

GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

AUSTRALIAN PACKAGING COVENANT

Action Plan

July 2010 - June 2015

*The Environment Protection Authority
South Australia*



**Government
of South Australia**

The Hon Paul Caica MP
Member for Colton



**Government
of South Australia**

**Minister for Environment
and Conservation**
Minister for the River Murray
Minister for Water
9th Floor, Chesser House
91-97 Grenfell Street
Adelaide SA 5000
GPO Box 1047
Adelaide SA 5001
DX 138
Tel 08 8463 5680
Fax 08 8463 5681
minister.caica@sa.gov.au

Ref: 11MEC0996

14 April 2011

Mr Stan Moore
Chief Executive Officer
Australian Packaging Covenant
PO Box 346
GORDON NSW 2072

Dear Mr Moore

The Government of South Australia is pleased to submit its Australian Packaging Covenant Action Plan for the period July 2010 – June 2015.

The South Australian Government has been committed to the Australian Packaging Covenant since its inception in 1999 and continues to support the Covenant through many of its complementary programs.

If you require further information regarding this report, please contact Ms Kerry Suthern, Project Officer, Business and Reform Branch, Environment Protection Authority on telephone (08) 8204 2682.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Caica'.

PAUL CAICA
MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION

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INTRODUCTION

The Government of South Australia is an original signatory to the National Packaging Covenant, now known as the Australian Packaging Covenant (the Covenant). The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) is charged with implementing Covenant obligations on behalf of the Government. Zero Waste South Australia (ZWSA) undertakes projects and programs to minimise waste, promote recycling and implement sustainable materials recovery systems.

South Australia's Strategic Plan includes a target to "reduce waste to landfill by 25% by 2014". ZWSA is the key to achieving that goal and has outlined how South Australia as a community can achieve this reduction and other targets in *South Australia's Waste Strategy 2010-2015* (the Strategy)(currently in draft).

South Australia's Waste Strategy 2010-2015 will be the lead policy-setting document for waste management in South Australia. The Strategy will help guide the development of a range of other key documents that will ultimately form part of an integrated framework of policies, strategies and plans to guide waste management activities in South Australia. The Strategy builds on the work achieved to date, reflects an improved national focus on waste, and recognises sustainability as a key principle for prosperity. The Strategy has two objectives. Firstly, it seeks to maximise the value of our resources, and secondly, it seeks to avoid and reduce waste.

In addition, South Australia continues to demonstrate extended producer responsibility through its successful Container Deposit Legislation. On the 1 September 2008 the Government of South Australia increased the deposit refund which has significantly increased recycling rates. South Australia also became the first state in Australia to ban checkout style plastic bags in May 2009. Although there are many other forms of packaging not addressed by our Container Deposit Legislation, it remains a key feature of South Australia's overall approach as a signatory to the Covenant.

As a signatory to the Covenant, the Government of South Australia acknowledges that a co-operative approach between industry and all spheres of government is essential to achieve the objectives and overarching targets set out in the Covenant. Our commitment to realise these targets will also greatly assist South Australia in achieving its resource efficiency goals.

This is the Government of South Australia's fifth Covenant Action Plan. This plan has been prepared as part of the South Australian

Government's commitment as a signatory to the strengthened Covenant.

Nominated Contact Officers

Requests for further information regarding this Action Plan should be directed to one of the Nominated Officers listed below:

Mr Rob Middlin
Senior Project Officer
Business and Reform Branch
Environment Protection Authority
GPO Box 2607
ADELAIDE SA 5001
Telephone: (08) 8463 3383
Facsimile: (08) 8124 4673
Email: rob.middlin@epa.sa.gov.au

Ms Kerryn Suthern
Sustainability Project Officer
Business and Reform Branch
Environment Protection Authority
GPO Box 2607
Adelaide SA 5001
Telephone: (08) 8204 2682
Facsimile: (08) 8124 4673
Email: kerryn.suthern@epa.sa.gov.au

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

South Australia continues to lead the nation with its innovative approach to reducing waste and conserving resources. South Australia's economy continues to grow, but the amount of waste going to landfill has decreased by 17.32% since 2002-2003. South Australians continue to recycle more each year and are on track to meet [South Australia's Strategic Plan \(target 3.8\)](#) - to reduce waste to landfill by 25% by 2014 from a 2002-2003 baseline. South Australia is the only Australian jurisdiction to show steadily reducing waste to landfill over the past 6 years, notwithstanding population growth and economic improvement.

The South Australian diversion rate of 70.4% is the highest recorded in the last 6 years. The SA per capita recycling rate was over 1,500 kilograms per person, per year (exceeded only by the Australian Capital Territory at just over 1,800 kilograms per person, per year).

Recycling rates in South Australia continue to grow, putting South Australians among the best recyclers in the nation. In South Australia, 2.55 million tonnes of materials were diverted from landfill to recycling (Hyder Consulting 2010 - Recycling activity in South Australia 2008-2009 financial year). This is an increase in the diversion rate of 14.5% since 2003-004.

An increase in the solid waste levy has been proposed for 2011-2012 in South Australia under the Fees and Levies Regulations through the *Environment Protection Act, 1993*. The levy is to be used in part to fund programs such as waste minimisation, resource recovery and KESAB litter strategies thereby assisting brand owners to meet their obligations as a signatory to the Covenant. In conjunction with the increase of the levy the South Australian Government has initiated a review of the levy, to be led by ZWSA to inform a long term structure to maximise recycling and reuse in South Australia. A statutory review of the *Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Act 2008* will be undertaken in 2011.

The Government of South Australia continues to encourage the waste sector by collaborating with and supporting local government, waste and recycling organisations and businesses. The Government of South Australia also recognises the vital importance of fostering strategic alliances with all levels of government, peak industry organisations and community organisations and is instrumental in achieving its targets and goals.

The long-term approach to waste management of the Government of South Australia is to move South Australia's habits up the waste hierarchy from disposal and recycling to reduction and avoidance.

ZWSA's ongoing programs including the Resource Efficiency Assistance Program (REAP) and Recycling at Work reflect this approach.

This Action Plan outlines policy and projects that will contribute to the objectives and overarching targets set out in the Covenant through:

1. **Design** including implementing regulation that drives progress and supports long-term investment decisions. The Government of South Australia will develop and adopt innovative products and services that help reduce our ecological footprint to create comparative economic advantage.
2. **Recycling** by increasing and maintaining the capacity of recycling systems and reprocessing infrastructure. Continue to monitor the effectiveness of South Australian government programs by conducting surveys and recycling activity studies through ZWSA Environmental Users System (ZEUS) data online from councils, recyclers and landfill operators in regular reports and audits. By undertaking an annual survey of councils that provide a kerbside recycling service across all metropolitan and regional areas.
3. **Product Stewardship** that will assist in delivering State and Covenant targets. The Business Sustainability Alliance (BSA) is an initiative of four South Australian Government agencies. The BSA delivers programs that encourage product stewardship including the REAP and is strategically poised to provide key competencies in the areas of waste, water, energy, lean manufacturing, construction, compliance, climate change and sustainability.
4. **Other Initiatives** include ongoing monitoring of the phase out of plastic shopping bags through the South Australia Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Bill 2008 and the ongoing success of the Container Deposit Legislation under the Environment Protection Act, 1993.

Key highlights in this Action Plan include:

- South Australia's Waste Strategy 2010-2015 will be the lead policy-setting document for waste management in South Australia.
- Implementation of the *Environment Protection (Waste to Resources) Policy 2010* including recovery of packaging materials promoted through the state-wide landfill bans for aggregated recoverable materials.
- The REAP for industry, business, local government and state government. REAP is the key waste avoidance program for ZWSA and has economic and sustainability benefits as well as developing a core of environmental knowledge in the business community. The program is expected to grow significantly over the next 2 years as more businesses join.

- Consumption and waste avoidance incentives program for ZWSA proposes a new open-call incentive scheme, available to any sector and waste stream. Its purpose is to enable initiatives that:
 - > demonstrate effective ways to avoid waste
 - > reach a broad number of people
 - > help to guide social change towards models of sustainable consumption.

SA GOVERNMENT COVENANT COMMITMENTS

The Government of South Australia is committed to and actively participates in the development and implementation of the Covenant. The South Australian Government subscribes to the overarching objectives and targets set out in the Covenant and accepts responsibility for the environmental impacts associated with its own activities.

In South Australia, the Used Packaging Materials National Environment Protection Measure (NEPM) is implemented through an Environment Protection Policy (EPP) via the Environment Protection Act 1993.

The Used Packaging Materials NEPM is currently in the process of being remade. A new Used Packaging Materials EPP will be developed once the NEPM is approved.

[South Australia's Strategic Plan](#) includes target 3.8 – Zero Waste: reduce waste to landfill by 25% by 2014. Table 1 in the Action Plan provides a number of South Australia's actions and targets that are linked to South Australia's State Strategic Plan.

[South Australia's Waste Strategy 2010-2015](#) will be the lead policy-setting document for waste management in South Australia. The Strategy seeks to maximise the value of our resources, and secondly, it seeks to avoid and reduce waste. Table 1 in the Action Plan provides a number of South Australia's actions and targets that are linked to South Australia's Waste Strategy.

The South Australian Government continues its commitment in providing funding for Covenant projects that benefit the State.

The South Australian Government acknowledges that its core commitments are as follows:-

- Implement the NEPM for Used Packaging Materials incorporating a regulatory safety net and enforcing the legislation giving effect to the NEPM in SA.
- Promote Covenant principles, undertakings and signatory benefits and work with signatories to achieve the Covenants targets.
- Apply the principles of the Covenant throughout the government's own internal operations.
- Work in cooperation with Covenant signatories and other stakeholders to develop consistent and harmonious policies and systems for the management of used packaging by:-
 - (a) developing best practice systems;

- (b) establishing/developing end markets for used packaging materials;
 - (c) promoting, supporting and funding market development initiatives;
 - (d) providing resource recovery community education and;
 - (e) establishing a communications framework to facilitate information sharing and coordinate education and promotion.
- Facilitate the development of programs that optimise the value of recycled materials.
 - Provide appropriate financial and other support to optimise materials recovery systems.
 - Cooperate with other jurisdictions and industry members to produce reliable data on the performance of disposal and materials recovery systems for paper and post consumer packaging, to assist the Covenant Council to report against its Covenant goals and targets.

As a signatory to the Covenant the South Australian Government will incorporate the following Covenant principles within its own operations:-

- The use of packaging materials and paper that ensures it is fit for purpose, it is resource efficient, the use of low impact materials and seeks to maximise its potential for recovery and recycling.
- Provision of recycling collection facilities for post-consumer packaging generated on-site.
- Implementation of 'Buy Recycled' purchasing policies and practices.
- Implementation of policies and practices that require take-back and recycling of packaging from supply contracts.

Term of Action Plan

The South Australian Government Action Plan is for the period July 2010 to June 2015.

Table 1: SA Government Actions to Address Covenant Commitments

1 Design					
<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Baseline data</i>	<i>Target or Performance Goal</i>	<i>Timeline or milestones (MM/YY)</i>
<p>1. Design - implementing regulation that drives progress and supports long-term investment decisions.</p> <p>Develop and adopt innovative products and services that help to achieve resource efficiency, reduce our ecological footprint to create comparative economic advantage and reduce environmental impact without compromising product quality and safety.</p>	<p>1.1 Develop Environment Protection (Used Packaging Material) Policy (UPM EPP) EPP will mirror the obligations of the NEPM in South Australia.</p> <p>1.2 Undertake actions that ensure all brand owners are engaged in practices that produce equivalent outcomes to those achieved through the Covenant.</p> <p>1.3 Undertake annual brand owner retail survey to identify non-signatories to the Covenant.</p> <p>1.4 Implement a SA Waste Strategy that will significantly influence stakeholders to maximise the value of our resources and seek to avoid and reduce waste. (refer to page 5 of the draft SA Waste Strategy 2010- 2015)</p>	<p>EPA</p> <p>EPA</p> <p>EPA</p> <p>ZWSA</p>	<p>1.4 2008/09</p>	<p>1.1 % of non signatory companies that comply with the UPM EPP/NEPM</p> <p>Number of non-complying signatories compliant with UPM EPP/NEPM</p> <p>1.2 Number of companies that signed the Covenant</p> <p>Number of non-signatories referred by the Covenant Secretariat to EPA</p> <p>1.3 Brand owner retail surveys conducted</p> <p>1.4 SA Waste Strategy 2010-2015 is implemented</p>	<p>1.1 Oct 2011</p> <p>1.2 Ongoing</p> <p>1.3 End June annually</p> <p>1.4 5 years to 2015.</p>

2 Recycling

<i>Commitment</i>		<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Baseline data</i>	<i>Target or Performance Goal</i>	<i>Timeline or milestones (MM/YY)</i>
2.	<p>Recycling - the efficient collection and recycling of packaging through increasing and maintaining the capacity of recycling systems and reprocessing infrastructure.</p> <p>Monitoring the effectiveness of programs.</p>	<p>2.1 Collect data on recycling and waste to landfill.</p> <p>2.2 Local government reporting provided for NEPC Annual Report on the Kerbside Recycling Collection Program statistics.</p> <p>2.3 Knowledge management, Zero Waste SA Environment Users System (ZEUS) including:</p> <p>2.3.1 to include data on organic waste composted and recycling from the material recycling facilities and transfer stations (subject to industry cooperation).</p> <p>2.3.2 to capture data from councils, recyclers and landfill operators in regular reports and audits (subject to stakeholder cooperation).</p>	<p>ZWSA</p> <p>EPA</p> <p>ZWSA</p> <p>ZWSA</p> <p>ZWSA</p>		<p>2.1 Data collected.</p> <p>2.2 Report completed.</p> <p>2.3 Data collected</p>	<p>2.1 Annually</p> <p>2.2 Annually</p> <p>2.3 Annually</p>

2 Recycling (continued)

<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Baseline data</i>	<i>Target or Performance Goal</i>	<i>Timeline or milestones (MM/YY)</i>
	<p>2.4 In collaboration with relevant stakeholders including councils, the Local Government Association continues to support coordinated and integrated recycling education and awareness campaigns and programs.</p> <p>2.5 Continues partnership with the Waste Management Association of Australia, SA Division (WMAA_SA) including:</p> <p>2.5.1 WMAA linking industry with ZWSA.</p> <p>2.5.2 Contribute to biennial Waste Conference in Adelaide.</p> <p>2.6 Encourage councils to implement and maintain high performing kerbside collection systems.</p> <p>2.7 Continued support of the Recycling at Work Program (funded by the APC) to encourage and support the effective recycling collection systems for small to medium businesses.</p>	<p>ZWSA</p> <p>ZWSA</p> <p>ZWSA</p> <p>ZWSA</p> <p>ZWSA</p> <p>ZWSA</p>		<p>2.4 Education and awareness campaigns and programs developed and implemented.</p> <p>2.5 Programs managed in accordance with the Agreement between ZWSA and WMAA.</p> <p>2.6 Increase diversion of MSW from 2008/09 baseline of 55% to 70% (Adelaide metro only).</p> <p>2.7 Increase diversion of C/I waste from 2008/09 estimated baseline of 60% to 75% (Adelaide metro only)</p>	<p>2.4 On-going</p> <p>2.5 On-going, subject to annual review.</p> <p>2.6 By 2015</p> <p>2.7 By 2015</p>

2 Recycling (continued)

<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Baseline data</i>	<i>Target or Performance Goal</i>	<i>Timeline or milestones (MM/YY)</i>
	<p>2.8 Guidelines developed for Minimising Waste at Public Events for Event Organisers.</p> <p>2.9 ZWSA to work with other agencies to encourage changes to contracts relating to waste and recycling services within government tenanted buildings.</p> <p>2.10 Implement the Australian Procurement and Construction Councils Sustainable Procurement Framework (the SA Government is a signatory).</p>	<p>ZWSA</p> <p>ZWSA</p> <p>ZWSA</p>		<p>2.8 Guidelines widely available to Event Managers throughout South Australia via ZWSA website</p> <p>2.9 Increased recycling and diversion of waste from landfill and improved awareness of tenants.</p> <p>2.10 Improve opportunities for use of recycled materials / products in Government projects, activities.</p>	<p>2.8 On-going</p> <p>2.9 On-going</p> <p>2.10 On-going</p>

3 Product Stewardship

<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Baseline data</i>	<i>Target or Performance Goal</i>	<i>Timeline or milestones (MM/YY)</i>
3. Product stewardship - working with others to improve packaging design and recovery and reduction in litter.	3.1 Litter reduction 3.1.1 Conduct quarterly litter audits. 3.1.2 Contribute to the Keep Australia Beautiful National Litter Index/Over 950 sites across Australia are visited twice per year to create an annual report on litter in each State. 3.2 Implementation of the National Waste Policy including: 3.2.1 Improving markets for the waste and resource recovery sector by establishing greater national consistency for waste definitions and resource recovery standards.	EPA/ZWSA KESAB KESAB EPA		3.1.1 Audits conducted across 151 sites 3.2 National Waste Policy implemented	3.1.1 Annually 3.2 On-going

3 Product Stewardship (continued)

<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Baseline data</i>	<i>Target or Performance Goal</i>	<i>Timeline or milestones (MM/YY)</i>
3.	Product stewardship - working with others to improve packaging design and recovery and reduction in litter.	<p>3.2.2 Identify best practice measures in managing landfills and resource recovery facilities including in regional and remote areas.</p> <p>3.3 Implementation of the Environment Protection (Waste to Resources) Policy 2010 including:</p> <p>3.3.1 Recovery of packaging materials promoted through the state-wide landfill bans for aggregated recoverable materials.</p> <p>3.3.2 From 1 September 2012 most waste from Metropolitan Adelaide must be subject to an appropriate resource recovery process prior to any disposal at landfill.</p>	<p>EPA</p> <p>EPA</p> <p>EPA</p>		3.3 On-going

3 Product Stewardship (continued)

<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Baseline data</i>	<i>Target or Performance Goal</i>	<i>Timeline or milestones (MM/YY)</i>
3.	3.4 Resource Efficiency Assistance Program (REAP) ZWSA to continue to be part of the Business Sustainability Alliance (BSA) to ensure REAP continues to be delivered.	ZWSA			3.4 On-going

4 Other Initiatives

<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Baseline data</i>	<i>Target or Performance Goal</i>	<i>Timeline or milestones (MM/YY)</i>
4. Ongoing monitoring of the phase out of plastic shopping bags through the South Australia Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Bill 2008 and the ongoing success of the Container Deposit Legislation (CDL) under the Environment Protection Act, 1993.	4.1 Review of Plastic Bags Act. 4.2 Continue to review opportunities to reform CDL system.	EPA EPA		4.1 Review complete 4.2 Ongoing	4.1 Completed