



Our ref: AA1000695  
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By email

24 March 2025

Dear Interested Party

**Re: Soft Plastic Stewardship Australia application for authorisation AA1000695–  
interested party consultation**

On 18 March 2025, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (the **ACCC**) received an application for authorisation from Soft Plastic Stewardship Australia Limited (**SPSA**). This email is to invite you to comment. You are welcome to pass this email on to others who may wish to make submissions.

SPSA is seeking authorisation under the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010* (Cth) on behalf of its itself, initial and current or future participants. The initial members of SPSA are:

- ALDI Foods Pty Limited
- Coles Group Limited and its related bodies corporate
- Woolworths Group Limited and its related bodies corporate
- Nestle Australia Ltd
- Mars Australia Pty Ltd
- McCormick Foods Australia Pty Ltd.

Authorisation would give SPSA and its members legal protection from competition laws to establish and operate a voluntary product stewardship scheme, managed by SPSA, to focus on recycling used soft plastic packaging materials. The scheme is proposed to be funded through the imposition of a levy on scheme participants. SPSA plans to develop an effective and efficient scheme by leveraging existing collection systems and sortation infrastructure. SPSA proposes to use levy funds to pay for the net incremental costs of collection, sortation, processing and recycling, as well as research and development in order to stimulate investment confidence to develop recycling capability. Scheme participants may choose to pass on the cost of the scheme levy through the relevant supply chain, including to consumers.

Subject to authorisation, SPSA is proposing to contribute \$16 million to Coles and Woolworths by way of set off over the authorisation period sought. This is intended to cover some of the costs incurred by Woolworths and Coles in remediating the REDcycle stockpile.

SPSA is seeking authorisation for 8 years. A full copy of the application for authorisation is available on the ACCC's [authorisations public register](#).

For information about authorisations more generally, please see the [ACCC website](#).

## Interim authorisation

SPSA has also requested urgent interim authorisation to allow it to commence collection of the scheme levy and transfer existing arrangements that the Australian Food and Grocery Council has in place for small-scale kerbside pilots, prior to the ACCC's final determination in relation to the substantive application for authorisation.

SPSA has also requested further interim authorisation at the draft determination stage to seek information from the market to negotiate potential contracts for services and to share operational information and data between SPSA and the Soft Plastics Taskforce (Coles, Woolworths and ALDI) to allow SPSA to prepare to take over the operation of the instore collection pilot program and expand on these pilots, prior to the ACCC's final determination in relation to the substantive application for authorisation.

## Making a submission

The ACCC invites you to make a submission on the application for authorisation. In making your submission, please provide information, evidence and views about the likely public benefits, effects on competition and any other public detriment that you consider will result from the proposed conduct.

Submissions in relation to the urgent interim authorisation request are requested by **7 April 2025**. All other submissions in relation to this application (including for interim authorisation at the draft determination stage) are requested by **22 April 2025**. If you wish to request an extension, please contact us on the details below as early as possible. Submissions after the due date (or after any extension granted) may not be taken into account.

Submissions should be lodged via the web form accessible on the public register page for this matter. Alternatively, if you would like to provide comments orally, please contact Hannah Craig via the details at the end of this email.

Your submission **will** be placed on the ACCC's [authorisations public register on the internet](#) unless you have made a request (with reasons) for us to exclude part or all of the submission from the public register. (see [Guidelines for Excluding Information from the Public Register for more information on how to make a request and how we assess requests](#)).

## Timetable

The ACCC will progress its assessment of the application in a timely manner. An indicative timetable is set out on the public register.

This email has been placed on the ACCC's public register. If you have any questions or wish to discuss any aspect of this matter, please do not hesitate to contact Hannah Craig on [REDACTED] or [exemptions@acc.gov.au](mailto:exemptions@acc.gov.au).

Yours sincerely

Tess Macrae  
Director  
Competition Exemptions