

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications**  
**Legislation Committee**  
Answers to questions on notice  
**Environment portfolio**

**Question No:** 98  
**Hearing:** Supplementary Budget Estimates  
**Outcome:** Outcome 1.6  
**Programme:** Environment Standards Division (ESD)  
**Topic:** National Clean Air Agreement  
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**Question Date:** 19 October 2015  
**Question Type:** Spoken

**Senator Ronaldson asked:**

**Senator RONALDSON:** I understand that the government is ahead of schedule on the National Clean Air Agreement with the states, which is terrific news. Can you take on notice how such an agreement will deliver improvements in air quality across Australia? I understand that the Packaging Impacts Decision Regulation Impact Statement had some comments about national regulation. Did it show that the existing arrangements, including the Australia packaging covenant, had been delivering improved outcomes? If you can take that on notice for me, please. I gather there is a review of the National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme which exposed a number of flaws. Can you take on notice how the government plans to help e-waste recyclers, please.

**Answer:**

***In relation to the National Clean Air Agreement***

In July 2015, Environment Ministers endorsed in-principle the National Clean Air Agreement and committed to finalise the Agreement and its initial work plan before the end of 2015, over six months ahead of schedule.

The Agreement will build on existing air quality arrangements and ensure a continued and strengthened approach to air quality management in Australia. It sets out a basis for a priority setting process to assist governments to deliver coordinated and practical responses to air quality priorities and ensure Australia is well positioned to respond to current and emerging issues.

The initial work plan is focused on implementing decisions to be taken by ministers in December to address a number of long-standing air quality priorities, including national ambient air quality standards for particles and managing emissions from key emitting sectors such as non-road spark ignition engines and equipment (gardening equipment and marine engines) and wood heaters. These 2 sectors account for approximately 10 per cent of Australia's air pollution.

***In relation to Packaging***

The purpose of the Packaging Impact Regulation Impact Statement was to analyse 10 options for national approaches to managing packaging waste and litter reduction, including industry based approaches and container deposit scheme legislation. The option modelling the Australian Packaging Covenant included significantly higher levels of industry investment than committed under the current Australian Packaging Covenant. This option was identified in the regulation impact statement as the preferred option in delivering a net benefit to the

community. Modelling of the existing Australian Packaging Covenant arrangements was not undertaken in the regulation impact statement.

***In relation to the National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme***

The operational review of the National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme was initiated by Minister Hunt in September 2014. The operational review considered, in extensive consultation with scheme stakeholders, adjustments to keep the scheme operating efficiently. The recommendations were implemented on 1 July 2015. One of the key outcomes was to increase recycling targets, to better meet strong public demand for recycling services, and to ensure stability and ongoing capacity in the e-waste recycling industry.

The responsibility for regulating e-waste recyclers remains with state or territory environment protection agencies. The responsibility for on-going business viability of each entity remains with the individual business owners.

More information on the outcomes of the operational review can be found at [www.environment.gov.au/ewaste](http://www.environment.gov.au/ewaste).