



Battery Stewardship Council welcomes changes

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The Battery Stewardship Council (BSC) has begun designing an industry-led stewardship scheme, which will undertake consultations of the industry and public in the coming months.

The BSC welcomed the plan to fast track the development of a stewardship scheme that aims to result in all types of batteries being recycled in Australia.

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The meeting of Environmental Ministers on 27 April 2018 was called to address concerns in the Australian recycling industry with representatives from federal, state and territory ministers.

Of the 400 million batteries that enter the Australian market each year, less than three per cent of non-car batteries are recycled in Australia, according to a 2014 trend analysis and market assessment report, prepared on behalf of the National Environment Protection Council Service Corporation.

Toxic chemicals such as nickel, cadmium, alkaline and mercury are often found in batteries, and can be a risk to the environment and human health due to their flammability and the leaching of heavy metals.

The BSC was formed earlier in 2018, combining government and industry bodies, to undertake background work to understanding the markets and barriers to recycling that need to be addressed in a stewardship scheme.

The work of the Battery Stewardship Council is supported by the Australian Battery Recycling Initiative (ABRI) with funding from the QLD Department of Environment and Science.

Chairman of the Battery Stewardship Council Gerry Morvell said Australians have to stop the throw away mentality which wastes a fully recyclable resource and poses a long-term threat to human health and the environment.

"One of our key aims is to facilitate the building of a strong and effective battery recycling industry in Australia. We do not want a repetition of the go-stop issue that has emerged with plastics," said Mr Morvell.

Australian Battery Recycling Initiative Chief Executive Officer Libby Chaplin said there is a confluence of events paving the way for an industry led scheme that could quickly solve this rapidly escalating problem waste.

"Australia has the capability and there is growing motivation to transform this waste management concern into a resource recovery success story," she said.

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