

Supermarket Soft Plastics Taskforce Meeting 22 Minutes

5 July 2024, 10 - 11am

Attendees

Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water ('Department'):

Cameron Hutchison, Jane Cronin, Annette Williams

Coles: Brooke Donnelly, Nina Stephens, Catherine Macneil, Lizzy Rogers, Simone Brookes, Sean O'Malley.

Woolworths: Jonathan Russell, Laurie Kozlovic, Nerilee Telford, Peter Bruce, Alice Yang.

Aldi: Daniel Baker.

Minutes

Agenda item 1: Welcome

- Cameron Hutchison delivered an acknowledgement of country.
- Cameron Hutchison provided an update on the recent meeting of the Federal and State Environmental Ministers in which the Ministers affirmed that driving a circular economy for plastics is a priority, while acknowledging that there was a need to ensure there was sufficient scale and spread of recycling capacity and sufficient end markets for the recycled material to enable a sustainable solution.

Outcomes

- **Attendees agreed** Woolworths would take minutes for this meeting.

Agenda item 2: Update on the stockpile and reprocessing capacity

- Woolworths provided an update on the Victorian stockpile, noting that:
 - progress on the processing of the stockpiled material in Victoria had slowed due to one of the two processors currently operational in Victoria, Close The Loop, temporarily pausing its operations [REDACTED];
 - the updated forecast based on currently available information was that the full stockpile in Victoria is forecasted to be processed around [REDACTED], with the stockpiled material in the warehouse at [REDACTED] forecasted to be cleared and processed around [REDACTED]; and
 - an ongoing watch-out was the need to ensure there is sufficient demand for the processed material to enable and support increases in processing capacity. The Department confirmed that [REDACTED]
- Woolworths provided an update on the NSW stockpile, noting that:
 - in June, the targeted volume of stockpile material had been processed;
 - in July, based on current information, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- Woolworths provided an update on the South Australian stockpile, noting that:
 - Woolworths is currently in discussions with a potential processor who had indicated [REDACTED]. Cameron Hutchison provided an update that [REDACTED];
 - [REDACTED] is in the final stages of obtaining [REDACTED] approval to build a processing facility [REDACTED]; and
 - the Participants were aware of a third potential processor was exploring contractual arrangements with [REDACTED], which would support the establishment of a further processing facility.

Outcomes

- **The Participants agreed** to provide an update at the next Soft Plastics Taskforce meeting.

Agenda item 3: Soft plastics instore trial

- Woolworths provided an update on the Victorian soft plastics instore trial, noting that:
 - the Participants continued to see steady increases in volumes collected to approximately [REDACTED]; and
 - the trial in Victoria would not be expanded to additional stores until Close The Loop became re-operational, or another processor became available, to avoid a single-point-of-failure risk. Woolworths noted that the volumes currently being collected in the Victorian instore collection trial constituted approximately [REDACTED] of the processing capacity of CRDC, with the remainder of CRDC's capacity being utilised to process the stockpile.

- Woolworths provided an update on [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Agenda item 4: [REDACTED] update

Brands Engagement

PUBLIC VERSION

- Coles provided an update that the recent meeting with a broader group of brands to explore [REDACTED] had been met with support and positive engagement.

[REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

Outcomes

- **The Participants agreed** to provide an update at the next Taskforce meeting.

[REDACTED]

Agenda item 5: Other business and wrap-up

ACCC Authorisation

- Coles noted that:
 - the ACCC was currently considering the Participants' reauthorisation application ahead of the expiry of the current authorisation in July;
 - the ACCC's current published timetable indicated that the ACCC would make a decision as to any interim authorisation in July; and
 - the Participants were continuing to engage with the ACCC regarding the application.

Outcomes

- **The Attendees agreed** to schedule further Taskforce meetings, noting that those meetings were contingent on the ACCC granting interim authorisation.

Agenda item 6: Meeting close