

MEDIA RELEASE

ABRI calls on the Federal Government to implement industry recommendations for the introduction of a national battery stewardship program

On July 28th, Environment Ministers will consider recommendations from the Industry Working Group on a pathway forward to establish a national recycling program for rechargeable batteries under 5 kgs. Industry has invested much time and resources to evaluate options and prepare a workable and realistic path forward. **Without government support of these recommendations, industry will pull out of the process and action will be delayed many years, resulting in environmental and community health impacts and leading to greater cost to government.**

ABRI fully supports the Industry Working Group recommendations and encourages others in industry to ensure government understand the need for responsible battery stewardship by contacting the Environment Ministers directly. We have also called on the government to expand the scope of the recommended scheme to include a phased approach to cover ALL batteries. Why?

- ✓ We are looking at an increasing avalanche in the volume of waste batteries over the coming years
- ✓ If not managed correctly, batteries will end up in landfill, leading to increased incidences of landfill fires with significant increases in releases of dioxins into the atmosphere causing serious ongoing community health impacts and costs to health services
- ✓ Research indicates the community has a strong desire to recycle batteries safely and will see this approach as a success
- ✓ Some battery chemistries have the potential to catch fire if they overheat, are crushed, or make contact – whether in the home, during transport or while in storage if not managed correctly
- ✓ Button cell batteries present a significant risk to children if swallowed (ACCC reports that 20 children present to hospital emergency rooms each week)

However, government are in a prime position to facilitate an industry lead solution. Contributing resources to establish the program and committing to introducing light regulation to ensure the inclusion of all batteries by 2020 and for ensuring equitable industry participation. This is needed to avoid free riders taking advantage of responsible industry partners.

By doing so, we can expect to see a big jump in safe and responsible recovery of batteries - much beyond the current very low level of recycling (less than 3%). This will lead to significant industry development and investment in local battery recycling in Australia, adopting new technologies and establishing new jobs.

Now is the time for action! Contact your Environment Ministers this week to show your support for battery stewardship in Australia

Contact	About the Australian Battery Recycling Initiative (ABRI)
Libby Chaplin AUSTRALIAN BATTERY RECYCLING INITIATIVE PH: 0467 515 260 secretariat@batteryrecycling.org.au	ABRI has been formed by a group of battery manufacturers, distributors, collectors, recyclers, government bodies and environment groups to promote the collection, recycling and safe disposal of all batteries. ABRI supports the principle of product stewardship: that responsibility for environmental management of products, including their recovery at end of life, is shared by organisations at every stage of the product life cycle.