

Media Statement

“A diverse industry with diverse packaging” – New Accord Infographic outlines key opportunities and challenges on the road to improved packaging sustainability

Sydney. Friday, 8 December 2023. Accord’s latest one-page infographic sheds light on the vital role packaging plays for product safety and quality across our diverse industry sectors, outlining practical pathways towards a circular economy via tailored approaches for better packaging management.

“What many people may not realise is just how diverse the packaging types are across the various supply chains that make up the hygiene, personal care and specialty products industry in Australia,” Accord Executive Director Bronwyn Capanna said.

“Three distinct product sectors are profiled in the infographic and the marked differences of each are highlighted. But one important feature is common across our three sectors. The vast majority of our industry’s many formulated products are multi-use, often over a relatively long period.

“This means the product stays in its primary dispensing package for use over a sustained period of several weeks or months, and up to a year or beyond in some cases. This contrasts with other products, such as snack foods and beverages, that are generally entirely consumed shortly after opening.

“Such prolonged use patterns, rather than one of use-and-dispose, not only result in a reduced waste packaging footprint but also mean that static labelling measures like the Australasian Recycling Label (ARL) may not represent the most effective measure for disposal communication to consumers for many types of formulated hygiene, personal care and specialty products. This is why our latest infographic points to other options for communicating disposal advice, such as via e-labelling.

“Differing characteristics for products in the three sectors of beauty/fragrance, personal hygiene/homecare, and commercial/institutional hygiene products outlined in the infographic illustrate that tailored policy approaches will be required.

“It is important that a light be shone on these sectoral differences to remind policymakers that poorly conceived, one-size-fits-all approaches to packaging policy measures and regulation will prove ineffective if they represent a poor fit with the market realities.

“Within these market realities, Accord is actively engaging all our product sectors to look for opportunities to improve packaging sustainability. We are an Industry Association member of the Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation (APCO). And recent action has included becoming an affiliate supporter of the National Plastics Recycling Scheme (NPRS) as well as our ongoing investigation of practical industry-wide options for small-format cosmetic product packaging waste.

“Accord will continue to invest time and effort into improved packaging sustainability throughout 2024 and beyond,” Ms Capanna concluded.

Attach – Packaging profile of the hygiene, personal care & specialty products industry Infographic.

Accord infographics - <https://accord.asn.au/about/infographics/>.

Accord packaging and plastics actions - <https://accord.asn.au/sustainability/plastics-and-packaging-waste/>.






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Packaging profile of the hygiene, personal care & specialty products industry

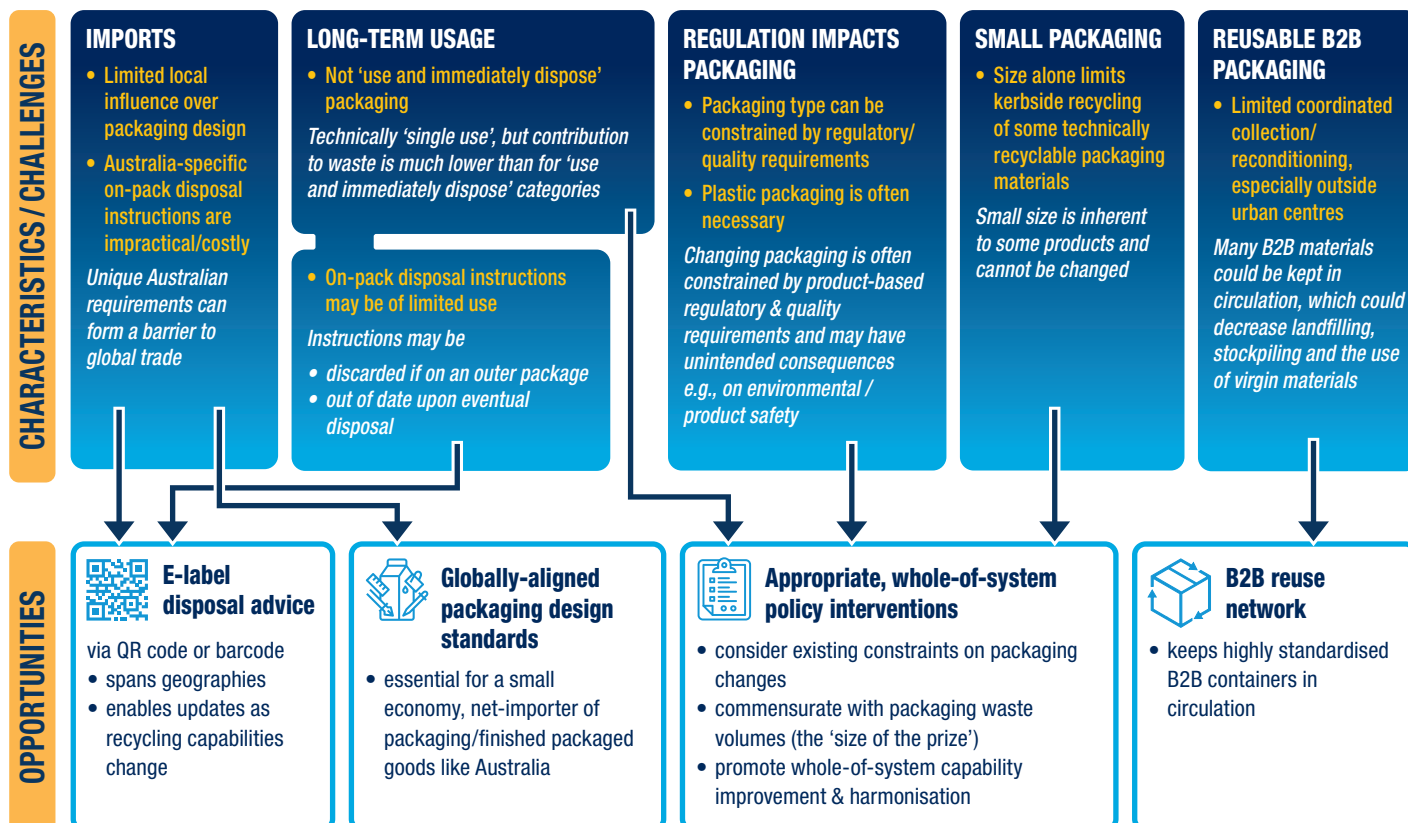
Packaging of our industry's formulated products is essential for product quality, safety and consumer information.

Our industry is committed to decreasing the environmental impacts of its packaging through better design, material efficiency and recoverability.

A diverse industry with diverse packaging...

Supply chain	Business to consumer (B2C) 		Business to business (B2B) 
Product category	 Beauty & fragrance products	 Personal hygiene and home-care products	 Commercial and institutional hygiene & specialty products
Packaging origin	Mostly imported	Mix of local and imported	Mostly local
Size	Mostly small	Small–medium	Large to very large
Diversity (format, materials, size)	High	Medium	Low (highly standardised)
Recyclability	Medium; often excluded from kerbside recycling based on size	High; many accepted through kerbside recycling	High technical recyclability; fate through C&I collection needs investigation
Reuse	Niche reuse applications being explored	Reuse models mostly based on refills	Very high reuse potential
Usage duration	Typically weeks, months or even years – not 'use and immediately dispose'		
Product regulations	All categories include products where changing the packaging is impacted by regulatory, quality or safety requirements		
Soft plastic use	Low (mostly for transport)		

...which brings both challenges and opportunities



There is no 'one size fits all' approach to packaging waste management, even within our industry.

Accord and its Members are committed to responsible action and leadership in addressing the packaging challenge for our sector in conjunction with concurrent whole-of-system improvements.