



MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT; WATER

Your Ref: Ev.116.110811.let.001.bm.A305653

Our Ref: 42-09263

Hon Brian Ellis MLC
Chair
Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs
Parliament House
Perth
Western Australia 6000

Dear Mr Ellis

Brian

Thank you for your letter dated 11 August 2011 regarding Petition No 116 – Western Australian Container Deposit Scheme, and the request for comments on the attached submissions from the tabling Members.

The tabling Members' submissions appear to identify two key problem areas which could be addressed by the implementation of a Container Deposit Scheme. These are to reduce the impacts of beverage container litter and to increase the recovery of beverage containers from the packaging waste stream.

In 2006 a Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) on Best Practice Container Deposit Systems (CDS) for Western Australia was formed by the then Minister for the Environment, Hon Dr Judy Edwards MLA. The SAG had representation from a range of key stakeholder groups, representing industry, state and local government and community interests.

In 2007 the SAG presented its final report to the Minister for the Environment which included recommendations on a preferred model for introduction into Western Australia. The report noted that "As with many EPR [Extended Producer Responsibility] policy instruments, it would not be advantageous to have a situation where a number of different CDS were operating in different Australian States. This would increase the compliance burden and costs for the beverage and packaging industries. A better outcome, from the perspective of the SAG, would be that a single national CDS is implemented." (SAG Final Report, January 2007 available from the ZeroWaste website at <http://www.zerowaste.wa.com.au>)

Since the completion of that study the Western Australian Government has targeted littering and illegal dumping in a number of ways, including:

- creating a new offence of dumping waste under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*, with increased penalties to deter illegal dumping;
- proposals for changes to legislation to increase penalties for littering;
- maintaining an illegal dumping hotline (1300 766 541);
- the Litter Reporter Scheme run by Keep Australia Beautiful Western Australia, which has over 5500 participants who can report illegal dumping or littering offences;
- various Keep Australia Beautiful Western Australia community programs such as Tidy Towns, Sustainable Cities, Trash-my-ad, Clean Beaches, Clean Schools and Bin Your Butt;
- providing over 10,000 Outback Packs to the public, which assist travellers to better manage their own litter and clean up other litter during their journey; and
- support for over 200 community groups and businesses through the Adopt a Spot program run by Keep Australia Beautiful Western Australia.

The Government has also been active in improving the recovery of packaging waste in Western Australia. For instance, two grants have recently been awarded to operators of innovative glass packaging waste recycling systems.

Almost \$2 million has been committed by the Western Australian Government to the construction of a state-of-the-art glass processing facility in Kewdale through a National Packaging Covenant initiated process. The new facility has the capacity to process 40,000 tonnes of glass per year and is able to recover the small pieces of broken glass from kerbside recycling systems which were previously not able to be recycled and were landfilled.

The Shire of Augusta-Margaret River received joint funding from the Waste Authority and the National Packaging Covenant to set up a regional glass crushing facility. The facility has the capacity to process most of the glass waste available for recycling in the region. In the first year over 800 tonnes of glass was processed into building and construction products.

The Western Australian Government is also working with other Australian governments in investigating the potential for a national container deposit scheme, and other measures, to address packaging waste impacts and reducing litter. This work has been overseen by the Environment Protection and Heritage Council and will now be carried forward under the new Standing Council on Environment and Water.

A Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement, which is due for completion by the end of 2011, will consider a container deposit system and a limited number of other options which could be effective and efficient in improving packaging waste recovery rates and litter reduction. The Western Australian Government has indicated a preference for the national application of a container deposit scheme over a state-only based scheme. This is consistent with the approach taken by the Stakeholder Advisory Group in its January 2007 report.

The Western Australian Government is waiting on the outcome of the national investigation, and will consider all options to ensure an effective and efficient outcome is achieved for waste management in Western Australia.

Yours sincerely



HON BILL MARMION MLA
MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT; WATER

13 SEP 2011

PUBLIC