



## MASTER PLUMBERS AUSTRALIA LIMITED

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11 April 2013

Committee Secretary  
Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

By email: [ec.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:ec.sen@aph.gov.au)

Dear Committee Secretary

**RE: Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards Act 2005**

On behalf of Master Plumbers Australia Ltd (MPA Ltd), the national body representing plumbing industry associations across all Australian states and territories, I refer to the attached comments regarding the Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards Act 2005.

MPA Ltd looks forward to working with the Senate Standing Committees to progress this review.

Yours sincerely

Noel Abercromby  
Chairman  
Master Plumbers Australia Ltd



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### Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards scheme (WELS)

Master Plumbers Australia Ltd (MPA Ltd) recognises that the objectives the Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards Act 2005 are as follows:

- (a) To conserve water supplies by reducing water consumption;
- (b) To provide information for purchasers of water-use and water-saving products; and
- (c) To promote the adoption of efficient and effective water-use and water-saving technologies.

Whilst MPA Ltd supports the objectives of the Act in principal, the plumbing industry has a number of concerns about the legislation and the affect it is having on the outcome of the WELS scheme.

Our concerns include:

- The administration of the WELS scheme previously through WaterMark and now through the Australian Building Codes Board does not align with the National Construction Code which is now a key driver of efficiency in the building industry.
- The industry believes that WaterMark status should be a prerequisite of WELS certification.
- The relationship between WELS and Australian Standards requires increased strength and support in order for the outcomes of the legislation to be realised.
- The lack of harmonisation between the WELS scheme and the National Construction Code, in particular the Plumbing Code of Australia may have an affect on the outcomes of the legislation.
- The industry appears to be lacking in its general awareness of the WELS scheme and increased communication and consultation to industry is necessary. Information available on the internet requires clarifying in order to accurately inform the industry and consumers about the legislation and its intent.

- The legislation must be policed and this information should be readily available to industry and consumers.
- Continued consumer dissatisfaction with the scheme is being experienced by plumbers when installing the products.

MPA Ltd believes that a review of the legislation and its alignment with plumbing regulations and the National Construction Code is required to ensure that the intended outcomes are achieved. Increased communication to the industry and the wider community following this harmonisation process will work to ensure that the intent and objectives of the scheme are fully realised.