

MEDIA RELEASE

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State of the art machine boosts recycling on the MidCoast

Twenty thousand containers per day are currently diverted from landfill by the three-person team at the Return and Earn Depot at Tuncurry Waste Management Centre. A second state-of-the-art machine has doubled this capacity as the depot reopens to the public this week.

“Customers can expect their wait times to be slashed with the second machine. It instantly doubles our capacity,” Resource Recovery Australia Supervisor Joel Gordon said.

“Following the closure due to the public health orders, we expect to see high numbers of containers returned in the coming weeks.”

Local, not-for-profit, social enterprise Resource Recovery Australia (RRA), in partnership with Tomra Cleanaway and MidCoast Council, launched the second state-of-the-art singulator at the depot on Midge Orchid Road recently.

The investment in the second machine means the potential for extra jobs and better environmental outcomes.

“With community support, a second machine means more containers out of landfill and more green jobs for our local community,” Mr Gordon said.

The machine itself, a singulator, is designed and manufactured by Tomra, the technology provider for Return and Earn.

“The singulator machine amazes a lot of our customers,” Mr Gordon continued.

“It captures about 1GB of data per second, including information about the size and condition of every container and can process up to 100 containers a minute. This enables our team to provide on the spot refunds for large volumes of containers.”

“In our peak summer period, the second machine enables us to process over 100,000 containers per day.”

For the RRA team, improving the customer experience is only part of the story. The social enterprise turns #Waste2Wages, providing employment and training opportunities to locals experiencing barriers to employment.

“The Return and Earn program has provided six employment opportunities since it started in 2017,” Mr Gordon said.

“As well as machine operation and day-to-day maintenance, our team build real work skills including customer service, community engagement, forklift tickets, WHS and leadership skills.”

Recently, the Tuncurry Automated Depot clicked over 19.2 million containers processed.

“Community members can donate some or all of their containers to local charities including the RFS and Riding for the Disabled to help raise money for a range of local causes.”

Residential and commercial customers can visit the Tuncurry Automated Depot to return their eligible containers and receive their 10 cent refund, seven days per week. For safety, all customers and staff are required to wear a mask when visiting the Tuncurry Automated depot.

“We appreciate everyone adhering to COVID Safe practices, including wearing a mask and staying home if they are unwell,” Mr Gordon said.

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