

Supermarket Soft Plastics Taskforce Meeting 11 Minutes

24 February 2023, 9:00am - 10:30am

Attendees

Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water: Kate Lynch, Cameron Hutchison, Jane Cronin

Coles: Adam Fitzgibbons, Brooke Donnelly, Llew Fleming, Simone Brookes, Kristen Boverly-Spencer, Cath Macneil, Wade Mosse, Sally Fielke, Matthew Swindells,

Woolworths: Laurie Kozlovic, Nerilee Telford, Simran Kaur, Amalesh Sukumar, Christopher Lane, Eloise Fanuli, Megan Hinchliffe

ALDI: Daniel Baker

Minutes

Agenda item 1: Welcome and attendance

- Kate Lynch confirmed her role as Chair for this meeting on behalf of the Department.

Outcomes:

- The Department confirmed that Liz Kasell/REDcycle was an apology for the meeting and would not be attending.
- **Attendees agreed** that Woolworths would take the minutes for this meeting.
- **Attendees agreed** to repurpose the first 20 minutes of the agenda (which were otherwise put aside for Liz Kasell/REDcycle to provide an update) to check in on actions and timeframes coming out of the Taskforce Meeting 10 on Thursday 23rd February.

Agenda item 2: REDcycle's update (repurposed to Check in on Participants' actions, timeframes)

- Participants confirmed Coles and Woolworths had made an offer to Liz Kasell/REDcycle on 23 February 2023 to take control of REDcycle's existing known stockpiled soft plastics and to provide safe storage of that material, while recycling solutions were being explored.
- Participants confirmed the NSW EPA, VIC EPA, SA EPA, ACCC and ALDI were informed of Coles and Woolworths' offer in advance of the media release.
- Coles and Woolworths discussed the NSW EPA's revised draft Clean-Up Notice [REDACTED]
- Participants discussed their approach to the Roadmap for Recovery document, including input required from the Department and external partners (AFGC, APCO and ACOR).

Outcomes:

- **Attendees agreed that** [REDACTED]
- Department agreed to provide the list of projects that had received grants under the Recycling Modernisation Fund that had soft plastics recycling capability.

Agenda item 3: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) update

- The Department introduced members of the NSW EPA, VIC EPA, SA EPA, TAS EPA, WA EPA and NT EPA.
- The Participants noted that Coles and Woolworths made an offer to Liz Kasell/REDcycle on 23 February 2023 to take control of REDcycle's existing known stockpiled soft plastics and to provide safe storage of

that material, while recycling solutions were being explored, and at present were awaiting feedback from from Liz Kasell/REDCycle on this offer.

- The Department and Participants provided a brief update on progress on the Roadmap to Recovery.
 - [REDACTED]
 - Participants noted a pragmatic approach will be taken to manage the stockpiles and support from the state and federal governments will likely be required to facilitate the most effective pathway forward.
 - The Participants noted that together, Coles and Woolworths have contributed more than \$20 million to the collection of soft plastics material via the REDcycle program to date, and consideration is required from the EPAs and governments [REDACTED] as Participants work to come up with an industry solution for the recycling of soft plastics.
 - The Department acknowledged the complexities the Participants were working with, including the lack of transparency at present about the nature/volume/quality of stockpiled soft plastics. The Department acknowledged this information was important to be able to manage and process the soft plastics appropriately [REDACTED]
- The EPAs asked various questions of the Participants in response to the information provided, including on the timing of the offer to REDcycle, when the Roadmap would be released publicly and how they could support the Participants.
- The Participants welcomed VIC and NSW EPAs offer to step in to help expedite access to relevant sites and approve storage solutions as required. The Participants also flagged it would be helpful for the EPAs to be mindful of consumer perceptions in any forthcoming public communications about the processing of the stockpiles, [REDACTED]

Outcomes:

- Participants agreed to provide [REDACTED]

Agenda item 4: Communications and reporting

- The Participants agreed not to name specific processing operators in the Roadmap to Recovery document as Participants are still working through their capacity capabilities and are mindful of non-disclosure agreements in place.
- Participants noted that whilst it is important to acknowledge our responsibilities as retailers, Participants are not waste management companies and have limited capabilities in that respect.

Outcomes:

- Participants agreed to reconsider timelines for the short, medium and long-term solutions set out in the Roadmap to recovery in light of the new arrangement in place for the management of stockpiles.

Agenda item 5: Other business and wrap-up

Outcomes:

- Participants agreed to discuss labelling at the next Taskforce meeting.