

Advisory Board Meeting Communique

01 October 2021

The sixth meeting of the ACE Hub Advisory Board (AB) continued discussions on circular procurement, consumer awareness and the development and implementation of standards in relation to effective policy making. The board also discussed Maria Atkinson's paper titled "Why We Need a Strategic Planning Umbrella Policy in NSW" and how this may fit in with potential policy recommendations.

An update on ACE Hub's programs was provided, including an overview of the ACE Hub Metrics Working Group's current work and focus. The Advisory Board was briefed on progress of a short paper the Working Group is preparing on the principles of Australian circular economy metrics and how the group intends to engage with business. The Board was also updated on a separate research project being carried out by ACE Hub Technical Supporters Edge Environment that will provide a snapshot of circularity metrics in Australia.

Circular procurement was a focus of the meeting, with members sharing feedback on the newly formed Procurement Working Group. The key takeaways from this discussion were:

- Procurement is a vitally important but complex and difficult space.
- Even with the considerable expertise of the ACE Hub Procurement Working Group additional resourcing, support and structure may be required to provide advice and guidance in such a complex area.
- Members agreed to provide feedback on the Procurement Working Group's Terms of Reference in order to help integrate their advice and suggestions.

The other main discussion point was policy recommendations. AB member Maria Atkinson provided an overview of her Strategic Planning Umbrella Policy paper, covering the following points.

- About 70 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions come from infrastructure, construction, buildings and transport. The built environment is a major contributor to climate change and resource consumption, accounting for around 40 per cent of energy-related global carbon emissions and approximately 50 per cent of all materials consumed. These two issues are inextricably linked, with around a quarter of all building emissions related to material production and construction. Overall, the built environment is responsible for at least one-third of global resource consumption and 40 per cent of solid waste is typically construction and demolition waste.
- There is a need for an umbrella policy mechanism that addresses the environmental impacts of buildings in the planning, construction and use phases. Currently, planning law ends when the keys are handed over meaning operational impacts are not measured and reported. We need to hold developers accountable for promises made during the design phase and introduce a policy mechanism that measures the results of these commitments.
- There is a piece of legislation called the Protection of the Environment Policy in NSW that links asset planning with asset operation. This could be one mechanism for achieving the necessary changes.

- Discussions with industry show that when they are trying to create circular economy opportunities the planning system often prevents them from doing what they want to do. The business community supports a way to record impacts and measure progress towards environmental goals.
- Focusing on precincts and neighbourhoods has great advantages: economies of scale, scope for decentralised energy, water and circular economy can be achieved at a precinct scale.

Find information on the [ACE Hub Advisory Board members and meeting summaries here](#).