

CAMPAIGN RESEARCH & ANALYSIS · SAMPLE

How a steel supplier became the source of a national recycling story

Independent Steel Company · research concept and analysis delivered white-label through Otto Media Group, 2025 · shared with permission

49% → 66%

Australia's resource recovery rate, 2006–07 to 2022–23

95.6%

South Australia's metal recovery rate, the national benchmark

344,603 t

extra metal recovered if every state matched South Australia

72%

metal recovery rate in household bins, against 95% in building and demolition waste

The central question

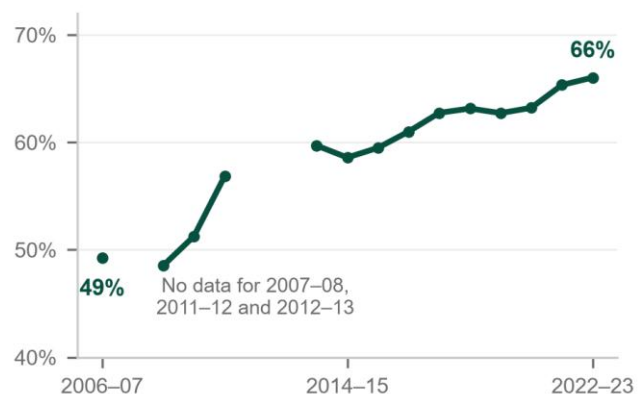
Independent Steel sells steel. Steel can be recycled again and again. So I asked a question a trade journalist would care about: **how well does Australia recover its metal, where does it fall behind and what is the gap worth in tonnes?**

That moves the story away from the supplier's product and onto a national public question. The client then appears as the one who did the analysis, not as an advertiser.

How I found the answer

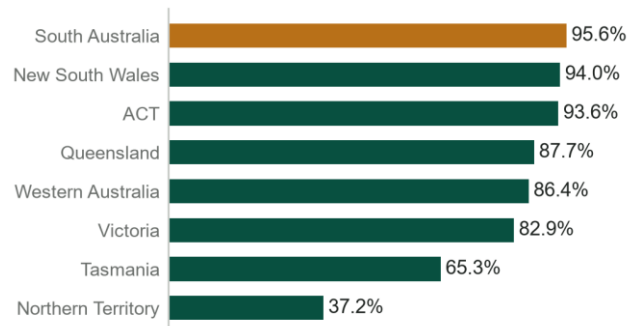
1. Took the Australian Government's National Waste and Resource Recovery Database 2024 and cleaned it into one table (21,904 rows).
2. Fixed the scope before counting: headline-scope rows at category level only, with the national total row removed so nothing is counted twice.
3. Defined "recovered" as recycling, energy recovery and waste reuse. The database file has no figures for three years. I left them as gaps and did not fill them in.
4. Compared states and waste streams, then built one clear scenario: what if every state recovered metal at South Australia's rate?
5. Checked every headline figure against the saved data before handover.

Australia recovered two-thirds of its waste in 2022–23, up from under half

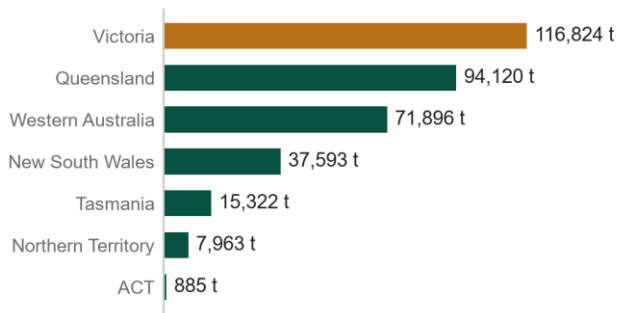


All materials, all states and territories. Share of waste generated that was recycled, used for energy or reused.

Metal recovery by state, 2022–23: South Australia leads, the Northern Territory trails



If every state matched South Australia: 344,603 extra tonnes, one-third of it in Victoria



Each state's metal waste × South Australia's rate (95.6%; the calculation uses the unrounded rate), minus what the state actually recovered. This is a benchmark scenario, not a forecast.

Household bins are the weak point for metal



Metal recovery rate by waste stream, 2022–23.

Each chart is a separate angle: a national trend, a state league table, a household story and one headline number.

The outcome

13 November 2025 — the client published it as its own research. Independent Steel put the analysis on its website under "Analysis by Independent Steel Company", with charts and tables to download and an open licence: anyone can reuse the work if they credit the company. It framed the finding for its own buyers, builders chasing recycled-content targets.

17 November 2025 — Waste Management Review picked it up. The article is built on five findings from this analysis and says the government data was "analysed by Independent Steel Company". A regional steel supplier was named as the analyst of national data in its own industry's trade press.

Finding in the analysis	How the article used it
Recovery rose from 49% to 66% of 75.6 million tonnes	The opening paragraphs
Metals are the most recovered material category	The headline: "Metals drive Australia's recycling"
Building and demolition 95%, commercial 93%, household bins 72%	A section on the gap between waste streams
South Australia at 95.6%	A section naming South Australia the national benchmark
344,603 extra tonnes under the benchmark	Quoted as the size of the metal recovery gap

The agency received the findings and charts, with the calculation behind every number.

Methodology

Source. Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, National Waste and Resource Recovery Database 2024. Years 2006–07 to 2022–23; the database file used has no figures for 2007–08, 2011–12 or 2012–13.

Scope. Rows marked headline scope, category level. The AUSTRALIA aggregate row is excluded, so state totals are never counted twice.

Recovery rate. (Recycling + energy recovery + waste reuse) ÷ waste generated.

Benchmark scenario. South Australia's unrounded metal rate (95.5522552%) × each state's metal waste generated, minus actual recovery, summed across the eight states and territories. Uses unrounded data; figures shown are rounded.

Limits. States differ in waste mix, reporting and infrastructure, so the scenario shows the size of the gap, not what is achievable. The Northern Territory's volumes are small, so its rate moves a lot with small changes.

Coverage: [Waste Management Review, Metals drive Australia's recycling](#). Client page: [Independent Steel Company, waste metal recovery statistics 2022–23](#) (published 13 November 2025, updated 22 November 2025). Data: [DCCEEW, National Waste and Resource Recovery Report and Database 2024](#). All figures recalculated from the saved project data on 26 September 2026.