

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Recycling – does it work?**

The Boomerang Alliance of 47 groups has called for three urgent reforms following revelations in last night's 4Corners program on the waste and recycling industry.

“The combination of - absence of support for recycled content in products; slack enforcement by regulators and no landfill levy in Queensland – has created a perfect storm threatening the crucial environmental and economic gains from recycling,” said Jeff Angel, Director of the Alliance.

“First, environment ministers and regulators need to be far more effective in the use of their enforcement powers. NSW in particular moves too slowly and appears to tolerate shoddy practises for far too long. They allow cheap dumpers to push recyclers out of the market and this prevents the rapid transition to reuse of resources and results in lost opportunities to create jobs and environment protection. NSW has the legal powers and the Minister should order an urgent review of how they are being applied.”

“Secondly it is essential that government and business require recycled content in their purchasing contracts for roads, construction materials, packaging and other items. Australia could be far more self-sufficient in resources and have a bigger manufacturing sector if we had a stronger domestic market for recyclables. There would for example, be a larger market for recycled glass in roadworks and construction sand.”

“Of note is that container deposit schemes will improve the quality of glass drink bottles in the recycling stream and open up more conversion back into bottles. Victoria is the stand out state that is ignoring this proven program,” Mr Angel said.

“Thirdly, Queensland must act to stop it being the dumping ground for waste from other states. The Newman government created an environmental disaster by removing environment protection laws and the landfill levy. Both parties in Queensland should recognise the ongoing damage and fix it.”