

**NATIONAL
CIRCULAR ECONOMY
COUNCIL**

National Circular Economy Council

TERMS OF REFERENCE

NATIONAL CIRCULAR ECONOMY COUNCIL

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1. Introduction

This is a time of crisis but it is also a time of immense opportunity for Australia. As we transform our economy and make our nation more sustainable and self-sufficient, the role of the circular economy is more important than ever.

While many States and Territory governments are already catalysing the circular economy through policy, funding, programs and approaches, there is a need for more collaboration to build consensus, support industry investment - especially with consistency across jurisdictions, and unlock the economic opportunities circular economy presents.

The 2022 [Australian Environment Ministers' communique](#) delivers a powerful mandate for action. This taskforce is an important platform for States and Territory governments to work together to achieve the objective: *To work with the private sector to design out waste and pollution, keep materials in use and foster markets to achieve a circular economy by 2030.*

2. About Circular Australia

Circular Australia is an independent, national body that is working to influence more Australians, governments and businesses to implement circular strategies. Our expertise, programs and partnerships drive change, measure impact and **accelerate** the circular economy transition.

Circular Australia has evolved from the NSW Government funded *NSW Circular*, and will soon launch its new strategic plan and actions to help government, industry, researchers and communities unlock the \$2 trillion circular economy opportunity in Australia.

Circular Australia has a network of industry taskforces (Finance and Investment, Industry, Precincts & Infrastructure, Tech) with 300 members and a network of 2000 government, industry and research organisations and individuals.

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3. Achieving a National Circular Economy by 2030

While States and Territories are progressing action on the circular economy, many gaps remain across policy, regulation, market settings, supply chains and infrastructure. This presents a significant barrier to scaling the circular economy across Australia.

Industry is also looking for more uniform definitions, metrics and regulatory approaches. It requires more certainty and continuity across jurisdictions, including how to ensure resources stay in the economy longer, supply chains are economically viable and circular infrastructure investment occurs at the right time and place. The scaling of circular economy outcomes also relies on collaboration between jurisdictions to enable business investment, new jobs and manufacturing.

Not one State or Territory can make the transition on their own. Cooperation between States and Territories to drive new circular supply chains, enabling regulatory, policy and market settings and development of infrastructure and metrics will accelerate the transition to a circular economy in Australia.

4. The National Circular Economy Council

Circular Australia has an important role to play in continuing to build collaboration between States, Territories and the national government to accelerate the transition to a circular economy through its national taskforce.

On 30 November 2020, the *State of Circular* collaborative was established by Circular Australia to bring together State, Territory and federal Governments to fast track the transition to a circular economy. The inaugural event was attended by circular economy policy-makers from the ACT, Queensland, Northern Territory, NSW, South Australia, Tasmania, Western Australia, Victoria and the federal government.

Since then, NSW, Victoria and South Australia have hosted meetings to showcase State circular economy activities and approaches and feedback has been positive about the value and ongoing need for this group.

With a new national commitment on circular economy, the National Taskforce has evolved into the **National Circular Economy Council** to drive coordinated action. By pooling resources and aligning ambition it will be possible to accelerate the transition to the circular economy by 2030.

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The National Circular Economy Council is not a decision-making body. State and Territory members may need further approvals before agreement can be reached on particular items. It is however an important forum to share information, insights and evidence frankly and freely to progress and accelerate the transition to a circular economy in Australia by 2030.

4.1. *Proposed Objectives FY22-25*

National Circular Economy Council objectives are to promote Circular Economy policy reforms, approaches and best practices to drive national circular economy outcomes by:

- 4.1.1. Information sharing including circular metrics
- 4.1.2. Commonality of approach (Harmonisation)
- 4.1.3. Projects (Sub-working groups)

4.2. *Council KPIs FY22-25*

The following proposed objectives have been identified by States and Territories, align with Circular Australia's Strategic Plan and deliver mutually beneficial outcomes for Australian Governments:

- 4.2.1. Delivering a set of:
 - a. Circular Economy definitions
 - b. Circular Economy metrics (building on State/Territory and expert best practices)
- 4.2.2. Identifying areas of circular economy action including:
 - c. Circular Economy policies, regulatory, legislation, market structures, such as procurement, materials and supply chains
- 4.2.3. Other areas identified by States and Territories include: Metrics, Procurement, Policy, Productivity (Economics, Social & Jobs), Infrastructure, Best Practice, Narratives, Knowledge Exchange, Representation (Treasury Transport/ Health & broader agencies, Trade, Consumer (Prosumers) and Education.

4.3. *Name Change*

It was agreed in Dec 2022 that the National Taskforce become known as the National Circular Economy Council to drive a coordinated CE action agenda.

5. Participation Costs

Annual paid membership of the Council will remain open for Australian State, Territory and national governments with a minimum three-year commitment. The

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introduction of a fee provides professional resources to deliver the key objectives of the Council and support the participation of the States and Territories. Pooling resources and aligning ambition will accelerate the transition to the circular economy.

5.1. **Membership Fee Structure**

The Council fee structure has been developed to accommodate the varying sizes of Australian State and Territory governments

- **\$7,000/ annum Large States: NSW, Queensland, Victoria, Western Australia**
- **\$3,500/annum Smaller States/ Territories: ACT, South Australia, Northern Territory, Tasmania**

5.2. **Shared Project costs**

The Council may commission project work to deliver objectives and KPIs. The associated costs will be shared between members (weighted to larger States).

6. **Roles and responsibilities**

6.1. **Secretariat**

Circular Australia provides secretarial and administrative support to the Council. It will work with States to rotate the hosting of the event between Council government members with the following ongoing administrative support:

- Convene, organise and diarise meetings
- Maintain member list and record of attendance
- Actions from meetings will be recorded but formal meeting minutes are currently deemed unnecessary to the function of the Council
- Manage the Zoom online forum for hosting meetings
- Terms of Reference drafting
- Managing, filing documents & folders

6.2. **Members**

Each state or territory can send at least one representative to Council meetings and in addition:

- Host meetings on a rotating basis in collaboration with the secretariat
- Provide a key contact (and alternate representative) for all meetings
- Contribute to information sharing in the spirit of collaboration towards a national approach to the circular economy

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6.3 Confidentiality

Participants can call for Chatham House Rule, during meetings. Where Chatham House rules apply, all meeting participants:

- **cannot use** the information received
- **cannot identify** the affiliation of the speaker(s)
- **cannot identify** the affiliation of any other participant

Action items and notes taken from meetings will be broad and action-focused. Specific discussions will not be minuted. Meetings will not be recorded, unless for the purposes of minute-taking and with the agreement of Council members.

7. Meeting Frequencies

Quarterly Meetings for 1.5 hours and an annual showcase event. A schedule of meetings will be provided at the commencement of the calendar year by the secretariat. Additional meetings may be required from time to time should new or urgent matters arise.