



Paul Foley/Lightmoods Photography

## Case Study Independent Transport Safety Regulator

# Bin Trim – Waste solutions for a sustainable business

Changing the way staff think about waste disposal, and improving their habits, has been the key to the Independent Transport Safety Regulator (ITSR) reaching its recycling goals.

### What's in the bin?

Prior to Bin Trim's visit, ITSR management had assumed that alternative methods of waste disposal would be costly. They also thought they would need to collaborate with the building's other tenants to make any changes viable. In fact, a few simple habit changes were all that was needed. Food waste and paper are the major forms of waste for ITSR, an independent statutory authority of the NSW Government. Although ITSR already recycled some plastic bottles, plastic containers and aluminium cans from the staff kitchen, many were contaminated and food waste was needlessly ending up in rubbish bins. Bin Trim found ITSR was recycling just

36 per cent of all waste collected, and that targeting the kitchen would make for significant savings.

Priority materials for recycling or reuse:

- Paper
- Food waste
- Rigid plastic

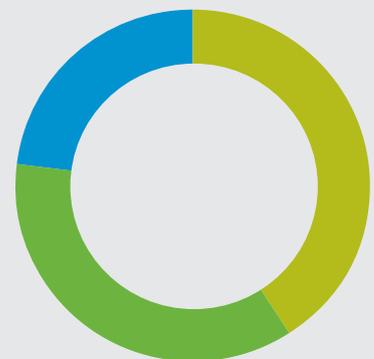
### Actions to reduce waste and recycle more

A new separate bin for food waste in the kitchen made it easy for staff to separate food scraps at lunchtime and to ensure leftovers from training days, morning teas and events didn't end up in general waste bins. Cleaners collect the building's food waste daily and transfer it to a composting facility, where it is broken down and used for fertiliser. 'When we started to use the food bins, I was amazed at how much food and organic waste was being thrown into the general waste bin that could have been used elsewhere to the benefit of the environment,' says Receptionist Alexis Terry. Although ITSR had two commingled recycling bins collected twice a week, the bins were



### Potential recycling

Bin Trim identified that ITSR had the potential to recycle 23 per cent more



- 41% General waste
- 36% Currently recycled
- 23% Potential recycling

### Bin Trim savings

- 1.6 tonnes food collected for reprocessing into fertiliser per year



Independent Transport Safety Regulator, 2013



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only 70 per cent full. An awareness program encouraged staff to wash out any plastic and glass containers before putting them in the recycling bin, and spot checks confirmed these habits were changing.

Actions implemented included:

- Educated staff to recognise waste minimisation as a cost saving through signage and emails
- Established a program to reduce contamination in recycling bins
- Added a food waste bin in the kitchen for commercial composting collection.

## Results and savings

ITSR managed to increase the amount of waste it recycles by 1.6 tonnes. By continuing to engage the 70 employees in recycling it is likely to ensure ongoing progress. 'Most of the staff at ITSR have noticeably changed their behaviours towards containers for their lunches,' Terry says. 'Those who do use containers use ones that can be used again such as lunch boxes... others bring their lunches in bags that can be recycled.' The remainder who do use plastic containers now wash them out before putting them in the kitchen's recycling bin. 'Most of our consumables are recyclable; it never ceases to amaze me how much businesses and individuals can recycle on an almost daily basis.'



## For further information

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# What is your business really throwing away?

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