

Mr Tom Whitby
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
Level 2, 23 Marcus Clarke Street
Canberra ACT 2601

AA1000536 – Paintback Limited – Submission

To whom it may concern (exemptions@accc.gov.au)

In response to the request for feedback from interested parties on the application for a ten-year extension of the current arrangements regarding Paintback Limited and their paint recycling program, I would like to submit the following on behalf of Planet Ark Environmental Foundation.

Planet Ark is supportive of the 10-year extension of the \$0.15 per litre levy to the cost of certain architectural and design paints, and woodcare products to fund the Paintback scheme and its collection and disposal activities.

Product stewardship schemes are very efficient and are highly effective mechanisms for managing the end-of-life waste generated from the use of products. For too many years the waste we have generated has followed a linear path and ended in landfill or has been dumped. This not only wastes the potential for reuse of resources but also raises the issue of long-term contamination and harm to our environment with emissions in their various forms.

The shift to a Circular Economy dictates that not only do we need to design for recovery, but we also need mechanisms in place for recovery and reuse of resources. Product Stewardship provides a system for consumers to return products and funds the research and management of resources to re-enter the economy or their destruction in an environmentally sound manner. It is important the schemes are well funded and well-resourced, and the standard mechanism is for this to be included at the point of purchase.

There are many reasons for the continuation of Paintback as a well-funded product stewardship scheme. The Paintback scheme operates to provide wide access to consumers for safe disposal of their waste, however this still needs to grow, and scheme targets have to be funded. Some materials collected are still being sent to landfill after processing, this needs to change and can only do so with well-funded R&D which is made possible through a levy system. Awareness of recycling systems always must be supported through marketing activities, including Planet Ark's 'Recycling Near You' website.

The alternative would appear to be an unsupported system and a return to many of the wasteful and potentially polluting practices of the past.

Yours Sincerely



Sean O'Malley

Dr Sean O'Malley
Head of Research
Planet Ark Environmental Foundation