



National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme – information for liable parties

This fact sheet explains the obligations for companies identified as liable parties under the National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE SCHEME?

The number of end of life televisions and computers (e-waste) in Australia has increased over time. The recycling rate for these products has typically been low, with large amounts of e-waste sent to landfill each year.

In landfill, the hazardous substances contained in e-waste can enter the environment, causing harm to ecosystems and human health. Landfilling of e-waste also means that valuable resources and materials are lost and cannot be reused.

To address this problem, the television and computer industries worked with the Australian Government to develop and implement the scheme and take responsibility for a proportion of e-waste nationally. In 2013-14, more than 1,180 industry funded collection services were made available to the public. To date, more than 130,000 tonnes of e-waste has been recycled under the scheme.

This has diverted hazardous materials away from landfill and enabled the reuse of valuable resources contained in e-waste, and responded to high demand from the community for e-waste recycling services.

As the first programme of its kind in Australia, the scheme will continue to be monitored and improved over time. A statutory review of the *Product Stewardship Act 2011* will be undertaken in 2016.

WHY IS MY COMPANY A LIABLE PARTY?

The Product Stewardship (Televisions and Computers) Regulations 2011 specify which importers and manufacturers of televisions, computers, printers and computer products are liable parties.

Product stewardship is the concept that everyone involved in the creation, sale, use and disposal of a product has a role to play in reducing its impact on the environment.

Widespread industry support for a co-regulatory scheme was a key factor in the decision to introduce the scheme in 2011.

In 2015–16, an importer or manufacturer is liable under the scheme if they are a constitutional corporation (i.e. a foreign corporation or a trading or financial corporation formed within Australia) and imported or manufactured more than a threshold amount of products during 2014–15. The threshold amounts are:

- 5,000 units of **televisions**
- 5,000 units of **computers or printers**
- 15,000 units of **computer parts or peripherals**

If the total number of products imported or manufactured by a group of related corporate bodies exceeds a scheme threshold, each member of the group that has imported or manufactured more than 1,000 products in their own right will be liable under the scheme.

HOW DO I FIND OUT IF MY COMPANY IS LIABLE?

Each year, data from import declarations is provided to the Department of the Environment by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection. Prior to finalisation of data, early notification letters are sent to parties who are likely to become liable, informing them about the scheme and its obligations. The Department then sends a statement of advice to each liable party in July.

The statement of advice informs a liable party of their products imported under scheme-listed product codes. All products are assigned an average converted weight using conversion factors. More information about conversion factors can be found on the Department's website at: www.environment.gov.au/ewaste

Important: Settlement date for changes to import declarations by liable parties

All importers have a legal responsibility to accurately declare their imports to the Department of Immigration and Border Protection. Any corrections to import declarations for scheme products should be completed by **31 October each year**. Changes made after that date to import declarations may not be taken into account under the scheme.

If you receive a statement of advice from the Department and believe your import data is incorrect, it is your responsibility to contact your Customs broker or freight forwarder to arrange any necessary amendments. Once any necessary amendments have been made, importers need to inform the Department of any amendments to Customs data, so that a revised statement of advice can be issued.

HOW DOES MY COMPANY MEET ITS SCHEME OBLIGATIONS?

A liable party's primary obligation is to be a member of an approved co-regulatory arrangement for the duration of the financial year in which they are a liable party. The deadline for joining a co-regulatory arrangement in a new financial year is 1 September. More information about co-regulatory arrangements can be found on the Department's website at: www.environment.gov.au/ewaste

The day to day operation of the scheme, including organising collection and recycling of waste televisions and computers on behalf of their members, is managed by approved co-regulatory arrangements and covered by the liable party's membership fee. Each approved co-regulatory arrangement must meet a recycling target that is determined based on their members' share of total liable imports or manufactured products in the previous financial year. More information about recycling targets can be found on the Department's website at: www.environment.gov.au/ewaste

Liable parties must also provide the Department with any information on their related bodies corporate that imported or manufactured television and computer products during the previous financial year.

HOW DO I JOIN A CO-REGULATORY ARRANGEMENT?

Contact details for the approved co-regulatory arrangements are available on the Department's web site at: www.environment.gov.au/protection/national-waste-policy/television-and-computer-recycling-scheme/coreg-arrangements

The details of individual contracts are a private matter for liable parties and their chosen co-regulatory arrangement. The Department does not set or advise on membership fees. Liable parties should contact the co-regulatory arrangements to discuss membership options and fees.

WHAT HAPPENS IF A LIABLE IMPORTER DOES NOT MEET ITS OBLIGATIONS?

To date, liable parties have strongly supported the scheme, and it is positive to note that for the first three years of the scheme's operation, liable party compliance rates by import or manufacture share have been 100 per cent, 99.2 per cent and 99.7 per cent respectively. We expect that liable parties will continue to fulfil their product stewardship responsibilities into the future.

A liable party that has not met its obligation to become a member of a co-regulatory arrangement may be subject to substantial civil penalties. These penalties increase for every day that the liable party remains non-compliant.

If a liable party leaves a co-regulatory arrangement during a financial year it must join another arrangement in that financial year. A liable party that has not yet met its obligation to be a member of an approved co-regulatory arrangement remains liable in the following year.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information on the National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme visit the Department of the Environment website at: www.environment.gov.au/cwaste or contact ewaste@environment.gov.au or call the Product Stewardship Line on 1800 332 783.

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