



## MEDIA RELEASE

### **RECYCLING SECTOR CALLS ON AUSTRALIA'S ENVIRONMENT MINISTERS TO DELIVER REGULATORY CERTAINTY AND COORDINATED ACTION**

**Wednesday 25 March 2026**

The Australian Council of Recycling (ACOR) is calling on Australia's Environment Ministers to secure the future of the nation's recycling system by fast-tracking overdue reforms in packaging, embedded batteries, market demand and regulatory enforcement.

This year will be critical for many recyclers. While there has been significant investment in collection infrastructure and processing capability, weak demand for locally recycled material is placing real pressure on the sector.

Ahead of the Environment Ministers Meeting, ACOR is calling for coordinated action to prioritise the viability of the recycling system by progressing long-overdue reforms.

- **National packaging reform:** The Australian Government has committed to national packaging reform, but the sector still lacks regulatory certainty. Ministers must now settle the process, timeframe and core design of reform, including nationally consistent regulation that makes producers responsible for the full life of packaging, supports a genuine level playing field, and drives demand for Australian-made recycled materials
- **Embedded battery fires:** Battery-related fires are one of the most urgent safety issues facing the recycling and waste sector, with more than 10,000 fires each year across Australia's systems. Most are caused by batteries embedded in electronic devices entering the system and igniting during collection and processing. Strong, nationally harmonised product stewardship regulation for batteries and small electrical and electronic equipment is needed, alongside safe collection systems and public education.
- **Demand for Australian recycled materials:** Governments must prioritise procurement of Australian recycled content and set clear targets that support local remanufacturing. No markets means no recycling. Without strong demand for locally made recycled materials, cheap imports will continue to displace Australian recycled content and create more waste.
- **Enforcement and harmonisation:** A viable sector depends on a level playing field. This requires rigorous enforcement of Commonwealth waste export rules and State environmental regulation, alongside greater national consistency in resource recovery regulation.

Suzanne Toumbourou, CEO of ACOR, said the sector had waited too long for key reforms.

“Recycling is a remanufacturing supply chain that contributes almost \$19 billion in economic value to the Australian economy. For that chain to hold, every link—collection, processing and end markets—must be viable. If any part fails, the circular economy reaches a dead end.”

“Environment Ministers have a clear opportunity to provide the regulatory certainty and practical action needed to support a stronger, sovereign recycling sector. Reform is overdue. Now is the time for national leadership to ensure Australian recycling remains viable, safe and delivers for the economy and the environment.”

**Media contact:** Suzanne Toumbourou, ACOR CEO | 0423 407 467 | [ceo@acor.org.au](mailto:ceo@acor.org.au)

**About ACOR:**

The Australian Council of Recycling (ACOR) is the preeminent industry forum for resource recovery, recycling and remanufacturing, leading the transition to circular economy in Australia. ACOR represents a growing industry that contributes almost \$19 billion in economic value, generating broad social and environmental benefits. Our sector collects, sorts and reprocesses material, and makes new products with recycled content, creating more jobs for Australians. [acor.org.au](http://acor.org.au)