

Product Stewardship Bill Passed by Senate - 15th June 2011

Australia is one step closer towards seeing the launch of a national e-waste recycling scheme led by industry, and regulated under the Product Stewardship Bill passed by the Senate yesterday.

After several years of pressure from TV and computer equipment manufacturers, the reality of a permanent collection, recycling and community education initiative is inching closer as Australia catches up with the rest of the world on e-waste laws.

The National TV and Computer Product Stewardship Scheme is being developed by Australia's peak TV and ICT industry bodies, in cooperation with the Federal Environment Department with the support of key states and other interested stakeholders. It will not only provide the community with a user-friendly recycling service, it will divert thousands of tonnes of e-waste from landfills and illegal dumping.

Product Stewardship Australia (PSA), the peak environmental body representing TV manufacturers applauds the foresight shown by the Senate yesterday in passing the Bill.

Stuart Clark, the Chairman of PSA and head of Service at Sony Australia and NZ, noted that the Bill's passing through the Senate is timely, and an essential part of the process that will enable TV manufacturers and importers to fund and implement a national recycling service.

"The timeframe for the switch to digital TV reinforces the need for the Product Stewardship Bill to be passed through both Houses of Parliament in a timely and unencumbered fashion. The sooner industry can get on with the job of collecting obsolete analogue TVs, the sooner we can avoid landfills and ensure that end-of-life products are recycled" said Clark.

The Australian Information Industry Association (AIIA), which is nation's peak body on ICT matters, believes that the Senate has demonstrated an intelligent position on achieving a sustainable outcome by passing the Bill.

"Yesterday's passing of the Product Stewardship Bill in the Senate represents a significant step for Australian industry and environment policy. It shows how smart legislation can deliver business certainty and environmental benefit when it comes to managing the growing volumes redundant computers and peripherals" said AIIA CEO Ian Birks. "The outcome is something AIIA and our members have worked towards for a number of years."

A key requirement of the National TV and Computer Product Stewardship Scheme will be the need to have industry-wide participation in funding and implementing the service.

Within the context of the Product Stewardship Bill, a co-regulatory approach will ensure that no manufacturer or supplier of new TV and computer equipment can avoid their collection and recycling obligations. Leading brands from PSA and AIIA welcome this aspect of the Bill because the economic cost of running a permanent national Scheme is equitably shared among all manufacturers, importers and suppliers.

Both PSA and AIIA congratulate the Senate on yesterday's decision and look forward to seeing the Bill passed through both Houses by the end of the winter sitting without delay.

Contacts

John Gertsakis
0409 422 089
mailto: johng@productstewardship.asn.au