



Recyclability Assessment Methodology (RAM) 2027

Food and Drink Federation webinar, 26 August 2026



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

Competition law

- Everyone is reminded that competition law applies today. That is, you will not discuss current or future commercial strategy, or disclose or exchange any other commercially sensitive information, in particular specific, non-aggregated information regarding prices including discounts, increases, rebates, and reductions; customers; costs and costs components; conditions of sale; capacities; quantities; turnovers and sales volumes; market shares; confidential technologies and R&D efforts.
- If anyone has questions or doubts about the competition law compliance of our meeting or in any further discussion today, you must raise these immediately and ensure discussion is stopped until a competition lawyer is content it's allowed.



LONDON PACKAGING WEEK 2026



Housekeeping

- This session is being recorded
- Submitted questions have been shared with PackUK for response during the webinar. Any questions not addressed during the session will be answered in writing afterwards
- A live Q&A function will also be available for you to submit additional questions. These will be addressed in writing following the session.
- If you have any additional queries which are not answered during the session, please reach out to our customer service desk at **EPRCustomerService@defra.gov.uk**

Agenda

1. **Welcome and Housekeeping** Damian Wilson – Relationship Management Lead
2. **Overarching Principles for RAM 2027** Jeremy Blake – Chief Executive Officer
3. **RAM 2027 Improvements** Yogesh Kumar – Technical Lead RAM
4. **Material Changes** Dan Acheson – Delivery Manager RAM
5. **RAM 2028 Consultation** Yogesh Kumar
6. **Questions** Damian Wilson



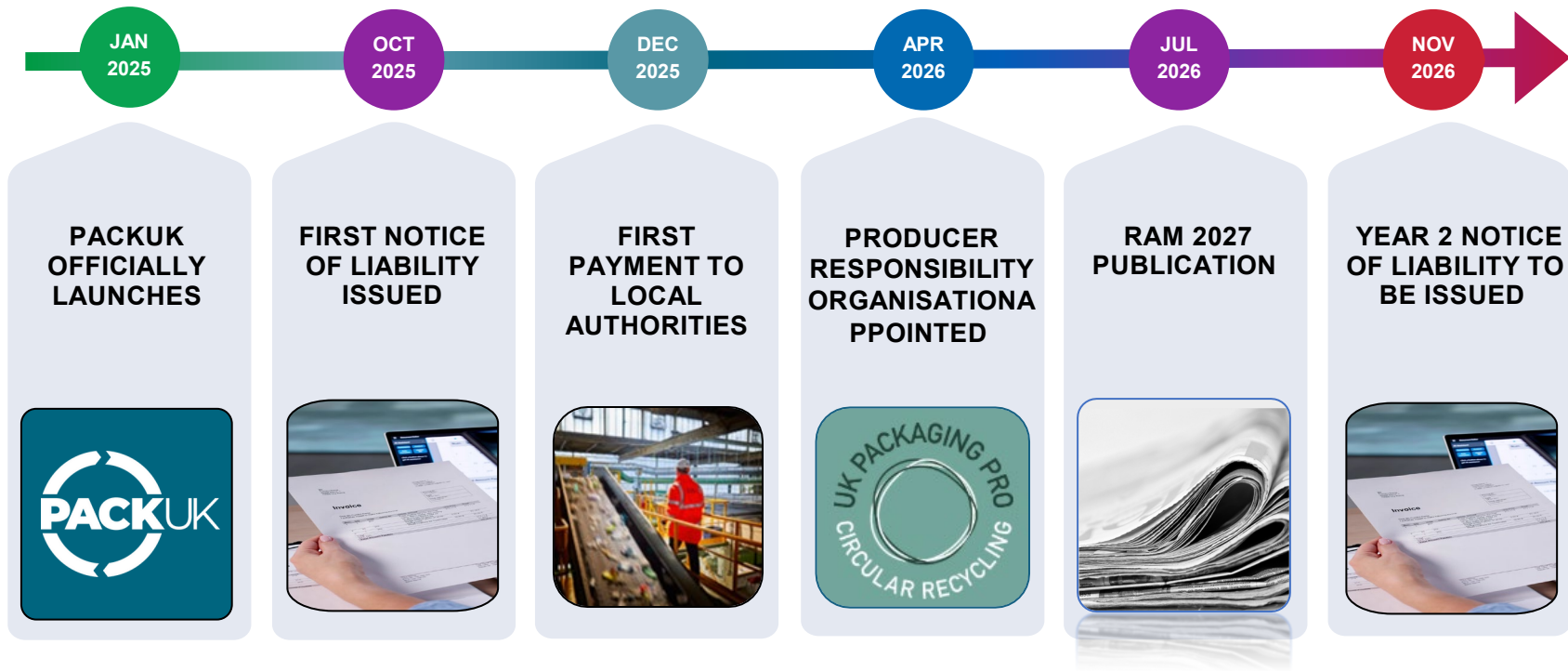
PackUK Update

Jeremy Blake

Chief Executive Officer, PackUK

Key PackUK Milestones

From launch to today



Year 1 of pEPR in numbers



£1.4bn

**Total funding to
be collected from
packaging
producers**



~4300

**Producers
incentivised to
transition to more
circular packaging**



388

**Local Authorities
received funding for
better collection and
recycling services**



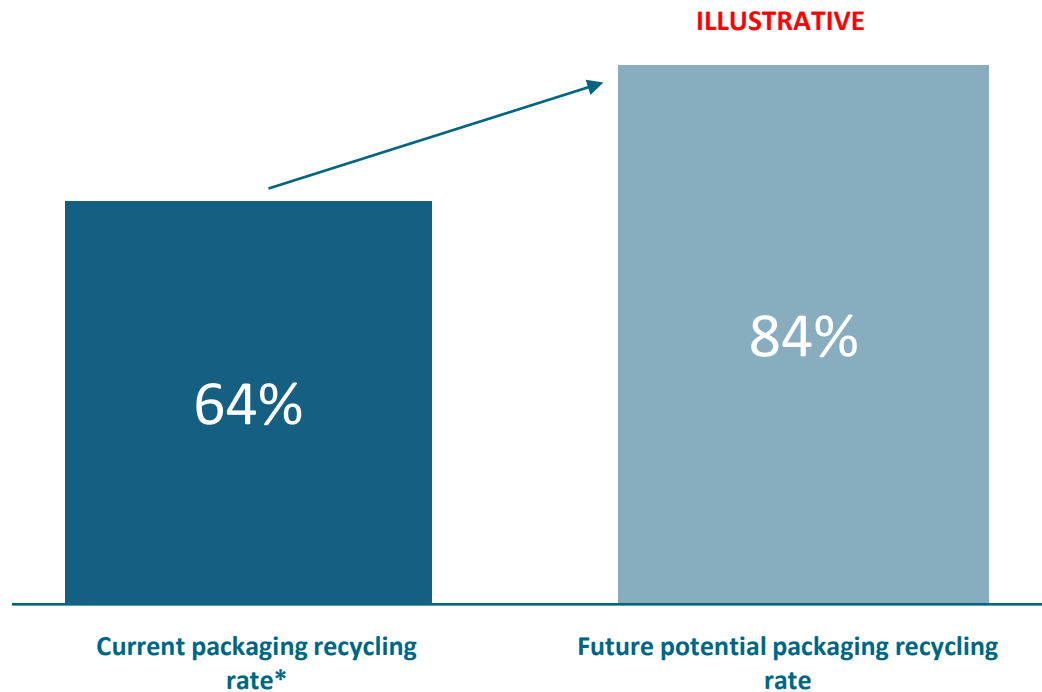
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**PackUK
headcount,
across all Four
Nations!**

What is the size of the opportunity?

To simplify, let's assume 20% of packaging entering local authorities waste management is not recyclable (i.e., rated Red)

If this packaging were to be removed from the market...



* [Household Packaging waste: 2024 UK statistics on waste - GOV.UK](https://gov.uk/statistics-and-data/collections/household-packaging-waste-2024)

A clearer route for future RAM updates

NOW Defining the process → **COMING MONTHS** Sharing it widely

THE REVISED PROCESS

1

SIMPLIFY

Fewer governance constraints



2

OPEN

Clear routes to query the RAM or suggest change



3

SHARE

Communicate the updated process widely

PRO

UKPackaging PRO • key role throughout the revised process

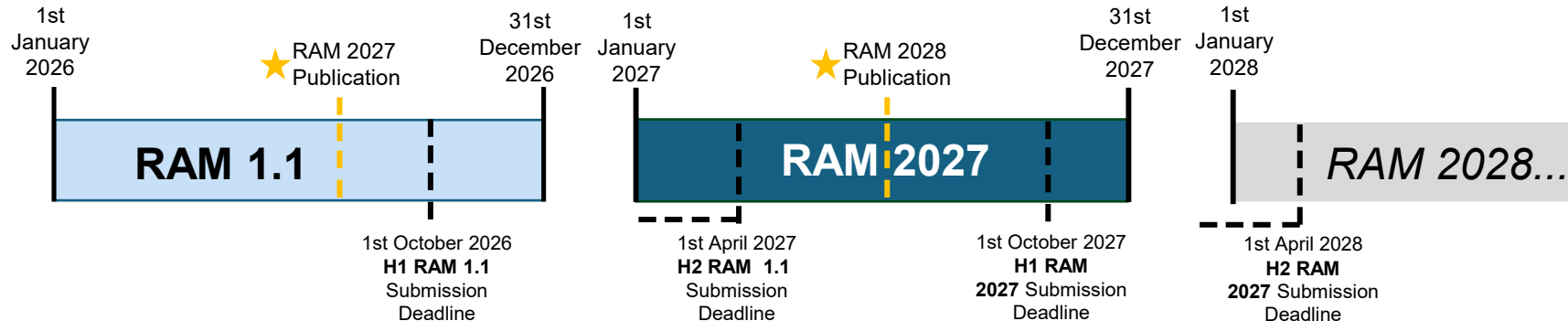
RAM 2027 has been developed collaboratively with industry

- Expertise from the RAM Technical Advisory Committee
- Industry engagement with material specialists
- Data and insights from recycling facilities
- Input and feedback from:
 - Regulators
 - Compliance Schemes
 - Trade Associations
 - UK Packaging PRO



RAM 2027: building on RAM 1.1 to drive up recycling

- The RAM is designed to be updated every year to adapt to industry changes and developments
- Each iteration of RAM has two reporting windows, the 1st October of that year and 1st April of the following year





RAM 2027

Dr Yogesh Kumar
Technical Lead, RAM

Key Aim

RAM encourages recyclable packaging

MORE RECYCLABLE
Lower EPR fees

LESS RECYCLABLE
Higher EPR fees

2027 requirement

Large producers must use RAM 2027 to assess and report household packaging recyclability.



How to use RAM 2027

1 READ

RAM overview

Understand the policy

This guidance gives an overview of the recyclability assessment methodology (RAM) 2027, including who must use it, how it works and the policy principles supporting it.

2 USE

Materials guidance

Assess your packaging

This guidance explains the steps you must follow to assess recyclability of items of packaging and components you supply

RAM overview: Who and what is covered

WHO

Large producers

Report recyclability data.

WHAT

Household packaging

Also covers packaging commonly found in public bins, including glass drinks containers.

Assess reusable or refillable household packaging only when first supplied.

PRINCIPLES

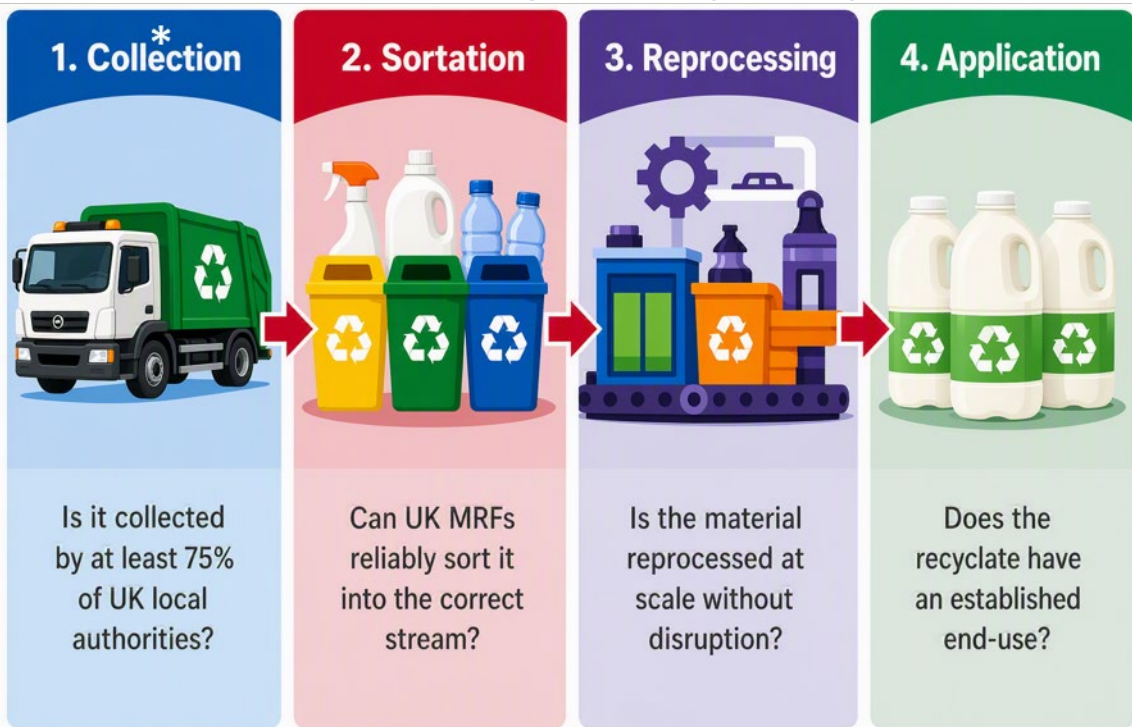
Stages of Recyclability

Collected → Sorted → Reprocessed → End Market Applications

Using proven infrastructure with enough capacity (Recyclable at scale)

RAM overview: Recyclability

Four Core Stages of Recyclability



*Based on data available at the time of RAM publication

RATINGS

Recyclability

- R** Difficult to recycle
- A** Some recycling barriers
- G** Widely recyclable today

TAKE-BACK schemes for packaging not collected at kerbside.

GREEN CLAIMS Check RAM ratings against the CMA Green Claims Code.

What Materials Guidance provides

GUIDANCE

Steps to assess and report packaging recyclability.

1

CHECK

Automatic red

Check for automatic red.

2

CLASSIFY

Material category

Choose the right category.

3

ASSESS

Recyclability

Apply material rules and thresholds.

8 MATERIAL CATEGORIES Paper or board • fibre-based composites • plastic (rigid/flexible) • steel • aluminium • glass • wood • other

**ALSO
INCLUDES**

How to report

Testing/
Evidence

Reporting
examples

Assessment
help

Material Guidance: Step 1

SIX AUTOMATIC REDS

Check whether any of the following apply to your packaging.

EEE

Electronics or batteries

Built into the packaging.

CHEM

Substances of Concern (SoC)

Above legal limits.

INK

Non-compliant inks

Outside the EuPIA charter.

PFAS

PFAS above limits

Non-food packaging >1 ppm
food packaging >25 ppb.

FOOD

Food-contact breach

UK rules not met.

BANS

Restricted formats

Subject to bans or phase-outs.

If any of the above apply, rate RED. No further assessment is required.

Material Guidance: Step 2

Assess the item of packaging and its components

CLASSIFY MATERIAL

Select the appropriate material category for each component

SEPARATE COMPONENT

Assess and report it separately.

- Distinct from the main pack
- Removed for use, and not reattached

Examples: blister, tear strip, cork

INTEGRATED ITEM (an item of packaging)

**Rate the pack by its main material
(by weight).**

- Cannot separate without tools
- Stays attached
- <40 mm in 2 dimensions; reattachable

Examples: aerosol assembly, label, cap/lid

ATTACHED PARTS MAY FOLLOW THE MAIN MATERIAL RATING

- **Example: a paper or plastic label firmly attached to a glass jar may be rated green.**

Material Guidance: Step 2

CLASSIFY MATERIAL

Classify each part by how it separates from the pack.

Does the part separate from the main pack?

SEPARATE COMPONENT



READY MEAL: SLEEVE + TRAY

Report separately.

Sleeve: **paper/board**
Tray: **amber rigid plastic**

INTEGRATED ITEM (an item of packaging)



AEROSOL VALVE

Assess with the main can.

Can: **metal**
Valve: **plastic (integrated)**

SEPARATE = REPORT EACH PART

•

INTEGRATED = ASSESS WITH THE MAIN PACK

Material Guidance: Step 3

ASSESS RECYCLABILITY

Assess every stage. If your packaging is assessed as red at any stage, its overall rating is RED.

1

COLLECTION

2

SORTATION

3

REPROCESSING

4

APPLICATION

G

GREEN

All four stages must be green.

A

AMBER

Only green or amber at any stage. No red.

R

RED

Red at any stage or evidence missing.

MISSING EVIDENCE? Contact your supplier.



Overview of key changes

Dan Acheson

Delivery Manager, RAM

Paper or Board: Possible rating **G**, **A**, **R**

	Criteria	RAM v1.1	RAM 2027
Classification		No major change	
Collection	Wax dispersion coatings	Interpreting any wax as red	amber
	Silicone	any silicone is red	exempt from red for use in linerless labels
Sortation		No major change	
Reprocessing	Glass or carbon fibres	Intentionally added is red	Any use is red
	Paper labels: silicone content	Any silicone is red	>0.3% amber
	Designed for food to be heated within		red
Application	PVC or PVCD dispersion coatings	amber	red
	foil >6 microns	amber	red

Review the RAM documents for full details on GOV.UK

FBC Liquid Cartons: Possible rating **A**, **R**

	Criteria	RAM V1.1	RAM 2027
Classification	No major change		
Collection			
Sortation			
Reprocessing	Reprocessing infrastructure		amber
Application	Aluminium		amber
	Glass or carbon fibres		red
	Silicone		red

Review the RAM documents for full details on [GOV.UK](https://gov.uk)

Plastic (flexibles): Possible rating **A**, **R**

	Criteria	RAM V1.1	RAM 2027
Classification	Bio-based plastic inclusion		Treated as fossil-based equivalent
Collection	red at collection stage (amber via take-back)		
Sortation	No assessment required at these stages		
Reprocessing			

Plastic flexibles (RAM 2027)

- Only **collection criteria** included in RAM 2027
- All flexibles are **red by default**, unless **amber via take-back** schemes
- Approach taken to **simplify RAM content based on user research**

[Review the RAM documents for full details on GOV.UK](#)

Plastic (rigids): Possible rating **G**, **A**, **R**

	Criteria	RAM V1.1	RAM 2027
Classification	Bio-based inclusion		Treated as fossil-based equivalent
Collection		No major change	
Sortation	Different material label coverage >60% surface area		amber
	Carbon black	carbon black is red	prevents NIR detection is red
Reprocessing	Trigger sprays with contaminating materials		red
	Label adhesive doesn't release at 70-90 °C hot-wash		red
	EVOH	Higher % tolerance thresholds across polymers	Lower % tolerance thresholds across polymers. PET – Any EVOH is red HDPE/PP – More than 5% is red
	Multilayers thermoforms with non-PET (e.g., PET-PE)		red
Application	Coloration updates		Coloured polymers are penalised PET bottles: red PET trays: amber CPET not included PET trays: red if not NIR detectable HDPE and PP – no restrictions
	Direct printing		red in most cases
	Foil	amber	Red

Review the RAM documents for full details on GOV.UK

Glass: Possible rating **G**, **A**, **R**

	Criteria	RAM V1.1	RAM 2027
Classification	No major change		
Collection	Kind of glass collected	Various categories	Non-soda-lime-silica glass red Soda-lime-silica glass green
Sortation	No major change		
Reprocessing			
Application	Contaminants and colours	amber	green

[Review the RAM documents for full details on GOV.UK](#)

Aluminium, Steel, Wood, and Other Materials

These categories have few material-specific changes but general Automatic Red changes, for example on PFAS limits and Substances of Concern, still apply.

Aluminium and Steel

Material-specific was mostly confirmed as being **fit for purpose** by industry stakeholders, with **only minor tweaks** required

Wood and Other Materials

Similar position to Plastic (flexibles), in that they can only currently be rated **red** or **amber** via take-back - no major changes have been made

Why RAM 2027 changed: better recyclability

Main reason: to improve

RECYCLABILITY

RAM Overview: packaging must work in the existing recycling system, not just be collected and sortable.



Better design = a lower recycling burden and lower EPR fees

Why the changes to automatic reds?

Substances of Concern

RAM 2027 extends links to relevant legislations outlining limitations on the use of these substances in packaging, in addition to those covered by UK REACH.

PFAS threshold in alignment with PPWR

The threshold of >25 ppb for food contact packaging is aligned with PPWR in Europe, applying to all material categories, intentionally added or otherwise.

Non-compliant food contact & packaging restrictions/phase-outs

Included to highlight the importance of adhering to UK food contact legislation. Most packaging is exempt from SUP or regulatory phase-outs.

What are the next steps for future RAM iterations?

PackUK will be working closely with the PRO to further develop future iterations of the RAM.

Some key priorities that are being explored for RAM 2028 and beyond include:

- Recycling at scale within UK infrastructure
- Reviewing take-back scheme guidance
- Potential new automatic reds:
 - Recycled content
 - Excessive packaging
- Reviewing international approaches e.g., PPWR



How to contact PackUK



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