

16 February 2021

Right to Repair Inquiry
Productivity Commission
4 National Circuit
Barton Act 2600

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Dear Commissioners

Productivity Commission Inquiry on the Right to Repair

The purpose of this submission is to introduce the recently announced Product Stewardship Centre of Excellence (Product Stewardship CoE). As a new organisation we are currently in establishment phase and not quite ready to make a submission, however the Centre expects to respond to the draft report to be released in June 2021.

As an interim submission, please read this letter as an introduction to the Centre, noting that issues related to repair, reuse and product durability will form part of the Centre's work and outreach when dealing with stakeholders involved with product stewardship programs and schemes.

About the Product Stewardship Centre of Excellence

The Product Stewardship Centre of Excellence was established by a consortium of UTS Institute for Sustainable Futures, the Australian Industry Group and Cox Inall Communications in partnership with the Australian Government through the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment. It was announced in December 2020 with the assistance of a National Product Stewardship Investment Fund grant.

The Centre holds the required knowledge and expertise in product stewardship scheme design and implementation, education, training, research, policy, community engagement, supply chains, logistics, government liaison and business engagement. It provides an opportunity to establish Australia as a leader in product stewardship across product types and material streams.

Our Mission, Vision and Challenge

The Centre's mission is to accelerate the uptake of product stewardship in Australia by mentoring, educating and activating stakeholders across product and material supply chains. Our Vision is to see the wide-scale adoption of product and material stewardship principles into business models that reduce waste generation and create positive environmental and social outcomes via better design, improved resource productivity and sustainable reuse.

The Centre of Excellence is about helping businesses, existing schemes, governments and the community to adopt, expand and activate stewardship across product categories and material streams.



The challenge is to assist businesses and government achieve the National Waste Policy Action 2030 Targets of decreasing waste generation by 10%, increasing resource recovery to 80%, increasing the use of recycled content, phasing out problematic and unnecessary plastics and halving the amount of organic waste sent to landfill. We believe that product stewardship is an opportunity for businesses to do more, strive for more and achieve more.

Who we collaborate with

The Centre will build enduring relationships between businesses, government, product stewardship organisations, not-for-profit entities and research institutions to achieve a sustainable and effective approach to product and materials stewardship nationally.

It will operate across Local, State and Federal Government jurisdictions and right across the supply chain from product design and sourcing to production and end of product life. We will advise the federal government on priority areas for stewardship action, support businesses to get involved, and help existing schemes to improve their performance.

Our activities and outreach will be of relevance and value to industry-wide schemes, individual companies and other organisations seeking to adopt a strong Product Stewardship approach.

What we do

Product stewardship requires producers and retailers to better manage the impacts of products and material streams through their life cycle, and this includes greater attention to design for durability, reparability, re-usability and recycling.

Product Stewardship aims to reduce waste generation through better design and manufacture of products, including the use of materials that are easier to reuse and recycle. Our team, partners and specialist advisers bring internationally recognised, multi-disciplinary expertise in product stewardship and the circular economy within a commercial context.

Our projects and services include:

- Mentoring
- Training and professional development
- Networking
- Marketing, outreach and promotion
- Stakeholder engagement
- Business case development
- Material flow analysis
- Applied industry research

In addition to core skills held by Centre personnel, we have specialist advisers covering several areas of capability directly relevant to achieving stewardship success:

- Design, innovation and alternative stewardship approaches

- Reuse, repair, recycling and resource recovery
- Sustainability strategy and environmental management
- Supply chain and logistics management
- Product life cycle management and life-cycle assessment
- Governance and organisational models
- Business planning and financial/economic analysis
- Compliance including OH&S and regulatory tracking
- Digital technologies and tools
- Risk management and legal expertise on competition issues
- Community and Indigenous engagement

The Centre will utilise its team and associates to support projects as needed, including input to professional development and training specifically related to product stewardship solutions and implementation.

Our priorities for 2021

The Centre's work program for 2021 will cover some key areas of activity. It will:

- Build networks and tools to support schemes, manufacturers, brands, retailers, distributors and industry associations accelerate product stewardship
- Establish training and executive development programs
- Establish the Excellence in Product Stewardship Awards Program
- Create and promote compelling case studies showcasing stewardship solutions
- Engage and educate businesses
- Report to the minister on product stewardship priorities
- Identify new stewardship measures and interventions, including circular design processes to facilitate waste avoidance
- Encourage voluntary schemes to become government accredited

We look forward to the Commission's draft report in June 2021 and the opportunity to respond more fully and specifically at that time. Please contact the Centre should you have any queries.

Yours sincerely,

Rose Read

Director

Product Stewardship Centre of Excellence