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**Attention:** - News & Current Affairs  
- Environment, ICT & Consumer Electronics editors, writers & presenters

## Federal Government Softens on E-Waste Regulations

End-of-life TVs and other electronic goods currently going to landfill could be collected and recycled across Australia within six months provided the Federal Government announces clear and stringent e-waste regulations at a meeting of all Federal, State and Territory Environment Ministers in Perth on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2009.

In an unprecedented alignment of TV manufacturers, recyclers, environmental organisations, local government bodies and several States, the majority of affected stakeholders are eager to see intelligent Federal regulation put in place as soon as possible.

There is widespread support to mandate the participation of all TV importers and suppliers in a national TV recycling scheme. In simple terms, industry is asking to be regulated to ensure a level playing field.

Product Stewardship Australia (PSA) – the organisation set up by TV suppliers to design and run a national scheme – is expecting a clear and positive announcement from Federal, State and Territory Environment Ministers at the Environment Protection and Heritage Council (EPHC) on 5 November.

The issue of Federal regulation to ensure e-waste is recycled has embarrassingly dragged out over a five-year period with no decisive action from Governments – Federal or State. After extensive community consultation, cost-benefit analysis and regulatory impact statements, the time has come for the Federal Government to move beyond superficial policy-jargon, and act decisively.

PSA has proposed a detailed plan to fund and implement a national collection, recycling and community education scheme that could be rolled out by June 2010, generating environmental benefits and green jobs. Industry's essential prerequisite is the need for business certainty only possible through clear, simple and sensible Federal regulation involving import control and Customs data.

This must include stringent enforcement and associated penalties to ensure that all TV suppliers take on their e-waste recycling obligations.

With only two weeks to go before the EPHC meeting of Environment Ministers, there is next to no detail from the Federal Government. Despite the goodwill and time invested by the TV industry, and its commitment to take on its recycling responsibilities to the tune of millions of dollars per annum, the Federal Government has yet to formally demonstrate that it can deliver sensible regulation and provide the consumer electronics sector with business certainty and policy stability.

PSA Executive Officer – John Gertsakis said, *“that Minister Garrett and his State counterparts are uniquely positioned to permanently extinguish Australia’s e-waste problem through uncomplicated and effective Federal regulation. Anything less on 5 November will simply confirm Australia’s persistent reputation as a global laggard on environmental matters.”*

*“The Federal Environment Minister has consistently signalled his enthusiasm to deliver a national solution on e-waste, and the upcoming meeting will unambiguously test the Australian Government’s capacity to deliver regulatory reform that has already been implemented across the majority of other OECD countries”* said Gertsakis.

### Media comment:

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