



**Product Stewardship
Centre of
Excellence**

**Product stewardship benefits
assessment – opportunities
for local government**

Dr Simran Talwar
UTS Institute for Sustainable Futures
simran.talwar@uts.edu.au

www.stewardshipexcellence.com.au

1



Overview

- Definitions & concepts
- About the Centre
- Benefits & effectiveness research study
- Opportunities for local government
- Partnership Program
- Contact Us

2

Definitions & Concepts

Product stewardship

- Approach for managing and reducing the **environmental and human health impacts** of products and materials
- **All life-cycle stages** in focus: design and production, consumption and post-consumption
- **Primary responsibility with producers and retailers**
- Aligned with **circular economy principles** and **waste hierarchy** – i.e. designing out waste and pollution, keeping products and materials in the economy, regenerating natural systems etc

Circular Economy Principles

- Designing-out waste and pollution
- Keeping products and materials in the economy
- Regenerating natural systems
- Decarbonising the economy
- Positive social and cultural dimension

Extended Producer Responsibility

“An environmental policy approach in which a producer’s responsibility for a product is extended to the **post-consumer stage** of a product’s life cycle”*, especially for the take-back, recycling, and final disposal of the product.

- shift some financial burden of waste management from local government (i.e. taking account of externalities)
- incentivise producers to reduce resources, use recycled materials, and improve product design to reduce waste

* OECD (2016), Extended Producer Responsibility: Updated Guidance for Efficient Waste Management, OECD Publishing, Paris.

3



About the Centre

Our Vision is for the wide-scale adoption of product and material stewardship [principles into business models that will reduce waste generation and create positive environment and social outcomes via good design improved resources productivity and sustainable reuse

Mentoring

Networking

Webinars

Awards

Newsletter

Resources – white papers, practice notes, case studies



Research and Advisory Support

Scheme and program design

Stakeholder engagement

Applied industry research

Business case development

Website: www.stewardshipexcellence.com.au Email: info@stewardshipexcellence.com.au

4

Product Stewardship Gateway

What

Database of existing and emerging product stewardship initiatives (100+) capturing publicly reported data on objectives, activities and environmental, social & economic benefits

Why

- Understand benefits of product stewardship
- Increase awareness and knowledge of product stewardship activity
- Evaluate effectiveness
- Identify opportunities to learn and improve

Primary audience

- Government (at all levels)
- Manufacturers, brands, importers, retailers
- Product stewardship organisations and service providers
- Researchers



5

Benefits & effectiveness research overview



First comprehensive evaluation of the benefits and effectiveness of product stewardship activity in Australia



Supports the National Waste Policy Action Plan 2019 Action 3.3: to evaluate the effectiveness of product stewardship and EPR, to help inform future efforts



Product Stewardship Gateway contains data for 106 PS initiatives, evaluating their environmental, social and economic performance



Both collective schemes & individual business were examined in terms of objectives & outcomes



Surveys and interviews with Businesses (n=600), Consumers (n=1000), Local government (n=89), Product stewardship actors and experts



Australian Government
Department of Climate Change, Energy
the Environment and Water

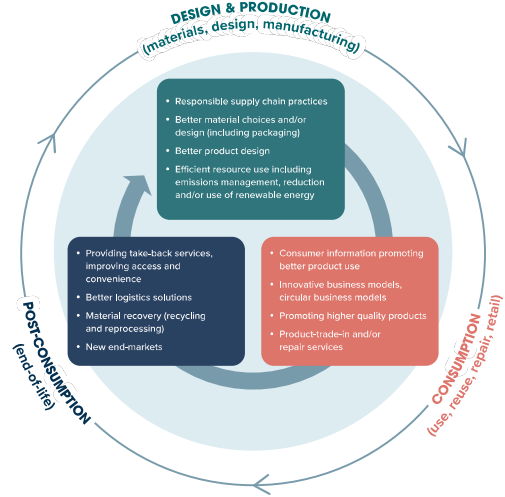


6






Actions across the lifecycle

Reducing environmental and human health impacts

Effectiveness is defined by how well product stewardship initiatives meet their objectives to minimise environmental and human health impacts of products and materials throughout the whole lifecycle



Product stewardship activity & benefits

| | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|--|
|  Packaging 28 initiatives |  Electrical & electronic products 17 initiatives |  Clothing textiles 9 initiatives |  Furniture 6 initiatives |  Plastics 4 initiatives |
|--|---|---|---|--|

Product stewardship benefits 2022

| | |
|---|---|
|  366,000 tonnes <small>19 initiatives collected more than 366,000 tonnes of used televisions, computers, mobile phones, tyres, hospital PVC, paint, beverage, and agricultural containers, batteries, sports shoes, and cosmetics</small> |  12,000 <small>33 initiatives established over 12,000 collection and drop-off points for various products</small> |
|---|---|



Characteristics of Effectiveness

1. **High levels of industry or business investment and participation is essential for realising these benefits** – ensures equitable cost sharing usually requires regulation
2. **Clearly defined objectives** – Measurable environmental, social, and economic performance indicators demonstrate benefits and allow for continual assessment of the effectiveness
3. **Good governance** – defined roles and responsibilities and transparency through public reporting
4. **Use of financial incentives** – to drive behaviour change of businesses, consumers, repairers, collectors, sorters, and recyclers
5. **Effective marketing** – leading to high awareness and increased user participation



9

Opportunities for local government



10

Local government are critical actors

- Previously, state & local government respondents have prioritised –
 - supporting current and emerging schemes
 - expanding their scope
 - improving policy alignment (Needs Assessment, 2021)
- Product stewardship schemes that enable better collection & management significantly reduces cost burden on local government for kerbside collection and recycling
- Logistics, governance and free-riders continue to remain challenges
- There is need to shift focus from local government to upstream producers through better product design and value chain responsibility.
- Involvement of local councils in scheme design is often limited or overlooked; yet they are expected to be active participants in implementation; adhoc approaches are common

11

Local government are critical actors

LG actively support community engagement by providing collection points (76%) and supporting community education (69%); 22% support repair and reuse services.

Product stewardship is broadly considered in local government procurement informally or as part of policy, 74% considered proportion of recycled content in products.

12

Local government survey design

- Online survey conducted by Ipsos
- Period: April-May 2022
- n=89 staff from Local Government
- Survey objectives
 - To assess awareness and understanding of product stewardship in LG
 - To characterise the nature of engagement with product stewardship initiatives, including benefits, challenges and opportunities.

| NSW | VIC | QLD | SA | WA | TAS | NT | ACT | Total |
|-----|-----|-----|----|----|-----|----|-----|-------|
| 11 | 16 | 11 | 6 | 33 | 7 | 5 | 0 | 89 |

| Metro/Regional | |
|----------------|----|
| Metro | 40 |
| Regional | 49 |

13

Local government survey findings

Understanding of product stewardship

- Around 50% understood PS through an EPR lens
- LG understanding of PS actions is limited to post-consumption phase of the product lifecycle

Awareness of product stewardship initiatives

- 98% of local government staff had heard the term
- Similar understanding of circular economy, sustainable product design and EPR

Engagement with product stewardship initiatives

- LG very engaged with collective schemes; on average engaged with 7 initiatives
- Initiatives for future engagement: Recycle my mattress, Tyre Stewardship Scheme



14

Local government survey findings



Benefits from engagement

- 71% councils surveyed acknowledge economic benefits
- cost savings
- direct and indirect employment
- local economy stimulation

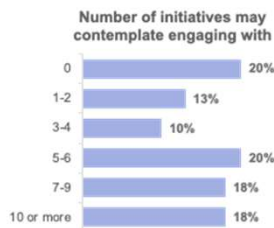
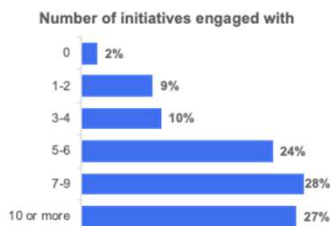
Challenges for effective engagement

- Lack of adequate resourcing and support to improve community engagement
- Shortfall in provision of service to regional and remote areas
- Internal barriers: resource requirements, administrative burden, financial burden incl disposal



15

Local government are very engaged and there is enthusiasm for further engagement



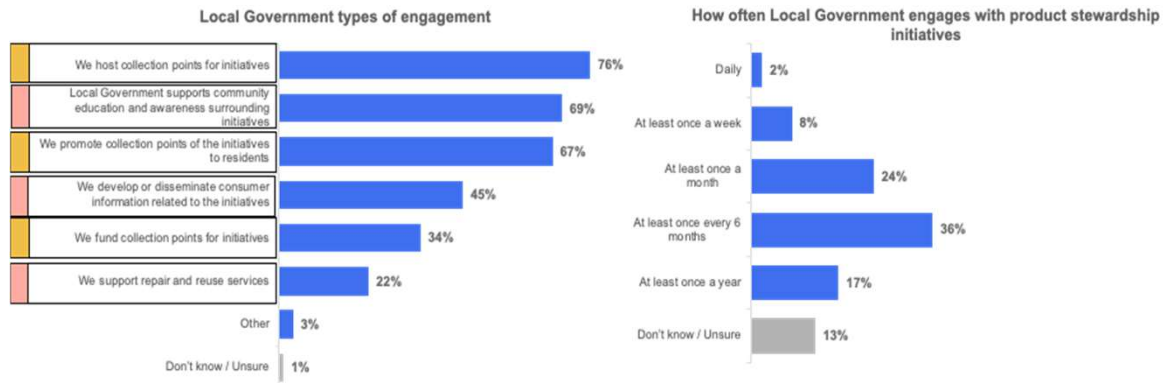
Initiatives most engaged

- Container deposit
- MobileMuster
- drumMUSTER
- Cartridges 4 Planet Ark
- Paintback
- NTCRS



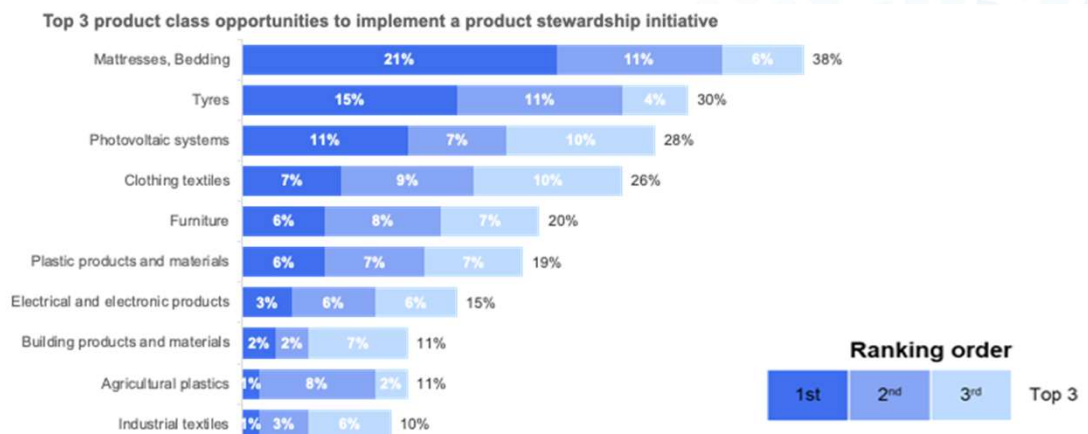
16

Local government actively support community engagement by providing collection points and supporting education



17

Opportunities for further product stewardship activity



18

Partner with the Centre



Three levels of partnership available to elevate the uptake of product stewardship within Australia

Strategic: Equip your team with the knowledge and experience necessary to lead in this evolving landscape. Provides a tailored approach for your organisation's needs.

Premium: Advance your product stewardship efforts to deliver a lasting impact on sustainability with your business with upskilling of your team with access to a wealth of resources.

Supporter: Demonstrate your support for the work of the Centre in shaping the future of product stewardship in Australia.

spyro.kalos@stewardshipexcellence.com.au
0404 01 55 33



19

Contact, Questions, Feedback

Website www.stewardshipexcellence.com.au

Email info@stewardshipexcellence.com.au

Research simran.talwar@uts.edu.au

Join us [Newsletter and Network](#)

Social Media



20