



Australian Packaging Covenant

12 April 2016

Ms Christine McDonald
Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600



Dear Ms McDonald

RE: SENATE INQUIRY THE THREAT OF MARINE PLASTIC POLLUTION IN AUSTRALIA

During the public hearings for Senate Inquiry into the Threat of Marine Plastic Pollution in Australia, several references were made regarding the Australian Packaging Covenant (APC). The National Packaging Covenant Industry Association (NPCIA) is the operator of the APC, and we wish to state the following for the public record.

The APC's role

The APC is a key national mechanism for implementing Strategy 3 of the National Waste Policy – better management of packaging to improve the use of resources, reduce the environmental impact of packaging design, enhance away from home recycling and reduce litter.

The APC establishes a framework for the effective life cycle management of consumer packaging and paper products delivered through a collaborative approach between all sectors of the packaging supply chain, consumers, collectors, reprocessors and all spheres of government.

The NPCIA is working towards stronger governance, a more focused targeting of a selection of key packaging and environmental issues, along with improved processes.

The commitment by governments and industry to the sustainable design, use and recovery of packaging has never been more important.

A unique value

The APC has 986 signatories across the entire packaging supply chain – from primary producers, to packaging manufacturers, to consumer product manufacturers/importers, to retailers, and end-of-life processors.



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Just as the supply chain is long, the influence of an individual organisation across the supply chain is limited. Fewer than 10% have operations spanning five or more parts of their supply chain, compared to 66% who influence just one to two segments.

This unique value was recognised in the hearings, when it was stated that the APC has the ability to influence the impact of marine litter because of its coverage of the whole supply chain; and through its focus on design and the Sustainable Packaging Guidelines.

Research underway

It is noted that throughout the public hearings many suggested the ideal solution to eliminate plastic debris in the ocean is stopping it at the source.

On behalf of the NPCIA, I am pleased to confirm that in 2015 the APC entered into an agreement with the CSIRO to co-fund the Marine Environment Analysis Project: *'Policy and Practices Analysis to Reduce Littering and Identify Source Point Losses'*.

This project is investigating the relationship between debris in the marine environment and litter from land sources, and the effectiveness of programs to mitigate it. Using reference to a range of existing data sets, the CSIRO will use a spatial statistical model across the Australian coastline to evaluate likely routes for debris to move in the marine environment, which will look at linkages between systems such as rivers, watersheds, wind and roads. It will also look at the type of site (industrial, retail etc.), development and proximity to the marine environment. Finally, the CSIRO will examine government activities in the marine areas and whether they have a distinguishable impact on littering or coastal debris.

This is a first of its kind project and is due for completion 30 June 2016.

Funding comes from CSIRO and the APC, and will have input from a wider litter data stakeholder group which will include most of the jurisdictions, some community and industry, and other academics.

Further information

I hope this information is of assistance and should you have any further questions, please contact me

Yours sincerely

Irish Hyde
Chief Executive Officer