

# 2019 FEDERAL ELECTION REPORT CARD

## An industry assessment of waste and resource recovery policies

MAY 2019



### Summary

That the major parties have released specific waste and resource recovery policies is unprecedented and a watershed in Australian Federal politics. It reflects that waste and recycling are mainstream issues at present and that industry and the community are expecting greater involvement, leadership and action from the Federal Government.

An assessment by four peak industry groups of the policies put forward by the Greens, the Australian Labor Party (ALP) and the Liberal National Party (LNP) finds that:

- All parties have presented credible and coherent policies and achieve a pass mark
- The ALP scores highly for a balanced suite of programs to support industry growth, recycled content products and work with local and State governments. It loses marks only through not specifically committing to wide-ranging community engagement programs – overall achievement is a C
- The LNP scores highly for a significant commitment to industry investment and a circular economy approach however loses marks for lack of recent implementation – overall achievement is a C
- The Greens scores highly with a very strong suite of programs but were marked down due to an inability to implement its proposals – overall achievement is a C

This being the first time all major parties have released specific waste and resource recovery policies is significant and bodes well for post-election activity, however parties will benefit from greater engagement with the industry to ensure better targeted programs in a timely manner.

Consistent and notable across all parties is commitments to:

- Upgrading and supporting innovative recycling infrastructure
- Promoting and establishing local markets for recycled content through government procurement
- Product stewardship schemes and ensuring producers step-up to meet their responsibilities for the full lifecycle of their products
- Dealing with plastic pollution locally and internationally

The assessment and analysis found that the major parties are less committed to:

- Establishing a more circular economy that avoids waste and changes consumption patterns
- Engaging the community in recycling and waste reduction activities
- Putting in place arrangements nationally to ensure their policies will be implemented in a timely manner

The assessment focused specifically on each party's waste and resource recovery statements and policies and did not include other policy announcements that may have an indirect impact on the waste and recycling industry.

### REPORT CARD

Party **Greens**

Grade 2019 **C**

Comments **Bold, coherent vision and strong commitments however limited potential to implement**

Party **ALP**

Grade 2019 **C**

Comments **Soundly based approach coordinating with States and Territories and providing leadership and funding in key areas**

Party **LNP**

Grade 2019 **C**

Comments **Unprecedented Federal commitment to industry infrastructure and a more circular economy**

# Detailed assessment

TABLE 1. ASSESSMENT, COMMITMENTS AND SCORING

Waste and Resource Recovery Policy Assessment		Party policy stated commitments		
Assessment category	Assessment Criteria	Greens	Labor	Liberal
<b>Recycling infrastructure</b>	Will the policy support, enable or otherwise facilitate new and enhanced resource recovery infrastructure and capacity in Australia?	\$500 million over five years for recycling infrastructure through the CEFC	\$60 million in a National Recycling Fund	\$100 million Australian Recycling Investment fund
<b>Scoring</b>		<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>
<b>Circular economy</b>	The understanding of and support for movement towards or development of a more circular economy including attention to waste avoidance and changed consumption patterns	Reducing waste and increasing recycling for a more circular economy	National Recycling and Circular Economy Fund	Establish a Circular Economy Hub
<b>Scoring</b>		<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>D</b>
<b>Community engagement</b>	Degree and scope of seeking to engage the community and support and extend peoples commitment to recycling and waste reduction activities	Providing incentives for people to recycle	National Waste Commissioner Role	Support national recycling app, consumer education program
<b>Scoring</b>		<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>D</b>
<b>National consistency, coordination, leadership</b>	Display of leadership and commitment to effective policy coordination with jurisdictions and national consistency	Mandatory product stewardship schemes	National Waste Commissioner Role	Product Stewardship Investment Fund
<b>Scoring</b>		<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>
<b>Recycled content product and market development</b>	Commitment to recycled content product and market development, including Government procurement or other procurement intervention	Mandatory targets for Government departments and recycled content products	Targets for federal government purchasing of recycled content products	Recycled content into road construction
<b>Scoring</b>		<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>

<b>Waste and Resource Recovery Policy Assessment</b>		<b>Party policy stated commitments</b>		
<b>Assessment category</b>	<b>Assessment Criteria</b>	<b>Greens</b>	<b>Labor</b>	<b>Liberal</b>
<b>Innovation and research</b>	Support for applied industry research and innovation to foster or continue work on areas of need	Plastics Research Centre	\$15 million to assist Australia's neighbours clean up the Pacific Ocean	\$20 million for CRC
<b>Scoring</b>		<b>C</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C</b>
<b>Overall funding</b>	The overall funding commitment	\$500 million	\$290 million	\$167 million
<b>Scoring</b>		<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C</b>
<b>Institutional implementation arrangements</b>	The extent to which the policy or program commits to or otherwise shows a pathway that would ensure measurable implementation of the suite of policy actions / interventions	Provision of grants to state and local government contingent upon meeting procurement targets	National Waste Commissioner	Industry packaging targets and continue food waste strategy
<b>Scoring</b>		<b>F</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>F</b>
<b>Capacity to implement</b>	The extent to which the party has the ability to implement its commitments including its past performance / record	Lacks power to implement	Good track record	Recent performance lacking urgency
<b>Scoring</b>		<b>F</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
<b>Industry and stakeholder engagement</b>	Has there been engagement with key stakeholders including industry in development of the policy and does the policy reflect any such engagement?	Light touch engagement	Good engagement and listening	Good engagement and listening
<b>Scoring</b>		<b>D</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C</b>
<b>Overall scoring</b>		<b>Raw score = 52% Overall grade = C</b>	<b>Raw score = 53% Overall grade = C</b>	<b>Raw score = 53% Overall grade = C</b>

## Methodology

Equilibrium was engaged by ACOR and accessed each party's waste and resource recovery statements and published policies. Each was assessed for how it responded to the following issues:

- Recycling infrastructure
- Circular economy
- Community engagement
- National consistency, coordination, leadership
- Recycled content product and market development
- Innovation and research
- Overall funding
- Institutional implementation arrangements
- Capacity to implement

Each of the industry associations was provided with a spreadsheet, assessment criteria and access to the full policy statements to enable a review of each issue and a raw scoring of 0 to 5 for each party's commitments for each of the issues.

## CONTACT DETAILS

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