



## media release

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### Recycling and Waste Associations Rate Major Parties Election Promises

The inaugural **Recycling & Waste Policy Report Card** on the Federal election policies of the ALP, Coalition and the Greens has found unprecedented political interest and progress in improving Australia’s resource recovery system.

With independent expert consultancy support by Equilibrium, the **Report Card**, released today, has been done by the major industry associations in the recycling, resource recovery and waste management sectors: Australian Council of Recycling (ACOR), Australian Industrial Ecology Network (AIEN), Australian Organics Recycling Association (AORA), and National Waste & Recycling Industry Council (NWRIC).

The **Report Card**, using a criterion-based analysis and independent scoring evaluation of all three Parties’ policies, determined that all have provided good to strong commitments to:

- upgrading and supporting innovative recycling infrastructure;
- establishing local markets for recycled content through government procurement;
- ensuring producers step up and meet their responsibilities for the life cycle of products, and;
- dealing with plastic pollution.

However, and what precluded grades of A’s or B’s, the **Report Card** also found fewer or minor commitments to aspects such as:

- establishing a circular economy that avoids waste and improves consumption choices;
- putting in place necessary policy and regulatory arrangements at the national level for consistent achievement of objectives across jurisdictions.

Party	Aggregated Grade	Strengthens	Weaknesses
ALP	C	recycling infrastructure funding; product stewardship funding; mandatory targets for recycled content procured; National Waste Commissioner; national container deposit scheme goal	community engagement; circular economy
Coalition	C	recycling infrastructure funding in particular; product stewardship funding; CRC funding; community engagement through a recycling app	national leadership; institutional implementation arrangements; procurement
Greens	C	recycling infrastructure funding; product stewardship funding and commitment to compulsory schemes; mandatory targets for recycled content procured; plastics research centre	capacity to implement; community Engagement

[According to Australian standards, a “C” indicates: evidence of learning demonstrates sound achievement at this year level.]

Pete Shmigel, ACOR CEO, said: "Recycling is the overall 'winner' as there is an unprecedented, tri-partisan and substantive response to the pressure being felt in municipal recycling from Asia and to growing community expectations. The ALP and the Coalition have come out neck and neck with good grades of C; the Greens also have a C, but less opportunity to realistically implement their vision."

Shmigel continued: "Taken as a whole, these policies recognise the landfill diversion, greenhouse gas reduction and jobs creation benefits of our \$20 billion and 50,000 job industry. ACOR supports their across-the-board emphasis on recycling infrastructure development so we can make more recycled content products in Australia. On the other hand, ACOR believes that both majors, not only the ALP, should commit to binding targets for governments buying those recycled content products."

Rose Read, NWRIC CEO, said: "The NWRIC is pleased with the commitments being made, in particular the ALP's response to our call for a National Waste Commissioner. This role is key to driving the national waste policy, collaboration across all levels of government; ensuring targets are set and met, and more regulatory consistency between states. However, the NWRIC is concerned with the lack of commitment by the major parties to use the co-regulatory powers of the Product Stewardship Act for batteries and all electronics."

Veronica Dullens, Executive Director AIEN, said: "AIEN sees these policies as recognition of the potential of our sector to drive environmental and economic outcomes. What is lacking is more specific recognition of the principles of a circular economy and more specific actions to move away from the 'take, make and throw' paradigm."

Diana De Hulsters, National Executive Officer AORA, said: "It's great that the Parties are focussed and committed to improved resource recovery. Now, it's time to get serious about implementation. To that end, and given that some 60% of a household rubbish bin is potentially compostable, we would like to see comprehensive recycling targets put in place in the National Waste Policy – not only those for packaging which is a minority part of the overall waste stream."

The full **Report Card** can be found at <http://aien.com.au/wordpress/download/97937/>.

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