

THE AUSTRALIAN PACKAGING COVENANT ORGANISATION

2020-21
Annual Report



Version 1: February 2022



Welcome

At APCO, our vision is to support government and our Members to build a packaging value chain which collaborates to keep packaging materials out of landfill, while maximising the value of materials, energy, and labour within the local economy.

This includes enabling industry and government to deliver Australia's 2025 National Packaging Targets, an important step on the pathway to a circular economy for Australia.

We help companies of all sizes on this journey by providing the insights, resources and programs to meet their customers' and governments' expectations.

This year's Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation Annual Report outlines:

- Australia's progress to delivering the 2025 National Packaging Targets.
- Our ongoing work and collaboration with industry and government.
- Continued growth of the Australasian Recycling Label Program.
- The introduction of the ANZPAC Plastics Pact to the region.
- Case studies from APCO Members' sustainable packaging journey.

Contents

1

Message from the Assistant Minister for Waste Reduction and Environmental Management

2

Our Board Chair and CEO Report

3

APCO's Leadership Team

4

2020-21 Highlights

5

Sustainable Programs

6

2020 APCO Awards

7

Government

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Acknowledgement of country:

APCO acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live and work in Australia. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging, and acknowledge the ongoing connection that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have with Australia's land and waters.

Message from the Assistant Minister for Waste Reduction and Environmental Management



The Hon Trevor Evans MP
Assistant Minister for Waste Reduction
and Environmental Management

Australians produce 74 million tonnes of waste per year – and the amount is rising as our population grows. Collectively we can, and must, do more to reduce the amount of packaging waste entering landfill. Despite the challenges we face in addressing this issue, it is working as a catalyst for change.

The Morrison Government is transforming our waste and recycling industry so that it is highly innovative and effective. We are implementing new policies, backed by over a billion dollars in investment, to turbocharge Australia's waste and recycling industry so Australia takes care of its own waste and makes the most of our precious natural resources.

Over the last 12 months, the Morrison Government has invested to develop better waste and recycling infrastructure by working in partnership with other governments and industry through its Recycling Modernisation Fund (RMF). We have already agreed to fund over \$121 million towards 86 projects. The agreed projects will process almost 1.3 million tonnes of plastics, tyres, glass and paper each year by July 2024 and there are many more projects to be announced over the coming months.

By turbocharging Australia's waste and recycling industry, we will support more than 10,000 new jobs – a 32% increase in jobs in the waste and recycling industry – and divert over 10 million tonnes of waste from landfill every year. This unprecedented investment in recycling infrastructure is also ensuring that there are clear streams for collection, processing and re-manufacture.

At the same time, we also want to see 100 per cent of packaging in Australia being reusable, recyclable, or compostable by 2025. The 2025 National Packaging Targets are ambitious and challenging to drive action and change, and the Federal Government is supporting industry to deliver them.

Industry is working hard to reduce the environmental, health and safety footprint of their manufactured goods and materials, including their packaging. However, it is evident that we must stay focused and continue to act to reduce the amount of waste we produce by improving the design, disposal, collection and reuse of our packaging. This requires governments, businesses, and industry to implement tailored solutions that respond to local and regional circumstances.

APCO continues to provide the insights, programs and resources to enable us to develop a sustainable national packaging ecosystem in Australia. I congratulate APCO and its Members for their continued actions to achieve the 2025 National Packaging Targets. The innovation and collaboration required to achieve the 2025 targets is the cornerstone for developing a circular economy for packaging. The commitment towards delivering the 2025 Targets demonstrates the outstanding level of leadership being shown by industry.

I look forward to continuing to work with you all.

Hear from our Chair and CEO

On behalf of the APCO team, we are pleased to present the 2020-21 Annual Report.

The push for a more sustainable future for packaging exists within a unique environment that presents several complex challenges. To overcome these, a myriad of solutions involving actors from across industry and government will be necessary. Co-ordinated leadership will be required from across the supply chain along with bold, systemic interventions in policy, production, education and engagement. Crucially, the goal for all of us remains the same: the achievement of the 2025 National Packaging Targets (2025 Targets).

Highlights

A number of successes were achieved over the 2020-21 financial year, moving the nation closer to this goal.

First, APCO welcomed hundreds of new Members, taking total Membership past 1,600, while Membership of the Australasian Recycling Label (ARL) Program increased by almost 50% from 460 to 680. This growth is further evidence of businesses prioritising sustainable packaging and demonstrates their commitment to take tangible steps to help achieve the 2025 Targets.

The growth of the ARL Program is a significant highlight, with tens of thousands of product SKUs now bearing the label and two-thirds of consumers recognising the label. Increasing consumer awareness and education remains a priority and through the National Consumer Education Campaign, which launched in October 2020, APCO continues to work with Planet Ark to promote the label and consumer awareness and action.

This year, APCO also took specific action on plastic packaging, releasing the Action Plan for Problematic and Unnecessary Single-Use Plastic Packaging to help Australian businesses eliminate approximately 50,700 tonnes of problem plastics every year. Furthermore, the launch of the ANZPAC Plastics Pact in May 2021 brought together 60 organisations from across Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands behind a shared vision of a circular economy for plastic in a vital step in creating a regional program for plastics.



Sam Andersen
Chair



Brooke Donnelly
CEO

Challenges

Consumption of packaging is increasing each year, with a large share still lost to landfill (45.5% in 2019-20). Notwithstanding, improvements have been achieved in a number of critical areas, particularly in recovery and sorting efficiency and local utilisation.

Challenges remain to both increase the pace of change in recovery and sorting, and drive market demand for recovered materials.

The ARL is driving the redesign of packaging to improve recyclability in the Australian kerbside system, and 86% of packaging is now assessed as recyclable, reusable or compostable. Whilst collection and sorting capacity and capability has improved, more must be done to achieve consistency across Australia, and increase and improve technology and equipment to achieve the levels of recovery and sortation required to meet the 2025 Targets.

In addition, the development of the upcoming Pledge Program, where businesses will pledge to use a certain amount of recycled content in packaging moving forward, will work to stimulate demand for recycled materials.

Furthermore, increasing the recovery of plastic packaging will be necessary, with 16% of plastic packaging being recycled or composted, against the 2025 Target of 70%. Plastics recycling capacity is projected to increase significantly over the next few years in response to incoming bans on exporting unprocessed plastics, with investments in new or expanded capacity announced by the waste and recycling industry and governments. The continued growth of the ANZPAC Plastics Pact, including the Polypropylene Plant Packaging Recycling (PoPPR) Program, a national recovery program for plant packaging, will also tackle difficult to recover plastic packaging. It will be necessary to achieve at scale collection, sortation and recycling of soft and challenging plastic materials in the immediate future to ensure the 2025 Targets are able to be achieved.

It is also important to recognise the impact of COVID-19 on the sustainable packaging landscape, with an increase in demand for single-use plastic packaging, along with presenting an overarching stressor for many businesses and government.

While APCO will continue to drive the strategic direction and provide key initiatives for change, gaps remain across the system that will require collective action. These include:

1. 100% of packaging to be reusable, recyclable or compostable

- Uncertainties about the compatibility of packaging items with current and future recovery systems, which is a barrier to change
- Recyclable materials that are lost in the sorting system due to size (too large or too small) or format type

2. 70% of plastic packaging to be recycled or composted

- Loss of recyclable materials due to poor source separation by households and businesses
- Technical and/or commercial barriers to sorting within Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs)
- Limited end markets for some materials

3. Phase out of problematic and unnecessary single-use plastic packaging

- Uncertainties about the availability or recyclability of alternative materials
- Lack of fit-for-purpose alternatives for some packaging applications
- Capital costs of new processing equipment when changing materials

4. 50% average of recycled content across all packaging

- Insufficient supply of some post-consumer recycled content at the right quality, particularly for glass and food-grade plastics

APCO's role is to bring together key contributors across the value chain to collectively work towards these priority strategies.

Despite these challenges, when we look at how the Australian supply chain has performed between 2018 – 2020, we can see positive change occurring with a positive uplift across all key efficiency metrics, including:

- Increased collection efficiency – from 58% to 62%
- Improved sorting efficiency – from 54% to 61%
- Higher recovery rate – from 50% to 55%
- Local utilisation rate – from 27% to 34%

These improvements are indicators of the level of transformation that is taking place as Australia shifts towards a circular economy model for packaging – with improvements and efficiencies taking place across all sectors.

Looking ahead

Over the coming years APCO will continue to drive this level of collaboration with (and between) industry, government and consumers by:

- Working with government and industry to build capacity through driving awareness of the system performance
- Providing strategic advice – what is working well and what needs to change
- Providing essential monitoring of the performance of industry
- Delivering key programs such as the ARL Program, the ANZPAC Plastics Pact and specific product stewardship programs for difficult to manage packaging formats
- Providing education and knowledge sharing by enabling shared resources such as the Sustainable Packaging Guidelines (SPGs), strategic material strategies and sector specific roadmaps

APCO has an important role to play over the coming years and will continue to work collaboratively to drive real and tangible change to build Australia's capacity to achieve a transition to a circular economy for packaging and successfully achieve the 2025 Targets.

Our approach to governance

APCO's ability to meet our co-regulatory commitments to governments, provide a valuable experience for Members, and work effectively towards achieving the 2025 Targets rests on a robust and transparent corporate governance framework.

APCO's vision is for the development of a circular economy for packaging in Australia. Our Members, team, partners and the broader stakeholder community are central to achieving this goal. APCO's values of honesty, transparency, impact and resilience underpin this effort, and the APCO Board and management team are committed to upholding these as the Australian industry works towards achieving its sustainable packaging goals.

Board

Board Sub-committees

Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) and Remuneration and Nominations Committee (RNC)

Executive Team

Senior Management Team

APCO Team



APCO's Leadership Team

The Board and Executive

The APCO Board is a diverse representation across sectors, industries and associations.

The independent Board structure provides APCO with a systemic view of the packaging chain and enables the executive team to draw on the insights and skills of a diverse range of organisations.

The Board is made up of nine directors, which fall under one of three categories: Independent Director, Brand Owner Director or Industry Association Director.

BOARD MEMBERS 2020-21

INDEPENDENT DIRECTORS



Sandra (Sam) Anderson
Board Chair



Dr Anne Astin
Independent Director



Trent Bartlett
Independent Director

BRAND OWNER DIRECTORS



Richard Smith
Amcor



Chris Foley
Kmart Group



Kylie Freeland
McDonald's Australia

INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION DIRECTORS



Lee Smith
Australian Council of Recycling



Andrew Petersen
Business Council for Sustainable
DevelopmentAustralia

RETIRED DIRECTORS



Keith Chessell
Australian Institute of Packaging

EXECUTIVES



Brooke Donnelly
Chief Executive Officer
(appointed 19 June 2017)



James Tarrant
Chief Financial Officer
and Company Secretary
(appointed 13 February 2017)

COMPENSATION OF KEY MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Short term employment benefits	750,409	712,241
Post-employment benefits	71,289	67,663
Total compensation	821,698	779,904

KEY MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL DISCLOSURES

APCO benchmarks remuneration for its Independent Directors and staff to the 25th percentile of an independent remuneration consultant's assessment of the market for similar roles and responsibilities. It then calibrates the results comparing outcomes to Commonwealth Government entities of a similar size and nature.

The Board and Executive personnel had authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the company, either directly or indirectly, during the financial year.

Independent Directors receive direct remuneration from the company. All other Directors are appointed on an honorary basis and as a result do not receive direct remuneration from the company.



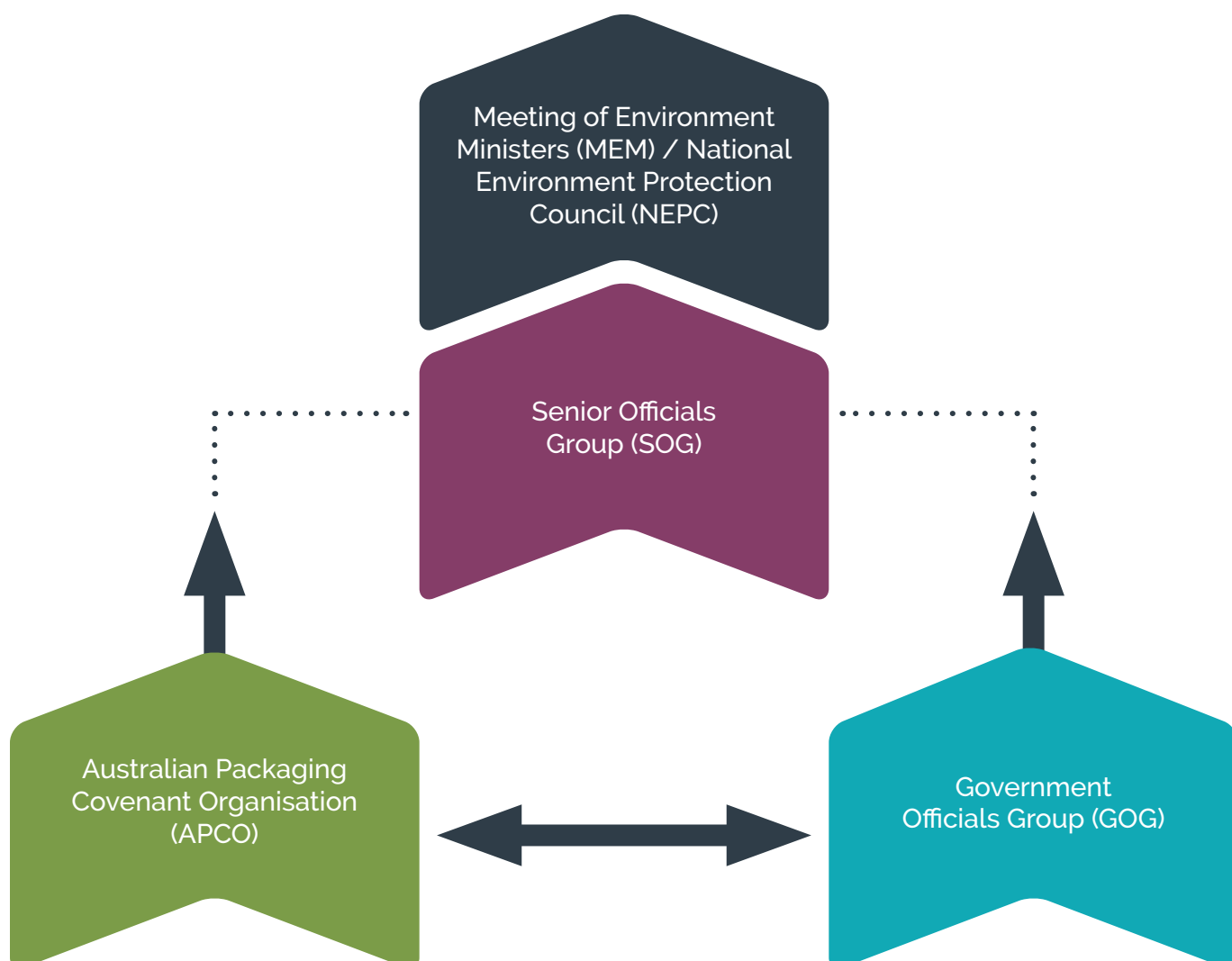
HOW APCO WORKS WITH GOVERNMENT

APCO's co-regulatory structure means we work in close partnership with state and federal governments, and local councils, along with our Members and broader industry, to deliver the obligations outlined within the Australian Packaging Covenant (the Covenant).

This co-regulatory framework enables APCO Brand Owner Members to meet their obligations under the National Environment Protection (Used Packaging Materials) Measure 2011 (NEPM).

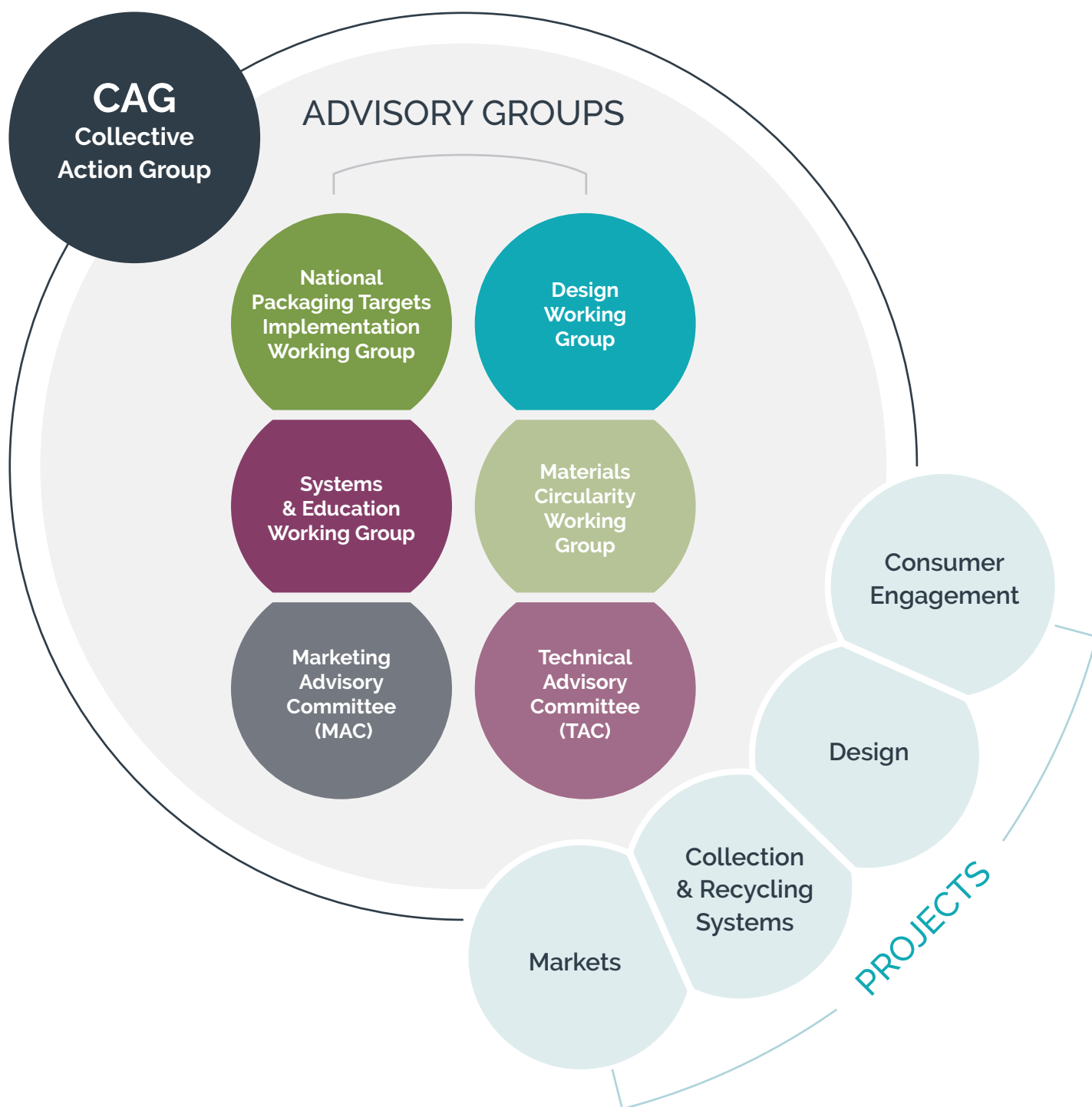
In practical terms, this close relationship is delivered through regular feedback cycles and a number of established channels and governmental advisory groups.

These include the Government Officials Group (GOG), the Senior Officials Group (SOG) and the Meeting of Environment Ministers (MEM). The APCO team also regularly contributes to government submissions, and participates in government committees, reference groups and task forces.



HOW APCO INTERACTS WITH MEMBERS AND THE PACKAGING ECOSYSTEM

APCO's Advisory Groups bring together representatives from government, industry, academia and the community sector to drive progress on Australia's 2025 Targets.



Year Highlights

2020



JULY

- The Recycling Modernisation Fund is announced

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

- The ARL celebrates its second birthday

OCTOBER

- Launch of the National Consumer Education Campaign
- APCO launches the 2025 Monitoring Program

NOVEMBER

- 2020 APCO Annual Awards
- APCO releases the 'Supporting government procurement of recycled materials' resource

DECEMBER

- APCO releases the 'Action Plan for Problematic and Unnecessary Single-Use Plastic Packaging' resource
- APCO releases the 'Packaging waste collection and processing options in remote and regional areas' resource



2021

JANUARY

- APCO releases the 'Australian Packaging Consumption and Resource Recovery Data 2018-19' report

FEBRUARY

- ARL Program named a finalist in the NFP/NGO category in the Banksia Sustainability Awards

MARCH

- The Federal Government releases the inaugural National Plastics Plan
- Australia's first soft plastic food wrapper made from recycled content is developed as part of a trial

APRIL

- The ARL Program welcomes its 500th Member

MAY

- Official launch of the ANZPAC Plastics Pact

JUNE

- APCO releases the 'National Compostable Packaging Strategy'
- APCO and Planet Ark release the 'ARL Consumer Insights Report 2021'
- The ANZPAC Plastics Pact releases the 'Recovered Polymer Specifications'



**Member
Overview**

ANZPAC

Sustainable Programs

**Australasian
Recycling
Label (ARL)
Program**

**Projects
with Industry
Sectors**

**Member
Case Studies**

Overview of Member Activity

In 2020-21 it became clear to APCO that the conversation about sustainable packaging had shifted: the questions coming from across the packaging value chain were no longer focused on 'why' this should happen, instead it became about 'how' do we do this.

APCO proactively supports practical solutions with a raft of initiatives to assist Members. In 2020-21, these included delivering new streamlined guidelines and enhanced digital tools that made reporting processes less onerous; significant investment in IT and an expanded catalogue of online training resources to inform, motivate and develop skills.

APCO's Membership passed 1,600 and, even more pleasing, Member engagement with APCO programs increased substantially. This was evident in the growing number of Members who signed up to the ARL Program; a total of 600 became participants in the Program in 2020-21, up from 460 the previous year.

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the uptake of online services – which also enabled increased collaboration across the Membership base.

STREAMLINING THE PACKAGING SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK

In July 2021, following an extensive 18-month review and consultation process, APCO released its updated Packaging Sustainability Framework (the Framework) and APCO Annual Reporting requirements for assessing and tracking packaging sustainability. APCO Members are required to complete an APCO Annual Report based on this Framework.

The Framework helps Members to identify and implement strategies that will achieve tangible outcomes in improving packaging sustainability; it also gives them a mechanism to monitor and measure annual progress. Since it was introduced in 2018, the Framework has assisted Members to identify areas of improvement, define best practice and provide data which is used to form strategies to achieve the 2025 Targets.



The update of the Framework was aimed at streamlining and simplifying reporting, and was undertaken with the support of the Institute of Sustainable Futures (ISF) at the University of Technology Sydney and Dr Helen Lewis of Helen Lewis Research.

This work involved tailoring the Framework to the needs of different Member groups; for brand owners and packaging manufacturers and suppliers with a total annual turnover in excess of \$50 million, the Reporting criteria have been reduced from 13 to 7 and a new scoring mechanism has been developed.

Key reporting areas such as recoverability, use of recycled content and reviews against APCO's Sustainable Packaging Guidelines (SPGs) are still retained. However, there are some variations in APCO Annual Report questions for packaging manufacturer/supplier Members that are now more relevant to their operations.

Small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with a total annual turnover of less than \$50 million have a reduced reporting load but can now also 'opt-in' to report against the full Framework and are encouraged to do so. Beginning this process gives them a pathway for collecting packaging data, preparing them for full annual reporting as their turnover grows.

Reporting against the updated Framework and the SME Report will come into effect in the 2022 Reporting Round.

INDUSTRY EDUCATION AND TRAINING

In 2020-21 APCO's increased focus on technology prompted additional investment in its current IT platforms. A key objective was to improve the Member experience through a new website and Member Centre which improved access to resources and learning tools.

Training programs continued to trend online, and new programs were designed to educate Members in a wide variety of areas. Two new programs were launched in 2020-21:

The Learning Management System (LMS)

– APCO's first interactive learning tool, accessible via the APCO Member Centre. The three APCO-specific courses are: APCO Membership 101, Sustainable Packaging Guidelines and Intro to the ARL Program. Members can expect additional courses in the near future to support the ARL and APCO Annual Reporting.

Member Lunch and Learns – tailored presentation and engagement sessions that enable Members to review their APCO Annual Report performance, identify opportunities for improvement and assess their progress in achieving the 2025 Targets.

The team were also pleased to again partner with the education experts at the Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP) to deliver a course on the Sustainable Packaging Guidelines as well as engage in Member-specific presentations with industry associations, sustainability committees and organisation-wide training days.



PUBLICATIONS

The list of publications released by APCO in 2020-21 included:

Recovered Polymer Specifications – details the 12 Australian industry-agreed standard specifications for recycled polymer materials. The standards were developed in 2020 by APCO's Materials Circularity Work Group in response to concerns raised by Members that achieving the 2025 Targets would be impeded, unless there was a stronger focus on standards throughout the packaging value chain.

Action Plan for Problematic and Unnecessary Single-Use Plastic Packaging – a practical resource to support the increased use of recycled content in packaging. Developed to support the growing number of businesses redesigning their packaging to meet the 2025 Targets, the guide provides clear and practical information about how to incorporate recycled content.

National Compostable Packaging Strategy – outlines strategies for the appropriate application of compostable packaging, particularly where it can support recovery of food waste. It also identifies collective action to assist compostable packaging recovery at end-of-life for beneficial end uses. Developed by APCO with the assistance of the Australasian Bioplastics Association (ABA), the Australian Organics Recycling Association (AORA) and Member and government representatives.

Outcomes from Member Annual Reporting

Despite many Members experiencing challenges through COVID-19, our Members' commitment to packaging sustainability has persevered. Member reporting outcomes showed an increase in average scores (%) for all criteria under the current Packaging Sustainability Framework ('Framework') from 2020 to 2021.

2021 was the last year Members will report under the current Packaging Sustainability Framework. In 2022, APCO Members will report against the updated Framework and APCO Annual Report formats.

YEAR ON YEAR

Figure 1 shows the average core score APCO Members received over the past four years. The data illustrates a general trend of improvement across the four years, for medium and large sized Members.

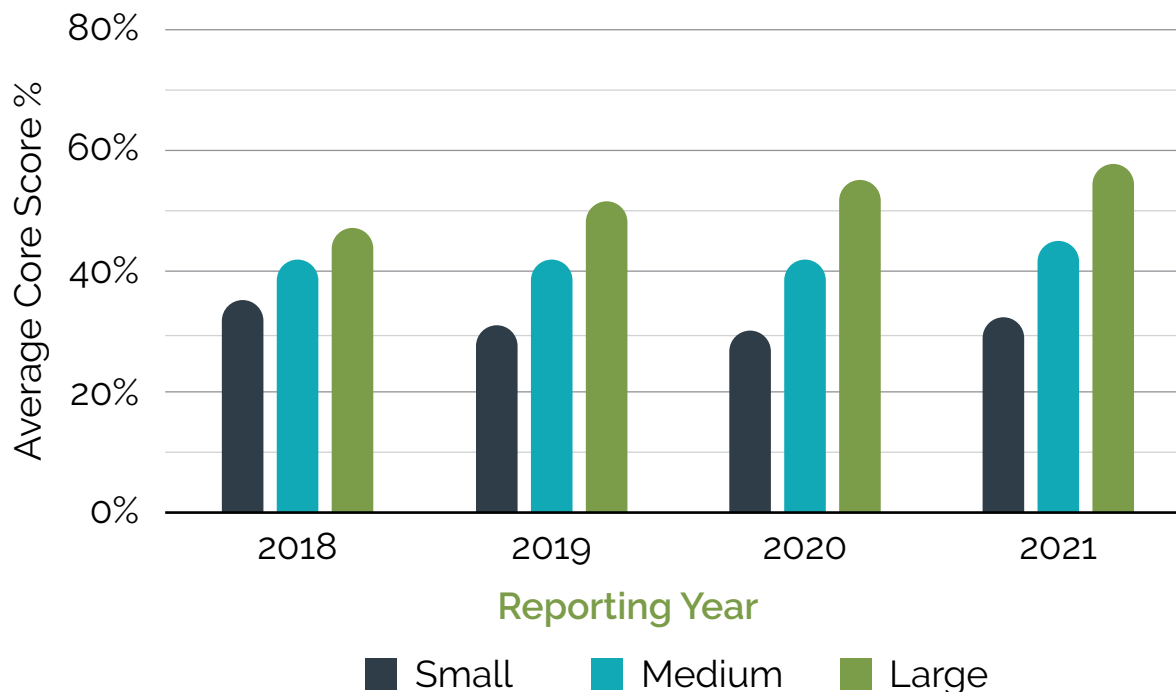


Figure 1: Average Core Score % across 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2021

TENURE OF APCO MEMBERSHIP

Figure 2 illustrates the average core score in 2021 by the number of years of being an APCO Member (tenure) and is further broken down by Membership size (small, medium and large organisations).

Despite the presence of a number of outliers (largely due to certain 'years' containing drastically fewer Members than others), there is a clear upward trend demonstrating the value of Member engagement with APCO processes, tools and resources over time.

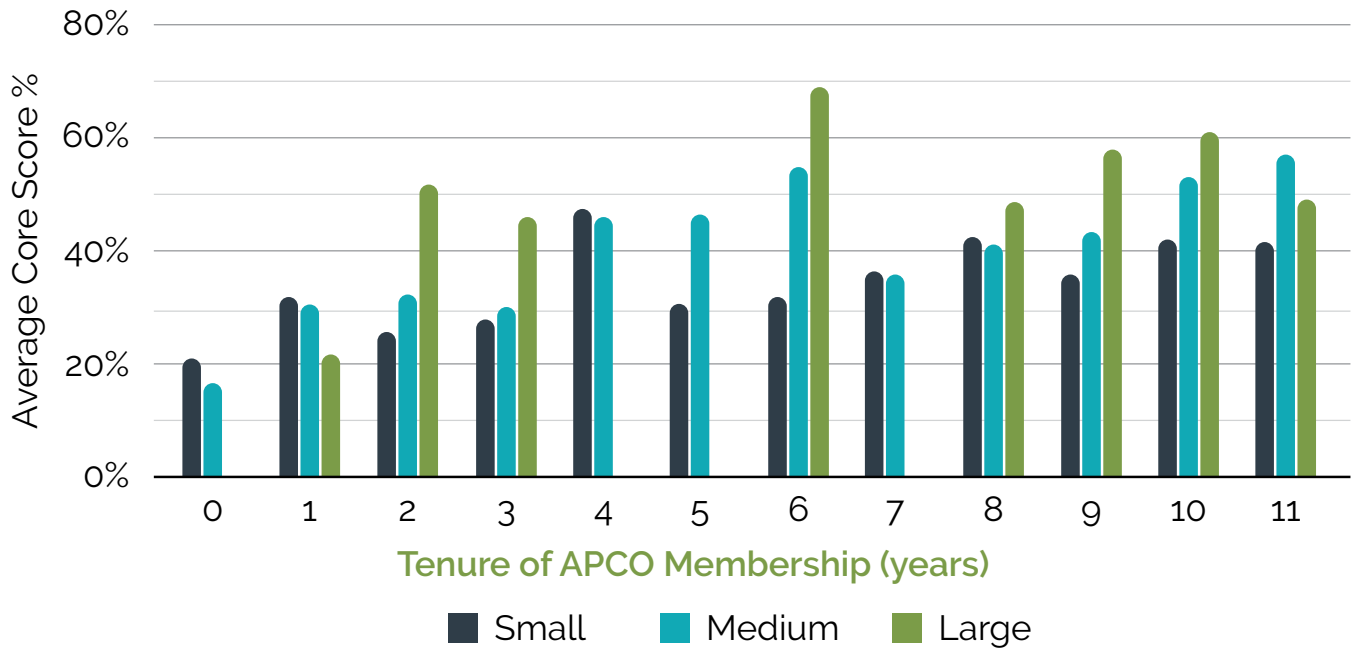


Figure 2: Average Core Score % by Member Tenure (years)

NEW MEMBERS

In 2021, 35 Members reported for the first time. Figure 3 illustrates how the new APCO Members performed compared to existing APCO Members, for each of the 13 Framework criterion.

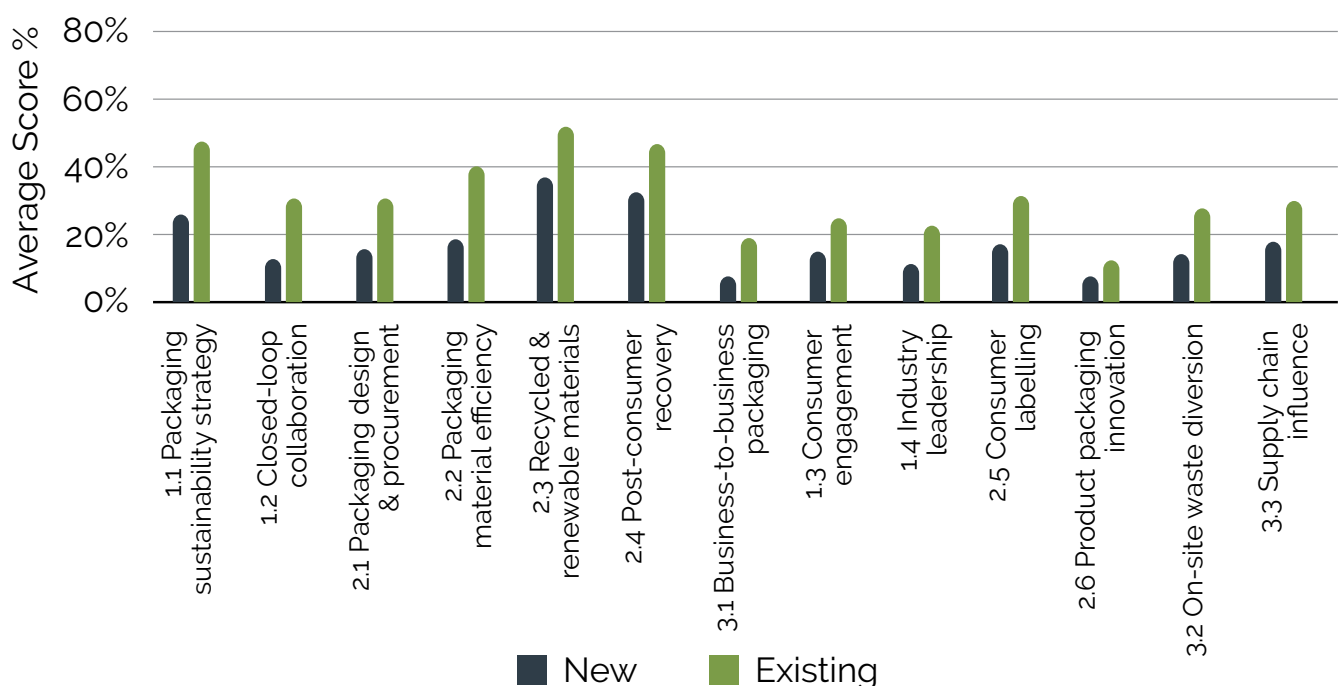


Figure 3: 2021 Average Score % for New versus Existing APCO Members for each criterion (Core criteria left and Recommended criteria right)

EXISTING MEMBERS YEAR ON YEAR

Figure 4 illustrates the year-on-year progress of all those APCO Members who have reported consecutively in both the 2020 and 2021 reporting periods. This allows us to analyse improvement over time for each reporting area. Positively, scores in 2021 were an improvement on 2020 in each of the 13 criteria.

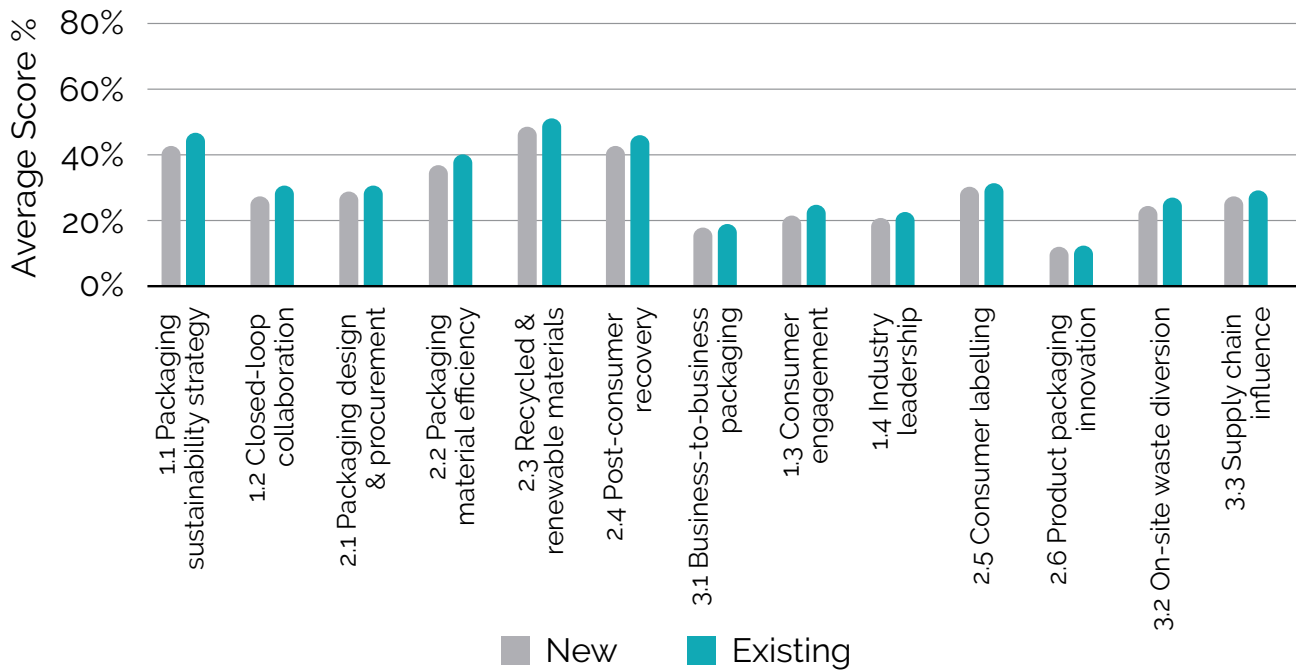


Figure 4: Consecutive year on year average scores % for each criterion (Core criteria left and Recommended criteria right)

MEMBER REPORTING SCORES BY MEMBER SIZE

The below figures breakdown existing APCO Members' year on year scores, for each Member size (determined by turnover).

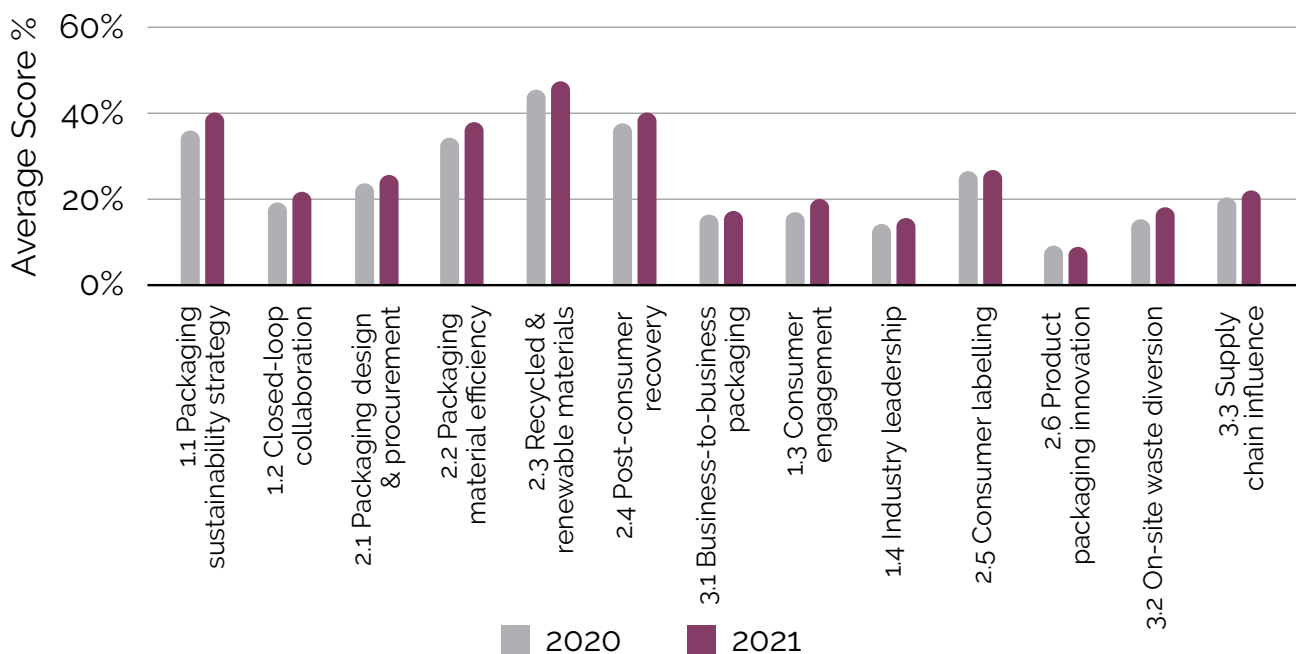


Figure 5: Consecutive year on year average scores % for each criterion for Small sized Members (Core criteria left and Recommended criteria right)

MEMBER REPORTING SCORES BY MEMBER SIZE (CONT.)

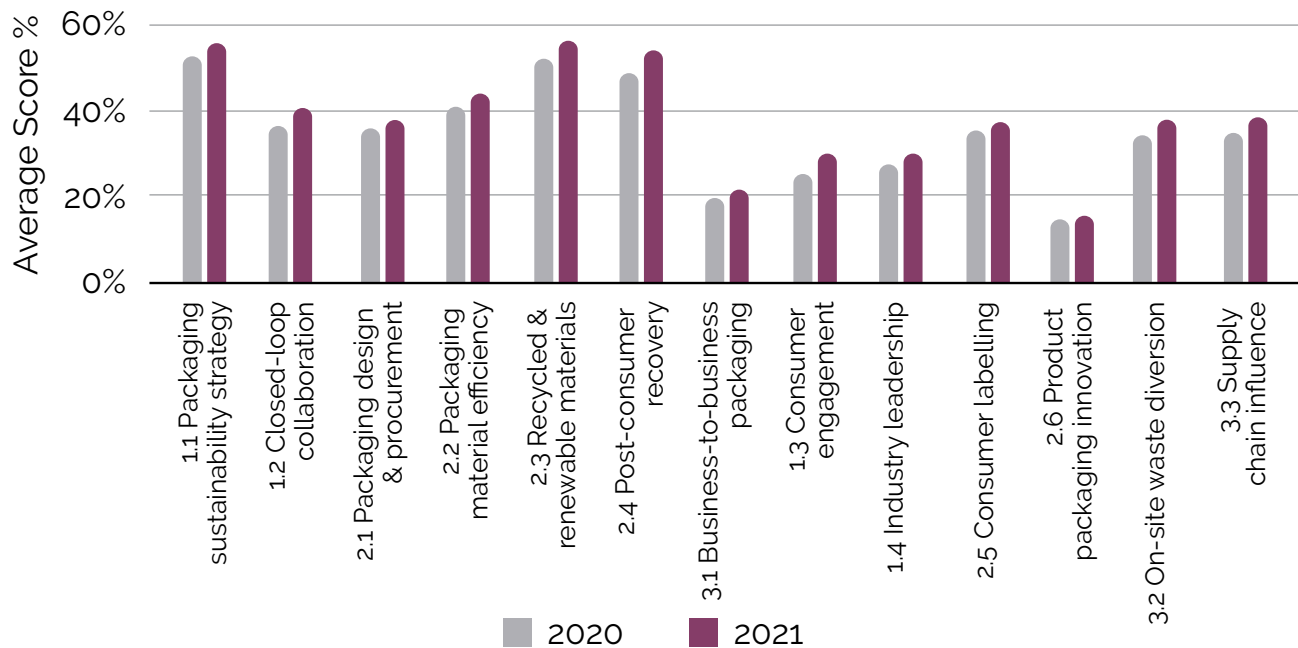


Figure 6: Consecutive year on year average scores % for each criterion for Medium sized Members (Core criteria left and Recommended criteria right)

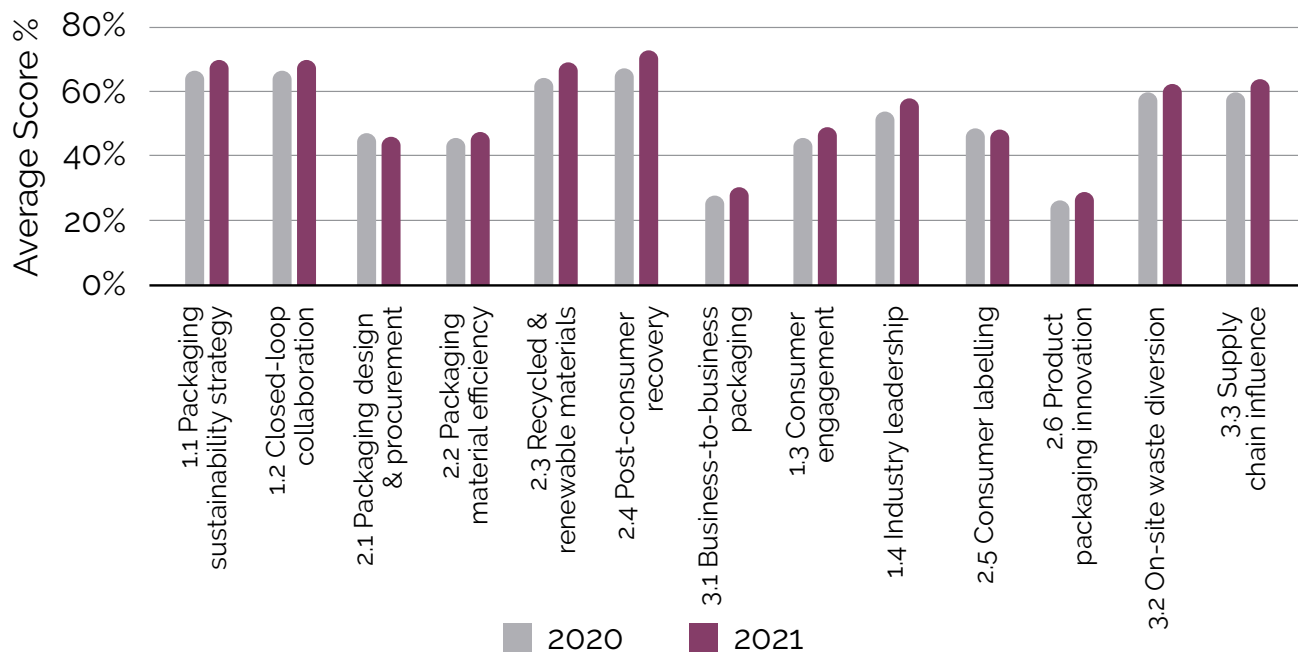


Figure 7: Consecutive year on year average scores % for each criterion for Large sized Members (Core criteria left and Recommended criteria right)

AUSTRALASIAN RECYCLING LABEL (ARL) PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS VS NON-PARTICIPANTS

At the time of reporting, 430 APCO Members were participating in the ARL Program. Figure 8 illustrates how participants of the ARL Program, on average, correlates with higher reporting scores across each of the 13 Framework criterion.

With more than 600 organisations now signed up to the ARL Program, a large cohort of APCO's overall Membership is now part of the Program. The results suggest a positive trend towards packaging sustainability as the proportion of ARL participants increase.

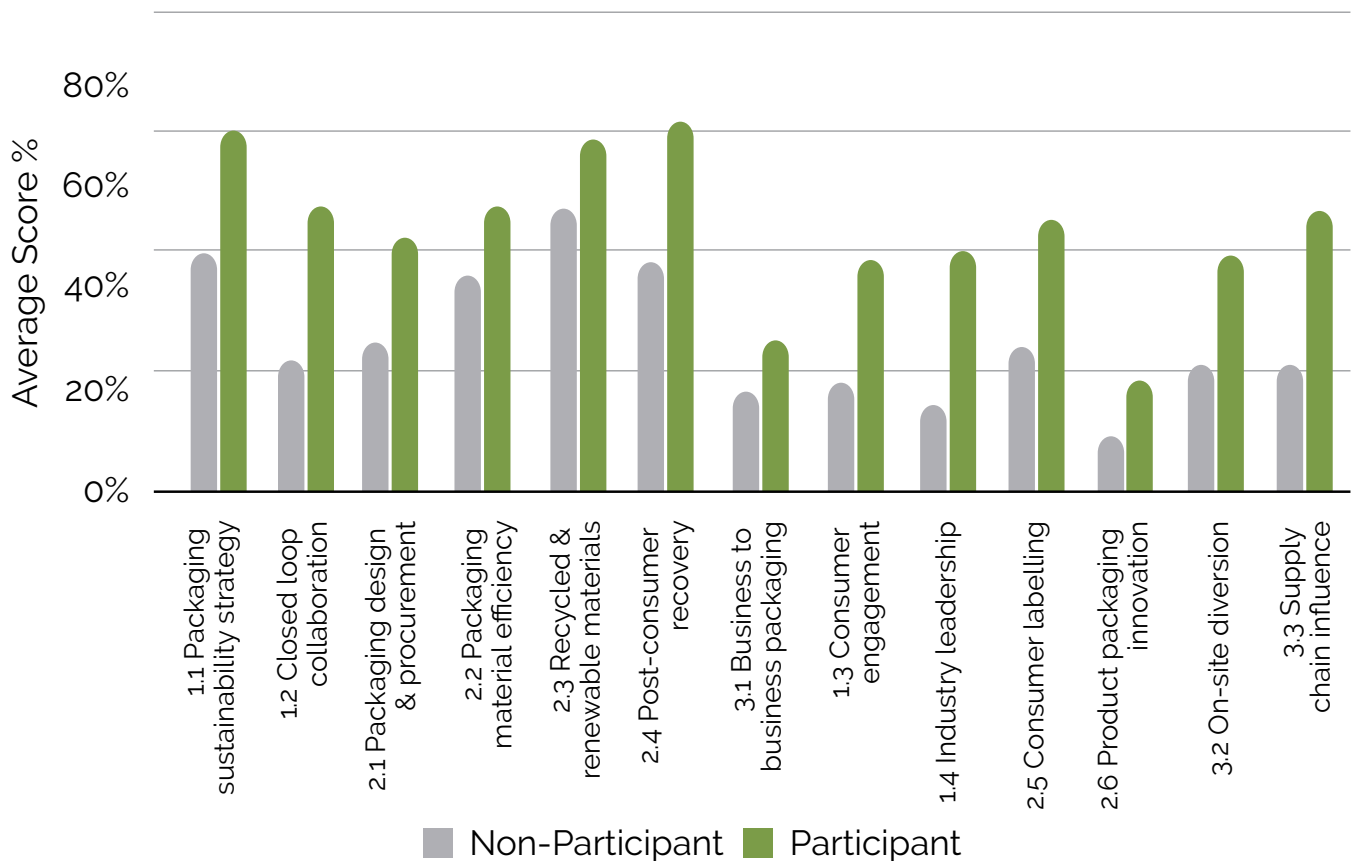


Figure 8: 2021 Average Scores % for ARL Program Participants versus non-Participants for each criterion
(Core criteria left and Recommended criteria right)

ANZPAC



In May 2021, APCO became the lead organisation for a significant international intervention to provide collaborative solutions on the plastic packaging challenge in Australia, New Zealand and Pacific Island nations.

The Members of the Australia, New Zealand and Pacific Islands (ANZPAC) Plastics Pact committed to delivering four, clear actionable targets by 2025:

1. Eliminate unnecessary and problematic plastic packaging through redesign, innovation and alternative (reuse) delivery models.
2. 100% of plastic packaging to be reusable, recyclable or compostable packaging by 2025.
3. Increase plastic packaging collected and effectively recycled by 25% for each geography within the ANZPAC region.
4. Average of 25% recycled content in plastic packaging across the region.

Founding Members included more than 60 organisations representing the complete plastics supply chain, ranging from: leading brands, packaging manufacturers and retailers to resource recovery leaders, government institutions and NGOs across the region. At the time of publication of this report, there are now more than 100 ANZPAC Members. ANZPAC joins the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's global Plastics Pact Network, a globally aligned response to plastic waste and pollution that unites more than 550 member organisations behind the shared vision of a circular economy for plastic.

APCO serves as the lead organisation for ANZPAC and worked closely with WRAP UK and the Ellen MacArthur Foundation in program development. WRAP is a not-for-profit organisation that is part of the international effort on plastics. It assists delivery of sustainable product design, waste minimisation, re-use, recycling and waste management.

The support of this international collaboration will assist ANZPAC to implement solutions that are tailored to the three geographic regions through shared knowledge, investment and industry-led innovation.

Priorities in its first year of operation are a roadmap for action and the hosting of collaborative workstreams with supporting pilot projects. In addition, ANZPAC Members will report on progress and APCO will constitute the ANZPAC Collective Action Group (ACAG) as an overarching advisory body.

DELIVERING PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP

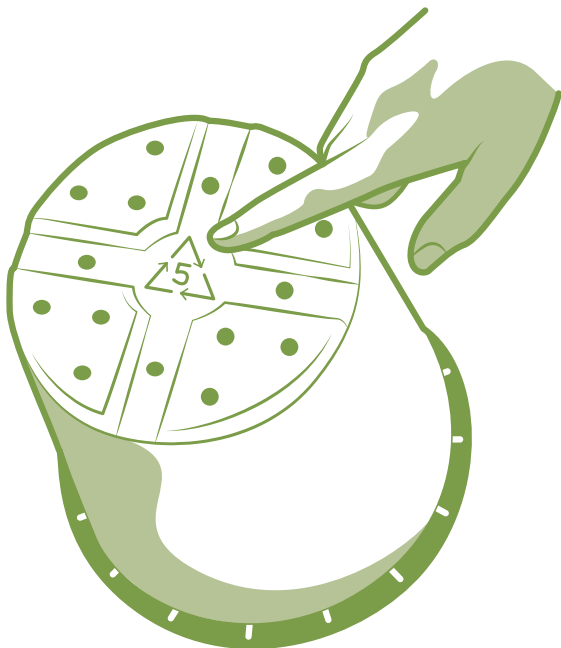
ANZPAC has already identified three areas of high-volume plastic waste as priorities for action in Australia: black polypropylene plant packaging (PP), plastic oil bottles and PET medical devices. ANZPAC will explore further plastic recovery approaches across the Oceanic region through a series of product stewardship schemes.

In 2020-21 ANZPAC commenced development of the first two schemes, in partnership with key industry sectors in Australia. This represents a shift away from organisation-specific product stewardship to a broader approach.

It is envisaged that product stewardship will be a powerful tool to assist whole industry sectors to better manage their products throughout their lifecycle, reduce the volume of packaging entering landfill and increase recovery rates. Key learnings from these projects will be shared across ANZPAC Member countries.

The two ANZPAC product stewardship initiatives being piloted in Australia are a national recovery program for plastic oil containers and a collection and recycling program for black polypropylene (PP) plant packaging, which includes plant pots, trays, tags and stakes. The schemes each received funding in 2020-21 under the Australian Government's Product Stewardship Investment Fund.

The impetus for addressing plastic oil containers is due to the residual oil left in them; this makes the waste material an environmental and safety hazard – and therefore unsuitable for collection through kerbside recycling programs.



PP plant packaging is also problematic for council kerbside collections because automated systems cannot recognise and separate it – and there is currently no other path to recycle this material.

The Polypropylene Plant Packaging Recycling Program (PoPPr) is an initiative of Greenlife Industry Australia and the ANZPAC Plastics Pact, led by APCO with support from allied organisations.

Both projects continue to meet milestones and have been a catalyst for broad industry collaboration.



Australasian Recycling Label Program

The uptake of the Australasian Recycling Label (ARL) Program accelerated across Australia and New Zealand in 2020-21 with business, government and consumers supporting the Program.

A series of significant milestones were reached (and surpassed):

- The Program recorded a 40 percent increase in Membership (from 430 to 600 Members).
- Research revealed that the labelling improved correct recycling behaviour by up to 30 per cent among consumers.
- Product evaluation reached extraordinary highs, with the completion of more than 100,000 assessments through the Packaging Recyclability Evaluation Portal (PREP).
- The ARL Program was named a finalist in the prestigious Banksia Sustainability Awards. It was a powerful acknowledgement of the program's capacity to effect positive environmental change behaviours – and recognised the partners who created it; APCO, Planet Ark and PREP Design.

NATIONAL CONSUMER EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

The acceleration of the Program was assisted by the launch in October 2020 of a two-year national consumer education strategy to improve packaging sustainability awareness and behaviour.

The first phase saw the release of the Check it! Before You Chuck It consumer campaign which included print and broadcast advertising, a suite of infographics and animations and broad distribution of information resources.

The upbeat ads featured an endearing cast of animated characters, a catchy song and a range of scenarios that draw attention to the many types of consumer products that now featured ARL labelling.



The Commonwealth also flagged further development of the Program through initiatives to encourage the involvement of small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and the roll out of ARL labelling on business-to-business (B2B) packaging.

This wide-ranging expansion of the Program was supported in the Federal Budget with a \$5 million funding boost, which will enable the production of resources, tools and assets to inform, encourage and motivate business to come on board with the Program.



Projects with Industry Sectors

APCO's model for collaborative action proved to be a recipe for success when applied to four industry sectors in 2020-21. Significant progress was made towards overcoming packaging waste challenges; solutions were delivered right along the packaging value chain for the wine, dairy, greenlife and healthcare industries.

The disciplined approach assisted each industry to identify a common agenda, align stakeholder input and empower practical action. All four industry sectors were able to decouple packaging sustainability from competitive concerns. They were subsequently able to deal with the challenges they face in a collaborative and mutually beneficial way.

WINE INDUSTRY SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING ALLIANCE

APCO commenced development of its industry sector initiatives in 2018 when it successfully worked with the Wine Industry Working Group to address packaging waste challenges. The group formally evolved into the Wine Industry Sustainable Packaging Alliance (WISPA) in 2020 and has since continued to expand its reach and impact across the sector.

A growing and increasingly engaged and confident group of industry Members have aligned with the South Australian Wine Industry Association (SAWIA) and engaged support from Green Industry South Australia (GISA) and Regional Development Australia (RDA). This alliance has acted as a catalyst to identify and tackle packaging challenges within the sector.

It has already developed an industry-specific set of sustainable packaging guidelines that complement those developed by APCO. The group has also collaborated with local Barossa businesses to improve their waste management across the region.

It is currently proposing to establish a local closed loop solution for plastic waste to support smaller wineries. When operational this system will divert waste from landfill by being designed, collected, recycled and then used again to make the same type of product.

While APCO continues to participate and support WISPA, the organisation has reached a level of maturity and sophistication that will ensure its continued evolution as the voice for packaging sustainability in the Australian wine industry.



GREENLIFE INDUSTRY – POLYPROPYLENE PLANT PACKAGING RECOVERY SCHEME

The horticultural industry is one of Australia's greatest contributors to environmental well-being and human health, but the industry had a challenge – black polypropylene (PP) plant packaging. The carbon black used to colour plant pots, renders them almost impossible to recover through existing automated sorting infrastructure.

Compounding this situation is the fact that PP has not, until very recently, been sorted as an individual fraction. This meant that much of the plant packaging passing through consumer hands was ending up in landfill, or was at best, being downgraded to sub-optimal uses.

Plant packaging already carries high levels of recycled content, with many plant pots manufactured in Australia carrying as much as 75% recycled content. Nevertheless, industry wanted more: a closed loop approach that would recycle plant packaging back into plant packaging – and contribute to an industry-led circular economy for its packaging waste.

Gathering participants from across the horticultural packaging value chain, with support from industry peak body, Greenlife Industry Australia (GIA), APCO established a working group to look at how we might go about firstly, capturing this packaging and then, directing it for recycling into new plant packaging.

The group worked together over the early part of 2020 developing a project plan, mapping the packaging value chain for plant life, identifying the key stakeholder groups and participants and developing a model for a recovery program. This aimed to capture plant packaging from household consumers and commercial businesses across the horticultural sector, including nurseries, growers and landscapers.

In November 2020, APCO and project partner GIA were granted \$549,000 to research and design a national recovery program for PP plant packaging. The project commenced in January 2021 and has progressed through Stage 1 to develop a detailed business case that clearly articulates the need for a dedicated product stewardship scheme. Work will continue towards an industry-endorsed scheme design and an implementation plan will support roll out of the final scheme. The project concludes in January 2023.

AUSTRALIAN DAIRY SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING ROADMAP TO 2025

APCO came together with Dairy Australia's already established Sustainability Working Group to develop the Australian Dairy Sustainable Packaging Roadmap to 2025. The working group comprised Australia's major dairy producers and suppliers, many of whom were also APCO Members.

The project was aligned with both the 2025 Targets and the Australian Dairy Sustainability Framework which sets measurable goals for economic prosperity, nutrition, animal welfare and natural resource management.

The project enabled a focused assessment of the whole dairy packaging landscape in Australia. Over the course of 2020, APCO took on the backbone organisation role and facilitated discussion around the development of the roadmap. A global scan highlighted that no other jurisdiction had created a packaging specific roadmap, so the working group were inspired to be the first.

The participating members shared a level of detail within the confines of the working group, that enabled a comprehensive and highly detailed articulation of the packaging mix, the challenges that existed within that mix and the steps that were being taken to address them.

The diversity of the group and their unique understanding of their own product mixes provided a holistic view of the sector and allowed the identification of commitments and objectives. The roadmap has also provided a call to action for the whole packaging value chain to step forward and support the dairy industry to deliver on its commitments.





SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING IN HEALTHCARE

The issue of healthcare packaging waste was initially raised at the Single Use Plastics Summit, which APCO co-hosted with the South Australian Government in Adelaide in November 2019.

Taking a closer look at the sector in early 2020, it became apparent that there were significant challenges for packaging sustainability in the healthcare sector. These had been somewhat shielded from scrutiny under the priorities of patient safety, hygiene, contamination risks and other similar barriers to improved resource recovery across the sector.

The initiative began with groundwork to build a proactive stakeholder group – predominantly practitioners – who were seeing the volumes of waste first-hand as they treated patients in clinical settings. They were also the ideal stakeholders to articulate the challenges of waste segregation in clinical settings, particularly in large healthcare facilities that had not been designed to handle the complex waste streams that are being identified for recovery and recycling.

Early in the process healthcare sustainability organisations were engaged, including Green and

Global Healthy Hospitals and the Climate and Health Alliance. Strong engagement has come from within government health procurement and there has been increasing connection with healthcare industry associations. The associations have responded to calls from their members to take a holistic and sustainability-centred approach to the healthcare professionals' commitment to 'do no harm'.

The dialogue also reached beyond packaging into the high-value single-use products and materials being lost to landfill or incineration through poor waste handling practices. It highlighted the blurred line between packaging and product in healthcare settings.

Having been delayed by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the working group commenced in June 2020.

Member Case Studies

The type and scale of sustainability projects undertaken by APCO Members in 2020-21 demonstrated an outstanding level of innovation and commitment.

Broader awareness of the business case associated with establishing a circular economy for packaging waste spurred more companies and industry sectors into action. The result was a series of transformative initiatives that are each assisting the industry achieve 2025 Targets.

The following examples demonstrate individual as well as collaborative projects from different Members operating at different points in the packaging value chain.

Circular Plastics Australia PET Recycling Plant

is a project by Pact Group, Cleanaway and Asahi Beverages to jointly develop a pelletising facility in Albury-Wodonga, NSW.

The joint venture was formed in August 2020 and when completed, the facility is expected to process 28,000 tonnes of plastic bottles and other recyclables into pellets. These in turn, will be converted into more than 20,000 tones of new PET bottles and food packaging.

Nestlé and recycler IQ Renew have embarked on a trial of a new kerbside recovery system, called Curbcycle, which aims to deliver large volumes of soft plastics from landfill. The project commenced with a pilot of 2,000 households on the NSW Central Coast – and will expand to more than 100,000 households over coming months.

Most material recovery facilities (MRFs) are not able to separate soft plastic from other items in household recycling. IQ Renew has developed an innovative approach, which encourages households to separate clean, soft plastics into a specific collection bag. When full the bag is simply added to the recycling bin for normal collections. Once sorted IQ Renew will test how the resource performs in a range of different manufacturing processes.

The project continues to expand with other collaborators including Licella, Amcor, Coles, iQ Renew, LyondellBasell, and Nestlé joining to produce a feasibility study highlighting the potential for establishing a local circular economy for soft plastic, with a focus on difficult to mechanically recycle plastic such as food packaging.

Packaging manufacturer Sancell is committed to delivering 100 per cent recyclable protective packaging solutions. Its product range includes bubble and foam rolls, cold chain solutions, armour padded mailer bags, reflective insulation and other custom protective packaging solutions.

The company is pioneering waste minimisation processes across all parts of its production and distribution processes and undertakes a remarkably comprehensive and detailed effort to include more sustainable practices. These include:

- Products make use of 100% recycled cores and returnable, recyclable cartons
- Some packaging products are made with recycled material using in-house recycling machinery,
- Packaging with bags contains a minimum of 50% recycled materials,
- Products are transported using returnable pallets.



Sancell manufactures using recycled material and its biggest challenge is gaining access to quality recycled resin. Currently, external suppliers are unable to sustainably provide enough resin for more than 50-60% recycled material in Sancell's outer bags.

To overcome this issue, the company implemented numerous internal processes to minimise, and where possible, eliminate single-use packaging from its products. Processes such as returnable pallets, returnable coreflute cartons, returnable pallet covers, optimised self-adhesive labels and its own return of cores to suppliers for reuse has assisted them in staying on track to achieving sustainability targets.

Unpackaged Eco is a Melbourne-based organisation helping pioneer Australia's reusable packaging offering in cleaning products and household essentials. Its mission is to provide customers with a simple way to shop and refill everyday household items, without plastic packaging.

Unpackaged Eco's core offering is a range of cleaning products supplied in reusable bottles, which can be topped up at in-store refill stations that are currently available at 30 partner retail outlets. The brand also has a range of dry bath and body products sold in recyclable paper packaging, with no single-use plastic.

Reuse is also a priority behind the scenes, where the Unpackaged Eco team uses reusable bulk refill containers through its current return-and-pickup process for local retailers. Packaging is focused on renewable and highly recyclable or compostable materials such as glass and paper.

Recent innovations include reduction of plastic labels by moving to screen printed glass bottles to increase reusability and decrease waste, along with the introduction of automatic dispensing machines to make the refill experience as easy as possible for customers. The company has also adopted the use of paper packaging across non-liquid lines in the effort to stay plastic free.



Annual Awards

2020

CELEBRATING SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING EXCELLENCE

In November 2020, finalists in the APCO Annual Awards dialled in from across the country to celebrate individuals and organisations that are leading the way in sustainable packaging in Australia.

It was the first time that the Awards ceremony was held virtually – but there was no lack of recognition for the 45 organisations from across nine industry sectors that were finalists. They were acknowledged for their innovation in sustainable packaging, leadership, and commitment to achieving the 2025 Targets.

During the ceremony 20 Awards were announced with winners representing a broad range of industry sectors, including retail, electronics, manufacturing, healthcare, logistics and food and beverage.

In 2020, a new category was added to judging: the Our Packaging Future Awards. The category consists of four awards that acknowledge the achievement of Members who demonstrate leadership in sustainable packaging education – for both industry and consumers, improved collection and recycling systems, and end-market development.

Assistant Minister for Waste Reduction and Environmental Management, Trevor Evans MP, shared his praise for all the winners and finalists via a video played during the Awards ceremony and declared 2020 'a year of unparalleled delivery' towards the 2025 Targets.

APCO 2020 Award Winners

INDUSTRY SECTOR AWARDS

Agriculture & Nurseries:
Rivalea (Australia)

Airline, Accommodation & Tourism
Qantas Airways Limited

Chemicals, Hardware & Machinery
Colourtrend Paints (Aust.) Pty Ltd

Electronics
Kyocera Document
Solutions Australia Pty Ltd

Food & Beverage
Chobani Pty Ltd

General Merchandise & Apparel
3M Australia Pty Limited

Healthcare & Scientific
ABC Tissue Products Pty Ltd

Large Retailer
Officeworks Ltd

Logistics & Warehousing
CHEP Australia Pty Ltd

Packaging Manufacturers & Suppliers
LyondellBasell Australia Pty Ltd

Telecommunications
Optus Pty Ltd

Tobacco
Philip Morris Limited

APCO SUSTAINABILITY CHAMPION

Matthew Mills
Garden City Plastic

Annual Awards

2020

OUR PACKAGING FUTURE AWARDS

**Our Packaging Future Award for Improved
Collection and Recycling Systems**
TerraCycle Australia & New Zealand, TerraCycle's
Colgate Community Garden Challenge

**Our Packaging Future Award
for End-Market Leadership**
Coca-Cola Amatil Limited,
100 per cent recycled PET packaging

**Our Packaging Future Award for Packaging
Sustainability Education - Consumer Education**
Unilever ANZ, Empowering Aussies to #buybetter
with post-consumer recycled plastic

**Our Packaging Future Award for Packaging
Sustainability Education - Industry Education**
ALDI Stores (A Limited Partnership),
25by25 Plastics and Packaging Commitments
and Communication Campaign

SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING EXCELLENCE AWARD

LyondellBasell Australia Pty Ltd

Award Winners



Kellogg (Australia)

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING OPERATIONS

This reporting period, Kellogg Australia has reviewed all packaging on the Australian market against the Sustainable Packaging Guidelines and within the Packaging Recyclability Evaluation Portal (PREP). Following this, the company has redesigned almost all packaging for optimised materials efficiency and weight reduction, with more than 85% now recyclable through kerbside or via the REDcycle program. Operationally, Kellogg Australia has diverted almost 95% of all on-site waste from landfill and ensures any timber packaging used is made from either recycled or renewable content. The company also placed further focus on business-to-business packaging efficiency, with all shipping in Australia now done with returnable pallets for reuse, while cases have been redesigned to optimise bulk packing capacity and space. The team also actively communicates sustainability information to key suppliers and international divisions to ensure they are aware of Australia's 2025 National Packaging Targets.



A Brambles Company

CHEP Australia

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING OUTCOMES

Providing sustainable packaging is the core of CHEP Australia's business model. This reporting period saw CHEP facilitate a transport optimisation programme that, by maximising distribution packaging utilisation, collaboration and reverse logistics, saved over 153,000kms of transport and 122.5 tonnes of CO₂ emissions. The company further engages customers around the value of circularity through tracking and sharing quantifiable customer-specific environmental indicators. These include the CO₂, waste and resource savings customers have made as a direct result of using CHEP products as opposed to its single-use counterparts. Finally, with a packaging product range that sees 100% optimisation and a commitment to using only recycled or renewable materials, CHEP Australia has achieved its outstanding zero product-waste-to-landfill target.



COCA-COLA AMATIL

Coca-Cola Amatil

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN LEADERSHIP

Building on its ambitious goal to have a weighted average of 50% recycled plastic content across its entire Australian packaging portfolio by 2020, this reporting period saw Coca-Cola Amatil achieve the outstanding feat of 7 out of 10 of its plastic bottles in Australia made from 100% recycled materials. Furthermore, working to actively engage its consumers on packaging sustainability, the team introduced prominent point-of-sale and on-pack messaging to highlight increased recycled content rates across its portfolio, and further encourage responsible customer disposal and recycling behaviour. With all existing packaging SKUs already optimised for materials efficiency and recoverability, Coca-Cola Amatil also uses a leading global accounting tool developed by brand partner The Coca-Cola Company to evaluate the lifecycle emissions associated with all its primary packaging.

Award Winners

2020



KeepCup

HIGHEST PERFORMING NEW MEMBER

KeepCup demonstrates a business-wide commitment to providing sustainable solutions both in product and packaging. With a packaging strategy underpinned by the Sustainable Packaging Guidelines and regular Life Cycle Analysis assessments, KeepCup embraces circularity while focusing on reduction and reuse. Moreover, through its active consumer engagement on the importance of sustainability and reuse, this 'reuse revolution' estimates its customers avoid more than 5 million single-use cups being used every day. All retail packaging is recyclable, made from 100% renewable content and optimised for packaging materials efficiency, and labelled with FSC certification on-pack. This reporting period KeepCup has also worked to remove single-use business-to-business plastic packaging where possible, and diverted 85% of on-site waste from landfill and redesigned its packaging to reduce 91% of breakages.



TerraCycle Australia & New Zealand, TerraCycle's Colgate Community Garden Challenge

OUR PACKAGING FUTURE AWARD FOR
IMPROVED COLLECTION AND RECYCLING SYSTEMS

Run as part of the Colgate Oral Care Recycling Program, this project has seen innovative recyclers TerraCycle, partner with the Colgate Community Garden Challenge in recovering hard-to-recycle oral care waste. The challenge invites all Australian schools to freely register, collect and ship oral care waste, of any brand, to TerraCycle for recycling into new products. Supported by a number of exciting participation incentives, including the chance to win a recycled community garden set as well as monthly prizes such as upcycled pencil cases, 2019 saw students from more than 1,200 schools ship more than 230,000 pieces of oral care waste to TerraCycle for recycling. As well as diverting multiple tonnes of oral care waste from landfill, the challenge highlights that there are solutions for waste streams beyond kerbside bins, and encourages students and the wider school community to think twice about what they are sending to landfill. Five years on from the program's launch, Colgate's oral care program has diverted more than one million pieces of waste from landfill, while in two years, the TerraCycle Colgate Community Garden Challenge has educated thousands of students, teachers and parents on alternative recycling beyond kerbside collections.

Award Winners

Annual Awards

2020



Coca-Cola Amatil,

100 per cent recycled PET packaging

OUR PACKAGING FUTURE AWARD FOR END-MARKET LEADERSHIP

Coca-Cola Amatil is the first company to offer 100% recycled PET packaging for both its still and carbonated beverages in Australia. This has been possible due to local innovation spearheaded by its small, in-house research and development 'Futureworks' packaging team, based in Eastern Creek, Western Sydney. As the first company globally to package carbonated drinks at scale in 100% recycled PET, Coca-Cola Amatil's commitment to using recycled plastic content in the Australian beverages industry is a key driver in Australia's transition to a circular economy for packaging. Having achieved its commitment to make 7 out of 10 beverage bottles in its Australian portfolio from 100% recycled plastic by 2020, over 50% of the company's plastic portfolio is now made from recycled PET. Positively disrupting recycled plastic supply chains and demonstrating leadership to waste, recycling and packaging industries around the world, Coca-Cola Amatil's innovative food-grade recycled PET is an invaluable driver for change and an outstanding example of end-market leadership.



Unilever ANZ

Empowering Aussies to #buybetter with post-consumer recycled plastic

OUR PACKAGING FUTURE AWARD FOR PACKAGING

SUSTAINABILITY EDUCATION – CONSUMER EDUCATION

In 2019, Unilever ANZ introduced recycled HDPE plastic into its bottles. Supported by state government funding and celebrated by industry, media and alike, this outstanding step toward packaging circularity has been enhanced by the Unilever ANZ #buybetter recycled plastics communications campaign. Through raising awareness of Unilever ANZ's shift to recycled plastic, the campaign works to educate consumers on the difference between virgin and recycled material, and the importance of recycled content in driving a circular economy for plastic packaging. Through the campaign, Unilever ANZ aims to empower consumers to 'buy better' through sustainable purchasing decisions. Implemented across the first half of 2020, the campaign consisted of social media content creation and delivery, media relations, micro influencer engagement, government relations and retailer activations. Working to leverage the expertise and reach of Unilever partners, the #buybetter campaign demonstrates the impact of collective action in communicating the importance of recycled content and influencing behaviour change to inspire consumers to be part of the plastics solution. As well as this, through focusing on two key actions, making sustainable decisions at home, and closing the loop on plastics through buying packaging made with recycled content, the campaign offers an accessible example for other business to replicate in their own education campaigns.

Award Winners

Annual Awards

2020

ALDI Stores

25by25 Plastics and Packaging Commitments and Communication Campaign

OUR PACKAGING FUTURE AWARD FOR PACKAGING
SUSTAINABILITY EDUCATION – INDUSTRY EDUCATION



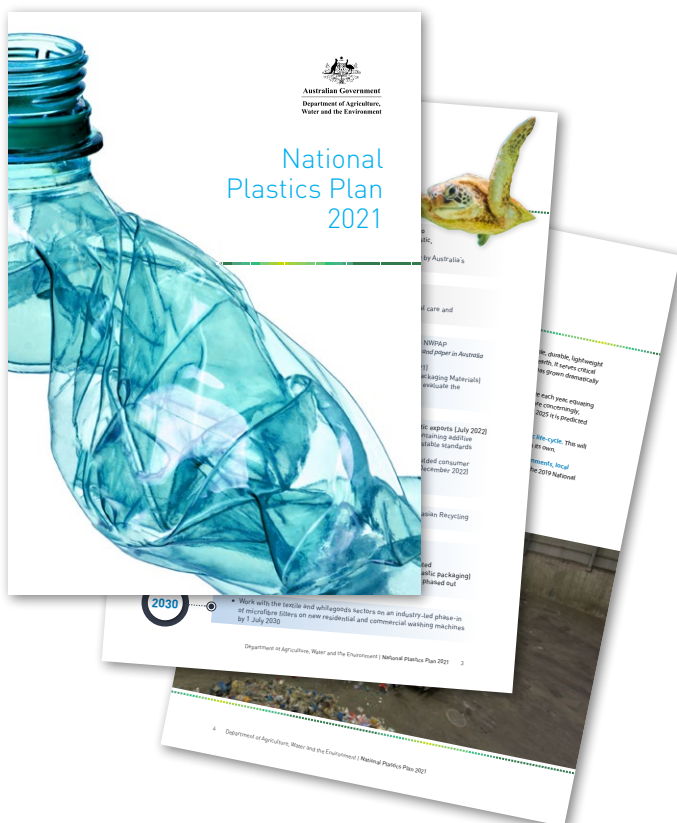
In June 2019, ALDI Stores announced its 25by25 Plastics and Packaging commitment, an ambitious goal to reduce all plastic packaging by 25% by 2025. Understanding that to make this goal possible, significant reductions in plastics and packaging would have to be achieved throughout its entire retail supply chain, ALDI Stores developed a campaign to engage, educate and inspire employees, suppliers, business partners and customers, on the importance of plastic reduction. The 25by25 campaign was launched with a sustainable packaging event for suppliers and business partners, followed by on-pack messaging, web and social media, catalogue and in-store marketing, as well as the company's first ever public plastic and packaging progress report. Furthermore, physical posters detailing the 25by25 commitment were deployed across every ALDI store, warehouse and office. Beyond this, the campaign also established a 'Packaging Taskforce' to prioritise plastic and packaging reduction activity across the ALDI product range, and has introduced 25by25 branded reusable metal water bottles at tills to replace their previously single-use plastic counterparts.

Government

APCO's involvement with governments intensified further in 2020-21 as community and government interest in plastics, packaging and product stewardship rose to new heights.

APCO has been at the forefront of industry engagement on the year's major policy developments including:

- The review of the National Environment Protection Measure (Used Packaging Materials) Measure 2011 and the Australian Packaging Covenant
- Australia's first National Plastics Plan
- Single use plastics (SUP) bans in some jurisdictions and progress towards bans in others
- Establishment of the Commonwealth's Recycling and Waste Reduction Act 2020
- Implementation of the National Waste Policy Action Plan, including waste export bans, investment in processing capacity and standards for resource recovery and recycling.



Our involvement in these activities included regular meetings with ministers, advisors and agencies, provision of data and other direct input to support policy development, no fewer than 21 written submissions to public consultation processes, and participation in a range of policy forums, including:

- National governance processes supporting implementation of the National Waste Policy Action Plan, including:
 - Resource Recovery Reference Group (RRRG)
 - RRRG Waste Data Working Group
 - RRRG Municipal Solid Waste Roadmap Working Group
- State and territory policy forums on single-use plastics, including:
 - South Australian Single-Use Plastics Stakeholder Taskforce
 - ACT Plastics Reduction Taskforce
 - Western Australian Single-Use Plastics Working Group
- Victorian Mixed Recyclables (Commingled) Standard Bin Contents Reference Group
- EPA Victoria Waste and Recycling Reference Group
- South Australian Container Deposit Stakeholder Reference Group
- Western Australian Waste Reform Advisory Group
- Queensland Organic Waste Stakeholder Advisory Group.

APCO also continued to administer the formal governance structure of the Australian Packaging Covenant, working closely with senior officials from the federal, state and territory governments and the Australian Local Government Association through the Australian Packaging Covenant Government Officials Group (GOG). The GOG provides for unparalleled engagement with governments on sustainable packaging, enabling shared understanding and alignment on the delivery of the 2025 Targets and the future of packaging product stewardship in Australia. Our discussions with the GOG in 2019-20 included the review of the NEPM and the Covenant, maximising alignment between APCO's projects and the mutually reinforcing activities of governments, and building a coordinated national approach to strengthening compliance with the NEPM.

NATIONAL ACTION ON PLASTICS

The publication by the Australian Government of the 'National Plastics Plan 2021' in March 2020 was a significant step towards a coordinated national approach on plastics. Importantly, the Plan highlights a range of APCO-led initiatives that are driving tangible improvements to plastic packaging reduction, recycling, and recycled content uptake in the Australian marketplace. In particular, the Plan:

- Recognised the ARL was as a key consumer recycling education tool, with the Australian Government committing to work with APCO and Members to:
 - apply the ARL on at least 80% of supermarket products by December 2023
 - roll out the ARL on business-to-business packaging
 - support ARL uptake by small to medium-enterprises (SMEs)
- Highlighted APCO's Recycled Content Pledge project, which will see major brands publicly commit to transitioning a percentage of their packaging from virgin to recycled material and help to stimulate major investment in packaging manufacturing and recycling processes for the future
- Reiterated the importance of the 2025 Targets to the Australian Government's approach to tackling plastics, particularly the target to phase out all problematic and unnecessary single-use plastic packaging by 2025. Under the new plan, Australia will phase out expanded polystyrene (EPS) from loose packaging fill and moulded packaging in consumer packaging (July 2022), and EPS consumer food and beverage containers (December 2022). The plan will also see the phase out of PVC packaging labels (December 2022). APCO is working with the Commonwealth Government and stakeholders to establish a roadmap to implement the National Plastics Plan's phase-out of business-to-consumer EPS packaging
- The outstanding work being led by a APCO Members and partner organisations, including Mars, Nestlé, REDcycle and Planet Ark's Circular Economy Hub.

The spirit of cooperation between the Commonwealth and state and territory governments on plastics was given a further boost at the Environment Ministers' meeting in April 2021. Ministers agreed a list of eight 'problematic and unnecessary' plastic product types for industry to phase out nationally by 2025 under the National Waste Policy Action Plan. These are:

- Lightweight plastic bags
- Plastic products misleadingly termed as 'degradable'
- Plastic straws
- Plastic utensils and stirrers
- Expanded polystyrene (EPS) consumer food containers (e.g. cups and clamshells)
- EPS consumer goods packaging (loose fill and moulded)
- Microbeads in personal health care products.

However, a lot of work on single-use plastics is continuing at state and territory level, with three jurisdictions – South Australia, Queensland and the ACT implementing bans in 2020-21 (the ACT's ban came into effect on 1 July 2021) and NSW, WA and Victoria working towards bans. APCO has continued to emphasise the importance of national alignment and evidence-based policy in these processes.





To contact APCO please visit our website
www.apco.org.au

