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For immediate release

Employees push for recycling at work

Australian businesses are generating an average of 1.7 tonnes of waste per employee, yet only about half of that is being recycled.

Many businesses have implemented waste minimisation and resource recovery programs to reduce the risk of environmental harm and improve their reputation and profile, in line with the growth of corporate social responsibility over the past decade.

However, employees have been increasingly placing pressure on employers to provide recycling facilities at work. Australia-wide, 80% of employees would like to see more recycling in their workplaceⁱ and 71% of people said that having access to recycling facilities at work makes or would make them feel like they work for a responsible employerⁱⁱ.

“Business waste is not only an environmental issue,” says Brad Gray, Head of Campaigns at Planet Ark. “Many employees want to know that their company is acting in a responsible manner when it comes to waste. Implementing recycling programs at work can boost staff morale and help employees feel like they are part of a team effort to reduce waste.”

Planet Ark’s **BusinessRecycling.com.au** aims to help Australian businesses and employees counteract the amount of waste sent to landfill and potentially save on waste costs through its free step-by-step toolkit and resources. The website is an online directory and hotline specifically designed to make it easy for Australian businesses to find local recycling services for more than 90 different materials.

“Australian businesses are getting better at recycling, and programs such as ‘Cartridges 4 Planet Ark’ and Mobile Muster have been very successful, but huge amounts of valuable materials are still ending up in landfill,” said Gray.

Small and medium businesses account for a significant portion of the 6.8 million tonnes (54%) of Commercial and Industrial waste sent to landfill each year.

Food waste, garden waste, timber and other biodegradable waste make up the biggest component of this waste stream. Cardboard, office paper and other paper, although readily recyclable, is the second biggest component, making up 22% of the total. Other easily recyclable materials sent to landfill include masonry and plastic packaging.

However a growing number of businesses are telling of their recycling success stories, from councils and employment services to shopping centres, hotels and even hair salons.

To find a local recycling service on **BusinessRecycling.com.au**, site visitors simply enter their location and choose from a broad selection of material categories like plastics, timber, food, paper and cardboard, packaging, metals and more. The site is also supported by the **BusinessRecycling** Hotline on 1300 763 768.



Positive environmental actions, for everyone.

BusinessRecycling.com.au is made possible through the support of Foundation Partner, the NSW Environment Protection Authority, and Major Partner, the Victorian Government. It is also supported by Promotion Partners Zero Waste South Australia and MobileMuster, the Australian mobile phone industry's official product stewardship program.

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Note to editors - quoted figures from:

ⁱ EPHC & DEWHA, 2010.

ⁱⁱ Parry-Husbands, H., Villani, C. 2013. *Green Pulse Report* - September 2013 (Wave 23). Prepared for Planet Ark. Sydney, Australia: Pollinate.

About Planet Ark

Planet Ark Environmental Foundation is an Australian not-for-profit organisation with a vision of a world where people live in balance with nature. Established in 1992, we are one of Australia's leading environmental behaviour change organisations with a focus on working collaboratively and positively. We help people, governments and businesses reduce their impact on the environment in three key areas: sustainable resource use; low carbon lifestyles; and connecting people with nature. We promote and create simple, positive environmental actions – for everyone.

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