



GREATER WHITSUNDAY
COUNCIL OF MAYORS *powering Australia*

Media Release:

Councils combine for waste study tour

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The Greater Whitsunday Council of Mayors will seize an opportunity to learn from the world's best practices when it comes to waste management.

The regional body, involving mayors and CEOs from Whitsunday, Isaac and Mackay, has agreed to participate in the Local Government Association of Queensland's International Zero Waste Study Tour.

Whitsunday Regional Council CEO Barry Omundson will represent the Greater Whitsunday Councils of Mayors on the tour, which will visit key waste sites in Europe and the United States from August 24 to September 8.

Mr Omundson will share outcomes of the tour and associated industry workshops with the three regional councils.

The tour coincides with a changing environment for treatment of waste in Queensland, including the release of the Queensland Government's Transforming Queensland's Recycling and Waste Industry Directions Paper.

It proposes directions focusing on alternative solutions, including waste to energy options.

Chair of the Greater Whitsunday Council of Mayors, Isaac Mayor Anne Baker, said the tour was an opportunity not to be missed.

"Individually, for the councils, it is unlikely that the cost of just over \$25,000 would have been affordable," she said.

"But by joining together and sharing the costs at under \$9000 each, this is a great investment and another example of what can be achieved when the three regional councils work together."

Whitsunday Mayor Andrew Willcox said his council was supportive of providing the services of CEO Barry Omundson for the tour.



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He said given Mr Omundson's commercial background, including in the waste industry, he was considered the ideal person to attend.

"Whitsunday sees this as a chance to partner and gain a great outcome for our residents – something individually we would probably not have participated in."

The waste industry in Queensland is big business for councils and is transforming.

Mackay Mayor Greg Williamson said this was an important and fairly modest investment in terms of major waste costs for councils.

"Collectively, the three councils would have well over \$100 million of waste assets, so this is really a sound investment to learn from world best practices and bring options and savings back from the learnings," he said.

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