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Ms Sophie Dunstone
Committee Secretary
Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
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Dear Ms Dunstone

Thank you for providing the Northern Territory Government with the opportunity to submit comment on the Environment and Communications References Committee Inquiry into the South Australia and Northern Territory Container Deposit Schemes.

The Northern Territory Container Deposit Scheme (NT CDS) is governed under the *Environment Protection (Beverage Containers and Plastic Bags) Act 2011* (the Act). The scheme operates through a range of approvals for the sale return/ redemption handling and recycling of regulated containers issued by the Chief Executive Officer of the Agency responsible for administering the Act.

Manufacturers or first importers of regulated containers are required to hold an approval issued when the Chief Executive Officer is satisfied that the container bears the approved refund marking, is recyclable and there is an ongoing, effective and appropriate Waste Management Arrangement in place with a CDS Coordinator.

To date, over 3700 container product lines have been issued with approval under the Northern Territory Scheme from approximately 110 beverage manufacturers or importers.

The role of CDS Coordinators is to work with the collection depots and industry to recycle, reuse or appropriately dispose of the materials. Operators have undergone an assessment process to ensure they have a waste management arrangement that gives effect to the CDS Principles. Five CDS Coordinators have been approved to operate under the scheme: NT Coordinators, Statewide Recycling, Envirobank NT, NT Recycling Services (NTRS) and Marine Stores.

Quarterly reports by CDS Coordinators provide the total number of containers sold for each material type in the Northern Territory. Data is aggregated across all Coordinators prior to becoming publicly available. Northern Territory CDS Coordinators and Collection Depots are required to provide information on the operational performance of the scheme.

Collection Depots that accept the return of approved containers must pay the 10 cent refund amount for each container to the person presenting the containers, provided that the containers were purchased in the Northern Territory and after 3 January 2012. A Collection Depot can only be established where the person is the holder of a Collection Depot approval. Collection Depot approvals have been issued in over 22 sites across the Northern Territory.

Cost structures on containers sold in the Northern Territory are determined through commercial arrangements. The Northern Territory Government is not involved with, and is not privy to, business decisions that relate to the beverage industry's price setting policies.

The use of unredeemed deposits and handling fees is determined by industry. The Northern Territory Government is not involved in discussions of this nature.

Since the commencement of the scheme on 3 January 2012 through to 30 June 2012, a total of 70 444 309 approved containers have been sold into the Northern Territory. 18 675 266 containers have been returned to CDS Coordinators, of which 100 percent were recycled or reused. That is, 18 675 266 containers that were not sent to landfill. During the first quarter, a return rate of 21.9 percent was achieved. This increased to 30.3 percent in the second quarter.

The Northern Territory Government appreciates the opportunity to participate in the Standing Committee on Environment and Communication Inquiry into Container Deposit Schemes.

Yours sincerely

TERRY MILLS

31 OCT 2012