

Better data supports low waste future for Queensland

Case Study:

Department of Environment & Science (DES), Queensland State Government, Australia.



Challenge: To provide quality data to enable informed environmental policy and planning.

Solution: Leveraging an existing software platform to establish the Queensland Waste Data System (QWDS).

Outcome: Waste reform strategies implemented and underpinned by sound data relating to waste generation, treatment, disposal and resource recovery.

Changing nature of waste

The nature of waste has changed. More complex goods are now a significant component of materials disposed of in landfill. The changing nature of waste provides serious challenges to the recovery and reuse of materials from discarded products.

To answer these challenges and more, the Australian federal government developed a national waste policy which aims to:

- Avoid the generation of waste, reduce the amount of waste (including hazardous waste) for disposal.
- Manage waste as a resource.
- Ensure that waste treatment, disposal, recovery and re-use is undertaken in a safe, scientific and environmentally sound manner, and
- Contribute to the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, energy conservation and production, water efficiency and the productivity of the land.

Vision for a healthy and resilient environment

At a state level, Queensland's Department of Environment & Science (Previously the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection) is responsible for managing the health of Queensland's environment by protecting the state's unique ecosystems, including its landscapes and waterways, as well as its native plants, animals and biodiversity. DES's environmental management focuses on avoiding, minimising or mitigating impacts to the environment by developing and coordinating policy, planning, legislative frameworks and regulatory enforcement. DES and Queensland's Waste Industry are progressing a draft waste strategy which has a vision that Queensland will become a national leader in avoiding unnecessary consumption and waste generation, adopting innovative resource recovery approaches, and managing all products and materials as valuable and finite resources.

An information platform to support policy aim

Underpinning both the aims of the National Waste Policy and functions of DES was the need to establish a readily accessible repository of extensive and accurate waste data. An DES and FINNZ team worked together to establish the Queensland Waste Data System (QWDS), leveraging the FINNZ-developed Queensland Waste Online Levy system as a foundation. Once established, QWDS enabled DES to meet both business and organisational objectives, establishing the information platform needed to support the development of policy, planning and implementation of waste sector strategies.

Case Study



At a system level, QWDS provides DES with a secure web-based system, enabling the collection of data from a variety of entities in the waste sector including waste generators, landfill operators and recyclers. It provides for both accurate and timely reporting alongside the ability to interrogate and analyse waste sector data.

QWDS has been designed to grow, as the data collection and reporting needs evolve over time. The system is architected in a way that allows for the growth in data providers, data users and the volume of data itself. This is important as it allows DES to continue to leverage their investment in a proven technology to answer wider waste sector objectives over time.

Enabling better waste management decisions

The successful implementation of the Queensland Waste Data System improves the quality and availability of waste and recycling data in Queensland. This enables the efficient capture and interrogation of information about resource recovery and waste generation, treatment and disposal.

Integrating online survey functionality enables the collection of more waste data from a wider group of waste sector entities. This provides a secure and reliable repository of waste data that these key stakeholders can rely on for measurement and performance against business or waste strategy targets.

QWDS also incorporates the waste data received since 2008, enabling all registered reporting entities to view their historical and trending data and assisting them in making their business decisions.

DES's vision is to report with confidence on Queensland's waste related performance, against statutory reporting obligations. The development of the Queensland Waste Data System is one of the tools that supports the accuracy of future State of Waste and Recycling in Queensland reports, and ultimately contributes to the state's low waste future.

About FINNZ

FINNZ are business systems experts, providing services to organisations involved in managing and protecting our environment, natural resources, and heritage.

We help organisations implement new initiatives in their business, from providing strategic advice at the beginning of the project through to building, delivering and managing business systems.

Customers work with us because we have a unique ability to understand the real-world implications of challenging policy and legislative frameworks.

FINNZ have the right mix of people, skills and experience to deliver tangible, cost-effective solutions. We make it real.



It all starts with a conversation, get in touch today!

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