correct the record, Cleanaway has addressed these issues below:

The need for the MRL:

Melbourne is one of the fastest growing Australian cities. Just as investments in other significant infrastructure support this rapid growth, like roads and public transport, the MRL meets a critical infrastructure need, to deal with the city's ever-increasing residual waste today, and for the long term.

Even with improved recycling rates, there is a need for residual waste to be managed safely and effectively.

The application process:

On 29 February 2016, Cleanaway lodged a Planning Permit application with Melton Council and a Works Approval application with the Victorian Environment Protection Authority (EPA) seeking approvals to extend the footprint of its operations.

The planning approval and call-in process gives local residents and interested parties the opportunity to make submissions in relation to the proposal, and we're required to meet a number of regulatory requirements as part of the process. Importantly, local residents have every opportunity to learn about the application and how the site will work.

The size of the Landfill:

The MRL is being extended not expanded. This means that the operational face of the landfill (the cell) will never increase in size from what it is today. A single cell is approximately 13 hectares in size, which takes up to two years to fill. At any point in time, the actual operating landfill site is approximately the size of a swimming pool. It is the only area where waste is exposed, and is covered over each day.

Landfill future:

The extension application for the MRL is to gain approvals needed for an additional 30 years of land filling at the site. This application seeks permission for Cleanaway to fill more of the void left by Boral's quarrying activities, over a longer period of time.

The use of landfill levies:

Landfill levies provide incentive for diversion of waste from landfills. All landfill levies are paid into the Environment Protection Fund and the money is distributed in accordance with the Environment Protection (Distribution of Landfill Levy) Regulations 2010. Levy funds are shared between regional

waste management groups (RWMGs), Sustainability Victoria, and the EPA. Levy funds are also allocated by the Premier and the Minister for Environment and Climate Change through the [Sustainability Fund](#) ([Sustainability Victoria](#)).

Odour and environmental management:

Unlike traditional 'tips' of yesterday, the MRL is a highly engineered and highly regulated facility.

The landfill safely manages household and business waste that cannot be recycled.

We invest significant resources including environmental specialists, engineers and highly experienced staff to ensure the site operates to the highest environmental standards, with the aim of having zero impact on the community.

We also work closely with an EPA appointed Environmental Auditor to collect all required groundwater samples and information for regular assessment. The sampling results are independently assessed and no impact to the quality of local groundwater quality have been identified to date.

The environmental performance of the MRL is reported annually as part of our Annual Performance Statement (APS) which is publically available on the Victorian EPA website. www.epa.vic.gov.au

Health and safety:

A well-run facility like MRL poses no health risks to local residents, animals or the environment. The MRL does not accept asbestos.

Cleanaway has made a number of operational improvements to the site since taking ownership last year and we deploy world class technologies to safely and effectively manage waste which cannot be recycled.

Cleanaway has stringent processes in place to ensure MRL only accepts waste that is defined in our EPA Licence No 12160. Acceptable and licenced waste types include household waste, solid inert waste and shredded tyres. The site is also licenced to receive category C soil such as excavated material from building sites.

However, before accepting category C soil, this material is assessed and an independent NATA accredited report is undertaken and checked by our environmental team to ensure the soil material meets strict criteria. Each load is transported and disposed of under an EPA transport certificate.

MRL is also approved by the Australian Commonwealth Government Department of Agriculture to accept quarantine wastes such as food from international flights landing at Tullamarine Airport, and waste packaging from ships at the Port of Melbourne. This type of waste is safely managed via deep burial into defined pits in the active landfill cell.

Renewable energy at the site:

Landfill gas is produced as a natural product of decomposition. Through the use of leading technology, we are now producing renewable energy from the methane gas we extract from the landfill cell. We currently produce enough energy to power 4,000 homes, and will soon double that capacity this coming financial year.

Remediation and rehabilitation of the site:

Over time, the MRL will be rehabilitated to become a valuable community asset for generations to come through the provision of large tracts of public space – space that would otherwise remain a large, unused quarry. For every tonne deposited into the landfill, Cleanaway has put away additional funds to cover the costs of future remediation of the site.

Suspension of the MRL CCG, following the resignation of the independent facilitator:

At the last Melbourne Regional Landfill community consultation group (MRLCCG) meeting held on 26 May 2016, the facilitator announced her resignation from the post. The facilitator cited concerns about the extent to which the rules of engagement for these meetings were being observed.

Given the importance of having an independent facilitator to chair these meetings, Cleanaway made the decision to put them on hold until a new facilitator is appointed. We are currently undertaking an independent review of these meetings and we are committed to the appointment of a new facilitator at the earliest opportunity.

We are committed to encouraging broader community participation in the new MRLCCG through an expression of interest process to be publically promoted in due course.

EPA's Pollution Abatement Notice (PAN), issued to Cleanaway on 7 June, 2016:

Since our acquisition of the Ravenhall site in March 2015, Cleanaway has undertaken significant improvements including an overhaul of the old infrastructure. We've doubled the recovery of gas for renewable energy that today can power up to 4,000 homes.

Cleanaway is in the final stages of implementing a clear plan to bring the pre-existing gas infrastructure up to world class standards and we're working closely with the EPA to that end, given the critical role the Melbourne Regional Landfill plays in managing Melbourne's waste needs as the population grows.

As the EPA indicated, the location of the gas bores and relevant buffer zones mean current gas levels provide no cause for community concern.

Community engagement:

Cleanaway has introduced a range of initiatives designed to keep the local residents and business owners informed about our operations and our future plans. These include:

- The introduction of a 24-hour community hotline – **1800 213 753**
- Launching the Fill Facts website to assist the community's understanding of the Melbourne Regional Landfill: **www.fillfacts.com.au**
- The construction of a **Community Information Centre** at the Ravenhall site

- Hosting eleven public information sessions with site tours of the landfill in February 2016, prior to lodging our planning application.
- Hosting community consultation group meetings - **Melbourne Regional Landfill Community Consultation Group (MRLCCG)**, consisting of residents and representatives from Stop the Tip, the EPA, and Brimbank and Melton Councils. Cleanaway will advertise an Expression of Interest to reinstate these meetings as quickly as possible.
- Hosting a large number of local school visits to assist student's understanding of waste management, the role of landfills and the importance of recycling.

If you have further questions please email Olga.Ghiri@Cleanaway.com.au OR for media enquiries contact Melissa McColl, on 0466 323 844.