

**Consumer Council Submission to the Legislative Council Bills Committee
on Promotion of Recycling and Proper Disposal (Electrical Equipment and
Electronic Equipment) (Amendment) Bill 2015**

1. The Consumer Council (CC) is pleased to provide views on the Promotion of Recycling and Proper Disposal (Electrical Equipment and Electronic Equipment) (Amendment) Bill 2015.
2. CC supports the “polluter pays” principle. CC welcomes introducing legislation to establish the necessary regulatory framework for the proper management of waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) through a mandatory producer responsibility scheme (PRS) and considers it appropriate that the recycling fees be collected from suppliers of regulated electrical equipment (REE).
3. With regard to the scope of regulated equipment, CC notes that it is currently proposed that only five types of electrical equipment be regulated under the proposed mandatory PRS. CC is of the view that the types of products will have to be extended to cover other electrical and electronic equipment, notably telecommunications equipment, audio and video systems and small electrical appliances. According to a recent report “*The Global E-waste Monitor 2014*” by the United Nations University,¹ small equipment such as microwave ovens, toasters, electric kettles and shavers is the category of EEE accounting for the largest amount of e-waste globally in 2014.
4. CC supports requiring an REE seller to arrange for an old product the equivalence of a piece of new REE purchased by a consumer to be properly disposed of at no extra charge to the consumer. Consumers however should be made to understand that they may keep the old product if they want to or alternatively make their own disposal arrangement possibly at their own cost.

¹ Baldé, C.P., Wang, F., Kuehr, R., Huisman, J. (2015), *The global e-waste monitor – 2014*, United Nations University, IAS – SCYCLE, Bonn, Germany
<http://i.unu.edu/media/unu.edu/news/52624/UNU-1stGlobal-E-Waste-Monitor-2014-small.pdf>

5. It is understood that recycling labels will be provided to facilitate identification (at retail transactions) of REE which is covered under the mandatory PRS with the recycling fees paid or to be paid by relevant registered suppliers. It is anticipated that some consumers might be concerned about disposal of products of types covered by the PRS but without the recycling labels, e.g. old products retained by consumers or purchased second-hand. To dispel doubts, consumers should be informed of how they may make use of the PRS recycling system, and whether there will be alternative options available.
6. CC believes that proper disposal of e-waste requires all stakeholders, from government, manufacturers, suppliers to consumers, to have a proper understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities. Territory-wide publicity campaign will have to be in place so that consumers will know what to do and co-operate for proper disposal of old products included under REE.
7. Continued efforts should be made to encourage the community to practise waste reduction and proper e-waste disposal in everyday life.

April 2015

Consumer Council