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Directors
Recovered Energy Australia
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By email

18 August 2019

Dear Directors,

Re. Peer review of community engagement program for the REA Residual Waste Gasification to Energy Project

I have undertaken a review of the engagement plan and activities for the project and I am confident that the approach adopted and the activities conducted are consistent with the best practices of the professional engagement practitioner community.

I note that the EPA has specifically drawn your attention to submissions it has received. I have looked through these submissions:

- Of the 40-odd submissions received 11 are supportive; 25 have raised issues, while four (4) were neither for nor against.
- Of the 25 submissions identifying issues, 11 are of a standard format as are 3 of the 11 supporting submissions. While the 'organised' nature of these does not discount the matters raised it does diminish the perception of both the level of dissatisfaction and support.
- Similarly, the change.org petition has 43 signatures in support of issues, some of which appear emotive and factually incorrect. Also, only 15 were clearly residents of the west, many the others are from undisclosed areas, interstate or overseas.

It is my view that the issues raised in these submissions have been adequately addressed and that the additional work REA's Environmental Specialist is undertaking – of your own volition – should provide even further reassurance to those persons who have raised these issues.

In reviewing your engagement effort I believe it is also worth noting that:

- The nature of the site originally led you to view this as predominantly a stakeholder engagement, not a community engagement. While I think you are right in this assumption, I have empathy with the EPA's need to ensure comprehensive community and stakeholder consultation and I note that you have responded accordingly and thoroughly. Notable examples of the success of your efforts are particularly evident in the creation of the facility model and its year-long display at the Eco-Living Centre and the respectful and supportive relationship you have established with the Western Region Environment Centre.
- It is important not to draw invalid conclusions. For instance, a lack of response can be as indicative of acceptance with the project as of dissatisfaction with it. What is important is to ensure that you have taken the necessary and appropriate actions to ensure sufficient 'reach' – in this instance I believe that you have done and continue to do so.

The paradigm by which we engage community continues to change. In part this is why the EPA, rightly, insists on a comprehensive engagement approach that prioritises addressing community concerns.

My company has completed tasks with EPA involvement and we have always maintained a respectful and harmonious relationship, built on our recognition of the challenges of the work they do.

It is my assessment that the engagement efforts you have undertaken for this project, which have involved many community and stakeholder interactions, have ensured that community concerns have been and can continue to be addressed. This is a conclusion I am happy to discuss with the EPA, should they wish.

If you need any further elaboration please do not hesitate to be in touch.

Yours Faithfully,



Mick Maguire
Managing Director

