

APCO responds to Ministerial announcement on Commonwealth packaging scheme

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The Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation (APCO) is disappointed that a new Commonwealth scheme for packaging will not be introduced in this term of Government, as reported recently.

We recognise cost-of-living concerns and understand governments need to carefully consider the impact of any policy change on households, businesses and the broader economy.

At the same time, APCO believes packaging reform must not be allowed to fall by the wayside. Australia still needs a packaging system that delivers better environmental outcomes, supports investment and innovation, and gives businesses greater certainty about the future.

Regardless of this decision, Australia's packaging co-regulatory framework remains in place through the [Used Packaging Materials NEPM](#) and the [Australian Packaging Covenant](#), which APCO administers nationally.

Obligations under the NEPM continue to apply, and the Covenant remains the pathway through which most Australian businesses meet them. APCO supports the Government's focus on working with states and territories to progress reform in the near-term.

Our immediate priority is to drive positive, future-focused outcomes for Members under the current framework. We continue to provide the tools, data and guidance that Members need to make informed decisions and plan with confidence while longer-term policy settings are worked through.

Businesses are also operating in a changing market, with increasing expectations from customers, supply chains and export markets, alongside action at the state and territory level.

APCO will continue to listen to Members and use their experience to ensure our programs and support respond effectively to the practical challenges they face.

APCO CEO, Chris Foley said: "Like anyone in Australia, we understand the pressures that a cost-of-living crisis presents, and for governments this is an economic tightrope.

“Our support for a national scheme does not change. However, with the Minister’s decision to take packaging reform off the table in this term of Government, our priority is to make the current framework work harder for Members.

“APCO remains committed to maintaining and building momentum towards better packaging design and recycling, supporting Members and stakeholders throughout the value chain to drive innovation and prepare for a future circular economy in Australia.”

The **Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation** (APCO) manages and administers the national regulatory framework for minimising the environmental impact of packaging, the Australian Packaging Covenant. The Covenant defines the collective responsibility of governments and businesses across Australia, with APCO bringing together businesses along the packaging supply chain with Commonwealth, state and territory governments, as endorsed by environment ministers.

APCO is driven by a vision for an Australia where all packaging stays in the economy and out of the environment through a trusted, efficient national stewardship system.