

# Recycling Victoria

Providing strategic leadership and oversight to the waste and recycling sector

*For a sustainable and thriving circular economy*

The establishment of Recycling Victoria is a key component of the Victorian Government's \$515 million circular economy plan, *Recycling Victoria: a new economy*, to reduce waste and landfill and transition to a sustainable and thriving circular economy.

Recycling Victoria is a new state-wide regulator that will provide strategic leadership, oversight and regulation of the waste and recycling sector, to support market stability, planning, and long-term circular economy objectives. It will commence operations from 1 July 2022.

Recycling Victoria will have distinct functions and powers (*see box to the right*) and a strong regional focus and presence across the state.



## Recycling Victoria will:

- provide leadership, stewardship and oversight of the new container deposit scheme (CDS)
- develop and implement strategies and plans to foster sustainable, resilient, and effective markets within a circular economy
- identify, monitor, manage and mitigate risks in the waste and recycling sector
- oversee and build capacity for municipal waste and recycling service delivery, including by supporting local government in the development and management of their procurement, and facilitating strategic procurement for groups of councils
- enforce service standards in relation to the quality and performance of waste or recycling services
- collect, analyse and report on data about the waste and recycling sector
- conduct inquiries into the waste and recycling sector on referral by the Minister or on the initiative of the Head of Recycling Victoria
- monitor and enforce compliance with requirements under the *Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) Act 2021*.

The *Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) Act 2021* provides the Head of Recycling Victoria with all the powers necessary to perform Recycling Victoria's functions, including graduated and proportionate enforcement powers.

Some of Recycling Victoria's functions are currently performed by Victoria's Waste and Resource Recovery Groups (WRRGs). Recycling Victoria will expand on these functions and deliver a broader functional remit than currently performed by the WRRGs.

All staff employed by WRRGs will transfer to Recycling Victoria, to enable continuity and allow Recycling Victoria to retain WRRG staff's regional presence, experience and expertise.

The regulatory and decision-making powers of the Head of Recycling Victoria will be supported by transparency and accountability measures (see box below).

### Transparency & accountability measures include:

- the Head of Recycling Victoria will prepare and publish a Charter of Engagement and detailed engagement strategy detailing how consultation will be carried out with councils, industry, regional communities and Traditional Owners
- the Head of Recycling Victoria will prepare and publish a strategic plan and an annual report
- mandatory publication of Ministerial directions online and in the annual report, unless information is deemed confidential or may have commercial sensitivity risks
- oversight by integrity bodies such as the Victorian Ombudsman, the Victorian Auditor General and the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission.

### Local and regional engagement

Engagement across local government and regional communities will be embedded into Recycling Victoria's operations, including through the following legislative mechanisms:

- Charter of Engagement
- annual reports
- advisory committees.

Recycling Victoria will be required to prepare a Charter of Engagement and a community engagement strategy setting out how Recycling Victoria will consult and engage with local government, industry, regional communities and Traditional Owners.

Recycling Victoria will report annually on the engagement activities that it has undertaken in accordance with the community engagement strategy.

To ensure local government and regional input is maintained, the *Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) Act 2021* requires that the Minister establish at least one advisory committee with members that have skills, knowledge and experience relating to local government and regional communities. This will ensure the Minister and the Head of Recycling Victoria are informed and advised about matters of concern to local government and regional communities. The Minister is also able to establish additional advisory committees that are place-based, topic-based, or sector-based, as required.

The Government has also committed to establishing a time-bound local government advisory committee to advise on the impacts and opportunities for local government during the establishment of Recycling Victoria.

### Implementation of Recycling Victoria

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) is currently working through comprehensive implementation processes for transitioning resources and functions to Recycling Victoria, including by considering staffing, financial, legal and all other necessary matters, and ensuring a strong ongoing regional presence. This is being developed in close consultation with all affected entities, including the WRRGs and Sustainability Victoria.

Recycling Victoria will commence operations from 1 July 2022 and will expand its functions over time as supporting regulations and other subordinate instruments are made. Regulations and subordinate instruments will be developed in consultation with local governments, businesses and the community. The expansion of Recycling Victoria's functions will align with stated government commitments, such as to have a container deposit scheme operational in 2023.

### Accessibility

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