

APCO Material Stewardship Committees

Terms of Reference



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The Material Stewardship Committees (MSCs) are the successor to the Technical Reference Group (TRG) and take their place in terms of the requirements outlined in the Australian Packaging Covenant (APC).

This Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation (APCO) **MSC Committee Charter** sets out, in broad terms, **what the committee will do**. Specific actions undertaken by the committee will be guided by the relevant Material Pathway and action plans.

The **MSC Terms of Reference** outlines **how APCO committees work**, including structure, decision making and obligations of committee members. This document is to be read in conjunction with the Terms of Reference and other policies issued by APCO.

 [Read the MSC Charter](#)

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1. Purpose of the Committee

Expert advisory committees and Working Groups form a critical part of the Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation's (APCO) industry engagement and consultation strategy. They exist to:

- 1.1. Ensure that APCO can lead a shared and strategic vision and deliver on priority activities as detailed in its business plan and Material Pathways.
- 1.2. Ensure that decisions are grounded in evidence, sense checked against commercial reality and are developed in consultation with critical and impacted stakeholders.
- 1.3. Facilitate inclusive whole-of-value- chain dialogues.
- 1.4. Create a shared understanding of sector challenges and opportunities
- 1.5. Develop consensus amongst the supply chain on actions to realize APCO and broader sector objectives that work towards the realisation of packaging circularity
- 1.6. Deliver on priority actions as identified by the data and mutually agreed through the annual planning process.

2. Composition of the Committee

Membership of the committee will comprise of:

- 2.1. A minimum of one packaging transformation representative from APCO.
- 2.2. An unlimited number of members, but with sufficient defined Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to cover the breadth of the material pathways as set out by APCO. This is necessary to ensure the correct functioning of the MSC. The exact makeup will be dependent on the individual committee, but the minimum required SMEs are listed in below.

Subject matter experts required

- Upstream.
- Manufacturer/Convertor.
- Brand owner/Producer/Placed on Market.
- Retail distribution.
- Collection.
- Logistics/Waste collector.
- Sorting/MRF.
- Recycling.
- End Markets.
- Industry stewardship.
- Independent bodies.
- Policy/Regulator.

- 2.3. A quorum for a meeting shall be 1/3 of the SMEs within the Material Stewardship Committee (MSC).

3. Nomination Process

- 3.1. Any APCO member or government official can nominate to participate in its committees.
- 3.2. Nominations occur via an open expression of interest. Nominees are invited to stand for multiple committees and to express their priority preferences.
- 3.3. Consultants may be invited from time to time as observers or expert contributors but are not invited to nominate as full Committee Members.
- 3.4. Where there are gaps in the subject matter expertise identified by APCO, APCO may approach members to discuss where they may be able to support.
- 3.5. APCO has the final say in selecting committee nominees.

4. Committee Tenure

- 4.1. Committee tenure periods vary.
- 4.2. MSCs nominally run-in three-year cycles. Other Working groups and sub-committees may be created or dissolved on shorter cycles.
- 4.3. Members can resign at any time by providing written notification to the Chair of their committee, who will then seek alternate nominees off-cycle at their discretion.

5. Membership/requirements as an attendee

- 5.1. APCO uses a collective impact framework that is predicated on delivering against a shared vision, good data to evidence progress, and mutually reinforcing activities.
- 5.2. Committee members are expected to work within these principles.
- 5.3. Members are expected to be courteous, constructive and kind.
- 5.4. Members are expected to review all meeting papers in advance, complete any actions nominated to them in a timely fashion, and to come prepared to discuss issues.
- 5.5. Members acknowledge and embrace complexity, and favour nuanced, evidence-driven solutions aligned to the APCO vision, over simplistic responses, or entrenched positions.
- 5.6. Committee members are expected to base their comments on solutions for the collective benefit of the system.
- 5.7. Where members are acting as a representative for a peak body or other group of market actors, they should make clear whose perspectives they are sharing and are expected to share key findings back to that organisation (subject to confidentiality clauses noted in Section 10).
- 5.8. Committee members who are consistently unable to act within these guidelines may be asked to step down from the committee.



Material Stewardship Committees Collective Impact Principles

- We leave our organisation’s hats and personal ambition at the door.
- We act with the benefit of the collective in mind.
- In a win/win negotiation, no one should be 100% happy - we all give a little.
- We do not let the perfect be the enemy of good.
- We strive for highest and best use over time.
- We focus our efforts on complex issues that require collective impact and let a competitive market manage the rest.
- We use consistent inputs and compete on differentiated outputs.
- We let many flowers bloom (because more solutions = greater market depth and resilience to shocks and stresses).
- We favour radical transparency because good data powers markets.



6. Secretariat Function

- 6.1. APCO will provide secretariat functions for each meeting.
- 6.2. Agenda and papers will be sent one week prior to meetings.
- 6.3. Minutes will be sent no more than one week after meetings are completed.

7. Committee Roles and Chairs

- 7.1. A member of the APCO Packaging Transformation team will chair the committee.
- 7.2. The Chair will always act in a fair and impartial manner. They will keep the agenda moving and on time. They will invite a diversity of perspectives from the group. They will summarise discussions and actions arising for the minutes.
- 7.3. On occasion additional stakeholders with relevant expertise may be invited to attend as observers.

8. Meeting Flow and Cadence

- 8.1. Annual review and face to face meetings will be held annually, with three more online meetings over the rest of the year which will normally be 1.5 hours in duration. Exact frequency, duration and cadence will be determined by each committee, dependent on its agreed workplan.

9. Decision Making Process

9.1. Decisions will be made on consensus basis.

9.2. Where no consensus can be reached, the issue should be noted and will be referred to the authorising committee, APCO CEO or board as required for final decision.

10. Confidentiality

10.1. APCO committees deal with many complex issues with diverse views. To protect the open, honest and respectful sharing of views, members should speak freely in meetings. Outside of meetings they should refrain from attributing discussions and perspectives to individuals, unless specifically permitted to do so.

10.2. In discussions, members should make clear when the views they are expressing are their own, those of their employer or those of the organisation which they are representing on this committee.

10.3. Documentation will move through iterations. Ideas and approaches will evolve throughout the process. To protect the integrity of that process, documentation should be shared beyond the meetings as follows:

10.3.1. **Confidential:** Not for sharing beyond meeting.

10.3.2. **Working draft:** Documentation not to be shared beyond committee membership. Broad principles can be socialised with relevant others.

10.3.3. **Discussion draft:** Documentation may be shared with others in professional network, organisation or peak body that members are representing.

10.4. Consultation draft: May be shared publicly via linking to APCO consultation website.

10.5. No documentation is to be shared with the media or government without explicit prior consent from APCO.

11. Conflict of Interest

Each member must carry out her or his responsibilities independently and in particular:

11.1. Act in the overall interests of all stakeholders in the recycling and packaging industries ahead of any interests of specific sectors within those industries.

11.2. Acts in the overall interests of all stakeholders in the recycling and packaging industries ahead of any potential, perceived or actual personal or business interests.

11.3. Members should be aware of and seek to avoid and potential of perceived Conflict of Interest.

11.4. Where a committee member has a conflict of interest in an item of business, they should declare it to the committee and have it noted in the minutes.

11.5. At the Chair's discretion, members may still share their perspectives, explicitly noting whether their position is that of themselves, their employer or the peak body or group that they are representing.

12. Remuneration

12.1. Committee members participate on a pro-bono basis only unless alternative arrangements are required and made prior to any meeting or commitment on the part of the member requesting remuneration.

12.2. Each member of the committee attending meetings must bear their own costs and cover their own expenses.

13. Definitions

13.1. Annual Action Plan or Workplan means the agreed list of projects, program and actions that the Working Groups will focus on to deliver against the Material Pathways.

13.2. APCO means Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation Ltd ABN 99 056 538 480 of Suite 2, Level 13, 55 Clarence Street, Sydney NSW 2000.

13.3. APCO Material Stewardship Committee Terms of Reference means this document.

13.4. Chair means the representative as appointed by APCO to convene and govern each committee

13.5. Material Stewardship Committee Charter means the document summarising the scope and purpose of the Material stewardship committees

13.6. Material Pathway means the strategic document identifying key opportunities for each of the top five (5) materials streams by impact (tonnage) as identified in the Consumption and Recovery Report.

13.7. Material Stewardship Committee (MSC).

13.8. Working Group means any technical sub-committee established to deliver against critical aspects of the Roadmap or Action plan. Requirements to be reviewed as deemed fit by the MSC

13.9. Subject Matter Expert (SME) Is an individual with recognised expertise, technical knowledge, and practical experience in a specific material stream, packaging format, recovery pathway, or related field. SMEs provide informed advice, evidence, and insights to the Committee, enabling robust discussion and decision-making. Their role is to:

13.9.1. Contribute specialised knowledge that supports the development of material pathways, best practice guidance, and recovery system design.

13.9.2. Ensure advice reflects both industry practice and system-level considerations, including design, collection, processing, and end-markets.

13.9.3. Act in the collective interests of the sector and the circular economy, rather than solely representing the views of their employer or organisation.

Appendices

➤ APCO Material Stewardship Committee Charter



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