# PAPER AND PAPERBOARD

CONSUMPTION AND RECOVERY

2023-2024 FACTSHEET



Australian
Packaging Covenant
Organisation



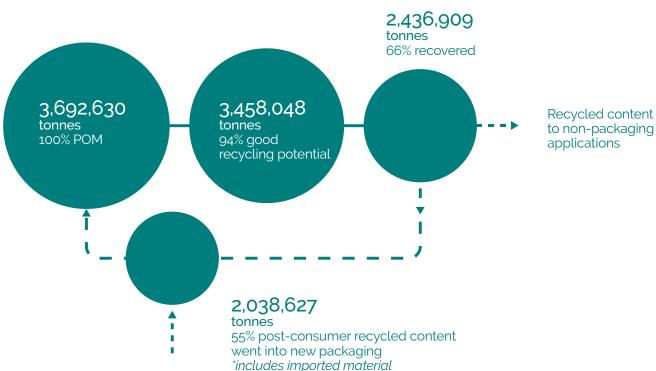
PAPER AND PAPERBOARD 2023 - 2024 Version 1: October 2025

### Summary PAPER AND PAPERBOARD

- Most packaging material placed on market (POM) is made from paper and paperboard (54%). That's 3,692,630 tonnes.
- Its volume POM means paper and paperboard have a significant ability to influence the packaging targets.
- Paper and paperboard POM decreased to near 2021–22 levels, with the first observed fall since the start of reporting in 2017–18.
- 2,038,627 tonnes of paper and paperboard (55%) POM was from post-consumer sources.
- Despite 94% of paper and paperboard packaging POM receiving a "good recycling potential" rating, only 66% of paper and paperboard was recovered throughout 2023-24.
- Paper and paperboard recovery rate has increased slightly, with approximately 66% of paper and paperboard POM recovered in 2023-24, compared with 65% in 2022-23.
- There is almost as much paper & paperboard packaging going to landfill (1,255,720 tonnes) as there is total plastic packaging POM (1,269,095 tonnes).
- Further improvements to paper and paperboard recovery represents the largest opportunity for advancing packaging recovery rates. A 10% lift in paper and paperboard recovery would deliver an additional 369,263 tonnes of packaging recovery. This would require equivalent uplifts in domestic paper & paperboard reprocessing capacity and end market development.
- Australia's paper and paperboard packaging supply chain is strongly influenced by global markets.
   Imported packaging represent approximately 47% of paper & paperboard packaging POM in Australia.
   At the same time, recovery also relies heavily on export markets, representing 48% of total paper & paperboard recovered.

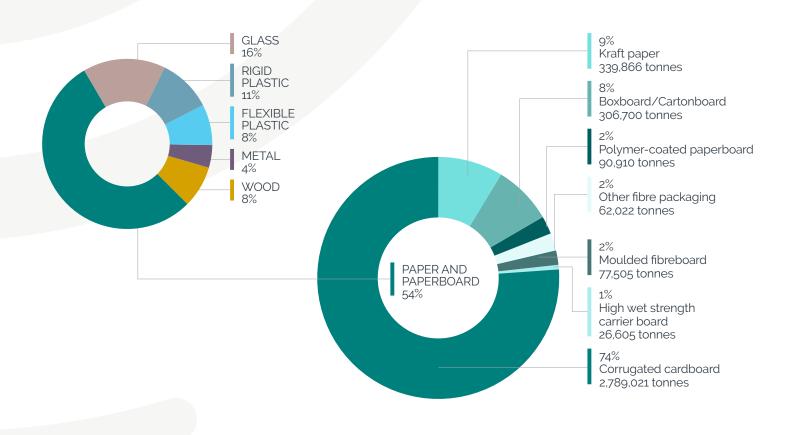
#### Material recovery





PAPER AND PAPERBOARD 2023 – 2024 Version 1: October 2025

## Placed on market PAPER AND PAPERBOARD



#### **TRENDS** 4,000,000 3,500,000 3,000,000 2,500,000 2,000,000 1,500,000 1,000,000 500,000 0 2018-19 2019-20 2020-21 2021-22 2022-23 2023-24 POM Good Recycling Potential Recovery Total recycled content Pre-consumer recycled content Post-consumer recycled content



PAPER AND PAPERBOARD 2023 - 2024 Version 1: October 2025

### Reprocessing capacity



### Top 3 priorities PAPER AND PAPERBOARD

The following three component groups represent 93% of all paper and paperboard packaging POM in 2023-24.

	POM (tonnes)	Recovery (tonnes)	Pre-consumer recycled content (tonnes)	Post-consumer recycled content (tonnes)
Corrugated cardboard	2,789,021	2,060,547	369,840	1,853,480
Boxboard/ cartonboard	306,700	106,198	68,905	82,645
Kraft paper	339,866	0	55,744	22,874



## Progress towards the National Packaging Targets

OUTCOME	TARGET	PROGRESS
Packaging designed for circularity and	100% of packaging is reusable, recyclable or compostable	94% was classified as having good recycling potential
sustainability	Problematic and unnecessary single-use plastic packaging will be phased out	NOT APPLICABLE
Harmonised and expanded reuse and recovery systems are in place	<b>70%</b> of plastic packaging is recycled or composted	NOT APPLICABLE
Deep and resilient markets exist for recycled materials	60% recycled content included across Paper and Paperboard  Target across all materials is 50%	55% of Paper and Paperboard was made with post-consumer recycled material

# For more information on 2023-24 Australian Packaging and Consumption Recovery data visit: <a href="https://www.apco.org.au">www.apco.org.au</a> or <a href="mailto:contact APCO">contact APCO</a>.

All data provided within this document is from or estimated based on the data available within the sources outlined below.

These figures do not include packaging lost to litter or with extended shelf life. Rounding of percentage data may result in discrepancies among totals. For more details, please refer to the Consumption and Recovery Report 2023-24.

Population data sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics – National, State and Territory Population data sets.

This factsheet was developed by the Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation (APCO) using information collated from publicly available sources. Such collated information could not be, and was not, independently verified by APCO and this information may contain typographical and other errors or inaccuracies Although all reasonable attempts were made to ensure the accuracy and Aon an "as is" basis without any representation, warranty or guarantee of any kind. To the maximum extent permitted by law, APCO accepts no liability or responsibility whatsoever for any use of or reliance upon this factsheet by any third party.

