

Sustainability Covenant

Review of PACIA and EPA Victoria Sustainability Covenant

July 2007

PACIA



1. Introduction

In January 2004 a [Sustainability Covenant](#) was signed between the Plastics and Chemicals Industries Association (PACIA) and EPA Victoria. The Covenant put in place a voluntary framework to enable PACIA to move their industries further towards sustainability by:

- Increasing the efficiency with which PACIA and its members use resources to produce products and services; and
- Reducing the ecological impact of those products and services throughout the life cycle.

The Sustainability Covenant was for a 3 year duration and expired in January 2007. PACIA and EPA Victoria are currently in the process of developing a second Covenant. The following provides an assessment by PACIA and EPA Victoria on the effectiveness of the actions and programs of the 2004 Covenant in delivering sustainability outcomes for plastics and chemicals industries.

2. Review of 2004 Sustainability Covenant Activities

The following provides a summary of the projects/actions of the Sustainability Covenant that PACIA and EPA Victoria considered as effective and those of limited value in terms of delivering sustainability outcomes for plastics and chemicals industries. The effective programs are likely to be continued in the second Sustainability Covenant.

2.1 Effective Programs

The Sustainability Covenant was effective in enabling PACIA members gain an increased level of knowledge and understanding of sustainability. The REWARDS partnership was an important component of Covenant activities that assisted in the PACIA member companies implement programs which deliver improvements in water and waste management. PACIA and its members also participated in a number of trial programs that enabled both PACIA and EPA Victoria to test material and approaches.

Sustainability Measurement Tools

EPA Victoria and RMIT University developed a sustainability training program and a range of tools that assisted PACIA members gain increased levels of knowledge and understanding of sustainability initiatives including Life Cycle Management. The knowledge gained from the training courses has assisted PACIA members on their sustainability journey including improving their resource efficiency and management of their waste.

Capacity Building

Throughout the Covenant period, PACIA conducted a range of workshops and seminars that were effective in identifying and promoting opportunities for plastic and chemical companies to become more sustainable. PACIA regularly engaged Dr Paul Tebo, former Corporate Vice President - Safety, Health and Environment for the DuPont Company; who was invaluable with sharing his knowledge and experience on the key sustainability challenges, barriers and opportunities for the plastics and chemicals on its journey to sustainable development. The seminars and workshops also assisted PACIA members build networks to identify sources of excellence in sustainability tools, and to share information, experiences and outcomes of integrating sustainability into core business practices.



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Promotion of Sustainability

A range of information on sustainability was disseminated to PACIA members and stakeholders in a variety of ways including through newsletters, the PACIA website and regular workshops and seminars. The issue of sustainability was also successfully promoted through the 2005 and 2006 PACIA Annual Conferences and the PACIA Awards program inaugurated Sustainability Awards for the sectors.

Fostering Innovation (including industry programs)

PACIA and EPA Victoria are committed to working together to develop sustainable business solutions within the association and its member companies. The partnership, known as REWARDS (Resource Efficiency & Waste Reduction Delivering Savings) was delivered to resource the activities of the Covenant and therefore provided financial support for Victorian plastics and chemicals companies to implement programs which deliver significant improvements in: a. resource efficiencies b. reductions in the generation of waste, particularly prescribed industrial waste (PIW) and trade waste (TW). As part of the Covenant, REWARDS funding was provided to Qenos, Dulux and Marplex that assisted these companies provide innovative solutions to managing their Prescribed Industrial Waste (PIW). Phase 1 of the 'plastics resource map' of the types and geographic distribution of waste materials in Victoria was also completed under the REWARDS program.

PACIA and its members also participated in a number of trial programs developed by both PACIA and EPA Victoria. This was a valuable component of the Covenant activities, enabling both organisations to test material and approaches.

2.2 Programs of Limited Value

The Sustainability Covenant was found to be limiting in several areas including the development of self-sustaining skills and secondment opportunities. One of the key reasons identified for Covenant programs not being implemented was a shift in priority that occurred during the life of the Covenant leading to programs not being completed. A more flexible approach to programs and actions is being investigated for the next Covenant.

Development of Self-Sustaining Skills

As part of the Sustainability Covenant, PACIA committed to develop a program to provide advice to people who were seeking for employment in the plastics and chemicals industries. Whilst no program was formally put in place PACIA was able to assist people on an as-needs basis.

Secondments

The Sustainability Covenant provided the opportunity for secondments between PACIA and EPA Victoria. Secondments are an excellent way for organisations to gain a first-hand understanding of their clients' business operations, drivers and people. Unfortunately no secondments occurred between EPA Victoria and PACIA during the Covenant period, however a secondment did occur during the Covenant development.

3. Next Steps

In January 2007 PACIA advised EPA Victoria of its intention to develop a second sustainability Covenant. PACIA and EPA Victoria are currently working together to develop the Covenant. It is anticipated that the Sustainability Covenant will be finalised in September 2007. The review of the 2004 Sustainability Covenant will assist PACIA and EPA Victoria in identifying areas to be addressed in the next Covenant, in particular having a flexible approach to programs and actions that will allow both PACIA and EPA Victoria adapt to changing priorities during the life of the Covenant.

4. Contacts

If you would like to provide feedback on any aspect of the 2004 Sustainability Covenant or alternatively you would like further information, please contact:

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5. Further Information

- [The Plastics and Chemicals Industries Association \(PACIA\)](#)
- [EPA Victoria](#)
- [The 2004 PACIA and EPA Victoria Sustainability Covenant](#)
- [Further information on REWARDS](#)