

July 2020

CONTAINER REFUND SCHEMES – CHARITY AND NFP CHARTER

We believe that the primary objectives of a Container Refund Scheme (CRS) should include:

- Grow community benefits by providing sustainable income to charities and other NFP community organisations
- Significantly reduce litter from beverage containers
- Increase recycling of containers
- Create new jobs and business opportunities in resource recovery

The charity and NFP sector has expressed interest in participating in CRS. This includes as:

- Recognised service providers or Network Operators. Providing collection/redemption points for eligible containers and paying refunds. In this instance, claiming a handling fee for container returns
- Collection points for donated containers, ie, being able to claim the refund from each eligible container
- Receiving donated refunds from supporters.

The development of appropriate infrastructure and arrangements for collection of eligible containers will inevitably lead to partnerships between the Network Coordinator and any collector organisations. As a sector interested in delivering these services, the sectors will consider appropriate joint arrangements within our sector or other potential partners. These partnerships offer the opportunity to maximise the efficiency of the collection network and optimise the benefits to our organisations.

The undersigned charity and NFP groups seek commitment from government that when designing a Container Refund Scheme, appropriate features are in place to support sustainable social enterprise operations and refund opportunities.

Social enterprise depots

Establishing and running a depot providing refunds to the community, entails financial risk and also the opportunity to develop significant revenue that can make a substantial positive impact on the services offered by charities and NFPs.

We support the following key design features for depots and collection points:

- The fewest number of container splits reducing complexity in handling of drink containers
- Efficient use of depot storage to reduce rental liabilities

- Minimal paperwork to report collections, with a preference for automation
- Supportive procurement arrangements for acquisition of capital equipment, its maintenance and insurance
- Efficient and reliable transport arrangements to collect containers from depots
- Clear 7 year contracts that safeguard collection volumes by allocating a viable territory and population catchment
- A handling fee that is not able to be eroded by unpredictable costs and is sufficient to cover ongoing costs and deliver a sustainable revenue stream to support charitable services
- Regular handling fee and refund payments (at least 3 times a week) from the overall manager of the network
- Active public education, website and social media campaigns informing the community about CRS refund opportunities.

Earning income from refunds

We recognise that convenience of access to refund points is a critical aspect for local groups to obtain refunds. In addition, CRS operators and government should undertake the following actions:

- Provide small grants for collection equipment and storage
- Create opportunities for donation campaigns
- Develop a registration process for charities and NFPs to receive donations from any refund point and for appropriate NFPs and charities to be refund donation points
- Utilise social media to profile charity collections.

Ongoing engagement with the charity and NFP sectors

Container Refund Schemes have wide community support and require transparency and accountability to ensure ongoing public support. Scheme managers need to implement formal and regular processes to engage the public and specifically NFP and charity groups about scheme performance and plans for improvement.

Involving the sectors in promoting the scheme and utilising our reputation and our networks to this end, will make the introduction of the scheme significantly easier and more practical.

[NACRO](#), represents 89 charity organisations and enables charities to maximise their financial returns from their recycling and retail operations, in order to uphold their charitable mission and purpose.

[Scouts Victoria](#), supports the values of Scouts Australia including the importance of individuals and the community adopting a lifestyle that allows ecologically sustainable development through preventing environmental overload, environmental degradation and resource depletion.

[Knoxbrooke](#), provides employment and services to adults with a disability.

[Boomerang Alliance](#) has 52 allies and works towards zero, waste and plastic pollution.