

MEDIA STATEMENT

4 November 2009

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

TV Recycling Laws Must Be Stringent & Timely

Australian Environment Ministers are on the cusp of making a landmark decision that will determine whether millions of obsolete TVs and computers are recycled, or continue to stream into landfills around the country, wasting tonnes of resources.

Industry associations, TV manufacturers, green groups and local councils, around the country are waiting earnestly to hear whether the Australian Government will introduce much needed e-waste laws, often referred to as 'Extended Producer Responsibility' or 'Product Stewardship' regulation.

At a pivotal meeting of all Federal, State and Territory Environment Ministers this Thursday (5/11/09) in Perth, the 'green' rhetoric of Australia's Environment Ministers will be tested on the crucial issue of end-of-life TVs and computers.

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).

PSA Chairman, Laurie Nolan, highlights the need for effective e-waste regulations that deliver timely outcomes and clear requirements for a minority of TV suppliers who care little for the environment: *"Minister Garrett and State Ministers must rise to the task and meet industry and community expectations. This includes intelligent regulation backed by stringent enforcement and penalties which ensure industry-wide participation."*

With next to no barriers to such regulation, Ministers have been gifted significant cross-sectoral support from the majority of TV suppliers, green groups and many local councils. Such regulation will provide a level playing field and the business certainty that TV suppliers require in order to fund a multi-million dollar recycling program across Australia.

The key to a positive outcome will be stringently-enforced regulation that is developed and implemented in a timely manner. The TV industry wants to see such regulations put in place within 12 months, otherwise industry's ongoing faith in effective government policy development will be weakened.

The right policy framework will enable PSA to fund and implement a national collection, recycling and community education scheme, generating environmental benefits and new jobs in the waste management sector.

PSA Executive Officer, John Gertsakis said, *"A positive announcement in favour of e-waste regulation and action, will rightly demonstrate to the community that politicians can deliver solutions that address environmental priorities and social demands. An outcome that mandates the collection and recycling of old TVs and computers will also signal that the age of sustainable production and consumption has at last arrived in Australia."*

Obsolete TVs currently going to landfill could be recycled across Australia within six months if Minister Garrett announces stringent e-waste regulations at tomorrow's meeting of Environment Ministers.

Media comment:

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