



Submission to Waste Reduction and Recycling and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012

The National Association of Charitable Recycling Organisations

7 January 2013

There is no doubt that without the recycling activities of the charitable recycling organisations (the proceeds from which fund welfare programs), both State and Federal governments would have significantly higher social costs in addition to an unmanageable volume of landfill, the management of which would be funded through increased taxes and a massive bureaucracy.

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About NACRO

NACRO, the National Association of Charitable Recycling Organisations, is the peak body representing a broad spectrum of charitable recycling organisations throughout Australia. The business of our members is to generate social capital through recycling activities to fund welfare programs. Indeed, millions of individuals benefit from the products, operations, and programs created by our members.

Members accept a myriad of donated goods including used clothing (textile waste) household goods, toys and books. The volumes are significant. Whilst there is little data available, through its efforts this industry diverts approximately 75 percent of the post-consumer textile waste from our landfills. ¹

NACRO provides a forum for the exchange of ideas, information and advice between member organisations; assisting them to continuously improve their recycling operations so that they can provide optimal funding for their charitable aims in the community.

NACRO advocates educating the community to donate goods responsibly to provide maximum profits for social welfare with minimum cost to the environment. It represents its members at a local, state and national level, when legislation affecting this industry is being drafted or reviewed.

In many councils, NACRO is the accredited body for clothing bins. An application for any placement of a clothing bin should be made to a given council and will only be approved if the owner of the bin is a member of the NACRO. Proof of membership is to be submitted with the application for approval. Approved bins must clearly show a label, as issued by NACRO, identifying that the owner is a member of that organisation.

Our members range from those that manage individual shops to the largest national charities that collectively run thousands of shops around Australia. Collection of second hand goods are either made by donations deposited into charity bins, thousands of which are located across Australia, and/or drop-offs directly to charity shops.

There can be no doubt of the important role these organisation plays in the community. State and Federal governments would have significantly higher social costs in addition to an unmanageable volume of landfill, the management of which would be funded through increased taxes and a massive bureaucracy.

Members of NACRO represent the following charities:

- Adventist Development & Relief agency (ADRA)
- Aid for the Blind
- Anglicare
- Australian Red Cross
- Diabetes Australia

¹ The Textile Recycling Association in the United Kingdom

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- Endeavour Foundation
- Epilepsy Foundation
- Fusion Australia Ltd
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- Life-Gate Inc
- Lifeline Australia
- Lifeline Central
- Lifeline Community Care
- Living Water Uniting Church
- Mission Australia
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- Paraplegic-Quadriplegic Association
- Paravin
- Presbyterian Recycling & Retail
- Rythms
- The Salvation Army
- St Vincent de Paul
- The Asthma Foundation of Queensland
- The Brotherhood of St Laurence
- The Smith Family
- Uniting Care Wesley
- Vincent Industries Inc
- Work Ventures
- YMCA Victoria
- Young Adults Disabled Association

About the charitable recycling industry

In Australia (and Queensland) the organised collection of donated used clothing and household goods are mainly undertaken by charities. By world standards, it is an industry with distinct characteristics driven by the industry's reason for being. These characteristics also set it apart from the for-profit sector. It is a system through which thousands of tonnes of donated goods (including a portion of household post consumer waste) are diverted from landfill and redistributed to men, women and children overwhelmed by life's hardships, or sold to assist in the charitable works of the organisations that have invested in the recycling infrastructure. It is accepted by Australians as a traditional and valuable community service; the practice of donating to a local charity is almost a cultural norm for Australians.

The Queensland charitable recycling industry comprises a broad cross section of charitable organisations, ranging from national bodies to local church groups. Common to each is the collection of unwanted items donated by the community and business sectors, which are either:

- given by the charities to individuals, families or communities in need of welfare,
- given by the charities to victims in response to local and international disaster relief emergencies, or

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- sold by charitable recycling organisations locally through opportunity shops; and exported (either directly or indirectly) to third world developing countries to generate income used to fund social welfare programs and services.

Comment and Recommendations

- **Validation of the Repeal of the Waste Levy on July 1 2012**

NACRO fully supports the repeal of the Waste Levy. Although NACRO members received exemptions from waste levy charges, the exemption renewal processes under the Legislation were anticipated to be onerous and an administrative burden to NACRO members

NACRO Qld recommends the full repeal of the Waste Levy

- **Waste Strategy Management Review**

NACRO notes the review of the current Waste Management Strategy with a view to have a new strategy in place by June 2014. Given the integral role NACRO Members perform in waste diversion through a wide range of activities, it is imperative that NACRO be recognised as a key stakeholder in the Waste Management Strategic Review process.

NACRO Qld recommends that given the amount of product currently being diverted from land fill (2 million kg annually) through charitable recycling that NACRO Qld becomes a key stakeholder in any consultations around the Waste Management Strategic Review.

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