

Mr Peter Weickhardt
Commissioner
Productivity Commission
LB2 Collins Street East
MELBOURNE VIC 8003

31 January 2006

Good afternoon Mr. Weickhardt,

RE: Inquiry into Waste Generation and Resource Efficiency

Kennedy's is pleased to provide this expression of interest and intention to provide a detailed submission. We highly commend the Government for initiating a public hearing on this very serious and important topic.

Kennedy's have been involved in the timber industry for over 80 years and since 1995 we have specialized in recycling, developing expertise in deconstruction and reprocessing of redundant timber structures and supplying an expanding, niche market with a range of high-value construction products. We are currently in the process of establishing an integrated waste transfer station and wood processing facility at Narangba north of Brisbane on 32,000 square metre heavy industry site. Further, we have provided leadership and support in a range of relevant research projects in collaboration with a range of State and Local Government departments.

From our experience in the timber recycling sector we are well placed to provide a detailed insight to the impediments to efficient management of waste. Whilst our detailed submission will cover a broad range of topics some key areas are as follows:

- time pressure on demolition and development projects-

- poor record keeping by local government authorities on issuing of demolition permits;
- no compulsory audit required for demolition projects- considerable volumes of recyclable materials are sent to landfill sites without consideration of their potential for re-use;
- low land-fill fees- there is no dis-incentive to the land-fill option, especially in Queensland,
- Lack of dedicated sorting facilities to separate various re-useable items;
- poor understanding of classification of wood waste- many organizations have an irrational fear of re-using wood or allowing their redundant wood resource to be recycled, There needs to be a systematic, quantifiable method to determine whether wood waste presents a risk to humans or the environment. Studies in the US determined that wood recycled from Army barracks posed no health risks (e.g. from lead-based paint exposure) during reprocessing or use. Similar studies are lacking for Australian situations, resulting in high volumes, of wood being diverted to land-fill sites rather than being considered for re-use;
- no incentives to classify wood waste-
- lack of appropriate environmental certification of recycled products-

We look forward to providing the detailed submission in the near future and to discuss this submission in the public hearing in Brisbane.

Best regards

Michael Kennedy
General Manager