

ATTACHMENT

24th April 2013**The Remit Scanning Committee**

Local Government New Zealand
 PO Box 1214
 Wellington 6140
 New Zealand

To the President, Vice President and Chief Executive

As the Greater Wellington Regional Councillor elected representative appointed to the Waste Forum – Wellington Region (<http://www.waste-forum.wellington.net.nz/>), I am writing to you with this proposed remit. Please note that the Forum's membership includes all councils (elected and staff) from councils throughout the Wellington region and also businesses operating in the region.

Why I am forwarding this remit:

- Electronic waste (e-waste), including televisions and computers, has for years been a frequent reoccurring topic of discussion at the regional Waste Forum-Wellington Region meetings.
- Initiatives focused on e-waste and product stewardship are in the national interest and also are relevant to all local government because e-waste recovery and recycling is a cost to all. In addition, there has been an increase in the illegal dumping of e-waste.
- The Forum has in the past communicated its wish for a product stewardship approach for e-waste with successive Ministers for the Environment.
- The Forum supports fully in principle a remit covering e-waste and product stewardship. Forum members have been asked to confirm approval by each individual council.
- Waste Minimisation Act 2008 provides legislative framework for product stewardship
- Digital television switchover has offered a fantastic opportunity to address this issue, and Government has provided short term Waste Minimisation funding for schemes such as TV Takeback: <http://www.tvtakeback.govt.nz/>. However, there needs to be a longer term plan to address computers and televisions currently coming into the country now and into the future.

This remit has been given support by seven councils within the greater Wellington region: Hutt City Council (Mayor Ray Wallace), Upper Hutt City Council (Mayor Wayne Guppy), South Wairarapa District Council (Councillor Margaret Craig), Masterton District Council (David Hopman, Manager Assets & Operations), Greater Wellington Regional Council (Chair Fran Wilde), Wellington City Council (Mayor Celia Wade Brown, subject to Council ratification 8th May), Carterton District Council (Mayor Ron Mark).

Yours sincerely,

Cr Paul Bruce

Paul Bruce (Cr.)
 Greater Wellington Regional Council

Attachment A: Product Stewardship (Televisions and Computers) Regulations 2011

Attachment B: Australian National Waste Policy fact sheet

<http://www.environment.gov.au/settlements/waste/publications/pubs/fs-apc.pdf>

Attachment C: Ewaste in New Zealand – Five Years On, a report prepared by the eDay NZ Trust evaluating the success of eDay in the context of

E-waste and Product Stewardship

This remit calls on central government to:

- Declare electronic waste (e-waste) a priority product under the provisions of the Waste Minimisation Act (2008)
- Set a timetable for the development of regulations requiring all importers of electronic equipment to sign up to a product stewardship scheme for eWaste at the point of manufacture, assembly or entry to New Zealand
- Collaborate with suppliers of electronic equipment in progressing a co-regulatory approach to product stewardship, aligned with Australia

Rationale

New Zealand's eWaste problem is escalating.

The safe disposal of increasing amounts of e-waste is a challenging issue for New Zealand. Most New Zealand communities do not have easy access to free (at the point of disposal) e-waste recycling services. Valuable materials can be recovered from e-waste, but the return on these is not sufficient to cover all the costs of collection, transport and recycling. Many consumers are unable or unwilling to pay the real cost of e-waste recycling at the time of disposal.

Product Stewardship provides the optimum long-term solution for e-waste

- Product stewardship provides a permanent long-term solution where all the costs of e-waste collection, transport and recycling are met by electronic equipment suppliers; in effect, the cost of recycling becomes included in the price of new products.
- This is the approach adopted in most developed countries (especially Europe) and where effectively implemented avoids the need for any funding support from central government or local authorities. Voluntary user pays product stewardship schemes for e-waste have not succeeded anywhere in the world.
- As there is likely to be considerable synergy, New Zealand should pursue the co-regulatory approach implemented in Australia from 1 July 2012
- The co-regulatory approach requires suppliers of electronic equipment to take responsibility for funding and managing e-waste recycling schemes. This approach results in 'free drop-off' for the public at the end of life (EoL) recycling facility. This factor is critical to optimise public participation, maximise EoL collections rates, and thereby ensure:
 - The numerous documented and internationally accepted harm resulting from inappropriate disposal is avoided
 - The significant globally scarce resources in e-waste are used most efficiently and economies of scale are maximised and work to favour reducing the per unit recycling cost – thereby minimising any perceived burden of environmental compliance cost upon the general economy
 - Government regulations are necessary to ensure participation by all suppliers and prevent "free-riders" gaining a business advantage. Government regulation is also required to ensure minimum recycling standards, such as those now provided by the Australian and New Zealand eWaste standard, AS/NZS 5377, apply evenly to all participants in the e-waste recycling sector. The necessary transparency, traceability, accountability, quality assurance and 'all inclusive level playing field' required for New Zealand to meet fully its international obligations, can most effectively be implemented by backstop co-regulation of the product stewardship of e-waste

Central Government

- Government has supported e-waste awareness-raising schemes since 2007, including eDay, RCN e-Cycle, and currently is providing subsidies for analogue TV take-back schemes
- The Waste Minimisation Act (2008) provides the legislative framework for the development of product stewardship schemes – both voluntary and compulsory
- No voluntary product stewardship schemes have been developed for computer or TV equipment in the four years since the legislation was passed
- The Minister for the Environment (Hon Amy Adams) has provided direction to MfE to explore options for mandatory producer responsibility for electronic waste but there is no evidence of any progress being made

Local Authorities

- A number of regions have elected to support the establishment of a local e-Cycle collection centre and in some cases, are subsidising the cost of e-waste recycling
- Local authorities should not be subsidising e-waste recycling schemes, whether this is from ratepayers or from Waste Minimisation Fund returns, when international experience shows that product stewardship approaches work better
- Local authorities should limit any investment in short-term e-waste collection infrastructure, as this may not form part of longer term industry-funded scheme