

CORRECTED VERSION

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING

LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

Inquiry into Environment Protection Amendment (Beverage Container Deposit and Recovery Scheme) Bill 2011

Melbourne — 9 November 2011

Members

Mr A. Elsbury
Mrs J. Kronberg
Mr C. Ondarchie
Mr S. Pennicuik

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Secretary: Mr K. Delaney

Witnesses

Ms J. Pickles, general manager, packaging stewardship forum, and
Mr T. Mahar, director, sustainable development, Australian Food and Grocery Council.

The CHAIR — Welcome. I declare open the public hearing of the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Environment and Planning Legislation Committee. Today's hearing is in relation to the inquiry into the Environment Protection Amendment (Beverage Container Deposit and Recovery Scheme) Bill 2011. I welcome representatives of the Australian Food and Grocery Council, Ms Jenny Pickles and Mr Tony Mahar.

I advise you that all evidence taken at this hearing is protected by parliamentary privilege as provided by the Constitution Act 1975 and further subject to the provisions of the Legislative Council standing orders. Therefore you are protected against any action for what you may say here today, but that parliamentary privilege does not extend beyond this hearing. If you go outside and repeat the same things, obviously you will not have that same protection. All evidence is being recorded by Hansard. You will be provided with proof versions of the transcript in the next couple of days and will be able to make some corrections to typographical errors but not to the substantive information of your evidence.

We have allowed about 10 minutes for you to make a presentation, if you would like, and the rest of the time will be available for questions by members. I will ask you to introduce yourself and also provide your business mailing address so we can send you a copy of the transcript. Welcome, and if you could give us your names, your positions and whether you are here in a private capacity or representing the organisation from which we are scheduled to receive evidence.

Mr MAHAR — My name is Tony Mahar, and I am the director of sustainable development at the Australian Food and Grocery Council, and that is the capacity in which I appear here tonight.

Ms PICKLES — My name is Jenny Pickles. I am the general manager of the packaging stewardship forum of the Australian Food and Grocery Council, and that is the capacity in which I am here tonight as well. You wanted our addresses as well?

The CHAIR — Addresses, yes.

Ms PICKLES — Level 2, 2-4 Brisbane Avenue, Barton, ACT 2600.

The CHAIR — And that is the same address for both?

Mr MAHAR — Yes.

The CHAIR — Thank you very much. I would like to welcome all those who are here in attendance as part of the public gallery.

Mr MAHAR — I would just like to make an opening statement. Jenny will make a couple of comments, and then we have a brief presentation, if that is okay with the committee. I will just read this out; it is short enough. We would like to thank the committee for the opportunity to appear and provide views on this bill tonight. I would like to make a couple of statements very clear at the beginning. The Australian Food and Grocery Council and our members are strong supporters of the need to manage our impact and improve sustainability. Waste management, particularly packaging waste management, is a critical area for the sector, and we have and will continue to work hard to improve the recycling rate and reduce litter.

Make no mistake — industry wants to do the right thing and is not for a second trying to dodge any challenges in front of us. We recognise that we need to act — and act cooperatively with government and the community — to achieve success. We have made some important gains, but we need to be better in the area of packaging waste management. And we will be, but isolated and outdated container deposit schemes are not the way to go about it. We have always been supportive of an efficient and effective response to what is a complex problem. It is our view that anyone who suggests that the problem can be fixed by a simple and isolated solution does not understand the issue.

Industry opposes the bill and recommends that the committee oppose the bill on the basis that a container deposit scheme is a collection scheme — a simplistic end-of-pipe solution — that will do nothing to address upstream packaging design and production of packaging, which is where the real gains can be made. The Australian packaging covenant is a comprehensive equitable instrument for the managing of packaging waste in Australia. Container deposit schemes impose a cost on everyone, the bulk of whom are already doing the right thing by recycling and not littering.

Finally, a national container deposit scheme is one of a range of options that is currently being subject to a cost-benefit analysis through a packaging consultation regulatory impact statement through the EPHC. A report is due in November 2011, and it is expected that a decision will be made by environment ministers in March-April 2012. It is our view that taking pre-emptive action in passing the bill ahead of the consultation RIS would be a waste of resources, time and money.

Further, we specifically query the approach, as Victoria has developed the world's best community-driven recycling programs, which are a result of the passionate adoption of recycling, particularly at home, plus unique cooperative arrangements between industry and all levels of government through the packaging covenant. In 2009–10 Victoria achieved the highest plastic packaging recycling rates of any territory at around 72 per cent. The next in line was South Australia at around 34 per cent. Further, according to the Keep Australia Beautiful national litter index, the ACT and Victoria continue to lead the country as the most consistently lowest littered jurisdictions since the survey began. The index also shows that Victorian beverage container litter by volume is already at lower levels than in many other states and has reduced in category since the survey began.

Ms PICKLES — There are some further comments we would like to make in relation to the bill that we did not have the opportunity to include in the submission. We are also concerned about the legality of the bill — the ability of the Victorian Parliament to enact legislation that will establish an environmental levy on a container. We are of the view that it would potentially breach section 90 of the commonwealth constitution, which allows only the federal government to put in place duties of excise. We would see this beverage container environmental levy as being an excise, essentially because an excise is a tax on goods that falls on any step in the production, manufacture, distribution or sale of goods. It involves payment of an impost to a public authority, which is of course the proposed set-up of this legislation. We would be keen to get some advice from you about whether any advice has been sought in relation to this issue.

Further, there is the longstanding issue of the Mutual Recognition Act, which was mentioned by Ms Hartland during the debate on the introduction of the bill. There are still outstanding issues as to the fact that the bill would potentially breach the Mutual Recognition Act and that processes would have to be put in place to grant a temporary exemption, with a view to gaining a permanent exemption from the Mutual Recognition Act at some stage in the future.

We now have a short video we would like to show you, which we hope gives you a bit more insight into container deposit systems.

Video shown.

Ms PICKLES — We missed the start of the video, but the presenter is Dr Raul Barreto, senior lecturer in economics at the University of Adelaide. I believe the committee will be visiting South Australia in the near future and he would be more than happy to meet with the group while you are over there as well.

The CHAIR — I think the itinerary is fairly fixed, but if there is an opportunity we would certainly contemplate it and if you could pass on the name and details, it would be useful if time permits.

Mrs KRONBERG — One of the areas of particular interest when it comes to container deposit legislation, including all the things that it achieved in the early days in South Australia, is that when there were moves to bring this to bear as the national scheme, the Swan Brewery, led by its then owner, Alan Bond, took a case to the High Court and won that case on the basis of restraint of trade in relation to the cost of upgrading the beer bottles so that they could be recycled 26 times. On the basis of that being a considerably more robust receptacle for the beverage — in that case, beer — he won the case and that stymied the efforts to make it a national program.

I am interested to see what you expect from the environment ministers when they convene between March and April next year, and in relation to this whole idea of the pressure on the expense of the beverage container to upgrade the production. A lot of focus has been on the basis that this is a single-use situation, not a multiple-use situation, so that some of those need to come back into the waste stream, that they are not going to be consigned for shredding and so on. I am interested in the whole complex of reuse as well as recycling and the whole sphere of problems for a national commitment to this.

Ms PICKLES — Maybe I will deal with the issue of the reusable bottle and maybe Tony might want to deal with the issue of the national process and what is actually happening through that and the likely models and the options that are being modelled.

I am not quite sure if that was quite right about the South Australian stuff. I heard a rumour, and I am not sure if it is true, that the whole CDL system was a protectionist system in the first place when it was put in place in South Australia, and it was about protecting some of the breweries over there. But that could be a rumour, so please list it as possible.

Mr SCHEFFER — Since you raised it, how does that work?

Ms PICKLES — Because of the reusable bottle, but that is only a rumour I have heard.

The CHAIR — We will investigate that one.

Ms PICKLES — If you investigate that one you might be able to get to the heart of just what it was, but I heard that the CDL was actually a protection issue. Getting back to the reusable bottle, there have been a lot of situations that have mitigated against reusable bottles if we consider previous days before food and health safety laws became so much more stringent. If we look back to the mid-1970s, which I can remember as a younger person, Coca-Cola and various other companies were getting litigated because some of the residues were not removed from those reusable bottles. The cost of transporting around our country of very heavyweight bottles does often militate against the issues of environmental benefit then.

We also manufacture our bottles in different parts of Australia, and it is a very interesting thing to know if you are not really aware of the issues — for example, in South Australia they only want green bottles because they only make green bottles for the wine industry. But on the eastern seaboard they want brown bottles because they are making beer for the rest of Australia. There are a whole lot of issues associated with the transport and distribution of reusable bottles that militate against it as well as the food health and safety issues, plus we have also seen a move to a much lighter-weight container, particularly for soft drinks through PET, less use of virgin resources, less cost to transport, less impact on greenhouse and carbon emissions. If we were to go back to those old days of transporting heavy-weight bottles around our country, I would like to see a full life-cycle assessment on it, but I am sure it would be a considerable environmental as well as economic burden on the industry.

Mrs KRONBERG — The view could have been that you are saving at one point production costs, because you are only providing handling, reinstatement and hygiene levels for the bottle and the bottle is not being reproduced?

Ms PICKLES — It could be and one would have to do a full life-cycle assessment to see the benefits of doing that using reusable bottles versus single-use, much lighter, lower-weight polymer throughout the whole life cycle, including its ultimate disposal and reuse, to really come down with a definitive answer and bring in the issues, too, of food health and safety, because there was a considerable period where various companies, as we became a more litigious society, were being sued for residues left in reusable bottles.

Ms TIERNEY — Could you give us some indication of the impact you see the bill having on sales volumes and employment in Victoria?

Mr MAHAR — Do you have the employment figures?

Ms PICKLES — They are in the submission.

Mr MAHAR — In our submission on page 5, the research we have undertaken suggests that the result to Victoria would mean a loss of 1000 jobs and over 1000 indirect jobs.

The CHAIR — Over what period of time?

Ms PICKLES — In the introduction.

Mr MAHAR — In the initial period, yes.

Mr ELSBURY — What is that based on? What is the foundation of those job losses? Where are they occurring?

Ms PICKLES — They are occurring nationally at the particular plants. The beverage industry does manufacture in most states throughout Australia, particularly on the eastern seaboard, where there would be the greatest impact, and smaller states like Tasmania as well, because that is where the bulk of production actually occurs. But it is based on a volume downturn.

Ms PENNICUIK — First of all I have a follow-up from the answer to the previous question. You spoke about a report that was commissioned, the ACIL Tasman report, which is a footnote in your submission. Are you able to provide that report to the committee?

Mr MAHAR — I think it is confidential.

Ms PICKLES — It has been provided as part of the commonwealth RIS process that is being looked into at the moment. It can be provided on a confidential basis.

Ms PENNICUIK — To the committee?

Mr MAHAR — We can provide you with a definite answer, if you like. We cannot give you one now. It has been provided to the commonwealth RIS — —

The CHAIR — Are we talking about the whole document or a specific bit of information?

Ms PENNICUIK — The report that is footnoted here that they have relied on for those figures.

Mr MAHAR — It is the full report you are talking about?

Ms PENNICUIK — That you have been talking about in the last two answers.

The CHAIR — Why do you not get back to us? Consider that and get back to us on that.

Ms PICKLES — As you would understand, it is commercially sensitive information about the impacts of costs on beverage sales.

Ms PENNICUIK — I understand that, but you are making quite substantive claims here and you have referred to that report, so — —

Mr MAHAR — We can take that on notice.

Ms PENNICUIK — Further down that page, in paragraph 5 — I have numbered the paragraphs — you say:

... Victoria achieved the highest plastic packaging recycling rates of any state or territory ... followed by South Australia ...

Is that plastic packaging per se or is it container deposits?

Ms PICKLES — No, it is across all plastic packaging. I think we are going to have another 3 minutes, aren't we?

The CHAIR — Let's just pause for a moment. With bells ringing in our ears, would you like to continue?

Ms PICKLES — Just turning back to your question, you referred to the Plastics and Chemicals Industries Association's annual survey. Yes, that 72.3 per cent recycling rate is for all plastic packaging, which is testament to the maturity and robustness of Victoria's kerbside recycling system. As the committee may be aware, the bulk of metropolitan councils already collect plastics 1 to 7. That is plastics right through from the very well-known PET bottle, which is for soft drinks and whatever, to HDPE, which is your milk bottle and whatever. One would have to say that even in looking at those figures, PET recycling rates, being one of the most renowned of all the plastics, might have even higher recycling rates.

Ms PENNICUIK — My question is about why the report is relying on just talking about plastic packaging rather than plastic containers, because that is what we are talking about here in our deposit legislation. We are

not talking about recycling plastic across the whole of the spectrum of plastic packaging, which is what you are talking about here. I am just wondering if that is somewhat misleading to not actually just talk about container recycling. If you refer to your chart on page 11, you see that four of the groups of the dirty dozen are in fact beverage containers and one of the highest ones is metal alcoholic beverage containers and plastic non-alcoholic beverage containers. So it seems contradictory — —

The CHAIR — I think we have the question, Ms Pennicuik.

Ms PICKLES — It is certainly not an attempt to be misleading in any way, shape or form. The fact is that that information in Victoria is just not readily available. I cannot tell you now what the PET recycling rate is, just like I cannot tell you what the recycling rate of garden organics is as opposed to wood waste. It is unfortunate that in some of these instances we are not able to break right down to the individual recycling rates for containers. The data was put in there because it is quite strong data on plastic packaging recycling rates. Victoria is doing remarkably well when it comes to the rest of Australia.

Mr MAHAR — If I can just add to that, our view is sort of taking up that point that a comprehensive system that looks at all packaging is much more effective than a system that just looks at beverage containers.

Ms PENNICUIK — That is what we are looking at for this inquiry, though.

Mr MAHAR — And our response to that is that an isolated system is ineffective.

Mrs KRONBERG — For all of the systems one has to look at the whole cycle of the system and all of the economic incentives to have things flowing through that system so it just does not end up as a failed solution. I really want to explore what you know about the issue of recycled materials being stockpiled. I am mindful of the fact, for instance — and this is nothing to do with plastics, but it certainly is to do with papers — that when the price of paper pulp in Singapore drops, stockpiles of recycled paper, office paper right through to newsprint are stockpiled. Interestingly enough, a regular occurrence for dealing with those stockpiles when the price falls is to set fire to them. There have been a number of fires in settings around metropolitan Melbourne in the last 20 years that we can attribute to depressed prices for that. In terms of things that are being recycled, we have a statement in your submission saying how things are sent to landfill or stockpiled. Nobody wants to see any of that in the ideal system, so have you got any evidence in terms of stockpiling because of price pressures and in fact what is consigned to landfill, because we do know that the noble intentions of kerbside recycling are often undone by co-mingling when the waste stream actually is presented to a landfill, and there can be a lot of ambivalence around the principles of co-mingling, even though there is good endeavour on kerbside recycling?

Ms PICKLES — I will take the response on that one. We are talking really about commodities that are traded on world markets — whether it is paper, newsprint, cardboard — so with any commodity cycle that we go through we will be impacted by what happens in the rest of the world. We know that we cannot stand isolated. Yes, we do export plastics; yes, we do export cardboard overseas that we collect through not only our kerbside but through commercially industrial collection services, and that will always happen. Yes, we have hit issues from time to time. The mid-1990s was the last one for paper cardboard when we saw remarkably depressed prices. There are suggestions that this may be hitting us again soon because of a slowdown in the Chinese economy which, as with a lot of our other resources or other exports, we have become quite dependent on.

Notwithstanding that issue, there was a lot of work done not only through the covenant at that particular time. The old national packaging covenant was brought about by that whole series, and the concept was that we should be able to smooth out that cycle. We have certainly had a remarkably good 10 or 15 years. I do not claim that the covenant has been responsible for that, but we will always be subject to economic cycles, and I do not think anyone suggests that we should be otherwise. We are a market economy.

Mr MAHAR — If I can add to that, that is one of the problems I suppose we have with the container deposit scheme. It is a collection system and to comprehensively respond to the issue of packaging waste management you need secondary markets to use the material that you have collected. So again a comprehensive system will look at the design of packaging, the collection of packaging — waste in this instance — but also the development of markets that will use that material so it does not have to be stockpiled, does not necessarily have to go back into bottles or containers. It can go into fence posts or anything else — any other materials that actually utilise that material rather than just a collection system that causes it to be stockpiled. As Jenny says, it

is a global commodity and markets fluctuate, and obviously that has an impact on the global stocks or stockpiling of materials and, like any commodity, we are subject to those fluctuations.

Ms PICKLES — I would add that we have certainly got better at doing some of that work on the market development area. There are other markets for cardboard now in insulation and various other areas, and in the glass area we have been working very closely with local governments, road authorities and the construction sector as well to look at alternative markets for the glass that gets broken too fine to be recycled back into the different coloured cullets, as they are known, of green, amber and white. We have been doing a lot of work and that has been very responsive in both our own organisation but also through the covenants to develop these alternative markets. So any stockpiles that are out there — and there are stockpiles out there, and let me tell you some of those stockpiles have been around for 20 years — they have been around for a long time and no-one has actually started to address it until the covenant framework and industry started to work on the issue.

Mr SCHEFFER — I have a broad question that actually comes from what Mrs Kronberg has been saying. You mentioned a couple of times product life cycle. Looking at the range of member organisations that the council has, there are a lot of different types of organisations there, but what do they do, if you can kind of group them or talk about the leadership you are providing? What do they do about that product life cycle and turning what is a cost — the disposal of rubbish, making rubbish an externality, which is the way we have always dealt with things like carbon — into a use that has been part of their income in a sense? It seems to me that if we could get that worked out, there would be a benefit in really proper recycling and reuse. Are you providing leadership to your organisations to effect that or not?

Mr MAHAR — We are trying to provide leadership. The real emphasis or opportunity for our member companies, at least those that you have in front of you, is in the actual design of the packaging. That is where they can have the most influence in what they place onto the market. They have less influence over the collection, recycling — —

Mr SCHEFFER — Does that mean design in the sense of an engineering design and how you reuse it, or is it designed in the manner of the look of it and what its utility is?

Mr MAHAR — Both. It is certainly the design of the packaging so it is functional and it can sit on the shelf and go through the supply chain.

Mr SCHEFFER — All that stuff, yes.

Mr MAHAR — But also they are required by the packaging covenant now to look at the beyond-use of materials and look at their recyclability, their recycled content, their openability; there is a range of things they have to consider in the design of their packaging.

Mr SCHEFFER — Is that making an impact on the issue that Mrs Kronberg raised?

Mr MAHAR — It will. It is not going to happen overnight, to use that cliché, but it is going to happen.

Mr SCHEFFER — But it is within 20 years, hopefully, that you are talking about?

Mr MAHAR — That is right. They have more opportunity now to actually influence the design, which will have a much better impact on the post-consumer management of it.

Ms PICKLES — Can I just — —

Mr SCHEFFER — I am sorry, and I do not want to be rude about it, but what we are really hearing you say a lot is, 'We're gonna' and 'It's going to happen before too long'; yet we heard your colleague Ms Pickles say that there have been some of these stockpiles for 20 years. How do we have confidence in what you are saying — that it is just around the corner?

Ms PICKLES — Can I give you an example of some of the work that has been done? It may be something that you can recollect yourself, particularly on the design side. It was a very small thing, but it was a thing that was causing considerable litter. It was the old ring-pull cap on your can. Where has the ring-pull cap of your can gone? It was redesigned out as a litter issue. All the caps now have a proper connection: the cap stays in there, they open up and no littering is caused as a result of that. That was a serious issue. That is an example of

industry designing out the potential for that product to cause some littering issues, through separating out, because it was a piece that came disconnected.

Mr ELSBURY — I refer to the evidence that we have received from Ms Hartland, who was the sponsor of the bill, that public place recycling is expensive and inefficient because you have got the costs associated with having to collect from multiple areas, and you have got the costs, especially for councils, associated with sending out a truck with a bloke to go and lift out the bins. Of course you have to replace the bins if they are vandalised, and there are all the other issues. I know that even some of the parks out in the western suburbs actually have a no-bin policy, where you take your litter home with you. According to figures cited in one of the submissions we have received, away-from-home recycling is about 22 per cent for the people who actually throw litter in the recycling bins provided, compared to roadside or kerbside recycling, which is at 60 per cent. What information do you have about the success or otherwise of public place recycling programs?

The CHAIR — Before you answer that I will just say that we are giving you more time because we started late and there have also been three lots of bells ringing. I apologise to the next witness for the delay, but I am mindful of the fact that another member still has not had the opportunity of asking questions. If we could keep questions short and answers perhaps not equally so, but concise.

Mr MAHAR — Sure. Do you want to do that?

Ms PICKLES — That is exactly what the packaging stewardship forum of the Australian Food and Grocery Council has been doing in the last few years. I must say our target is not local government; we are targeting venues where people congregate and where they potentially consume beverages, because that is the low-hanging fruit. We have been working with Lend Lease, Westfield, the GPT Group, the Mirvac Group, and we have just signed a new agreement with Colonial to put in place new systems in their 26 shopping centres — places people go to congregate, whether they are likely to consume. The Westfield project has been completed for sometime. We are still waiting on final data because of their 36 centres where new recycling systems were rolled out. Canberra was only completed in February, so we will not have full data from that. But recycling rates have doubled and contamination rates are very low, less than 10 per cent, which is what you get through kerbside. We believe we have demonstrated, through the work we are doing putting in place simple, cost-effective, clearly labelled systems, that we are achieving great results.

If you have travelled on Qantas or Virgin lately — maybe you have not noticed; maybe I am the only person who notices rubbish bins around — we have put new systems in all Qantas terminals nationally and in Virgin terminals nationally, and we are working behind the scenes with the Qantas clubs and lounges and the Virgin clubs and lounges to collect the glass out of those venues. So we are working on high consumptions: sporting stadiums, major entertainment venues and racecourses. Local government really is not involved in those areas, but that is where the bulk of the away-from-home recycling is actually sitting. We are more than happy to work with those local governments that want to work with us. We have a couple of projects already. We are working on a project in a new park on the Sunshine Coast with councils there. We have done a number of other projects with regional councils. But they are not our prime focus because we know our low-hanging fruit is sitting out there in the pubs, in the clubs, in the sporting stadiums — in the venues where people go and consume — and that is where we want to get it out of and that is where we are having great success. We have already put in place about 7000 bins nationally over the last three years; we think we need another 30 000 bins nationally. We believe with those 30 000 bins nationally we can get us up to a 70 per cent recycling rate in five years, and we think we can get 80 per cent in 10.

Mr TARLAMIS — Have you done any research or do you have any evidence on how the proposed scheme will impact on the viability of kerbside collection?

Ms PICKLES — I do not have any particular evidence and I would like to have some evidence that I could mention to the committee that someone else has done; but, funnily enough, no-one has actually done any work on that here. We are certainly looking to the packaging consultation RIS to get us some of that information because, quite frankly, it was not done in the previous BDA report. There has been no cost-benefit analysis done of this piece of legislation, so there is nowhere I can go to tell you. I would even like some of the recycling companies themselves to have done their own risk assessment. I sit back and say, ‘Surely they are looking at “This is my business; I need to do a risk assessment for my own business about what the impact of container deposit legislation could be”’.

I do know from my years at Sustainability Victoria and the former EcoRecycle Victoria in Victoria that work that we had done showed that about 80 per cent of kerbside recycling is the cost of collection. So for merely sending the truck around to every household in a particular municipality, about 80 per cent of the total cost is just for sending the bin around. I also know that a number of councils in Victoria are actually paid for their kerbside recycling, some \$25 a tonne and some up to \$45 a tonne. Perhaps you need to speak to the recycling industry, and I am not sure if you are receiving submissions from or are talking to any of them as part of this process. But maybe you need to speak to them to get it straight from the horse's mouth. So there really is no evidence that I can give you

The CHAIR — Time has galloped away from us. I will ask one question as the Chair and I will allow one more from either the Deputy Chair or the sponsoring party. The question I wish to ask is: I would have thought that your own membership would have had a strong interest in the legal advice to which you referred, and obviously it does not seem to be floating around. Are you aware of legal advice about whether or not it is in breach of the commonwealth constitution or any other legislation? Is that available anywhere, and why have you not commissioned it?

Mr MAHAR — We have got some access to some legal advice, and if it is okay we can get back to you as to whether we can make that available.

Ms PICKLES — Yes.

The CHAIR — Thank you so much.

Ms PENNICUIK — I go back to page 5 of your report at paragraph 6, where you talk about litter reduction in Victoria over the last five years and, referring to page 10, you say:

The index also shows that in Victoria, beverage container litter by volume, already at lower levels —
than —
in many other states.

I am interested in its comparison to South Australia, in particular, which is the only other state that has CDL. If you look at Ms Hartland's discussion paper you see there is a vast difference between the litter that is beverage containers in Victoria and that in South Australia. Victoria has so much more in terms of plastic soft drink and milk bottles, glass alcohol drink bottles and metal alcohol drink bottles et cetera, referring to page 18 of Ms Hartland's paper. I am wondering why you say 'many other states'. Which other states does Victoria do better than?

Ms PICKLES — On overall litter?

Ms PENNICUIK — No, on beverage container deposit, because it does not do better than South Australia.

Ms PICKLES — I have not got that information with me to hand at the moment. We would say that yes, you will get less beverage litter.

Ms PENNICUIK — Could you provide that information because you say it in your submission?

Ms PICKLES — I would have to do an analysis.

Mr MAHAR — But do we have the data?

Ms PICKLES — The Keep Australia Beautiful data is readily available. In fact we can give you the link to where to find it and it does show for every state and territory the composition by volume and by count, so it breaks the composition down for every state and territory.

Ms PENNICUIK — Only one state has container deposits.

The CHAIR — I think the point has been made.

Ms PICKLES — That is correct.

The CHAIR — Thank you very much. That brings our time to a close. Given that you are from interstate, I hope you have had ample opportunity to present your case. Just be mindful of the fact that you will receive a transcript in about three days. You will have an opportunity of correcting any typographical errors and returning them promptly to the committee secretariat. I wish you a safe journey home and I hope you do not get too wet.

Mr MAHAR — Thank you for the opportunity.

Witnesses withdrew.