

National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme: Co-regulatory Arrangements

The National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme is a co-regulatory Scheme established by the *Product Stewardship (Televisions and Computers) Regulations 2011*. The Regulations were made under the *Product Stewardship Act 2011*, which commenced on 8 August 2011. The objectives of the Act are to reduce the impacts that products have on the environment throughout their life cycle; and also to reduce the impact that substances contained in products have on the environment, and on the health and safety of human beings.

WHAT IS THE AIM OF THE SCHEME?

The Regulations were developed following a comprehensive national consultation process, starting in July 2009 with a consultation regulation impact statement undertaken by the Environment Protection and Heritage Council. The regulation impact statement showed there was a community benefit to be gained from recycling televisions and computers. In 2007-08 television and computer waste was around 106,000 tonnes (16.8 million units). Approximately 10 per cent of this was recycled, with the rest going to landfill. These waste volumes are increasing and are predicted to grow to 181,000 tonnes (44 million units) by 2027-28. The Scheme's primary goal is by 2021 to lift recycling rates to 80 percent of waste televisions, computers and computer products generated in that year.

WHAT IS A CO-REGULATORY ARRANGEMENT?

The Act requires that all liable parties (importers and Australian manufacturers of covered products over a

threshold) covered by the Regulations must join an approved co-regulatory arrangement.

A co-regulatory arrangement under the National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme is an arrangement that is designed to achieve outcomes, specified in the Regulations, on behalf of liable parties. The outcomes include providing reasonable access to collection services across Australia by December 2013, meeting annual recycling targets and meeting a material recovery target.

A co-regulatory arrangement will need to have an administrator and membership comprised of one or more liable parties. The administrator is a body corporate responsible for ensuring that the arrangement achieves the outcomes. The administrator may also be a member of the co-regulatory arrangement. All members of an arrangement must be liable parties (see the fact sheet *National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme: Liable Parties*).

Co-regulatory arrangements will need to be approved by the Minister (or delegate).

WHAT IS A CO-REGULATORY ARRANGEMENT REQUIRED TO DO?

Co-regulatory arrangements are required to achieve the outcomes and deal with certain matters required by the Regulations. Under the Regulations, there are three outcomes:

- Provision of reasonable access to collection services;
- Meeting annual recycling targets; and
- Meeting a material recovery target.

Reasonable access is defined in the Regulations by a set of metrics that include specific, minimum requirements for access to collection services in metropolitan, inner regional, outer regional and remote areas.

The Scheme target will be a proportion of the available waste in a financial year, starting at 30 per cent in 2012-13 and rising incrementally to 80 per cent in 2021-22. A co-regulatory arrangement's recycling target is the weight of products it must recycle in a given financial year. It is calculated based on a methodology in the Regulations. Each arrangement's target will be a share of the overall Scheme target.

The material recovery target requires each co-regulatory arrangement to ensure that at least 90 per cent of the weight of material they recycle in a financial year is sent for further processing into useable materials. This is consistent with the estimated average material recovery rate currently being achieved by Australian recyclers of televisions and computers. The target comes into effect in the 2014-15 financial year.

Co-regulatory arrangements must also deal with the following matters:

- Governance of the arrangement;
- Financial arrangements and funding;
- Procedures relating to membership of the arrangement;
- Communicating information to the public about how its services can be accessed; and
- Assessing the adequacy of the environmental, health and safety policies and practices in the collection, storage, transportation or recycling of products.

WHAT IS REQUIRED OF AN ADMINISTRATOR?

The administrator of an approved co-regulatory arrangement is obliged to take all reasonable steps to ensure that the co-regulatory arrangement achieves the required outcomes. In addition, the administrator has a series of additional obligations including: making and keeping accurate records of the administration and operation of the co-regulatory arrangement, keeping the Government informed of membership and changes of circumstances, and providing annually an audited, detailed report on the operation of the arrangement during the financial year.

WHAT ARE THE TIMEFRAMES?

The period for application for approval of co-regulatory arrangements opened on 8 November 2011 with the commencement of the Regulations. At the time of publication of this fact sheet, it was anticipated that approval would be granted to the first co-regulatory arrangements by February 2012.

Each liable party will be expected to become a member of an approved co-regulatory arrangement by the membership census date. In 2011-12, the census date is 1 April 2012. In subsequent financial years, the census date will be 1 September.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information on the National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme visit the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities website at: environment.gov.au/ewaste.

If you wish to receive updates about the Scheme you can subscribe to the Television and Computer Recycling Scheme e-bulletin at environment.gov.au/settlements/waste/ewaste/subscribe.html.

Alternatively, you can e-mail the department at: ewaste@environment.gov.au.

Factsheet last updated on 24 November 2011

