

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Industry and government collaborate to improve Australia's resource recovery**

Two of Australia's leading recycling and resource recovery organisations have joined forces with the Commonwealth Government to improve Australia's resource recovery standards and procedures to help reduce the amount of material going to landfill.

Funded by the Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment (DAWE), the National Waste and Recycling Industry Council (NWRIC) and Australian Council of Recycling (ACOR) will each deliver a project aligned to key targets in the National Waste Policy Action Plan to reduce total waste generated in Australia by 10 per cent per person by 2030, increase Australia's resource recovery rate to 80 per cent by 2030 and significantly increase the use of recycled content by governments and industry.

The National Waste and Recycling Industry Council (NWRIC) will be developing an up-to-date set of national performance standards for material recovery facilities (including sorting, primary and secondary processors).

NWRIC CEO Rose Read said specifications for plastics, paper, glass, metals and organics coming through the Municipal Solid Waste collection stream will be developed in consultation with end users (e.g. manufacturers, construction, farmers) and the recycling sector.

"The specifications will assist Australian recyclers meet market demands for recovered materials locally and overseas and improve the quality of recovered materials as tradeable commodities.

"Through the project we are also looking to stimulate domestic re-use of recovered materials by improving market information which leads to greater confidence in the quality of recovered materials," Ms Read said.

The Australian Council of Recycling (ACOR) will be developing a national accreditation or certification scheme for Australian recyclers to support resource recovery and focus on the circular economy.

ACOR CEO Suzanne Toumbourou said ACOR would be delivering a comprehensive scheme for recyclers that considered economic, regulatory and market impacts.

"To ensure we implement the best, fit-for-purpose national accreditation or certification scheme for Australian recyclers, ACOR and its project partner Equilibrium have developed a robust consultation process. This will include industry workshops to test the approach, process and intended outcomes of the scheme, as well as desktop and physical audits.

"For the recycling and resource recovery industry, a national accreditation or certification scheme will support continual improvement in recovery rates and improve stakeholder and investor confidence in their facilities.



“ACOR is incredibly supportive and has been a long-term advocate of a scheme such as this. A robust and transparent national accreditation or certification program for will give Australians confidence that the facilities that accept materials that are destined for recycling are operating at a high standard with respect to environmental and health and safety requirements as well as taking responsibility providing the material for re-use opportunities,” said Ms Toumbourou.

The Assistant Minister for Waste Reduction and Environmental Management Trevor Evans said these two projects are important foundations for building confidence, trust and best practice along the recycling supply chain.

“The NWRIC project will ensure that Australia’s recycled materials can be certified against a consistent set of national standards, and the ACOR initiative will provide a legitimacy tick, acknowledging that recyclers are meeting these performance standards” Assistant Minister Evans said.

“This enables those making and buying products containing Australian recycled materials to shop with confidence, knowing they are receiving high quality recycled materials that are produced safely and environmentally responsibly.

“Together, these projects contribute to the Australian Government’s national roadmap to improve the harmonisation of kerbside collections and resource recovery across Australia.”

It is envisaged that the NWRIC and ACOR projects will be complete by October 2021.

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#### ABOUT NWRIC

The National Waste and Recycling Industry Council (NWRIC) is funded by major national waste and recycling businesses operating Australia wide. Its core purpose is to represent its members and affiliates priorities to the government to advance waste and recycling in Australia.

#### ABOUT ACOR

Established in 1983, the Australian Council of Recycling (ACOR) is a leading national industry association for the recycling and resource recovery sector in Australia. It represents some 50 businesses who are part of a successful \$15 billion industry that employs some 50,000 Australians and generates exceptional environmental benefits for our society.