

Recycling Industry Strategic Plan Implementation Update

June 2019



In July 2018 the Victorian Government released its \$37 million Recycling Industry Strategic Plan in response to China's restrictions on the import of recyclable materials.

This package was developed in consultation with industry, local government, peak bodies, manufacturers and environment groups.

The *Recycling Industry Strategic Plan* was developed to provide short, mid and long-term solutions for the recycling industry, to help deliver a safer, more robust and resilient recycling sector.

This bulletin summarises the progress being made to date against the four main goals of the plan.

Goal one: Stabilise the recycling sector

- Local Government Victoria (LGV) has distributed \$10.8 million in relief funding to 76 of 79 Victorian councils and three alpine resort boards to assist in meeting the increased costs of recycling services. The funding has assisted local governments and the recycling industry to transition to new contractual and pricing arrangements.

- Sustainability Victoria has provided \$2.1 million in grants to five recycling companies to improve the quality of paper, plastic and cardboard, to help meet market demand for cleaner materials. This funding will help build infrastructure that processes over 65,000 tonnes of household recycling each year.

- To support local councils improve their contractual arrangements with recyclers, in February 2019 LGV

On 27 May 2019 the Victorian Government released its state budget. The Government will invest a further \$34.9 million to strengthen the Victorian recycling sector. The \$34.9 million will go towards an integrated package of reforms, including:

- accelerating collaborative procurement of recycling services to promote new investment in the sector
- co-investment with industry to increase domestic remanufacturing capabilities
- community education and behaviour change campaigns
- a review by the Essential Services Commission of waste and recycling services
- a review of the landfill levy

This funding will build on the strong foundations of the \$37 million Recycling Industry Strategic Plan. Bringing the government's investment in the waste and resource recovery industry to more than \$135 million.

and the Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Group released [guidance notes and model contract clauses](#) and [recycling pricing model](#).

Goal two: Increase the quality of recycled materials

- In December 2018, Sustainability Victoria announced \$4.8 million in grants through the [Resource Recovery Infrastructure Fund](#). These grants will fund 20 projects to improve their infrastructure for collection, sorting and processing of materials. Across the 20 projects, it is

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expected that 150 jobs will be created, and 335,000 tonnes will be diverted from landfill each year.

- The fourth grant round closed on 30 April 2019 and grant recipients will be announced soon. Previous grant recipients include:

- Schulz Organic Dairy- \$49,015 to build a bottle washing facility to replace plastic bottles with returnable, reusable glass bottles.
 - Outlook (Vic) Inc- \$112,867 to establish a new resource recovery facility.
 - Warrnambool City Council- \$300,000 to support the introduction of a kerbside food organics/garden organics collection service to over 15,000 households, diverting approximately 8,500 tonnes of organic waste from landfill each year.
- Sustainability Victoria and DELWP have commenced detailed analysis on potential interventions to improve the quality of recyclable materials collected from households. Results will be shared with local governments later in the year.

Goal three: Improve the productivity of the recycling sector

- Victoria's seven Waste and Resource Recovery Groups are supporting local councils to collaborate in procuring recycling services.
- The Victorian Resource Recovery Facilities Audit Taskforce, led by EPA Victoria, continues to oversee a program of joint agency inspections of facilities across the state to identify high risk sites and take action to reduce the fire risk posed by stockpiling.
- As at 16 May 2019, the Taskforce had completed 541 inspections involving 162 high risk sites. EPA has issued 160 notices and 31 sanctions. EPA intelligence has identified an additional 65 sites that are currently actioned for inspection in 2019.

Goal four: Develop markets for recycled materials

- In December 2018, Sustainability Victoria announced \$1.5 million in grants through the Research, Development and Demonstration program. This will fund ten projects to conduct research and field trials to develop new markets for recovered materials and increase their uptake in Victoria.
- Round two of the Research, Development and Demonstration grants closed 31 May 2019. \$1.2 million will support projects to conduct research and field trials to develop new markets.
- Sustainability Victoria has released two editions of a series of bulletins designed to provide up to date information on the quantity and destination of materials recovered for recycling, and issues and opportunities for resource recovery in Victoria.

Upcoming actions

- DELWP is preparing a circular economy policy and action plan for Victoria. We will begin consultation with stakeholders and the public later this year.
- With support from the Victorian Government, Yarra City Council will begin trialling separate glass collection with 1000 residents in June 2019. DELWP has a working group for councils interested in glass separation. Councils who would like to join the discussion can contact Tessa via RISP.project@delwp.vic.gov.au.
- Sustainability Victoria is developing a statewide recycling education campaign that will be launched later this year.
- Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Group is collaborating with the Municipal Association of Victoria to develop a new standard contract for recycling processing.

The State of Victoria Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning 2019



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