



National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme—liable parties

This fact sheet explains the obligations for importers and manufacturers identified as liable parties under the National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme.

About the scheme

The National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme was established in 2011 to provide Australian households and small businesses with access to free industry-funded collection and recycling services for televisions, computers, printers, computer parts and peripherals.

The scheme aims to:

- reduce waste to landfill, especially hazardous materials found in e-waste
- increase recovery of reusable materials
- provide access for households and small businesses across Australia to an industry-funded recycling service.

The scheme supplements and builds on state, territory and local government e-waste management, providing alternative collection services. It also creates employment opportunities in the recycling sector.

How the scheme works

The *Product Stewardship Act 2011* and the Product Stewardship (Televisions and Computers) Regulations 2011 provide the regulatory framework for the scheme and set outcomes for industry to meet.

Companies who import or manufacture television and computer products over certain thresholds are liable under the scheme, and are required to pay for a proportion

of recycling through membership in a co-regulatory arrangement. This is a form of product stewardship, where those involved in producing and selling products take responsibility for the whole life cycle of their products.

Co-regulatory arrangements are responsible for day-to-day operation of the scheme, including organising collection and recycling of e-waste on behalf of liable party members.

Identifying liable parties

Companies that imported or manufactured television or computer products covered by the Regulations in the previous financial year may be considered liable parties under the scheme.

In any year, an importer or manufacturer is liable if they imported or manufactured more than a unit threshold amount during the previous financial year. The threshold amounts are:

- 5000 units of televisions
- 5000 units of computers or printers
- 15,000 units of computer parts or peripherals.

A liable company must be a constitutional corporation—a trading or financial corporation formed in Australia or a foreign corporation. A liable party can be part of a group of related bodies. If a group of related corporate bodies has collectively imported over a threshold, then any member that imports over 1000 of any of these products must take part in the scheme.

Notification of liability

Each year, the Department of Home Affairs provides data from customs declarations to the Department of the Environment and Energy. Based on this data, early notification letters are sent to parties who are likely to become liable, informing them about the scheme and their obligations.

In July, the Department sends a Statement of Advice advising each liable party of the number of television and computer products they imported under scheme-listed product codes in the previous financial year.

Scheme product codes and weights

All products are assigned an average converted weight, designed to be a fair approximation of the weight of products under that code. This makes it easier for liable parties, who do not need to supply information about the actual weight of each unit they import. It is also necessary because waste management and recycling processes work in weights rather than units of products.

A list of all the products under the scheme, their product codes and the conversion factors used to calculate converted weight can be found in [Schedules in the Regulations](#) (look for 'legislation' at environment.gov.au/ewaste).

Changes to import declarations

Importers have a legal responsibility to provide accurate information on their customs import declarations. If they believe the information in their Statement of Advice is incorrect, it is their responsibility to contact their customs broker or freight forwarder to arrange necessary amendments to their customs declarations. Once these changes have been made, they need to advise the Department of the Environment and Energy so a revised statement can be issued. Any corrections to declarations for scheme products imported in the previous financial year should be completed by 31 October.

Applications for exemption from the scheme must be supplied in writing to the Department between late July and 1 September.

Mandatory requirements under the scheme

The *Product Stewardship Act 2011* and the Product Stewardship (Televisions and Computers) Regulations 2011 require all liable parties to be a member of an approved co-regulatory arrangement for the duration of the financial year in which they are liable. This is their primary responsibility under the scheme.

The deadline for liable parties joining an approved co-regulatory arrangement is 1 September.

A corporation that hasn't met its obligation to become a member of a co-regulatory arrangement may be subject to substantial civil penalties which may result in monetary fines. These penalties increase for every day that the company remains non-compliant.

If a liable party leaves a co-regulatory arrangement during a financial year, it must join another arrangement in that financial year. A liable party that has not met its obligation to be a member remains liable in the following year.

Joining a co-regulatory arrangement

A liable party can join any of the approved co-regulatory arrangements. The details of individual contracts are a private matter between liable parties and their chosen arrangement. The Department doesn't set or advise on membership fees. Liable parties should contact co-regulatory arrangements to discuss membership options and fees.

Contact information and annual reports for approved arrangements are published on the [Department's website](#) (look for 'coregulatory arrangements' at environment.gov.au/ewaste).

Determining membership fees

Membership fees are based on how much liable parties imported in the previous financial year. Exports may also be taken into account when determining membership fees, and may reduce liability.

Liable parties are required to supply the Statement of Advice summarising their liable imports to the co-regulatory arrangement they join. If liable parties want their exports considered under the scheme, they should also supply details of any televisions and computer products exported in the previous financial year.

The deadline for liable parties advising their co-regulatory arrangement about imports and exports is 1 September.

Annual milestones for liable parties

The following table will help liable parties to understand and meet mandatory annual milestones:

Date	Action
Late May	<p>Early notification letters are sent to parties identified as likely to be liable based on import data covering the period 1 July to 30 April.</p> <p>The purpose of these letters is to alert importers to the likelihood that they are liable so that they can consider entering into an agreement with an approved co-regulatory arrangement.</p>
Late July	<p>Letters are sent to importers identified as liable based on their imports in the previous financial year (1 July to 30 June). These letters will include a detailed Statement of Advice summarising the imports on which the assessment was based and a notice under section 18 of the <i>Product Stewardship Act 2011</i> requiring the organisation to become a member of an approved co-regulatory arrangement by 1 September.</p> <p>Liable parties should check the data in the Statements of Advice for errors and advise the Department of Home Affairs through their customs broker or freight forwarder of any necessary amendments by 31 October.</p> <p>Any applications for exemption from the scheme must be supplied in writing to the Department between late July and 1 September.</p>
1 September	<p>Liable parties must join a co-regulatory arrangement and supply their import summary to their chosen arrangement by this date. A liable party that hasn't met its obligation to become a member of a co-regulatory arrangement may be subject to substantial civil penalties. These penalties increase for every day that the liable party remains non-compliant.</p> <p>If a liable party leaves a co-regulatory arrangement during a financial year, it must join another arrangement in that financial year. A liable party that has not met its obligation to be a member of an approved co-regulatory arrangement remains liable in the following year.</p> <p>Liable parties should provide their co-regulatory arrangement with details of their exports as soon as they can. A co-regulatory arrangement may take a liable party's exports into account when determining their membership fee.</p>
8 September	<p>Co-regulatory arrangements are required to provide their membership lists to the Department. Non-members can then expect follow up contact from the Department to encourage compliance.</p>
15 September	<p>Co-regulatory arrangements are required to provide their audited export report to the Department on behalf of their members by this date.</p> <p>A liable party must be a member of a co-regulatory arrangement before 15 September and have exported television or computer products in the previous financial year for these products to be counted under the scheme.</p> <p>Liable parties must submit their export data to their co-regulatory arrangement—the Department cannot accept export data from liable parties.</p>
31 October	<p>Changes to the Department of Home Affairs data after this date will not be taken into account in the assessment of a corporation's liability, except where the amount of goods for which the party is liable has increased as a result of the changes.</p>
Mid November	<p>Updated Statements of Advice will be provided to those liable parties that have amended their import declarations with the Department of Home Affairs. These revised Statements should be provided to the liable party's co-regulatory arrangement to signal a change in the amount of products imported by them.</p>

Further information

For more information on the National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme visit environment.gov.au/ewaste, contact ewaste@environment.gov.au or call 1800 332 783.

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