



# Annual Report

2022 – 2023

RECYCLING VICTORIA

We acknowledge and respect Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it.

We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

DEECA is committed to genuinely partnering with Victorian Traditional Owners and Victoria's Aboriginal community to progress their aspirations.



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# Message from the Head, Recycling Victoria



**Tony Circelli**  
Head, Recycling Victoria

I am pleased to present the Recycling Victoria 2022-23 Annual Report on the operation of the *Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) Act 2021 (CE Act)*.

Recycling Victoria was created to lead, be a steward and provide oversight of the waste, recycling and resource recovery sector and support the development of a circular economy.

Transitioning to a stronger circular economy will encourage innovation, create more sustainability focussed jobs and provide quality goods and services to end users. This will enable more consistent and higher quality recycled material for remanufacturing into new goods to supply the marketplace.

Our work focuses on building a world class circular economy system that minimises the impact on non-renewable resources and makes a strong contribution towards a more sustainable and climate resilient future for all Victorians.

The past 12 months has seen Recycling Victoria establish its team and operations, the operating approach with portfolio partners and governance framework to commence delivery of key statutory initiatives. During our first year, we worked closely with industry and local and state government on the shared duty to pursue more sustainable practices that consider the development of a stronger circular economy.

## About Recycling Victoria

Recycling Victoria commenced operation on 1 July 2022. It is a central part of the Victorian Government's once in a generation reform of Victoria's waste and recycling system, to make it more effective, accountable, and consistent with community expectations.

The establishment of Recycling Victoria is a key initiative of the Victorian Government's circular economy plan, *Recycling Victoria: A new economy*, released in February 2020.

The Head, Recycling Victoria was established under section 15 of the CE Act. The Head, Recycling Victoria reports to the Deputy Secretary, Regions, Environment, Climate Action and First Peoples of the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) and is supported by three Executive Directors. The Head, Recycling Victoria reported to the Secretary of DEECA until 31 July 2023.

Ingrid Stitt MP, Minister for the Environment, is the responsible minister for Recycling Victoria. The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP was the responsible minister until November 2022.

## Our key achievements

I am proud that in our first year of operation, we have;

- developed the strategy and capabilities required to enable Recycling Victoria to deliver effectively and efficiently on its functions
- commenced delivery of key actions to improve the reliability and stability of the waste and recycling system
- raised the public profile of Recycling Victoria as the government agency responsible for providing leadership and oversight of the waste and recycling system to enable the growth of a stronger circular economy
- listened to numerous stakeholders, particularly local government, to better understand their capacity and needs to manage collaborative procurement for infrastructure and services
- ensured that self-determination of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Victorians is recognised and designed into our developing services.

Our key initiatives and projects in 2022-23 included:

- **Establishment:** Recycling Victoria was formed by transferring staff from the 7 former Waste and Resource Recovery Groups and specific teams from within Sustainability Victoria.
- **Strategic planning:** The Strategic Plan, Regulatory Strategy, Charter of Engagement and Community Engagement Strategy were submitted to the Minister in June 2023 following a targeted consultation period with stakeholders. These are important strategic documents, for our stakeholders and staff. They set a clear vision for our collective aspirations, including identifying the objectives and priorities to focus efforts over the next 3 years. The strategic framework outlines the role we collectively play in the transition to a stronger circular economy.

- **Container Deposit Scheme:** Recycling Victoria is responsible for the oversight and regulation of the Container Deposit Scheme, CDS Vic, which is set to start on 1 November 2023. We have:

- recruited highly skilled team members
- established a strategic approach to contract management to support mobilisation and operation of the scheme
- launched instruments and protocols for public consultation via Engage Victoria
- led relationships with interstate agencies responsible for oversight of CDS to facilitate learnings and cross-jurisdictional collaboration on operationalising CDS in Victoria.

- **Waste to Energy Scheme:** The purpose of the Waste to Energy Scheme is to control the amounts and types of waste processed in thermal waste to energy facilities. We have:

- launched Stage 1 of the scheme, which pertains to licensing of existing operators
- supported our colleagues from the former Waste and Recycling (now Climate Action and Circular Economy) Division to develop the regulations for Stage 2 of the scheme, which pertains to cap licensing for new waste to energy facilities.

- **Data Hub:** We have built and launched an online Data Hub, a high-quality waste data management system for our investment in market research, risk management and strategic planning. Two sets of core statistics for Victoria have been produced and released:

- 2019-20 State-wide industry waste and recycling performance figures for Victoria
- 2020-21 Victorian local government waste and recycling performance figures.

Our data will better inform Victoria's recycling industry, local government procurement and investment decisions, and behaviour change initiatives and campaigns.

## Engagement

We have worked hard at establishing an approach that values engagement as a key part of how we undertake our work. Recycling Victoria engaged regularly during the year with key stakeholders in local government and the waste, recycling and resource recovery sector. Examples of stakeholder engagement:

- Recycling Victoria continued its partnership with local government leaders through the Recycling Victoria Local Government CEO Forum.
- We worked with colleagues in the former Waste and Recycling (now Climate Action and Circular Economy) Division to revitalise and reposition industry engagement through the Resource Recovery, Recycling and Waste Industry Group (RRRWIG). This ensured the group could focus on the new functions and purpose of Recycling Victoria.
- Site visits were a great way for Recycling Victoria to learn more about the progress individual businesses are making towards a circular economy.
- We presented at a range of forums and conferences, including the Australian Organics Recycling Association conference in June 2023.
- Recycling Victoria leaders travelled across the state to meet with 75 local governments and engaged with 141 senior leaders and CEOs during our regional visits between November 2022 and March 2023.

As Head of Recycling Victoria, I:

- led the consultation on the draft Recycling Victoria Strategic Plan
- presented at multiple conferences
- attended various governance committee meetings
- led the Victoria wide regional and site visit program
- facilitated a number of stakeholder meetings.

## Acknowledging our partners

Recycling Victoria recognises the importance of working closely with our lead portfolio partners and appreciated their support during our inaugural year including:

- the former Waste and Recycling Division within the Environment, Climate Action and First Peoples Group (now Climate Action and Circular Economy Division, within Regions, Environment, Climate Action and First Peoples Group) in DEECA
- Environment Protection Authority Victoria
- Sustainability Victoria.

We formed relationships across DEECA, including with the Secretary and Deputy Secretaries, the Minister, Minister's Office and with Victorian local government and waste and recycling industry.

We collaborated with our partners on a range of important topics including:

- service standards regulations and kerbside reform
- data standards regulations and regulations to support risk, consequence and contingency planning
- standing up Victoria's Container Deposit System.

I would like to thank Recycling Victoria staff for their commitment, professionalism and dedication throughout the year. This is further appreciated in light of start-up challenges. They continued to be champions for more sustainable outcomes for our current and future generations. I would also like to sincerely thank Ingrid Stitt MP and the Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP and their Offices, along with DEECA staff and senior leadership, for their support and direction during our establishment year.



**Tony Circelli**

Head, Recycling Victoria  
29 September 2023

# Purpose

This report on Recycling Victoria's operations under the CE Act is submitted by the Head, Recycling Victoria to the Minister under Section 22 of the CE Act.

A detailed schedule of compliance with Section 22 is contained at the conclusion of this report. Recycling Victoria's annual compliance reporting is incorporated within the DEECA Annual Report.

## Operating context

The Head, Recycling Victoria was established under section 15 of the CE Act.

Our responsible Minister is Ingrid Stitt, MP, Minister for Environment.

In April 2022, Mr Phil D'Adamo was appointed interim Head and in October 2022 Mr Tony Circelli commenced as Head, Recycling Victoria. Recycling Victoria is a business unit of DEECA.

## Legislation

The CE Act first came into operation on 1 July 2022.

It established the Head, Recycling Victoria to provide leadership, stewardship and oversight of waste, recycling or resource recovery services and to support the development of a circular economy.

The CE Act includes a range of tools for the Head, Recycling Victoria including:

- the Container Deposit Scheme
- service standards
- advisory committees.

The CE Act was amended from 1 June 2023. This amendment provides for additional tools including:

- the Victorian Recycling Infrastructure Plan
- risk, consequence and contingency planning
- the waste to energy scheme.

## Regulations

On 27 September 2023 and 1 March 2023, the Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) (Container Deposit Scheme) Regulations 2022 came into force, facilitating administration of the Container Deposit Scheme. These regulations have been subsequently amended in August 2023.

On 1 June 2023, the Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) (Waste to Energy Scheme) Regulations 2023 came into force, facilitating administration of the Waste to Energy licensing scheme for existing operators.

# About Recycling Victoria

As the recycling industry continues to transform, including by responding to changes in international markets, it is essential that Victoria's waste and resource recovery sector can deliver services for our current and future needs and maximise the benefits of resource recovery for households and the business community.

Recycling Victoria has been established to:

- provide leadership, stewardship and oversight of waste, recycling and resource recovery services
- support the development of a circular economy.

Transitioning to a stronger circular economy will:

- encourage innovation
- create more sustainability focussed jobs
- provide quality goods and services
- enable more consistent and high-quality recycled material for remanufacturing into new goods.

Through our work we focus on building a world class circular economy system that minimises the impact on non-renewable resources, maximises waste avoidance and makes a strong contribution towards a more sustainable, environmentally friendly and climate resilient future for all Victorians.

## Our vision

A world class circular economy system that helps build a sustainable future for all Victorian.

## Our purpose

Leadership and oversight of waste and resource recovery services to support the circular economy.

## Our early priorities

In our first year of operation, our early priorities were linked to directions under the CE Act, including:

- establishing the Container Deposit Scheme
- market risk and contingency plans
- market intelligence
- engagement and consultative committees
- infrastructure planning
- service standards
- Waste to Energy Scheme
- strategic procurement framework
- strong corporate services underpinning our operation.

## Our operating approach with portfolio partners

Recycling Victoria recognises the importance of working closely with our lead portfolio partners:

- Climate Action and Circular Economy Division within the Regions, Environment, Climate Action and First Peoples Group (formerly Waste and Recycling Division within the Environment, Climate Action and First Peoples Group) in DEECA
- Environment Protection Authority Victoria
- Sustainability Victoria.

Along with these partners, Recycling Victoria is a member of DEECA's Circular Economy Portfolio Coordination Group which is a critical forum for building shared understanding, integration and plans in response to the risks, opportunities and issues faced by the sector. Less formal, day to day interactions between the portfolio partners are observed at all levels in the organisations. This includes regular meetings at the senior officer level and collaboration on shared priorities.

In addition, Recycling Victoria worked with the EPA and Sustainability Victoria to establish Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) to clarify the roles and responsibilities of participating entities and provide solid foundations for future work.



## Our Head and Executive Directors

Recycling Victoria is led by the Head, Tony Circelli.  
The Head is supported by three Executive Directors.



### Tony Circelli

Head, Recycling Victoria

Tony has spent more than 30 years in the environment protection field, with extensive experience in environment and sustainability issues, modern regulatory practice, and organisational strategy and reform. He has led numerous policy and operational reforms at state and national levels in areas including chemicals and public health, site contamination, waste and resource recovery, container deposit systems and waste to energy. He has held senior executive positions with the South Australian Environment Protection Authority (SA EPA) and was the Chief Executive for over 8 years.

Tony was appointed as the inaugural Head, Recycling Victoria in October 2022. With an Honours degree in Mechanical Engineering, a Masters in Business Administration, and a Fellow of the South Australian Governor's Leadership Foundation. Tony has been a director on numerous government boards including the SA EPA Governing Board, the national Heads of EPA forum and Chair of the national Australasian Environmental Law Enforcement and Regulators network.



### Jennifer Anne

Executive Director Engagement, Regulation and Oversight

Jen joined Recycling Victoria in August 2022 from the Energy Group in the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning. With qualifications in law, public policy and management, Jen has worked in the Victorian and Commonwealth Government leading strategy and regulatory policy and operations across diverse sectors including agriculture, energy, gaming, education and health and human services.

As Executive Director Engagement, Regulation and Oversight, Jen works across Recycling Victoria to support connection with key stakeholders including local government, Alpine Resorts Victoria and the former Alpine Resort Boards, industry and businesses, Traditional Owners and the community. Jen also leads Recycling Victoria's oversight and regulation functions, including oversight of the Container Deposit Scheme and the Waste to Energy Scheme.



## **Deb Cailes**

Executive Director Strategy, Procurement and Planning

Deb joined Recycling Victoria in September 2022 coming from executive roles in local government, managing waste, strategic infrastructure investment, engineering and sustainability. With qualifications in science, finance and economics, Deb has spent 20 years in the manufacturing industry driving output optimisation in highly regulated plants around the world. As Executive Director Strategy, Procurement and Planning, Deb oversees state-wide data and insights, strategic infrastructure planning, and sector risk and contingency management. Deb also plays a key role in supporting local government waste and recycling service procurement.



## **Grant Breheny**

Executive Director Operations

Grant joined Recycling Victoria in August 2022 from the Department Health/Health and Human Services where he was Director Organisational Design and Performance. As Executive Director Operations, Grant manages Recycling Victoria's corporate, administrative and operational functions. Grant leads Recycling Victoria's transformation programs to maximise performance, service delivery, legislative compliance and risk management to best serve the interests of government and Victorian communities.

## Our functions

Under section 16 of the CE Act, the Head, Recycling Victoria must deliver functions aimed at providing leadership, stewardship and oversight of waste, recycling and resource recovery services in Victoria and support the development of a circular economy, outlined below.

### Support development of a circular economy

- reduce waste, support recycling and promote circularity in the use and reuse of products
- maximise the continued use of products and waste material over their life cycle
- support transition to a net zero and resilient Victoria.

### Leadership

- identify, monitor and manage risks and harm associated with waste, recycling and resource recovery services
- provide strategic and infrastructure planning for waste, recycling and resource recovery services
- collect, use, disclose and publish information and data.

### Stewardship

- oversee and build capacity for municipal residual waste, recycling and resource recovery service delivery
- support best practice procurement management by local government, Alpine Resorts Victoria and service providers for waste, recycling and resource recovery services
- advise on best practices for waste, recycling and resource recovery services.

### Oversight

- build and implement regulatory capability and systems for the sector
- oversee the Container Deposit Scheme
- implement and administer the Waste to Energy Scheme
- develop and implement service standards, including standards for household waste and recycling services.

## Our governance

Recycling Victoria is a business unit of DEECA, with a statutory Head.

In accordance with section 37(2) of the CE Act, the Minister must establish at least one advisory committee that includes people with relevant skills, knowledge and experience in local government and rural and regional communities.

The Minister must consider any advice or comments received from an advisory committee in relation to making, amending, or revoking a service standard as stated under section 66 (a) (ii) of the CE Act.

At time of writing, the Recycling Victoria Advisory Committee was approved in August 2023 and is due to hold its first meeting in the first half of 2023-24.

The establishment of the Recycling Victoria Local Government Advisory Committee, including the Terms of Reference, are currently in government approval processes.

Once approved, the Terms of References for both committees will be published on Recycling Victoria's website.

### Recycling Victoria Stewardship Committee

The Recycling Victoria Stewardship Committee is a subcommittee of the DEECA Executive Board.

The purpose of the Recycling Victoria Stewardship Committee is to provide high level oversight, governance and coordination of key decisions required as part of the establishment of Recycling Victoria. The Committee will ensure coordination of the enabling activities across DEECA to ensure the effective founding of the new organisation.

The Recycling Victoria Stewardship Committee held its inaugural meeting on 14 June 2023. The Terms of Reference for the Committee were endorsed by the DEECA Board on 19 June 2023. The Committee is chaired by the Secretary, DEECA, and meets monthly.

# Key initiatives and projects 2022-23

In 2022-23 we focused on delivering the following key initiatives and projects for Victorian communities:

## Establishment

Recycling Victoria commenced operation on 1 July 2022 and included transfer of staff from the 7 former Waste and Resource Recovery Groups and specific teams from Sustainability Victoria.

## Key strategies

Section 21 of the CE Act requires Recycling Victoria to prepare and submit to the Minister for approval a strategic plan for waste, recycling and resource recovery services.

The Recycling Victoria Strategic Plan, Regulatory Strategy, Charter of Engagement, and Community Engagement Strategy set out Recycling Victoria's vision, and its strategic intent and direction for the next 3 years. The Strategic Plan conveys for the first time, Recycling Victoria's role, functions, objectives, priorities and vision.

These governing documents provide the foundation for Recycling Victoria to focus effort and to ensure effective engagement and collaboration with its stakeholders on developing and implementing initiatives to strengthen the sector.

Recycling Victoria consulted with key stakeholders in the development of the strategic documents. This included portfolio partners and key industry, local government and state government stakeholders. Consultation will continue with the release of the strategic documents, with the focus shifting to implementation.

This set of strategic documents was submitted to the Minister for approval in June 2023.

## Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan 2023—26 (the Plan) defines our purpose, objectives and vision for a world class circular economy system that helps build a more sustainable future for all Victorians. The Plan, together with our Charter of Engagement, Community Engagement Strategy, and Regulatory Strategy, sets out the pathway to reform Victoria's waste, recycling and resource recovery services. The Strategic Plan describes our strategic focus and immediate priorities for the next three years.

In preparing the Strategic Plan, four key considerations have shaped our approach and priorities:

- Our policy environment
- Our new role as a leader, enabler and regulator
- Our engagement approach
- Aboriginal self-determination.

## Regulatory Strategy

Our Regulatory Strategy outlines how we will use our regulatory functions to achieve the objectives of our Strategic Plan and how we will support, promote, monitor, and enforce compliance with the CE Act.

The Regulatory Strategy will clarify the regulatory priorities for Recycling Victoria and outline the principles and approach we will apply in carrying out our role as a regulator.

Recycling Victoria will take an objectives focused and risk-based approach to exercising our regulatory functions. Our Regulatory Strategy describes our commitment to engaging with regulated entities and stakeholders to provide timely and quality compliance advice and support. It also describes how we will respond to compliance issues in a proportionate way.

We will continue to build our capability to deliver the Regulatory Strategy over the next 3 years as we deliver on our regulatory priorities.

## Charter of Engagement

Our Charter of Engagement describes our commitment to engage meaningfully and transparently with stakeholders. It states how we will engage with stakeholders on issues and decisions that matter to them.

Our Charter of Engagement applies a whole of Victorian Government approach to engagement, encompassing the Victorian Government Public Engagement Framework, the DEECA Community Charter and Traditional Owner and Aboriginal Community Engagement Framework.

The Public Engagement Framework aims to strengthen meaningful engagement practice in Victoria

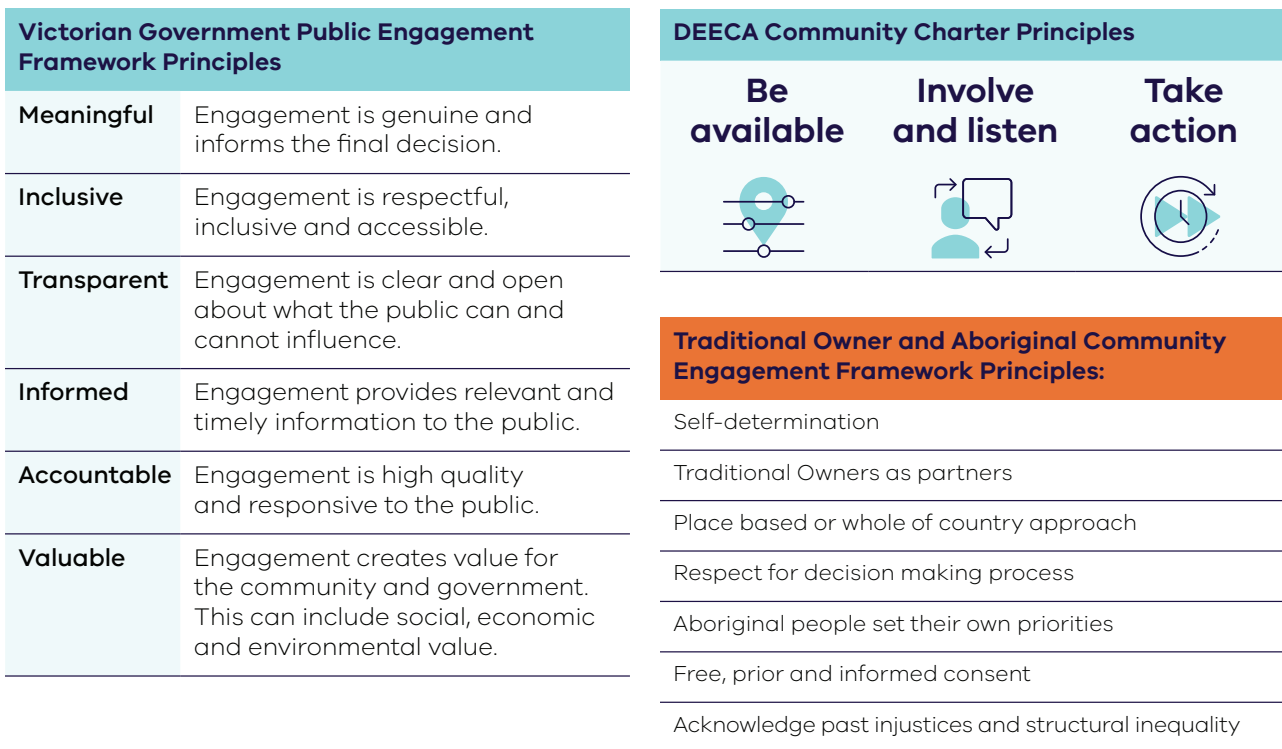


Figure 1 Recycling Victoria Charter of Engagement framework.

## Community Engagement Strategy

Our Community Engagement Strategy sets out our commitment to work with regional and metropolitan stakeholders and communities, businesses, industry, Traditional Owners, local government and Alpine Resorts Victoria in decisions that affect them and on issues that matters to them.

. This involves connecting with our community to:

- build strong relationships
- share information and data
- strengthen our waste, recycling and resource recovery system.

### Our engagement approach

Waste, recycling and resource recovery system reforms affect every household in Victoria, as well as each local government, Alpine Resorts Victoria and the waste, recycling and resource recovery services sector. More broadly we will need to see continued and stronger leadership and commitment by all business and industry for more circular use of resources. The input and collaboration of these sectors will be critical to the successful implementation of the CE Act.

Our engagement approach is tailored to individual stakeholders, locations and circumstances.

### Aboriginal self-determination

Traditional Owners are recognised in Victoria as the First Peoples through a range of legal and policy instruments that support self-determination and their continuing responsibilities to care for Country.

The Victorian Government is working in partnership with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Victorians to advance a treaty or treaties that will provide a foundation for a new, positive relationship, and enable true self-determination for Victoria's First Peoples.

Recycling Victoria will work with Victoria's Traditional Owners and ensure our work is founded on the principles of self-determination. We will make sure that Traditional Owner cultural knowledge is part of how we deliver our functions.



Figure 2 Community Engagement Strategy approach.

## Container Deposit Scheme

Recycling Victoria is responsible for the oversight and regulation of the Container Deposit Scheme, CDS Vic under Part 6 of the CE Act.

The Minister for Environment, Ingrid Stitt MP, announced in April 2023 that CDS Vic will commence effective from 1 November 2023.

Recycling Victoria plays a key role in:

- managing, monitoring and ensuring compliance with Scheme Coordinator and Zone Operator agreements, which are the basis for what they will deliver to establish and operate CDS Vic
- ensuring compliance with associated CE Act provisions
- making decisions in relation to 'first suppliers' and 'eligible containers'
- publishing any necessary guidelines and issuing directions to scheme participants
- establishing branding and marketing guidelines for CDS Vic
- collecting information and providing advice to the Victorian Government
- taking action where compliance and other issues are identified.

Our achievements in the first year of operation include:

- recruitment of highly skilled team members to 4 areas of delivery (CDS Vic oversight, Communication Contract Management, Program Management, and Determinations)
- establishment of a strategic approach to contract management to support mobilisation and operation of the scheme
- development and approval of branding templates for reverse vending machines
- commencement of mobilisation management meetings with the 4 Scheme Participants
- launching of instruments and protocols for public consultation via Engage Victoria in June 2023
- leading relationships with interstate agencies responsible for oversight of CDS to facilitate learnings and cross-jurisdictional collaboration on operationalising CDS in Victoria
- working collaboratively with the former Waste and Recycling Division (now Climate Action and Circular Economy Division) within the former Environment, Climate Action and First Peoples Group (now Regions, Environment, Climate Action and First Peoples Group) as the appointment of contractors moved to implementation of the Scheme.

## Waste to Energy Scheme

The Waste to Energy Scheme regulates thermal waste to energy facilities. The purpose of the scheme is to control the amounts and types of waste processed in thermal waste to energy facilities. This ensures investment in waste to energy facilities does not exceed our needs as we avoid, reuse and recycle more waste in the future.

Under Part 5A of the CE Act, Recycling Victoria is responsible for:

- licensing operators by providing existing and new operators with a licence to process permitted waste using a thermal waste to energy process
- administering the scheme by providing information and education, guidelines and administering licences (such as licence transfers and amendments)
- monitoring and enforcing compliance with licence terms and conditions, applying compliance and enforcement tools, and working with co-regulators such as the EPA.

The Victorian Government is delivering regulations that prescribe the processes and requirements to apply for licences in 2 stages. Stage 1 of the scheme, which pertains to existing operators, commenced 1 June 2023, following the commencement of the Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) (Waste to Energy Scheme) Regulations 2023.

Existing operators of thermal waste to energy facilities have until 4 December 2023 to apply to Recycling Victoria for a licence.

Stage 2 of the scheme, which pertains to new operators, will commence once cap licensing regulations are made (currently under development).

A cap licence will allow a thermal waste to energy facility operator to use permitted waste up to a specified maximum amount. These regulations and the associated Regulatory Impact Statement are expected to be released for public consultation in 2023-24. Recycling Victoria will continue to work with our colleagues in Climate Action and Circular Economy Division, who are leading the consultation process.

## Recycling Victoria Data Hub

Our decisions and actions will be informed by market data and intelligence.



**Figure 3 Community Engagement Strategy approach.**

We were pleased to launch the online Recycling Victoria Data Hub (the data hub) in April 2023. The data hub is a high-quality waste data management system for our investment in market research, risk management and strategic planning.

Two sets of core statistics for Victoria have been produced and released:

- 2019-20 Statewide industry waste and recycling performance figures for Victoria
- 2020-21 Victorian local government waste and performance figures.

This data underpins:

- the Victorian Recycling Infrastructure Plan
- policy and investment decisions
- performance against the government's Recycling Victoria policy targets
- supply chain analyses
- capacity forecasting, risk and contingency planning.

Market Summary reports have also been released, providing detailed information about major material streams.

Together, these datasets enable Victorians to plan, monitor and improve waste collection and management in Victoria.

We will continue to develop and broaden market sector knowledge and develop the data hub.

## Stakeholder engagement

Recycling Victoria engaged regularly with key stakeholders in local government and the waste, recycling and resource recovery sector.

In 2022-23, Recycling Victoria continued its partnership with local government leaders through the Local Government CEO Forum and worked with colleagues of the former Waste and Recycling (now Climate Action and Circular Economy) Division to revitalise and reposition industry engagement through the Resource Recovery, Recycling and Waste Industry Group, RRRWIG.

During the year, the Head, Recycling Victoria participated in a wide array of engagements including:

- leading consultation on the draft Recycling Victoria Strategic Plan
- presenting at multiple conferences
- attending various governance committee meetings
- leading the Victoria wide regional and site visit program
- facilitating a number of stakeholder meetings.

We promoted Recycling Victoria's role and responsibilities at 6 keynote forums during the year.

### Connecting with leaders in local government and industry

On 30 May, Recycling Victoria hosted the first Local Government CEO Forum for 2023. Fifty-five local governments attended along with representatives from the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) and colleagues from the former Waste and Recycling Division.

The forum is a key opportunity to engage with local government leaders on the significant reforms the Victorian Government is leading in waste, recycling and resource recovery. Waste and Recycling Division representatives shared information about policy developments for risk contingency and consequence regulations, as well as an update on consultation timelines for proposed waste and recycling sub-legislation.

Recycling Victoria provided updates on the mobilisation of CDS Vic and the content of our strategic documents, the Strategic Plan, Regulatory Strategy, Community Engagement Strategy and Charter of Engagement.

On 1 June 2023, Recycling Victoria leaders presented to a meeting of waste, recycling and resource recovery industry representatives



(RRRWIG). Jointly hosted by Recycling Victoria and Environment, Climate Action and First Peoples Group, the RRRWIG provided an opportunity to discuss risks, issues and opportunities for the industry as we transition to a circular economy.

### **Witnessing the circular economy in action**

Site visits are a great way for Recycling Victoria to learn more about the progress individual businesses are making towards contributing to a circular economy.

On 16 May 2023, the Head, Recycling Victoria, and a small group of staff visited Cleanaway and Martogg recycling facilities in Melbourne's southeast to see first-hand the opportunities and challenges being met by the recycling and resource recovery industry.

Cleanaway's Dandenong facility sorts, decontaminates and shreds more than 100,000 tonnes of food organics and garden organics (FOGO) collected from homes across Melbourne's southeast every year.

The team also visited the nearby Martogg Melbourne facility, where a new line will see 25,000 tonnes of PET plastic recycled into new plastic bottles. This is in addition to the existing PET and HPDE (milk and shampoo containers) facility already installed at the site.

The Head, Recycling Victoria, and Manager Sector Planning visited Hanson Australia's Wollert site on 27 June 2023, where planning was underway for a new, purpose-built resource recovery precinct.

Recycling Victoria's executive team toured a landfill in Horsham, a regional circular economy precinct in Ballarat and a composting facility in Anakie.

In December 2022, the Head, Recycling Victoria, and staff visited Sustainable Plastic Solutions, a Hamilton-based plastic recycling facility. Sustainable Plastic Solutions recycles plastic waste from industry, agriculture and retail settings to create high-grade resins to be used in moulding, thermoforming and extrusion applications.

The Head, Recycling Victoria, and Executive Director, Strategy, Procurement and Planning, visited the Paintback site in March 2023. Paintback takes unwanted paint and packaging and responsibly disposes of it, providing an alternative pathway to landfill and illegal disposal.

In April 2023, the Head, Recycling Victoria facilitated introductory meetings with Circular Plastics Australia. Circular Plastics Australia is building a national network of recycling facilities to process multiple plastic polymers that can be used to make

high-quality food-grade and non-food-grade resins to manufacture new packaging products. The partners in this project are Pact Group, Cleanaway, Asahi Beverages and Coca-Cola Europacific Partners.

### **Recycling Victoria senior staff contributing at conferences**

On Thursday, 8 June 2023 Recycling Victoria's Executive Director of Engagement, Regulation and Oversight, Jennifer Anne, and Director of Kerbside Reform and Service Delivery of the former Waste and Recycling (now Climate Action and Circular Economy) Division, Lorna Mathieson, presented at the Australian Organics Recycling Association (AORA) conference. Jennifer and Lorna presented on FOGO and how Victoria is setting the standard for better recycling at home. Their presentation included a brief overview of the legislative framework, future subordinate legislation, consultations to date, issues, operators and the role of Recycling Victoria as a regulator.

Executive Director Strategy, Procurement and Planning, Deb Cailes presented at a panel discussion for the Waste 2023 Conference in Coffs Harbour on the importance of end-to-end systems approach to soft plastics recycling.

Manager Data Intelligence and Information, Cate Turner, presented at the 2022 Enviro Conference in Canberra about the development of market reports.

# Our people

## Regional visits

Between November 2022 and March 2023, Recycling Victoria leaders traveled across the state to meet with 75 local governments and engaged with 141 senior leaders and CEOs. We held 12 meetings and participated in 8 regional site visits.

The objectives of our regional visits were to:

- strengthen communication and engagement with local government
- learn more about local waste and resource recovery issues
- brief attendees on the CE Act and Recycling Victoria's early priorities
- discuss issues and opportunities.

Participants expressed interest in the four kerbside service system, local infrastructure opportunities, kerbside reforms for multi-unit developments, upcoming rollout of CDS Vic and continued collaboration opportunities.

Our staff are committed to being service oriented, having a learning mindset, and being responsive and adaptive.

Recycling Victoria has provided support for staff including the following:

- managed more than 150 staff movements and a significant amount of recruitment and onboarding work to make sure our staff hit the ground running and have a seamless onboarding experience
- promoted awareness and training on Pupangarli Marnmarnepu and ensured staff awareness of Aboriginal Cultural Safety training
- commenced planning for the organisational change process, to ensure our people and capabilities are best aligned with the functions that Recycling Victoria is required to deliver.

Our workforce data is included in the DEECA Annual Report 2022-23.



## Key risks and issues

Recycling Victoria has responsibility to identify, monitor, manage and mitigate risks and harm associated with waste, recycling and or resource recovery services.

Determination of sector risks has commenced to inform the Circular Economy Risk Consequence and Contingency Plan due in 2023/24.

## Waste and Resource Recovery Group transitional projects

All 7 of the former Waste and Resource Recovery Groups (WRRGs) wound up operations on 30 June 2022. Staff from the WRRGs transitioned to Recycling Victoria on 1 July 2022.

The ability of former WRRG staff to continue contributing and maintaining high professional standards through an extended period of change, demonstrates their integrity and professionalism. Former WRRG staff have worked across a range of Recycling Victoria functions and initiatives through a transitional arrangement, continuing to drive excellence in the sector across regional and metropolitan Victoria.

### Collaborative procurement

Recycling Victoria has supported the Hume and Gippsland Regional Collaborative Procurement projects undertaken by local government, Alpine Resorts Victoria and the former Alpine Resorts Boards. The support role for these 2 major collaborative procurement projects transferred to Recycling Victoria from WRRGs:

1. Gippsland Collaborative Procurement (Gippswide Kerbside), previously led by Gippsland WRRG for services to support kerbside reform.
2. The Resource Recovery Collective Hume, a regional collaborative tender for kerbside waste and recycling services, previously led by Goulburn Valley and North East WRRGs.

The Gippsland Collaborative Procurement Project is facilitating the procurement of the following services on behalf of all 6 local governments in the Gippsland region: FOGO, residual waste – landfill and alternative waste treatment, glass and mixed recycling and materials collection and transport.

Gippsland WRRG undertook an expressions of interest process prior to the collaborative procurement tenders being launched. Contract documentation is in the final stages of completion for execution. Services will commence progressively from 1 July 2023 through to 1 February 2024.

The Resource Recovery Collective Hume project achieved the following:

- supported local government and alpine resorts to award 20 contracts to 7 service providers
- provided an opportunity for participating local governments and alpine resorts to test the market and achieve substantial cost savings due to the combined tonnages offered to the market
- enabled participating local governments and alpine resorts to implement actions contained in the Victorian Government's circular economy policy, Recycling Victoria – A new economy, including the introduction of kerbside FOGO collection services and separated glass collection services.
- a strong focus on glass beneficiation, ensuring that separated glass collected across the region is predominately used to make new recycled glass products
- contracts that include an ongoing financial commitment to implement education programs, as well as kerbside waste audits that will help to inform and target areas for improvement
- the development of a consistent contract model that recognises the benefit of risk sharing between the Principal and Contractor and accommodates greater transparency, responsiveness, flexibility and accountability.

### Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery contract oversight

From 1 July 2022, DEECA was the successor in law to the former Melbourne Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Group (MWRRG) and is responsible for 11 municipal collective contracts. As a transitional arrangement, Recycling Victoria led administration of these contracts for DEECA.

The contracts are for the provision of landfilling, recycling, and organic processing services, and work to service local government in metropolitan Melbourne who are a party to these contracts.

## Section 22 (2) Annual Report Mandatory Content

Section 22 of the CE Act requires the Head, Recycling Victoria, to submit to the Minister an Annual Report, on or before 30 September each year. The prescribed minimum contents of the report are shown in the following table, along with a reconciliation of how they are addressed by this current edition.

Leg. Ref	Legislative requirement	Outcome	Notes
S22(2)	An annual report under subsection (1) must include the following		Draft Recycling Victoria Annual Report 2022-23 has been prepared
S22(2)(a)	the total number of written directions given by the Minister under this Act	No written directions	Draft Recycling Victoria Annual Report 2022-23 has been prepared
S22(2)(b)	the total number of written directions given by the Head, Recycling Victoria under this Act	No written directions	
S22(2)(c)	a description or summary of each written direction	Not applicable	
S22(2)(d)	a copy of each written direction as published in accordance with this Act	Not applicable	
S22(2)(e)	details of the community engagement activities undertaken by the Head, Recycling Victoria in accordance with any existing community engagement strategy	Stakeholder engagement page 14-16	
S22(2)(f)	a description or summary of the key risks, consequences and measures identified in the Circular Economy Risk, Consequence and Contingency Plan (CERCC Plan)	Not applicable	S22 reporting Provisions relating to CERCC and RERCC were not in force during 2022-23  Determination of sector risks has commenced to inform the Circular Economy Risk Consequence and Contingency Plan due in 2023/24.
S22(2)(g)	the total number of responsible entities that are required to prepare a Responsible Entity Risk, Consequence and Contingency Plan (RERCC Plan) under section 74F	Not applicable	
S22(2)(h)	the total number of statements of assurance submitted to the Head, Recycling Victoria under section 74G	Not applicable	
S22(2)(i)	the total number of written reports prepared by the Head, Recycling Victoria under section 74I	Not applicable	

Leg. Ref	Legislative requirement	Outcome	Notes
S22(2)(j)	a description or summary of each written report prepared under section 74I	Not applicable	
S22(2)(k)	details of any actions that the Head, Recycling Victoria has carried out or proposes to carry out in response to a written report prepared under section 74I.	Not applicable	

