



18 January 2017

## Pre-Budget Submissions

To whom it may concern,

The Australian Council of Recycling (ACOR) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the priorities for the 2017-18 Budget.

ACOR is the peak national industry association representing a broad range of organisation within the resource recovery industry. We represent a diverse group of members, including local councils, private sector resource recovery operators, remanufacturers and recyclers with different interests in the 2017-18 Budget.

Australia lags well behind comparable countries in extended producer responsibility or product stewardship schemes under the *Product Stewardship Act 2011*. Most if not all of the schemes that have been established are either problematic for industry and government alike, or will become so over time as voluntary schemes are fraught with free riders and the inevitable blame shifting between the Commonwealth and the State Ministers when a public facing incident occurs (e.g. Tyre Stockpiles).

A recent O.E.C.D report titled "*Working Party on Resource Productivity and Waste: Extended Producer Responsibility – Updated Guidance*" indicates the nature and scope of problematic materials typically dealt with in O.E.C.D countries with Australia lacking in effective schemes for globally problematic waste streams such as tyres, batteries, e-waste, batteries and many others.

The prerequisite to encouraging innovation and investment by industry is sufficient capacity in the Commonwealth Public Service, specifically the Department of Environment which administers schemes, to work with industry on developing effective schemes.

Whilst it is somewhat unusual for an industry group to advocate for additional public service resources, the absence of effective product stewardship schemes inhibits industry growth and investment and increases the costs to business and the community from effective and cost efficient waste management. In addition, enhanced and practical product stewardship reduces or eliminates the need for toxic landfills that contaminate the air, water and soil, conserve natural resources such as trees, water and all kinds of increasingly rare yet potentially toxic minerals and elements. Recycling also prevents pollution by reducing the need to mine finite raw materials, saves energy and reduces Australia's climate change gas emissions, leaves a positive legacy for future generations and creates well-paying sustainable employment in the recovery, logistics, recycling and remanufacturing industries.

A very modest allocation, or reallocation of internal government resources by way of new positions dedicated towards Product Stewardship would have enormous benefits for the entire community, business and government.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Grant Musgrove', written in a cursive style.

Grant Musgrove

Chief Executive Officer