

August 8, 2019

Special Advisor's Report on Blue Box Transition Released

The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks has posted the final report on the Blue Box mediation process. The report was authored by Mr. David Lindsay, Special Advisor on Recycling and Plastic Waste. The link to the report can be found [here](#).

The [Special Advisor](#) was engaged by the Province on July 7, 2019, to provide advice on how to tackle plastic waste and litter, improve recycling, increase products that can go into the Blue Box, and ensure producers are fully responsible for managing plastic and other packaging at end-of-life.

AMO participated fully in the mediation process on behalf of members. During the process there was a growing alignment amongst all stakeholders on the compelling need to change the Blue Box program, and how transition of the Blue Box to full producer responsibility could be best implemented.

The report recommends a six-year transition of the Blue Box program to full producer responsibility (i.e. the Minister provides direction in 2019, a timeline of 12-18 months for regulation development (2019-2020), a two-year preparation process (2021-2022), and a three-year transition for all municipal programs (2023-2025)).

The recommendations within the report, which will inform the Minister's next steps, are generally aligned with municipal positions. It is important to highlight that there will be many more opportunities for stakeholder and public input going forward.

These changes are needed as the current Blue Box system is not working well. Municipal governments have been advocating for this transition because our waste systems are not well positioned to respond to the rapidly changing composition of products and packaging, the necessary investments in collection and processing infrastructure, and the demands of end markets.

Producers can best reduce waste, increase the resources that are recovered and reincorporated into the economy, and enable a consistent province-wide system that makes recycling easier and more accessible.

AMO is encouraged by the progress made to date by the government on this file. All stakeholders understand the compelling need for timely action on waste diversion and appear increasingly aligned on the necessary next steps. With global momentum building to reduce waste, increase diversion and improve recycling, transitioning the Blue Box program is an opportunity for Ontario to show commitment and leadership.

As we wait for an announcement on the Blue Box program, we are hopeful that the plan that is ultimately put forward by the Province incorporates municipal advice and allows for adequate time and certainty for all stakeholders to plan and collaborate successfully.

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