



AUSTRALIAN ORGANICS RECYCLING ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23



AORA CHAIR'S REPORT

On the proceedings of the Company 2022-23, as presented at the Annual General Meeting on 17 November 2023.

AORA, led by our National Executive Officer, John McKew, has continued to make great strides in the organics recycling industry and I would like to thank John for his hard work across the year, and particularly in helping AORA to raise its profile and be part of many conversations at Government level.

Our National Coordinator, Alex Hammett continues to ensure that AORA and all its elements run smoothly across the country, with the support of our Victorian Coordinator, Doug Wilson and New South Wales Coordinator, Lisa Lepore. We had to make the difficult decision in December 2022 to cease the contract of our South Australian Coordinator, Yvonne McLaren due to financial position of membership in that state.

I also extend our thanks to Lisa Dower from Dower House Bookkeeping and Veronica Dullens and her team at Revolve Services, their input is invaluable and we continue to enjoy working with them.

I thank the Board for its ongoing commitment and our Members and sponsors for their strong support.

It was great to get back to normal in 2022- 23 with AORA events taking place across the country. The AORA conference, held in June 2023, in Melbourne was the highlight of the year, with 26% growth in audience since the previous conference. With 319 delegates attending from across the country to discuss the strong and robust collaboration between Australia's organics recycling industry, State and Federal governments and businesses, and the implications of Australia "getting organics recycling right" by leveraging improved collaboration and cooperation. We had strong involvement from sponsors and exhibitors at the Demonstration Day and Exhibition elements, with 26 pieces of equipment onsite at RePurpose It.

Other events held across the year included:

- Member meetings in all states
- Exploring Organic Amendments, Coonawarra, South Australia
- Organics Recycling in Queensland Breakfast, Brisbane
- Benefits of using Recycled Organic Compost Breakfast, Melbourne
- Best on Ground – Benefits of Procuring Recycled Organics, Sydney
- Learn Why Municipal Solid Waste Education Matters Breakfast, Adelaide
- Coffs Waste Conference Local Government Procurement Panel Session
- Christmas Networking at the Zoo, Adelaide
- AORA Vic MCG Showcase Event, Melbourne
- Annual Members Forum and AGM, Sydney
- Wood Fibre Webinar with Premier Tech
- Economic Contribution of the Australian Organics Recycling Industry Webinar series
- Compost in Agriculture Workshops, throughout regional Queensland
- Sydney Networking Breakfast.



AORA CHAIR'S REPORT CONTINUED

The second edition of the Economic Contribution of the Australian Organics Recycling Industry report was presented with some interesting findings;

- In 2021-22, Australia produced 14.8 million tonnes of organic waste of which 5.4 million tonnes was sent to landfill, 7.7 million was recycled and 1.6 million tonnes recovered through energy, this was a 1.4 per cent increase on recycling, compared to the previous financial year.
- Australia's overall organic material recycling rate in 2021-22, was 52.3% equating to 296 kg/person of recycled organic material for each person in Australia. SA leads the way in recycling 725kg/person, followed by the ACT recycling 644kg/person each year.

One of the biggest challenges to our industry and a very real danger at the moment, is that the Australian organics recycling industry is being unreasonably held to account for the extremely low levels of forever chemicals that may be detected in our products – compost, mulches, and soil conditioners. These chemicals include the broad category referred to as PFAS, which are found in every Australian household in products used in everyday life including food packaging, carpets, lipstick, mascara, dust, firefighting foam, and many more.

It is really important to put PFAS concentrations in compost into a real-world context - both for the general public and for regulators. PFAS is found everywhere and in everything, that is not in dispute. It is also (and this is really important) not made as a consequence of the composting process nor is it an additive to the process. PFAS contamination occurs in trace levels within compost as a result of it being present in the feedstocks that are used to make compost – food scraps, etc. With PFAS literally everywhere, there is no way to avoid it being found in trace levels in finished compost products – levels much lower than the levels found in day-to-day products we all use in our homes. Restricting the use of PFAS is the only way to reduce its presence in our waste streams.

Over-regulating PFAS levels within compost is almost absurd. Some Australian jurisdictions are contemplating allowable levels of PFAS in compost as low as one part per billion (1 ppb), which is not possible. This is conceivably much lower levels than currently exist within our own bodies and certainly within many of the products we regularly use.

AORA has a very pragmatic and rational view about the PFAS issue: restrict or ban the use of the compound - don't over-regulate the Australian organics recycling industry with regards to PFAS as the adverse consequences of this will be detrimental and far-reaching including increased volumes of food and organic waste streams returning to landfill which directly contradicts our federal and state government objectives of reaching our net zero emissions targets. If we want a successful circular economy and the benefits this can bring, economically and environmentally, we must have a robust, sustainable, and commercially viable organics recycling industry and we cannot allow over-zealous regulation to prevent that.

This is my final Chairman's report, as I am retiring as the Chair of AORA at the 2023 AGM, it has been an absolute pleasure to lead this organisation and I thank all of the AORA Staff, Directors, Partners and Members for their support over the years. In my time in the organics recycling industry I have seen great change, and I know there is significantly more to come, and I am hopeful for the next generation who will lead the industry.



Peter Wadewitz OAM
National Chair, Australian Organics Recycling Association Limited

AORA NATIONAL EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Reflecting on my first twelve months as the National Executive Officer for AORA, I am conscious of not sounding too trite but if there is one word that comes to mind to sum up my first year, it would have to be challenging.

Personally, entering a new industry and leading a new organisation will naturally be challenging and that is to be expected and my focus had to be on building an understanding quickly of the immediate challenges internally and externally. Whilst I feel I have a good appreciation of the internal challenges, externally, the industry is shifting quickly and the forces impacting the Australian organics recycling industry change rapidly.

Internally, the initial focus of my tenure was on rebuilding a sound financial position for AORA. We have achieved the first stage of that financial rebuild by posting a modest surplus this year. From here we need to continue to consolidate the balance sheet and ensure we can continue to secure a long-term, sustainable financial position for the Association. That translates to more members and more sponsors (and less attrition of both) and wherever possible, availing ourselves of government grants to prosecute our work program. To attract more members and correspondingly, more sponsors (I believe sponsors are easier to attract when you have a strong and loyal membership base), you need to have a strong value proposition and associated delivery of programs – something that speaks to members that states it is in their very best interest to be involved in the Association – it is not a question just of value, it is a question of need. Value propositions change and evolve over time and that applies to AORA also and a key component of that is a strategic plan.

The current AORA strategic plan concludes at the end of 2023 and the AORA Board asked me to review the existing plan and develop a new plan, which has now been completed. The new strategic plan is not a significant departure from the previous version, it is a refresh and refocus. From my NEO perspective, a key focus of our new strategy has to be on communications. In my previous CEO roles, there has been a strong correlation to improved Association outcomes (i.e., member satisfaction) when we have improved our communication efforts. We do a very good job on social media and with our newsletter, but I think there is room for improvement, especially with the media and with other key stakeholders, especially governments. More broadly however, the strategic focus areas for AORA can be ascribed across five zones: Advocate / Communicate / Educate / Collaborate / Innovate. These are not mutually exclusive but work in partnership with one another to deliver optimal outcomes.

Externally, there is a long list of challenges that we are aware of, and I am sure many more that are yet to materialise. Contamination is obvious and when we dig deeper into that, we are confronted with PFAS, microplastics, etc. AORA has been active this year in establishing our concerns and position of PFAS and through strong cooperation with our processing members, we were able to make a strong submission to the PFAS NEMP 3 with the assistance of Dr Matthew Askeland. We will continue to make strong representation on key issues that will impact on our industry, and we will state our position in an authoritative, balanced, and credible manner.



AORA NATIONAL EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT CONTINUED

Our external relationships also require time and attention and probably more of it. That certainly includes governments, but it also includes other stakeholders that we have a reciprocal stake of mutual interest with. Of note in the last year has been the establishment of an MoU with ACOR (Australian Council of Recyclers). Increasingly ACOR and AORA are working on joint positions on issues, and we feel this united voice will only bring stronger recognition and appreciation for our industry and the broader recycling sector. We continue to seek out and support other initiatives, including various CRC's (e.g., Fight Food Waste CRC, Soil CRC); more recently we have been assisting the Solving Plastic Waste CRC with their renewed bid for CRC establishment and funding.

In concluding my AORA NEO Annual Report for 2023, I would like to acknowledge and thank the AORA Board for their support and guidance. I am also extremely thankful for the outstanding support and dedication from Alex Hammett, our National Coordinator. In addition to her current and considerable AORA work program, Alex took on the role of SA State Coordinator in 2023. Nothing ever seems to daunt Alex and her work ethic on behalf of AORA is outstanding. I would also thank and acknowledge the excellent efforts of Lisa Lepore, our NSW State Coordinator. Lisa brings significant passion and conviction to her role on behalf of AORA and the organics recycling industry in NSW.

I also acknowledge and sincerely thank Lisa Dower for all of her efforts and hard work in managing our accounts and finances and Veronica Dullens and her team at rEvolv Services (especially Emma McVie) for planning, coordinating, and executing the AORA Annual Conference. The AORA Annual Conference is no easy task and whilst there is a Conference Committee to guide and assist, the work on the ground happens because of Veronica and Emma. 2023 was AORA's biggest and most successful conference ever and that is largely the result of the investment of time and effort by Veronica and Emma. We aim to make 2024 bigger and better again and hope that you will join us on the Gold Coast (5-7 June 2024) for the 2024 AORA National Conference.



National Executive Officer, AORA



AORA FINANCE REPORT 2022 - 2023

A copy of the full (audited) AORA Financial report For the year ended 30 June 2023 is available to all members on request.

The 2022/23 financial year delivered a surplus of \$36,890 for AORA.

This compares very favourably to the previous financial year loss of (\$188,304) but was below the budgeted surplus of \$56,697.

The key financial outcomes were:

Revenue and other Income: **\$840,386**

Income improved in 2022/23 compared to 2021/22 by \$324,630 due to increases in all major income streams including membership fees, sponsorship, projects and grants, conferences and events, and levy. 60% of income is derived from the top 4% of Income types as indicated in the table.

From an aggregate perspective of Total Income, Membership accounts for 20%, Events 41% and Other income (including levy) 39%.

Top 4 % Income Streams (2022/23)

Income Type	% Share of Total Income
Delegate Registration Fees	18%
Levy Income	17%
Sponsorship Income	13%
Event Sponsorship	12%

Expenses: **\$803,496**

Expenses increased by \$99,436 in 2022/23 compared to 2021/22. Increased Admin Support Costs, Conference and Events Expenses and Other Operating Expenses all contributed to this result. 61% of expenses is derived from the top 4% of Expense types as indicated in the table below.

From an aggregate perspective of Total Expenses, Events & Projects accounts for 40%, Employment 22%, Office & Administration 32%, Promotional 5% and Other expenses 1%.

Top 4 % Expenses (2022/23)

Expense Type	% Share of Total Expenses
Admin Support Costs	21%
Salaries and Wages	18%
Venue and Catering Costs	13%
Contractors - Conference	9%

Surplus: **\$36,890**

The financial surplus of \$36,890 for the 2022/23 year is a significant and important improvement on the reported loss of (\$188,304) for the 2021/22 year and accounts for a \$225,194 turnaround. Whilst this is pleasing, the result was not possible without making some difficult decisions, namely the cessation of the contract for our SA State Coordinator at the end of March 2023 and a reduction in contracted hours for our VIC State Coordinator at the same time. Considered and careful scrutiny of all expenses have also contributed to the result including but not limited to travel.

There should be no surprise that the focus on the Association's financial position moving through the 2022/24 year has to be on income, especially growing the membership, levy, and sponsorship base. There is no substitute for a loyal, robust, and growing membership and sponsorship base for any Association, including AORA.

Expenses will also be carefully monitored and controlled, especially in an environment of increasing CPI and general increases in most business-related costs. The Board and NEO are mindful that we have to invest in the business to improve productivity and the servicing of our members and sponsors and that is why we will have invested in a new integrated website and member database (i.e., CRM) system to be implemented in early 2024. Our current systems, especially our CRM, are inadequate and productively draining on the Association. We are also actively recruiting a new VIC/TAS State Coordinator and a WA State Coordinator.

2022 - 23 AT A GLANCE

AORA Members as at June 30 2023

National Associate Members	46
National Processing Members	4
Local Government/Government Members	18
Processing Members	46
Associate Members	50
Individual Members	12
Student Members	3
Life Members	1

Total Members **180**

Directors 2022-23

Peter Ross Wadewitz (Chair)

Charles Foster Emery (Vice Chair)

Timothy Geoffrey Richards

Gregory Wilson Whitehead

Steven Marshall

Morne Hattingh

Rowan Alan Williams (Resigned on 10 November 2022)

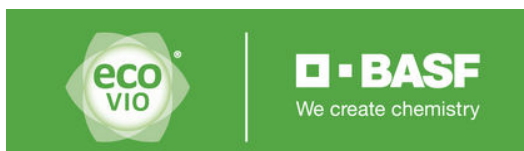
Catherine Philips (Appointed on 10 November 2022)

Patrick Noel Soars (Appointed on 10 November 2022)

Jan Duebbelde (Appointed on 10 November 2022)

Michael Peter Wood - Company Secretary

Platinum Plus Partners



Gold Partner



Silver Partners



Bronze Partners



Founding Members



Research Partners



Media Partner



2022 - 23 MEMBERS LIST

Member

ACT NoWaste
 AgSight Pty Ltd
 Andrew Crosling
 Angus Howlett
 Aprince Consulting
 Arinze Ezieke
 Arup Australia Pty Ltd
 Australasian Bioplastics Association
 Australian Native Landscapes Pty Ltd
 Avian Management Services Pty Ltd
 Barker Trailers
 Barwon Water
 BASF Australia Limited
 Bega Valley Shire Council
 Ben Carr
 Better Grow
 Bill Grant
 Bio Carbon Soil
 BioBag World Australia Pty Ltd
 Biomass Solutions (Coffs Harbour) Pty Ltd
 BioPak
 Bioptiv (AUS) Pty Ltd
 Brandown Pty Ltd
 Breen Resources
 Brook Clinton
 Burdett Sand Soil and Stone Pty Ltd
 Cal Technologies Pty Ltd
 Camperdown Compost Company
 Canberra Sand & Gravel
 Candy Soil
 Carbon Mate Albury Pty Ltd
 CEMAC Technologies Pty Ltd
 Centre for Recycling of Organic Waste and Nutrients, UQ
 Circular Resources Australia
 City Compost Network
 City of Gold Coast
 City of Greater Dandenong
 City of Greater Geelong
 Clean & Green Organics
 Cleanaway
 Clorox Company (GLAD)
 Closed Loop Environmental Solutions
 Confoil
 COPAR Pty Ltd
 Corbet's Group
 Corkhill Bros
 COVA
 CQ Compost Pty Ltd
 C-Wise
 Cypress Bark & Mulch Pty Ltd

Type

Local Government/Government
 Associate Member
 Individual Member
 Student Member
 Associate Member
 Student Member
 National Associate
 National Associate
 Processing Member
 Associate Member
 National Associate
 Associate Member
 National Associate
 Local Government/Government
 Associate Member
 Processing Member
 Individual Member
 Associate Member
 National Associate
 Processing Member
 Associate Member
 National Associate
 Associate Member
 Associate Member
 Associate Member
 Associate Member
 Associate Member
 Processing Member
 Associate Member
 Processing Member
 Processing Member
 National Associate
 Associate Member
 Associate Member
 Associate Member
 Local Government/Government
 Local Government/Government
 Local Government/Government*
 Processing Member
 National Processor
 National Associate
 National Associate
 National Associate
 Associate Member
 Processing Member
 Associate Member
 National Associate
 Processing Member
 Processing Member
 Processing Member

- denotes a dual membership, local government and processing

2022 - 23 MEMBERS LIST

Member

Daisy's Garden Supplies
 DALY Pty Ltd
 Denrith Pty Ltd
 Department of Water and Environmental Regulation
 DJR Environmental
 Dulverton Waste Management
 Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council
 Eastern Waste Management Authority
 EC Focus Pty Ltd
 Eco Guardians Pty Ltd
 Ecodynamics Mulch
 Elmore Compost
 Emily Bryson
 Finlease Pty Ltd
 Focus Enviro
 Frank Klostermann
 Garden Mediums Pty Ltd T/A Go Grow
 Garry Kimble
 Gekko Systems
 GHD Pty Ltd
 Gippsland Water - Soil & Organic Recycling Facility (SORF)
 Grange Growing Solutions Pty Ltd
 Grayson Australia
 Great Wrap Pty Ltd
 Green Industries SA
 Greenchip Recycling
 Groundswell Laboratories
 Hitachi Construction Machinery (Australia) Pty Ltd
 Hitachi Zosen Inova Australia Pty Ltd
 Horticultural and Landscape Supplies
 Insurance Choice Pty Ltd
 IQ Energy Australia
 J. D. Organics
 J. J. Richards
 James Landau
 Jeffries
 John Nassis
 John Shaw
 John Vyse / Why Waste It
 JR Richards & Sons
 Kate Darvill
 Keep South Australia Beautiful Inc
 Kevin Wilkinson
 Komptech CEA
 Kyndalyn Park Pty Ltd trading as Select Harvest
 Lincom Group
 Lismore City Council/Northern Rivers Waste
 LMS Energy
 LoadScan
 Loop Organics Pty Ltd

Type

Associate Member
 Processing Member
 Processing Member
 Local Government/Government
 Associate Member
 Processing Member
 Local Government/Government*
 Local Government/Government
 Associate Member
 Associate Member
 Processing Member
 Associate Member
 Student Member
 National Associate
 National Associate
 Associate Member
 Processing Member
 Individual Member
 National Associate
 National Associate
 Processing Member
 Processing Member
 National Associate
 National Associate
 Local Government/Government
 Processing Member
 Associate Member
 National Associate
 National Associate
 Processing Member
 National Associate
 National Associate
 Processing Member
 National Associate
 National Associate
 Processing Member
 Individual Member
 Processing Member
 Individual Member
 Individual Member
 Individual Member
 Processing Member
 Individual Member
 Associate Member
 Associate Member
 National Associate
 Associate Member
 National Associate
 Local Government/Government
 National Associate
 National Associate
 Processing Member

2022 - 23 MEMBERS LIST

Member

Mecbio Pty Ltd
 Melbourne Water
 Mike Ritchie and Associates Pty Ltd
 Mindarie Regional Council
 Mineral Washing Systems
 Mulbarton Transport
 NALG envirotech
 NuGrow Pty Ltd
 Nuleaf Organics
 Oakwood Consultants Pty Ltd
 Olivia Morland
 Organic Nutrients Pty Ltd
 Orgro
 Pacific Materials Handling Pty Ltd
 Pak360 Pty Ltd
 Pam Allan
 Paul Coffey
 Peats Soil and Garden Supplies Pty Ltd
 Phantm Pty Ltd
 Phoenix Power Recyclers Pty Ltd
 PineGro
 Pratco Industries
 Premier Tech Systems and Automation
 Pyrocal Pty Ltd
 Queensland Government Department of Environment and Science
 Radicle Agriculture Pty Ltd
 Rawtec
 Raymond Trevorah
 RDO Equipment
 Re Group Pty Ltd
 Regen Soils
 Remondis Australia Pty Ltd
 Repurpose It
 Resource Recovery Group
 Ricardo Energy Environment & Planning
 Richgro Garden Products
 RM Consulting Group
 Russell Kennedy
 Sacyr Environment Australia Pty Ltd
 SAI Global Ltd
 Secos Group
 Sequence Digital Pty Ltd
 SESL Australia
 Shoalhaven City Council
 Skala Australasia Pty Ltd
 Soil Recycling Co
 Soilco Pty Ltd
 Solo Resource Recovery
 Source Separation Systems
 Southern Cross University - Environmental Analysis Laboratory
 Spartel Pty Ltd
 SRO Technology

Type

National Associate
 Associate Member
 National Associate
 Local Government/Government
 National Associate
 Processing Member
 Associate Member
 Processing Member
 Processing Member
 Associate Member
 Individual Member
 Processing Member
 Processing Member
 National Associate
 National Associate
 Individual Member
 Life Member
 National Processor
 Associate Member
 Processing Member
 Processing Member
 Associate Member
 National Associate
 Processing Member
 Local Government/Government
 Associate Member
 Associate Member
 Individual Member
 National Associate
 Processing Member
 Associate Member
 Processing Member
 Processing Member
 Local Government/Government
 National Associate
 Processing Member
 National Associate
 Associate Member
 Processing Member
 National Associate
 Associate Member
 National Associate
 Local Government/Government*
 National Associate
 Associate Member
 Processing Member
 Processing Member
 Associate Member
 National Associate
 Processing Member
 National Associate

2022 - 23 MEMBERS LIST

Member

Stuart Hercules representing Garden State Mulching Services Pty Ltd
 Sustain Paper
 Sustainability Victoria
 Sustainable Project Management
 Sydney Waste Pty Ltd
 Taking Care Group
 Talis Consultants Pty Ltd ATF Talis Unit Trust
 Tamworth Regional Council
 Tatiara Trench Diggers
 Terra Nova Agriculture
 The LZ Environmental Company Pty Limited
 The Rockyard
 Thomas Manufacturing Pty Ltd
 Tietjen Original
 Tim Marshall
 Tonkin & Taylor Pty Ltd
 Toowoomba Regional Council
 Van Schaiks Bio Gro Pty Ltd
 Veolia Environmental Services
 Verterra
 Wastech Engineering Pty Ltd
 Wedderburn Pty Ltd
 Western Composting Technology
 Westrex Pty Ltd
 Wood Mulching Industries
 Woolworths Group Limited
 Yarra Valley Water

Type

Associate Member
 National Associate
 Local Government/Government
 Associate Member
 Associate Member
 Processing Member
 National Associate
 Local Government/Government*
 Processing Member
 Associate Member
 Associate Member
 Associate Member
 Associate Member
 Associate Member
 Individual Member
 National Associate
 Local Government/Government
 National Processor
 National Processor
 Associate Member
 National Associate
 Associate Member
 Processing Member
 Processing Member
 Processing Member
 National Associate
 Processing Member



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