

**Media Release**

**21 September 2022**

## **Boosting recycled material use in infrastructure assets**

The Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia is pleased to announce the commencement of a South Australian industry led project 'Boosting recycled material use in infrastructure assets'. The project is a collaboration between the Institute of Public Works Engineering (IPWEA), Waste and Recycling Industry South Australia (WRISA) and the Local Government Association of South Australia (LGA), with funding from the Green Industries SA Circular Economy Market Development Grant.

The project will build collaborative links, extend knowledge, address barriers and give practitioners confidence to extend their use of recycled materials into infrastructure assets. Asphalt, concrete, steel, glass, tyres, plastics, PVC and organics will all be included and their potential use in over 200 assets including: roads; bridges; buildings; footpaths; curbing; water treatment, water supply and stormwater assets; fencing and outdoor furniture will be assessed.

"IPWEA is very excited to be working with our project partners to increase the uptake of recycled materials, introduce circular economy processes and reduce waste to the environment." Jacqueline Balston – Director of Sustainability, IPWEA.

Infrastructure accounts for approximately 70% of global greenhouse gas emissions (World Bank estimate) and half of all resources used and waste created globally (DSEWPC 2011). The recently released Australia's Local Government 2021 National State of the Assets Report identified that Australian local government currently has control of a \$523 billion dollar asset portfolio that is growing at a steady state of 6.4% and being consumed at a rate of 1.6% per annum. It is projected that 60%-70% of the 2050 infrastructure is not yet built. These two elements combined make it obvious that the infrastructure sector has enormous potential to reduce, reuse and recycle waste resources while at the same time reducing the impacts of climate change and demand on water and other raw materials.

"Councils in South Australia are committed to transitioning toward a more circular economy. This project is a positive step in supporting councils buy back more recyclable materials for use in a range of infrastructure assets, developing local markets for recyclable materials in our state and reducing waste management costs in local government." Clinton Jury – CEO, Local Government Association of SA

This project will boost the use of recycled material in infrastructure assets by producing an industry led, innovative, best practice guideline (Practice Note) and education package (Online Training Course) for asset managers, engineers, local government and consultants. It will achieve this by addressing the gaps in technical knowledge, procurement options and practical training by producing resources that summarise in practical language the very latest in recycled materials research and link it to potential uses in infrastructure assets. The incorporation of recycled material into infrastructure assets has the potential to increase asset life, market demand for recycled materials, innovation, new market opportunities, and reduce impacts to the environment.

"The resource recovery industry contributes significantly to the South Australian economy. Increasing the uptake of recovered content materials will enable this contribution to grow, providing more jobs and economic activity while delivering a great outcome for the environment". Jim Fairweather, WRISA President.

For further information about the project, provide technical input or review project deliverables, please contact Project Manager, Dr. Jacqueline Balston, IPWEA Director of Sustainability. Email: [sustainability@ipwea.org](mailto:sustainability@ipwea.org)

For additional information about IPWEA Australasia, please contact IPWEA CEO David Jenkins at [david.jenkins@ipwea.org](mailto:david.jenkins@ipwea.org).

**About IPWEA** - The Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia is the peak association for municipal and public works professionals. IPWEA is a global leader in the delivery of sustainable infrastructure asset management, financial planning and reporting.

**About WRISA** – Waste Recycling Industry South Australia is an industry based association representing businesses of all sizes that have a direct involvement and capital investment in the waste and recycling industry in South Australia. Members come together to advocate for a strong, sustainable, safe and profitable waste, recycling and resource recovery industry in the State.

**About LGA of SA** – The Local Government Association of South Australia is the voice of local government in South Australia, representing all councils across the state. The LGA of SA provides leadership, support, representation and advocacy relevant to the needs of South Australian councils.

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