

CONTAINERS FOR CHANGE — CHANGE MAKER AWARDS

Statement by Minister for Environment

MR R.R. WHITBY (Baldivis — Minister for Environment) [12.16 pm]: It brings me a great deal of pride to inform the house of a magnificent achievement. Through the efforts of Western Australian families, charities, schools, sporting clubs and individual recycling champions, our highly successful container deposit scheme, Containers for Change, has now received over 3 billion beverage containers. That is 3 billion, would members believe!

Some of these extraordinary recycling champions were recognised at the 2023 Change Maker Awards. I acknowledge their contributions to this incredible three-billion milestone. They include the school of the year, Kensington Secondary School; the individual of the year, Mr Viktor Strizek, better known in his local community around Nedlands as RecyclemanPerth—he is quite a character and quite a ferocious collector—Good Sammy Enterprises; the Goomalling Toodyay Containers for Change refund point; and the community participant of the year, the Western Australian AIDS Council.

Containers for Change commenced on 1 October 2020, fulfilling a commitment of this government to increase recycling, reduce litter, provide fundraising benefits for community groups and charities, and create employment opportunities for small businesses and social enterprises. Prior to the commencement of our container deposit scheme, just 34 per cent of beverage containers were being collected for recycling. We saw this every day, with a significant number of containers simply thrown out of the car window, discarded as litter along our streetscapes. Now, Western Australians are recycling close to 64 per cent of beverage containers, and the amount of beverage container litter has been reduced to around five per cent. This is a huge achievement in less than three and a half years. Western Australians have now donated almost \$11 million to over 7 000 charities, community groups and schools that are registered with the scheme.

As good as these results are, there is still much more we can do on our mission to be the most successful container deposit scheme in the country, which is why we continue to innovate with new ways to improve community and business participation. Automated self-serve kiosks are now being rolled out across the metro area, already offering convenience and new levels of accessibility. So far, we have launched kiosks in Greenwood, Kingsway, Whitfords, Mirrabooka and Waikiki, with Byford opening next week.

There is a lot more to talk about, including the Containers for Change collect system, which provides more accessibility, with customers able to go to an app or website and get their containers collected from their homes, factories, shops and offices. This is a moment of change for Containers for Change. I again acknowledge that 3 billion containers is an extraordinary achievement. I am confident that 3 billion is only the beginning.