



MEDIA RELEASE

3 August 2020

New \$45 million Albury/Wodonga recycling plant to build a domestic circular economy and boost regional jobs

A new recycling plant will substantially increase the amount of recycled PET plastic produced in Australia each year from local waste.

The decision to build the world-class facility in Albury/Wodonga was confirmed yesterday after Pact Group Holdings Ltd, Cleanaway Waste Management Ltd and Asahi Beverages formally entered a joint venture to deliver the project. It will create dozens of direct jobs when construction starts in coming months.

It is anticipated the facility will recycle the equivalent of around 1 billion 600ml PET plastic bottles each year. The bottles will be used as a raw material to produce new bottles plus food and beverage packaging in Australia to help close the loop on recycling. This will see the amount of locally sourced and recycled PET produced in Australia increase by two thirds - from around 30,000 tonnes currently to over 50,000 tonnes per annum according to Pact Group.

Other major environmental benefits it will deliver include reducing Australia's reliance on virgin plastic, the amount of plastic waste sent overseas and the amount of recycled plastic Australia imports. Solar energy will power part of the facility.

The \$45 million facility will be located at the Nexus Precinct, 10km north of Albury/Wodonga's CBD in NSW and will be among the first businesses located at the new industrial precinct.

Over the course of the build, the project is expected to create over 300 direct and indirect jobs, with tradespeople, engineers and technicians among the roles that need to be filled. Announcements will follow regarding the hiring of these roles.

Construction will start towards the end of the year, pending approval from Albury Council, and is expected to be fully operational by December 2021.

The plant will draw on the expertise of each member of the joint venture, which will trade as Circular Plastics Australia (PET). Cleanaway will provide the plastic to be recycled through its collection and sorting network, Pact will provide technical and packaging expertise while Asahi Beverages and Pact will buy the recycled plastic from the facility to use in their packaging.

Today's announcement follows the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the joint venture members earlier this year. The project was supported with nearly \$5 million from the Environmental Trust as part of the NSW Government's *Waste Less, Recycle More initiative* funded from the waste levy. The project was also made possible through the support of the Department of Regional NSW.



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Brooke Donnelly, CEO of the Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation, commented: "A huge congratulations to Pact Group, Asahi Beverages and Cleanaway on reaching this important milestone for the project. This new partnership is a real testament to the powerful impact of collaboration. By bringing together key roles within the plastic packaging supply chain, the partnership will ensure more PET plastic is collected, recycled and used again in future packaging - all the while reducing the strain on virgin materials and boosting a local economy with more jobs and greater opportunities. This industry-led, decisive leadership is fundamental to ensuring the successful delivery of Australia's 2025 National Packaging Targets.

Commenting on the arrangement, Pact's Managing Director and CEO, Mr Sanjay Dayal, said "We are delighted to have formed this partnership. We would like to thank the NSW Government for their support enabling the acceleration of investment in local processing capacity. The arrangement is clearly aligned with our Vision to lead the circular economy and will support Pact in achieving our 2025 Sustainability Promise to offer 30% recycled content across our packaging portfolio."

Cleanaway's CEO and Managing Director, Mr Vik Bansal, said "This partnership will create valuable raw materials from the recyclables we collect and sort to help make a sustainable future possible. Being the joint operator with TOMRA of the NSW Container Deposit Scheme has provided Cleanaway with confidence in the market to invest in this facility. This partnership has been made possible by the NSW Government and I'd like to thank Minister Kean for his continual support. This is a natural extension of our value chain and expands our footprint of prized assets."

Asahi Beverage's Group CEO, Mr Robert Iervasi, said "I'd like to thank Minister Matt Kean and the Albury Council for their support. I'd also like to acknowledge local Federal MP and Environment Minister, Sussan Ley MP, for her commitment to transform Australia's waste and recycling capacity. We already have our beverage manufacturing plant in Albury. We are delighted to expand our presence there and create more local jobs. We've listened to our consumers and are committed to delivering them more recycled bottles. We are very pleased to be contributing to the creation of a truly circular economy and can't wait to get this project started."

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