



MEDIA RELEASE

ACOR STATEMENT ON MEDIA REPORTS ON INDONESIA & RECYCLING

ACOR can confirm, following review late yesterday, that the shipping container in Indonesia at the centre of recent media reports is from an Australian recycling company, which is one of several who have exported similar material to Indonesia.

It consists of approximately 13 tonnes of mixed plastic material derived from household kerbside recycling from suburban Melbourne.

Our review has been advised that the material is not "toxic"; it is in fact material that householders have put in their Council recycling bins, such as plastic containers for motor oil and food products.

ACOR notes that one shipping container – or potentially eight - does not define any one company or the Australian recycling system. It does, though, reflect the reality of what is collected from Australian ratepayers via Councils' kerbside recycling programs, and our industry's subsequent attempts to do something useful with very heterogeneous material.

Similar container loads of exported mixed plastic have long met all expected requirements under both Australian and Indonesian law and policy. However, across Asia, authorities are changing their approaches in line with their own domestic circumstances.

Of the 37 million total tonnes diverted from landfill in a typical year in Australia, some 4 million total tonnes are exported with majority being metal and pulp and paper.

Approximately 415,000 tonnes of plastic is recycled by Australia every year or some 11% recycling of our society's total consumption (which is a lower recycling rate than all EU member countries including Bulgaria and Malta). Of that, some 235,000 tonnes are exported overall, and some 60,000 tonnes have been exported to Indonesia in the last twelve months or so, according to Commonwealth Government figures.

Plastic exported to Indonesia is approximately 1.5% of the total amount of material exported for recycling and less than .2% of all material recycled.

Material has historically been exported because overseas buyers pay for it as inputs to make useful products. In the case of mixed plastics in particular, there has historically been under capacity of domestic infrastructure and robust markets in Australia. In Europe, unlike here, there are specific policies in place to promote domestic recycled content manufacturing. Without export, our recycling rate for plastics could fall to as low as 5%.

In this context, ACOR welcomes recent action by Governments and industry to further develop domestic capacity and the opportunity to keep more material on-shore. As part of its responsibility for the improvement of recycling, ACOR is developing an app to assist householders to keep their recycling cleaner, and is forwarding an industry accreditation approach with further details to be announced soon.