

4 April 2025

Australian Competition and Consumer Commission  
GPO Box 3131  
Canberra  
ACT 2601

### **Re. Soft Plastic Stewardship Australia authorisation - public consultation**

Essity is a leading provider of locally manufactured personal care and professional hygiene products in Australia, with well know brands such as Libra, TOM Organic, TENA and Modibodi. Essity is committed to achieving sustainability targets that minimise the impact of our products on the planet. Essity supports the authorisation of SPSA to enable accelerated progress towards an effective product stewardship model for soft plastic packaging waste in Australia.

The challenges facing industry, government and our communities in addressing soft plastic waste are significant.

The collapse of REDcycle means there are currently limited options for consumers wanting to minimise the impact of their soft plastic packaging waste on the planet.

Recycling rates for soft plastic packaging are low – about 6% of the total volume placed on the market is recycled. With low recycling rates, the vast majority ends up in landfill, while the lack of recoverable value of soft plastic packaging also leads to fugitive soft plastic waste ending up in our environment.

To address the problem of soft plastic waste, Soft Plastic Stewardship Australia (SPSA) represents an effective means of enabling industry collaboration to identify and progress circular solutions.

Critically, 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 transforming those areas where more work is required to achieve a circular economy for soft plastic packaging waste in Australia.

Without industry collaboration, any progress is likely to be slow with a fragmented approach leading to potential piecemeal solutions. By working together, brand owners, manufacturers and retailers have the opportunity to accelerate progress through scale that can support the significant investment required to close the gaps that hinder soft plastics from becoming a circular material in Australia.

An effective industry-led initiative will deliver significant economic benefits through increased investment in collection and recycling infrastructure, including more jobs and capturing stored value in soft plastic waste that currently ends up in landfill.

Your sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jake Hatton', written in a cursive style.

Jake Hatton  
Head of Sustainability  
Essity Australasia

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