

## **Submission to the QPC Inquiry into the Container Refund Scheme**

### **Matthew Byrnes – Private individual**

Thanks for the opportunity to make a submission.

I have been a user of the Queensland container refund scheme since commencement and would like to raise an important issue:

#### Operations of the container refund sites/processing centres

- There needs to be much more transparency with the operations and processes of these facilities and the scheme in general.
- At the moment, the main facilities where containers are returned have reverse vending machines and small windows set into solid walls for bag drop offs and customer queries.
- There needs to be much greater visibility to the general public/customers of where the bottles are being processed and processing practices.
- The walls should be made of clear plastic so that, particularly in the case of bag drop offs, customers can see their containers being processed through the machines, if they wish.
- This would be a significant and concrete advance in terms of transparency and accountability in the operations of container return centres and have many positive benefits.
- At the moment customers have to trust that their containers are being processed appropriately and that all containers which they provide are dealt with correctly and that they receive the refund they are eligible for.
- This may be the case currently, but an architecture with more and real transparency would create an environment where the possibility of customers not being fairly remunerated, or their container being mishandled would be less likely to occur.
- By having the processing side of the refund scheme and its processes operating behind closed walls with no visibility, an environment conducive to corrupt and unfair practices may develop.
- Having more openness would also create a better and more collaborative approach to the scheme and relations between facility employees and customers. Customers would have more confidence in the scheme, and this would increase its effectiveness.
- Also, there needs to be greater visibility and transparency about the bag drop off processes – at the moment, once bags full of containers go into a facility, the customer has to take on trust that all containers will be dealt with appropriately.
- The facility operators prepare documentation related to each bag drop off (e.g. containers processed/containers rejected etc). However, customers cannot see or access this important documentation prepared by the operator's employees - it should be freely and willingly provided by centre operators/employees to the customers who request this documentation.

The above suggestions are made as a way of encouraging a more effective and productive container scheme for Queensland, that customers have improved confidence in.

Yours sincerely,

Matthew Byrnes