

5 April 2011

Senate Environment and Communications Legislation Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600



RE: INQUIRY INTO THE PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP BILL 2011

Dear Secretary, Stephen Palethorpe and Committee Members

Mr Lyall from the Keep Australia Beautiful National Association has passed your correspondence onto member offices regarding the inquiry into the Product Stewardship Bill 2011. Keep Australia Beautiful Council (NSW) would like provide a short submission for this inquiry from their experiences and knowledge. This is only in relation to division 3, section 4 and 5.

Division 3, Section 4, Objects of this Act is very well prepared and I was very impressed to see the waste management hierarchy fully reflected in part 2, a-e with each point including avoid, reduce, reuse and recycle.

One of the ongoing trends in numerous types of products produced by numerous industries is the reducing lifespan of products. For example, in the 1950's, 60's and 70's, a washing machine or a cooking appliance lasted well over a decade and when it needed to be repaired, parts were available to repair them. However, the current trend is to simply throw that product onto a curb side council cleanup and buy a brand new product because the parts might be too expensive or difficult to find. When producing any type of product, there is a set amount of energy and resources demanded to produce the product, this various depending on the product, however the longer this product is used for the better the return on the embodied energy and inputted resources. In economic terms this could be explained as return on investment (ROI).

In reading the Objects of the Act, I couldn't find any object which aimed at increasing the lifespan of products, the ease of repair of products, availability of parts for a set period of time or mandatory lifespan required for specific products. I feel this is an essential part of product stewardship and an important area which needs to be included in a product stewardship bill.

Division 3, Section 5, Product Stewardship Criteria, point (a). This point is important; however, how is a "national market" classified and is this term easily avoided or skipped if companies interpret "national market" to suit their own circumstances. Perhaps this term needs to be listed and explained in Division 4, section 6, The Dictionary and therefore it won't be misinterpreted or challenged in the future.

Thank you for providing us with this opportunity, I am more than willing to provide further information to this enquiry or to expand on the points I have raised in this submission.

Yours sincerely,

Peter McLean
Chief Executive Officer and Company Secretary