

# Media Release

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**Attention: Environment Reporter**

## **Packaging and drink companies try to dump new recycling system costs on local government**

The peak industry lobby of the packaging and beverage industry – the Packaging Stewardship Forum (PSF) – has been caught out trying to get councils to accept all future costs of new ‘away from home’ recycling services – the NSW Local Government Association and environment groups said today.

Producers of packaging should be the ones taking financial responsibility for collection and recycling of container waste. Container deposit and refund systems take the burden off local government and should be mandated by government, they said.

In its current approaches to local councils around NSW the PSF is offering ‘seed funding’ for councils to set up so called ‘public place recycling’ infrastructure – i.e. recycling bins in parks etc and pick up services. As part of this arrangement the PSF requires the local council to take on future liabilities for this new infrastructure.\*

“The new National Packaging Covenant (NPC) acknowledges the fact that 50% or more of packaging is consumed away from home. Industry has been told to address this massive waste stream and the Covenant also explicitly states there should be no new costs on local government. Yet the beverage and packaging industry is attempting to do just that with its new scheme.

“All local councils should be very wary of accepting this seed funding, it’s simply a ploy to burden local councils with extra and ongoing costs of new recycling services”, said Cr Genia McCaffery, President of the NSW Local Government Association.

“We have seen this before with kerbside recycling which now costs local councils hundreds of millions of dollars every year. Industry offers financial help in the first year or so to set the system up and then walks away leaving local government to carry the financial burden and we won’t be accepting it this time”, said Cr McCaffery

Jeff Angel, Total Environment Centre Director said: “The only place where we have had public place recycling deliver substantial portions of materials is at the Sydney Olympics. This involved enormous investment and constant supervision. This won’t be possible for local councils to arrange. And even with the mammoth effort at the Sydney Olympics there were still problems of contamination. It’s about time we introduced a comprehensive national system of container deposits. It’s the only truly

### **The Boomerang Alliance:**



viable and financially sustainable method to collect the now over 50% of packaging consumed 'away from home.'

"Rolling out Public Place Recycling through the country will cost tens to hundreds of millions of dollars to start and run every year. With no financial base for this system industry is seeking ways to dump costs on local government, said Dave West, Campaign Coordinator of the Boomerang Alliance.

"This is madness when in fact Australia could build a best practice, financially sustainable and cost neutral container deposit system. It's about time industry dropped their ideological opposition to deposit systems and got onboard with designing the best system that wouldn't have to cost anyone but the people that still pollute or don't redeem their containers, said West.

*\*stating: "That the ...council maintains an appropriate standard of resource recovery infrastructure systems that is (sic) established as part of this project and that quarterly reports / information are provided to the PSF as a way of monitoring resource recovery levels and provide an ongoing example of best Council practice in this important area of recycling"*

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