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## Californian recycling expert urges Australia to take control of waste

Former head of the Californian Department of Conservation Darryl Young today urged Australian businesses to take greater responsibility for packaging waste in front of an audience of 300 attendees at Total Environment Centre/Green Capital's 'Waste Wars' breakfast forum.

Mr Young highlighted California's successful container take-back scheme as an example of producers and consumers working together to increase recycling.

"In Australia, kerbside recycling is funded by ratepayers through councils at a cost of around \$300 million per year, while consumers and producers avoid responsibility for their share of the burden," Mr Young said.

"In contrast, Californian consumers and producers of packaging have shared responsibility for managing packaging waste for the past sixteen years.

"Consumers receive an incentive to recycle via a 4-cent refundable deposit on bottles and cans, with uncollected deposits used to finance recycling facilities, industry development and kerbside services.

"Manufacturers are free to choose their preferred packaging, but must bear the true costs of recycling it via a processing fee which encourages use of materials with low or no recycling costs."

Mr Young highlighted the need to move beyond kerbside recycling alone in order to tackle packaging waste generated away from home.

"Australian consumption of packaged goods away from home now accounts for approximately 50% of the total and continues to grow," he said.

"Kerbside recycling can't tackle this area of consumption. The absence of a deposit incentive means consumers don't bring their containers home."

A new National Packaging Covenant, which guides Australia's treatment of packaging waste, is currently being negotiated between government, industry and environment groups.

**More information: Angela Greenwood, Boomerang Alliance, ph 0408 211 914.**

**Interviews with Darryl Young are available today.**

The Boomerang Alliance members:

