



Efficient Consumer Response Australasia

Express Receipt Roadmap

2015



Express Receipt Roadmap

This document is supported by the retailer participants of ECRA's Order to Receipt Excellence Standing Working group:



.....and were developed in conjunction with the supplier participants on the group:



.....and industry stakeholder participants:



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Introduction

The use of Advance Shipping Notices (ASNs) has the potential to be an enabler (as part of B2B e-commerce suite) to reduce cost and complexity associated with the delivery and receipt of goods, and to help facilitate improved availability to shoppers through supporting improved speed of replenishment (both in relation to the current order and in terms of reorders). Other benefits may include supporting Chain of Responsibility related initiatives.

Prior inhibitors to ASN's being optimised as an enabler of improved speed of replenishment through Express Receipt have included a lack of confidence in the quality and accuracy of information, data, and operational processes within the order to receipt process. This suggests there may be a logical flow of precedent components of the process which must be addressed to enhance quality and permit confidence to undertake practices to speed receipt and optimise the value of ASNs.

The ECRA Order to Receipt Excellence Working Group initiated a review of the issues and opportunities in 2014 which included consideration of past studies and surveying retailers and suppliers around the potential benefits, inhibitors and underlying data/process/component drivers of the aforementioned 'quality' inhibiting factors. This work has informed the Roadmap presented in this document.

The Roadmap focusses on 'controllable' quality and accuracy related issues and optimising of processes rather than system functionality issues or internal operational processes employed by various parties (eg retailer receipt) which are respected as being in the domain of specific retailers. In doing so, they identify a range of performance areas (operational and data related) which would need to be demonstrated to be achievable at an extremely high level of quality and consistency prior to, during and post implementation of Express Receipt programs, as well as the need for quality on-boarding and subsequent management processes including appropriate measures and measurement practices.

Clearly the decision to move towards implementation of Express Receipt processes lies with the given retailer – receipt of goods is the retailers business to manage. This Roadmap document is focussed on providing support to industry in relation to addressing the identified requirements and overcoming issues in order to provide a platform for excellence for trading partners seeking to engage in Express Receipt programs if, as, and when retailers wish to implement such processes.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Any decision to implement Express Receipt is at the discretion of a given retailer as is the timing and specific requirements to be complied with by trading partners.

Where a retailer has the capability and desire to pursue Express Receipt with trading partners, it must similarly be noted that Express Receipt is NOT mandatory. A rigorous cost vs. benefit analysis and detailed trading partner discussions relating to all requirements should be pursued prior to any implementation decision.

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Acknowledgements

ECRA would like to acknowledge the input of the following participants who contributed to this Roadmap:

Company	Working Group Representative
Woolworths	Lynda Heeley (Co-Chair)
Nestle	Mandeep Sodhi (Co-Chair)
Coles	Hugo Butterfield Matt Lowe
Metcash	Jude McEvoy
CCA	Joe Nicotera
Simplot	Vince Vella
Sanitarium	Iain Myers
Lion	Adam Wade
Primo	Mark Olson
Kimberly-Clark	Abby Phillips Mario Carniato
GS1 Australia	Andrew Steele
GS1 New Zealand	Craig Russell

ECRA Board Sponsors:

Retailer: Coles
Supplier: CCA

ECRA Secretariat:

Samantha Blake
John Cawley

Role of ECRA versus Role of Trading Partners:

The determination to implement Express Receipt (considering costs, risks and benefits) is a matter for decision between trading partners. The role of the ECRA is promote and assist efforts towards optimising outcomes for at industry level. Discussions relating to requirements should be pursued prior to any decision to implement by trading partners.

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Call-to-Action

The Australian food and grocery industry is one in which there is a rapid pace of change. This facilitates the industry staying at the cutting edge by providing product to shoppers when and where required, at the best quality and value for money. The adoption and implementation of best practices around identification, communication and receipt of products along the FMCG retail supply chain is critical in achieving efficiency and effectiveness in product supply.

In cases where competitive advantage is gained through operational execution, rather than through proprietary intellectual property, a better and timelier outcome can be achieved by developing and implementing industry approaches. This is a role that ECRA regularly provides by bringing suppliers and retailers together to develop and implement optimised programs.

Express Receipt has been an area of interest to retailers and suppliers alike in recent years, supported by the increased levels of B2B E-commerce capability applied within the industry, including the use of ASNs as a key facilitator. ECRA is aiming to support industry through the establishment of guidance to clarify expectations and assist industry to prepare for success as and when retailers seek to roll-out Express Receipt programs.

What Exactly is Express Receipt?

The concept of “Express Receipt” has two distinct components: Express System Receipt and Express Physical Receipt. These components are technically independent (one could be employed without the other) but complementary:

1. Express System Receipt is a streamlined scan receipt process, in which the supplier dispatches a shipment to a customer with the necessary B2B e-commerce elements (eg SSCC labels, GTINs, etc) along with an ASN message to facilitate the customer scanning a single SSCC pallet label which then enables system receipt of all linked pallets within the entire order. This association can be between one SSCC and the single ASN to which it is linked, or – in cases where multiple POs and ASNs are delivered on a single vehicle, including multi-supplier bookings – between the SSCC, the primary-linked ASN and any related ASNs that share that assignment/booking.
2. Express Physical Receipt: Combined with above incorporates elements such as dedicated docks designed to efficiently unload a vehicle as opposed to the manual forklift solution. Some examples of this is the Ro-Ro docks (Roll on / Roll off), cross docking, or “flow thru” processes. This may facilitate faster truck turn-around time for transport, faster put away for retailers, with potential flow on benefits to store and shelf replenishment.

The primary focus of this Roadmap is the Express System Receipt which in turn becomes an enabler to Express Physical Receipt as performance and critical mass levels are achieved.

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Potential Benefits of Express Receipt

Benefits associated with Express Receipt will vary for companies dependent on their operational model and rate of utilisation but the potential opportunities might be summarised as:

	Financial Benefit Opportunities	Other Potential Benefit Opportunities
Retailer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efficient receipt processes versus manual receipt Enhanced replenishment to optimise in-stock (sales) position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support Chain of Responsibility initiatives Activity scheduling for receipt and put-away tasks Store and shopper satisfaction (OSA)
Supplier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efficient delivery (time) versus manual receipt Enhanced replenishment to optimise in-stock (sales) position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support Chain of Responsibility initiatives Shopper satisfaction (OSA)

Purpose and Scope of ECRA Express Receipt Roadmap

The role of the following information is to provide a platform and framework for trading partner discussion, and in doing so to assist industry to prepare for any efforts to accelerate a roll-out of express receiving at retailer distribution centres through provision of support material such as prerequisite requirements, performance standards, and associated processes and practices as guidance to industry.

The Roadmap also aims to assist industry to optimise the potential of Express Receipt programs once implemented through provision of guidance in relation to ongoing best practices and performance measurement. They provide documented guidance to industry. Wherever practical including standard approaches, measures and practices are encouraged across retailers to promote and facilitate consistency.

As previously noted, this initiative is focussed on building capability within the industry and respects the competitive nature and varying levels of operational maturity. Therefore, as varying associated operational processes employed at different retailers, these are deemed the responsibility of the given retailer and as such are outside the scope of this initiative.

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Specific Exclusions

Readers should note that there are items that are supplier-retailer relationship specific and not included in this Roadmap on that basis. These specific exclusions include:

- Direction as to how to achieve Express Receipt accreditation requirements (the document discusses the requirements but how exactly each company will go about achieving these requirements is a matter for individual businesses)
- Expectations around vehicle turnaround times or specific projected/estimated savings relating to Express Receipt (i.e. the Roadmap specifically avoids references such as “Express Receipt should improve efficiency by XX% and expedite receiving process by XX%”) as any benefits in this regard will be unique to specific business situations.
- Retailer-specific order management processes, document processing, etc... is excluded as processes for invoice/delivery docket/ASN (etc) handling will likely differ significantly across retailers (and across DCs/Chambers/Categories within retailers), dependent upon supplier type and WMS capabilities.
- Implementation timeframes and/or any explicit commitment to implement Express Receipt are clearly excluded. Retailers will continue to evaluate ER in line with supplier capabilities and conformance (accuracy, dependability) and the retailer’s capabilities to support.

Proposed ‘Rules of Engagement’

ECRA suggests industry participants approach discussion and collaborative efforts towards Express Receipt implementation with the following informal ‘rules of engagement’ in mind:

1. *An assumption there is the strong will between retailers and suppliers to realise the enhanced availability, delivery cost, receipt cost, and inventory optimisation related benefits potentially facilitated by ASNs (as part of the broader suite of B2B e-commerce components) through the implementation of pre-planned, Express Receipt and put away of goods. However, acknowledging that any execution must be preceded by requisite accuracy, quality and process excellence standards and proven consistency of delivery of these standards being achieved.*
2. *A recognition that there will be internal, company specific processes that may need to be changed (for example retailers may need significant changes in goods receipt processes), and respecting that these lie within the trading partner’s own business to identify and determine any timelines against.*
3. *When utilising the Roadmap in discussion, consider that their purpose is to identify the core underlying prerequisites which would need to be fully implemented and executed to a high standard and consistency prior to any move towards pre-planned, Express Receipt and put away of goods. These prerequisites pertain to any and all retailers with B2B capability and are not related to current specific retailer system or process driven issues per se.*

Express Receipt in the Local Context

The key objective of the development of the Roadmap is to clarify and align the concept of Express Receipt across the industry as a basis for further discussion between trading partners wishing to pursue the initiative. This is critical as it appears (at least from anecdotal evidence) that expectations relating to the adoption of Express Receipt may vary widely among industry participants.

The following sections provide guidance to trading partners wishing to progress engagement in relation to Express Receipt practices. Topics covered include:

- Expectations for Participation
- On-boarding Process and Requirements
- Performance Metrics and Measurement
- Issue Monitoring and Alerts
- Exception Management and Resolution

Expectations for Participation

Whilst (as previously noted) there are potential benefits to be enjoyed by retailers and suppliers alike though moving to Express Receipt, it should in no way be assumed that this alone is any form of guarantee that parties should simply enter into agreement to commence Express Receipt processes.

The reality is that trading partners will need to be operating at an exceptionally high standard of performance in many business disciplines, that there will need to be ingrained checks and balances in place, risk and issue mitigation procedures implemented and tested, and exception management processes agreed prior to any Express Receipt inception, and post inception as part of an ongoing review and continuous improvement cycle.

The reasons for this regime of discipline and ongoing focus on excellence are rooted in the reality that Express Receipt will only be beneficial in a net sense at an extremely high level of operational quality – i.e. it takes a relatively small degree of poor performance to offset all the benefits enjoyed. When working perfectly there is little doubt that the process is beneficial to all, but if issues arise, even at a relatively small scale, the benefits may well be outweighed.

The following sections relating to on-boarding processes and requirements, performance measurement and metrics, issue monitoring and alerts, and exception management and resolution examine the expectations for participation in greater detail. The good news is that all aspects covered should be encompassed in business excellence programs already – i.e. they should indeed be everyday practice. The challenge lies in ensuring that exceptionally high performance can become entrenched and then maintained every day, every order, and every delivery.

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On-boarding Processes and Requirements

Whilst all retailers are somewhat different, and each will employ its own specific process to onboarding suppliers into Express Receipt programs, it is very likely that a formal Express Receipt on-boarding process will apply, including retailers predetermining qualifications to become a 'trusted' supplier. The on-boarding process will likely involve components relating to:

- Application for participation

Retailers might choose to invite certain suppliers into a program to engage in Express Receipt, or a supplier may apply to participate. The application process provides a framework for participants to develop a formally agreed plan to work together and establishes requirements and responsibilities and outlines the specifics of the participation program.

It is important for retailers to be able to extract data from systems to trace the accuracy of all product and messaging quality and accuracy from their supplier base so that informed decisions can be made in relation to potential partners in an Express Receipt program.

- Clarification of requirements (including: volumes, products, system, data quality, operational, issue management)

Volumes: It is anticipated that retailers would seek to undertake Express Receipt programs with suppliers for which volumes are large, as this provides the greatest return in time and resource savings. Retailers will advise volume requirements accordingly.

Products: A byproduct of the Express Receipt program is that it is likely there will be less detailed inspection of goods entering a retailer DC. Whilst a damage inspection is likely, each individual pallet will no longer be scanned at initial point of receipt. Therefore it is important that the products involved meet requirements for pallet and carton sturdiness and for excellent scan rates of labels to avoid issues arising post initial receipt.

System: Quality e-commerce systems must be in place to facilitate a seamless flow of information between trading partners across all e-documents and utilising the agreed e-messaging protocols. Suppliers and retailer trading partners must clearly establish and entrench these protocols ahead of any effort to engage in Express Receipt.

Data Quality: exacting levels of data accuracy and alignment between trading partners is a prerequisite to Express Receipt as the process is reliant on trading partners enjoying an extremely high level of trust that all item, volume, life, and other required data is precisely as agreed and as understood within the context of the order and its delivery.

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Operational: Clearly the benefits of Express Receipt are derived from speeding processes and removing errors. As such it is critical that extremely high levels of service (quantity and time) are a prerequisite factor to engagement. Similarly the quality and reliability of key enables such as pallet and carton labels is paramount to participation in such programs.

Issues Management: Robust, agreed and tested issues management processes are a further prerequisite to participation should exceptions arise.

- Agreement to enter a trial period with specific hurdle rate targets established

Express Receipt programs should encompass a trial period within which retailer and supplier trading partners monitor performance against set parameters on an order by order basis and undertake joint analysis of performance and issues during this period. The benchmark 'hurdle rate targets' should be set against a variety of parameters in areas such as data accuracy, data alignment, ASN transmission timing, SSCC quality and accuracy, delivery performance, service levels, and others noted in the previous section of this document and at a detailed, commonly understood level to ensure like-for-like monitoring and scoring between trading partners.

- Operational trial period and scope/scale

A suitable trial period should be undertaken to evaluate performance against aforementioned hurdle rates and be sufficient that both parties are assured that performance can be sustained. If necessary the trial period should be extended until all issues arising have been evaluated and overcome to the mutual satisfaction of each party and hurdle rates are being cleared consistently.

Potentially the trial might take place with one or a few transport lanes/legs (DC-DC) and/or a limited number of deliveries in scope before ramping up in scale with success being met.

- Performance evaluation process

At the conclusion of the trial period a formal performance review should be undertaken with both trading partners afforded the opportunity to challenge elements of the program and each other's performance. Parties should only be prepared to move to accreditation when mutually agreeable performance has been consistently met and any perceived issues worked through and overcome.

- Formal accreditation (assigning and revoking) process

Following the trial period, achievement of performance targets and agreement to proceed, a formal accreditation should be provided which includes a review process and advice as to what needs to be achieved to maintain accreditation and the process and channels by which any revoking of the accreditation might occur as well as any avenues for challenging such decisions.

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(NOTE: it may be advantageous to have parameters agreed to before commencement as to what percentage of errors and type of errors would see accreditation revoked).

The accreditation must clearly spell out the product ranges and supply chain channels included in the Express Receipt program between specific trading partners. Participants should consider that this might be appropriate at a 'by dispatch point' basis as, for example, performance within one supplier may vary across different 3PLs used by that supplier.

Following accreditation and commencement of Express Receipt, an inherent review process should be built into any Express Receipt program with an ongoing monitoring program utilised.

Performance Metrics and Measurement

In order to ensure the benefits of Express Receipt can be optimised without detrimental performance offsets, it must be noted that there will be specific performance standards which need to be achieved and maintained, both initially for suppliers to be considered for inclusion in retailer Express Receipt programs, and then subsequently during the trial period where specific operational aspects and performance metrics will be tracked by both parties.

Though operational differences across retailers may see some minor variation in the specific measures and metrics used therein, it is critical that both parties establish:

1. What specific measures will be used (for both supplier and retailer performance)
2. What metrics will be employed against each measure
3. Alignment on inclusions and exclusion in regards to exceptions which impact metrics
4. How and when visibility of the metrics will be made available to each party
5. How disputes relating to the performance metrics are to be managed

When entering an Express Receipt trial period, the following is an example of items which trading partners might expect to measure:

Retailers measuring suppliers:

- Inbound service level
- SSCC label compliance: (GTIN, QTY, UBD etc) on correct pallet, accurate and readable
- Data accuracy vs POA
- Stock on truck accuracy vs ASN
- ASNs arrival time at retailer DC vs to truck arrival time
- PO's allocated per truck
- Data alignment rate between supplier and retailer
- IT systems related to ASN transmission issues (robust servers)
- Effectiveness of work-arounds in place in case of any emergency
- Carrier compliance levels, behaviours (eg around consolidated loads)
- Product quality - damages in delivery

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- Speed/quality of issue resolution processes
- Physical pallet compliance (pallet quality, wrapping etc)
- Barcode scanning rates
- Ti-hi accuracy and alignment
- Min-max date accuracy and alignment
- Labelling issues and reprint rates
- SSCC label duplication

Suppliers measuring retailers:

- Changes to POs made post sending of ASN
- Truck turnaround times versus non-Express Receipt loads
- Data alignment rate between supplier and retailer
- Effectiveness of work-arounds in place in case of any emergency
- Rate of subsequent claims (short/damaged etc)
- Speed/quality of issue resolution processes

Issue Monitoring and Alerts

As noted previously, the effectiveness of Express Receipt processes is significantly dependent in their being free of issues and exceptions as the benefits can quickly be eroded if extremely high quality/performance tolerance levels are not met. To assist in ensuring these levels are met, it is incumbent on participants to ensure that accurate, timely, and insightful monitoring and alerts systems are in place and utilised.

Though participants in Express Receipt programs are likely to utilise a variety of operational and transactional systems in their businesses, it is be critical that systems are in place to monitor and alert users to issues, both in real time and periodically. Examples of such monitoring include:

Real time monitoring that:

- There are no errors in ASN transmission
- Data is 100% aligned against POA
- Stock on truck matches ASN
- PO delivered on single truck load
- No changes to POs post sending of ASN have occurred
- Label issues have been addressed prior to despatch
- ASNs will arrive at retailer DC prior to truck
- SSCC labels have not been duplicated

Periodic monitoring that:

- 100% alignment in data between supplier and retailer in maintained
- 100% pallet label compliance is maintained
- Exceptional carrier compliance levels and behaviours are maintained
- Product and packaging quality is maintained (no damages in delivery)

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- Physical pallet compliance is extremely high (pallet quality, wrapping etc)
- Ti-hi's are accurate and correct/aligned
- Min-max dates are accurate and correct/aligned

Exception Management and Resolution

Given that occasionally unavoidable issues do occur, it is critical that trading partners operating Express Receipt processes agree and execute actions when the system goes down or other unforeseen issues arise. The management of exceptions, and their ensuing resolution is likely to be largely retailer specific. It is vital that in such instances the following are clearly available:

- Emergency contacts – people are available who know how to manage the exceptions and have been granted authority to act in these cases on behalf of their company.
- An agreed, available, and up to date process to manually receipt goods.

No Express Receipt program should be entered into without these provisions being in place.

Express Receipt Optimisation

The following sections provide advice in relation to good practices which might be employed to optimise the benefits associated with the implementation of Express Receipt practices between trading partners. Good practice advice from ECRA Working Group members is provided in relation to Operational, Data Integrity and Alignment, and, B2B messaging.

Obviously each individual retailer and supplier will be at different points on a journey of proficiency (and to excellence) at different time, however the following points of advice are intended to help ensure the journey progresses smoothly between trading partners.

Good Operational Practices

- Suppliers should pick items/quantity as per the inbound customer Purchase Order (PO) via scan and construct the ASN based upon the final pick post goods the issue process – the actual ASN is captured when loading the vehicle and thereby correct at time of dispatch.
- The retailer must not cancel the PO once the delivery has been dispatched by the supplier.
- Suppliers should strictly adhere to their delivery booking window time slots at the retailer DC to ensure the Express Receipt process is not interrupted for retailers and other suppliers.
- 1 ASN = 1 delivery from 1 PO: i.e.
 - Ideally a single PO is delivered on one truck with one ASN
 - If 1 PO is delivered across >1 truck, (eg if order is greater than a truckload) then each delivery will have its own ASN, linked to the same PO#;
 - If a truck is delivering goods from 2 POs, then there will be 2 ASNs, 1 for each PO
- B-double loads with two PO's on board should be loaded with one PO on trailer A and the other PO on trailer B, to optimise the benefits of Express Receipt at the retailer DC.

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- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) should be implemented by suppliers for operational aspects of their business related to Express Receipt to ensure ongoing performance – for example: SSCC label checks, Printer cleaning, Pallet Quality, Pallet Stretch Wrapping, etc.
- Suppliers should develop and utilise a Pre-Dispatch Checklist to avoid non-conformance.
- Retailers should seek to align operational guidelines across DCs for consistency.
- Clear and consistent ‘work-around’ guidelines should be implemented between trading partners to deal with operational exceptions – eg supplier unable to print/apply SSCC labels.

Good Data Integrity and Alignment Practices

- Retailers and Suppliers should synchronise master data between their business systems – ideally via the Global Data Synchronisation process as this is data is to be used by retailers to place electronic purchase order(s) with suppliers.
- An action process should be developed and agreed with clear process steps to be implemented if a PO is received from a retailer by a supplier which includes any incorrect data or prices.
- Suppliers should ensure (via a specific system based process) that all data points should be validated prior to transmitting to retailers.
- Documented processes should be in place to ensure product changes have been updated within the retailers ERP system prior to despatching against a PO.

Good e-Messaging Practices

- All EDI messaging should be based on GS1 EANCOM or GS1 XML standards to eliminate duplication of work and errors.
- Where retailers have the functionality available, a Functional Acknowledgement (FA) request flag should be sent in the ASN and for FA's to then be tracked by suppliers to know that the ASN has been receipted by the retailer.
- Suppliers should set up a group email address to capture ASN rejection error message notifications and ensure this group email is monitored so any ASN rejection messages are actioned promptly and resent where deliveries have not yet occurred to allow the delivery to be Expressed Received.
- If ASN error message notifications are not understood by suppliers, they should swiftly contact the retailer involved to understand what the issues are.
- The Trade Partner should review all ASN error rejections at the end of each week to determine key issues to prevent these recurring.
- Retailers should have clear guidelines in regards to disaster recovery should either a supplier's or the retailer's electronic messaging system fail and become non-operational – eg if ASNs cannot be sent.
- All electronic messaging where possible should be automated so no manual intervention is required to transmit, for example and ASN is triggered by invoice creation or SSCC labels being produced.

Key Contacts and Support for Express Receipt Implementation

Retailer/Wholesaler first contact points for supplier companies wishing to find out more about opportunities to pursue Express Receipt and the associated requirements are:

Coles:

Contact: Adam Crawford, *National Systems Manager – Distribution.*

Email: Adam.Crawford@coles.com.au

Woolworths:

Grocery: "repl-dc-grocerymanagementteam-aus@woolworths.com.au"

Perishables: "repl-dc-perishablesmanagement-aus@woolworths.com.au"

Liquor: "repl-dc-liquor-aus@woolworths.com.au"

Metcash:

Department: eBusiness Vendor Engagement Team

Email: eBusiness@metcash.com

Reference Materials

The following retailer documents may assist suppliers seeking to engage in Express Receipt:

Coles: <https://www.supplierportal.coles.com.au/csp/wps/portal/web/SupplyChain>
Then click on Supply Chain Standards link for detailed information.

Woolworths: <http://www.wowlink.com.au/TopicCentre/SupplyChain>

Metcash: <http://www.metcash.com/supplier-information/ecommerce/etrade/>

Efficient Consumer Response Australasia (ECRA)

Efficient Consumer Response (ECR) is a business concept aimed at better satisfying consumer needs, through businesses and trading partners working together. ECR Australasia (ECRA) reflects a commitment to take costs out of the food and grocery supply chain and better satisfy consumer demands through the adoption of world's best practice.

In an increasingly global food and grocery industry and a retail environment subject to rapid change, the future for Australian and New Zealand suppliers, retailers and wholesalers depends on increased efficiencies, reduced costs and added value for consumers. ECRA focuses on delivering against a robust work plan that includes the key platform of order to receipt excellence, on-shelf availability and supply chain optimisation.

Formally launched in November 1999 and fully supported by the Australian Food and Grocery Council (AFGC), ECRA is an informally constituted joint industry body which brings suppliers, manufacturers, retailers and wholesalers together.

For further information contact:

Efficient Consumer Response Australasia

C/o Australian Food and Grocery Council

Locked Bag 1, Kingston ACT 2604

Telephone: (02) 6273 1466 Facsimile: (02) 6273 1477

Email: afgc@afgc.org.au Website: www.ecraustralasia.org.au

