



# Electronic Stewardship Work Program



## Electronic Waste in Australia

- Consumer electronics depend on electric currents or electro-magnetic fields to function. This includes televisions, mobile phones, computers, appliances and other items.
- Over 500,000 tonnes of electronic waste (e-waste) is generated every year - and this is projected to grow to nearly one million tonnes by 2035.
- E-waste can be hazardous and toxic - containing lead, mercury, arsenic and brominated flame retardants - and can damage human and environmental health.
- E-waste can also contain valuable materials - precious and other metals - and this drives a market for the recycling and recovery of waste.
- Around half of e-waste in Australia is recycled, mainly through the National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme, with the rest being landfilled or sent overseas.
- Since it began, the NTCRS has resulted in the collection and recycling of around 400,000 tonnes of e-waste.
- Some state and territories have also banned e-waste from landfills.
- Internationally, countries are debating on whether to introduce new rules to better control and manage the international movement of e-waste.

## Electronic Stewardship

- Improving Australia's end-of-life management of consumer electronics has to start with products - through their design, manufacturer, import, sale and consumption - and not just when the product is thrown out.
- We refer to this as 'Electronic Stewardship' (e-stewardship for short) - making everyone in the product cycle take responsibility for its end-of-life fate - not just recyclers.
- E-stewardship has been very successful when implemented in Australia. For example, the industry-led MobileMuster program has recycled over 14 million handsets and batteries since 1998.

## E-Stewardship Work Program

- The Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment is running a work-program to better understand e-waste in Australia and identify potential e-stewardship opportunities.
- Our priorities for the work-program:
  - **Clarify and improve visibility of the state of consumer electronics and e-waste in Australia:** The department will be working with state and territory departments to analyse existing data and investigate options to improve measurement at end-of-life.
  - **Map e-product supply chains to identify circular economy opportunities:** Any solutions will need to be implemented across the supply chain and not just at recycling. Mapping the different players and critical issue points in the lifespan of e-products will better enable targeted interventions by industry and governments.
  - **Identify options for successful management of consumer electronics in Australia:** there are actions that can be taken across all levels of governments and by businesses across the supply chain to improve the management of consumer electronics in Australia. This work program will help identify and coordinate the key actions that need to occur to achieve strong environmental, social and economic outcomes.



## Find out more

- If you would like further information, please contact [writ@awe.gov.au](mailto:writ@awe.gov.au)