

## **FOGO Reference Group Meeting 14, 23 February 2023**

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### **MEETING OUTCOMES STATEMENT – MEETING 14 23 FEBRUARY 2023**

The fourteenth meeting of the FOGO Reference Group was held on 23 February 2023.

#### Key updates

The Group was provided with an update on:

**FOGO Rollout Plan 2022-23** progress – market development projects are well underway, including better practice contracting (draft report with WRIWA, WALGA, and DWER for review); target market case studies and trials (project underway) and testing and auditing (project scope presented at the meeting for comment).

**WA's Plan for Plastics and compostable packaging** – members received an update on WA's Plan for Plastics, and noted that some items affected by the ban, such as coffee cups, will be replaced with compostable alternatives. The group noted that during the transition – as non-compostable items are phased out and replaced by compostable alternatives – compostable packaging such as coffee cups should be disposed to the general household waste bin. This is because it is difficult for consumers and composters to differentiate non-compostable items from compostable items.

The Group noted that there will be a growing community expectation that compostable items should be composted through FOGO systems. The group discussed the importance of a planned approach to improving disposal pathways for compostable items, and ensuring communications to the community are clear and consistent.

#### Case studies and trials project

Members noted that DWER has appointed a consultant to produce case studies on the use of FOGO-derived products in priority markets (extensive agriculture, intensive agriculture, mine rehabilitation, local / state government projects, and urban amenity). Case studies will be published on the Waste Authority website.

#### Testing and auditing project

Members discussed a project which aims to identify and quantify contamination in FOGO feedstock, and identify a method which can be applied on an ongoing basis to measure and report FOGO feedstock contamination levels.

The project will support composters to understand and meet their requirements under the *DWER Guideline: Better Practice Organics Recycling Guideline*.

#### FOGO Interim Agreed List update

DWER advised that an updated FOGO Agreed List has been published on the WasteSorted website. The list was updated on advice from the FOGO Reference Group and the Consistent Communications Collective.

The list helps local governments and regional councils implement consistent FOGO collection services. It focuses on materials that maximise recovery and minimise contamination.

#### Guideline: Better Practice Organics Recycling (BPOR) update

In December 2022 DWER published the *Guideline: Better practice organics recycling* and the Consultation summary report.

The BPOR is based on outcome-focused environmental performance objectives (EPOs) that must be achieved by organics recycling operators demonstrating the implementation of appropriate and effective benchmark and / or alternative controls.

DWER's website will evolve as more elements to support this guideline (both internally and externally) are developed. An external contractor has been appointed to assist with delivering tools to support implementation.

#### FOGO projections and processing capacity

Members received updated information on licenced FOGO processing capacity and future projections. Members noted that projections should include actual / planned capacity rather than licences capacity.

#### *Footnote:*

*On 4 April 2023, DWER released a Draft Western Australia State Waste Infrastructure Plan for comment. The documents will be used to help inform FOGO projections and processing capacity.*

#### WasteSorted Grants – Organics Infrastructure

Members were advised that WasteSorted Grants – Organics Infrastructure program was launched on 19 December 2022. A maximum \$200,000 grant limit applies per operating site, to assist operators in implementing DWER's *Guideline: Better Practice Organics Recycling*. The program will be available to support both existing FOGO processing facilities and transfer stations.

#### APCO's action plan to phase out PFAS in fibre-based packaging

Members were advised of Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation's (APCO's) launch of an *Action Plan to Phase Out PFAS in Fibre-Based Food Contact Packaging*. The plan outlines a voluntary, industry-led approach to phase out intentionally added PFAS substances in fibre-based food contact packaging by 31 December 2023.

The action plan responds to a 2021 APCO-led study (PFAS in fibre-based packaging) which found a proportion of fibre-based, food-contact packaging samples contained PFAS. The action plan aligns with the National PFAS Position Statement agreed to by all Australian governments in 2020, and the achievement of the 2025 National Packaging Targets (2025 Targets).

APCO is hosting webinars and releasing supporting guidance and tools to help industry and members with the transition of the plan.

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