



Media Release

**Industry and Green Groups call for Recycling Leadership
at Friday's Ministerial Council Meeting**

25 April 2018: In a clear demonstration of the importance of recycling - green groups and the waste and recycling industry have united to advocate for systemic change within Australia by calling on Environment Ministers meeting this Friday to act urgently to implement an Australian Circular Economy & Recycling Action Plan with clear targets, enforceable policy and funding assistance .

While individual groups have been calling for a new direction to decouple the Australian recycling and resource recovery industry from global markets – this is the first time the waste industry, recycling businesses and environment groups have joined together to recognise not only the economic benefits but also the environmental gains of moving to a circular economy.

“The waste and resource recovery sector is a \$15.5 billion industry that employs 50,000 people nationally delivering a cleaner environment and saving resources. We are all acutely aware that the industry must grow and not move backwards to the days of dumping and incineration. We call on Environment Ministers to work together to deliver what we know the public wants – more and better recycling and major domestic market development,” said Jeff Angel, Director of the Boomerang Alliance of 47 national, state and local groups.

“There can be nothing but a negative outcome if the states and federal governments do not come together at this point,” said Ms Gayle Sloan, CEO of WMAA. “What we have seen in Ipswich cannot be repeated, the community will not accept it, the industry does not want it, we need Government to come together on Friday and act - not talk.”

WMAA, ACOR and Boomerang all agree that the Circular Economy and Recycling Action Plan is needed to build on respective state governments’ shorter-term actions to date to maintain the community’s confidence in recycling services under the current unprecedented circumstances precipitated by China’s National Sword legislation.

ACOR CEO, Peter Shmigel: “We need to stop seeing the items that go into the bins as just waste and see them for what they are – commodities. Year on year we have seen a 2% drop in employment in the manufacturing industry. Seeing Australia transform from a linear economy (manufacture – use – dispose) to a circular economy (design – manufacture – use – recycle – reuse) will not only see us protect Australian jobs, it will see protection of our economy. We know we can create almost one job for every tonne recycled in Australia.”

The three groups called for at a minimum, Ministers to agree to action supporting:

1. National Circular Economy Plan
2. National Mandated Green Public Procurement;
3. Mandated recycled content in packaging;
4. New funding assistance

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About WMAA

The Waste Management Association of Australia (WMAA) is the peak body for both the waste and resource recovery industry. WMAA supports its members to provide sustainable waste management and resource management in Australia. The WMAA is the voice for the waste management industry across Australia and covers the key areas of landfill, resource and energy recovery, carbon management and biohazard waste.

www.wmaa.asn.au

About Boomerang Alliance

Established in 2004, the Alliance of environment groups has grown from 10 groups to 47 and has worked on campaigns for container deposits, plastic bag bans, used tyre recycling and economic incentives for recycling. It recently produced Australia's first Threat Abatement Plan on plastic pollution and is working with local communities and businesses to end single-use plastics.

www.boomerangalliance.org.au

About ACOR

ACOR, established in 1983, is a peak national industry association representing some 70 businesses in the recycling and resource recovery industry of Australia. Our core business is:

- Advocating on behalf of our members to influence governments' decision-making in support of the recycling and resource recovery industry;
- Representing businesses in the supply and value chain of recycling and resource recovery;
- Raising the calibre of resource recovery and recycling debate to achieve commercial solutions for our members;
- Managing sovereign risks for our members.

ACOR works closely with governments to develop policies and programs that improve recycling and resource recovery, and support investment in and growth of the Australian recycling industry.

<http://www.acor.org.au/>