

Supermarket Soft Plastics Taskforce Meeting 10 Minutes

23 February 2023, 8:00am - 9:00am

Attendees

Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water: Kate Lynch, Annette Williams.

Coles: Wade Mosse, Simone Brookes, Llew Fleming, Kristen Boverly-Spencer, Brooke Donnelly, Adam Fitzgibbons.

Woolworths: Eloise Fanuli, Laurie Kozlovic, Christopher Lane, Simran Kaur, Nerilee Telford, Megan Hinchcliffe.

Minutes

Agenda item 1: Welcome and attendance

- Kate Lynch noted the meeting was called as an extraordinary meeting of the Taskforce and confirmed her role as Chair for this meeting on behalf of the Department.

Outcomes:

- The Department confirmed that Aldi was an apology for the meeting but would be in attendance at the next Soft Plastics Taskforce meeting on 24 February 2023.
- **Attendees agreed** that Coles would take the minutes for this meeting.

Agenda item 2: Coles and Woolworths stockpile proposal

- Attendees discussed a proposal for Coles and Woolworths to make an offer to REDcycle to take control of REDcycle's existing known stockpiled soft plastics and to provide safe storage of that material, while recycling solutions were being explored. The participants discussed setting up a "fund" for this purpose.
- The Department agreed to advise the Minister for Environment and Water of the proposal, and noted that the plan would be likely to be well received.
- Participants observed that the existing stockpiled material was an industry wide issue and that other members of the REDcycle program could be invited to contribute towards such a fund.
- Participants discussed a proposal to issue a media release to announce the Coles and Woolworths' offer to REDcycle and that it would be important to notify relevant stakeholders, such as the New South Wales (NSW) Environment Protection Authority (EPA) and the Victorian EPA and ACCC, in advance of the issue of media release.
- Following on from separate discussions between both Coles and Woolworths with the NSW EPA about the proposed offer and stockpiles, the attendees discussed the following feedback from the NSW EPA:

[REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- Participants noted their general concerns about accessing the material at the relevant sites and noted that the NSW EPA had offered to provide access assistance if required.
 - Participants raised the issue of REDcycle's solvency and the requirement to notify the ACCC pursuant to the Interim Authorisation if they formed a view that REDcycle was insolvent or likely to become insolvent. Participants noted REDcycle has not provided any evidence to date that they are insolvent, or likely to become insolvent or have liquidators appointed. Participants have communicated this reporting obligation to REDcycle and REDcycle has agreed to keep Participants informed.

Outcomes:

- **Coles and Woolworths agreed** that they were aligned on making an offer to REDcycle as outlined above and in respect of issuing a joint media release.
- **Coles and Woolworths confirmed** that following discussions with the NSW EPA, [REDACTED]
- **Coles and Woolworths confirmed** that they propose to send their offer to REDcycle, and to subsequently issue the media release, on 23 February 2023.
- **Attendees agreed** to subsequently table a number of action items, responsible persons and timeframes in relation to the stockpile issue.
- **Attendees agreed** to update Aldi on the offer to REDcycle and media release.

Agenda item 3: Other business and wrap up

- Participants discussed the agenda for the Taskforce meeting on 24 February 2023 and the timeframe by which they would seek a response from REDcycle to their offer.
- Participants discussed the possibility of inviting the ACCC to the next Taskforce meeting.

Outcome:

- **Coles and Woolworths confirmed** they were comfortable with the agenda for the Taskforce meeting on 24 February 2023 and that [REDACTED]
- **Participants confirmed** that state and territory EPAs could provide feedback at the Taskforce meeting on 24 February 2023 on plans for the roadmap.
- **Attendees agreed** that the public roadmap would be issued at a later date than the ACCC Progress Report (the latter being due on Monday 27 February 2023).
- **Attendees agreed** that feedback would be sought from the Australian Food and Grocery Council, the Australian Council of Recycling and the Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation in relation to the draft public roadmap.
- **Attendees confirmed** that communication with the ACCC would be in accordance with the above action items and via the Progress Report.

Agenda item 4: Meeting close