**Waste 2017 Abstract Submission**

**Unlocking hidden value – reducing e-waste and
whole of life management of retired technology**

*My presentation is relevant to the following topic area(s).*

◼ Circular economy 🞎 Overseas experiences

🞎 Collection (inc MUD’s, transient population areas) 🞎 Problem/Hazardous waste (inc asbestos, clinical &

🞎 Container Deposit Schemes medical, ocean plastics, paint, tyres etc)

🞎 Economics (inc business cases, data gathering, ◼ Product Stewardship

monitoring performance) 🞎 Regional issues

🞎 Education (inc community engagement) 🞎 Recycling (inc CRC’s, collection)

◼ E-Waste 🞎 Regulations and levies

🞎 Grants (outcomes and processes) 🞎 Social enterprise

🞎 Infrastructure (inc major waste grants, EfW, organics) 🞎 State based issues (eg. Fit for the Future NSW)

🞎 Innovative projects (case studies preferred) 🞎 Technology

🞎 Landfill (inc operations, regulations) 🞎 Tenders and contracts

🞎 Litter and/or illegal dumping (inc litter initiatives) 🞎 Other 🞎 Organics (inc collection, processing)

**Presenter information**

**Presenter name:** Tom Penny

**Presenter position:** Senior Advisor – Resource Efficiency and Compliance

**Presenter organisation:** Telstra Corporation

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**Biography**

Tom Penny leads Telstra’s resource efficiency initiatives from the Environment Team in the Chief Sustainability Office. Prior to joining Telstra, Tom worked in the United Kingdom notably developing and implementing product sustainability strategies for Sky and the UK National Health Service. He is an experienced practitioner with over 10 years’ experience in product stewardship and is both a Chartered Engineer and Chartered Environmentalist with the Institute of Engineering Designers.

**Abstract Summary**

Telstra recently launched *Unlocking Hidden Value* – our new Electronics Reuse and Recycling Strategy. The new approach incorporates responsibly managing the equipment Telstra uses, providing the public with take back, re-use and recycling opportunities, and influencing upstream decisions to reduce e-waste and manufacture more sustainable products.

The need for action on end -of-life electronics is urgent. The rapid evolution of information and communication technology (ICT) is driving global growth in e-waste.

This presentation will canvass the lessons Telstra has learned from 20 years at the forefront of e-waste and electronics stewardship management, Telstra’s programs, and canvass the barriers and opportunities for future improvements.

**Abstract**

Digital technologies and enhanced connectivity are transforming the way we live and connect, but the use of more devices creates more e-waste. Not surprisingly, e-waste is currently growing faster than any other waste stream.

Based on more than 20 years’ experience managing e-waste and with support from eminent Australian and global e-waste experts, Telstra has established an new ambitious Electronics Reuse and Recycling Strategy detailing goals, targets and specific actions from 2016-2020.

Better managing e-waste, and ultimately reducing the generation of e-waste, will take time. Current costs,

complex supply chains and consumer attitudes and behaviour are all barriers to overcome. Along with global thought leaders we want to accelerate change and stop treating e-waste as an end-of-pipe recycling issue.

In this presentation we will articulate Telstra’s experiences, the complexities and pathways forward.

Telstra’s approach to be part of the solution includes:

1. **Product recovery, reuse and recycling** – increase the recovery rate of end-of-life electronics by providing convenient disposal and collection opportunities.

2. **Outreach and education** – be a trusted voice on e-waste and able to inform and educate the community.

3. **Responsible end-of-life management** – ensure that when electronic and electrical products are disposed of, reuse and recycling is done in a secure and responsible manner.

4. **Governance and simplification** – internal processes encourage and make it easy to responsibly manage electronic waste.

The Strategy includes 34 tactical initiatives each with ambitious performance measures and targets – and Telstra will provide an up to date report on progress in this presentation.

The need for action on end -of-life electronics has never been more important. The rapid evolution of information and communication technology (ICT) and other electronic products is driving a significant growth in electronics waste globally.

The 2014 Global E-waste Monitor, released by the United Nations University in 2015, found 41.8 million tonnes of e-waste were generated in 2014, but only 6.5 million tonnes recycled. Globally, 3 million tonnes of small ICT equipment were dumped in 2014.

The scale of the e-waste problem is large and currently increasing. In 2013, the United Nations forecast the volume disposed globally to increase from 48 million tonnes in 2012 to 65 million tonnes in 2017 – and in Australia e-waste is growing three times faster than any other waste stream.

Gartner estimates that in 2016 there are more than 4 billion consumer devices connected globally, and about 2.2 billion business devices – that is a 30% increase from 2015 and almost one device for every one of the 7.4 billion people in the world in 2016. It is estimated that in another five years there will be 13.5 billion connected consumer devices.

Telstra plays a significant role in current e-waste practices in Australia. About 60% of old phones returned to mobile phone retailers in Australia for recycling come through Telstra stores. During 2016 Telstra eCycle helped more than 600 small businesses recycle over 60 tonnes of e-waste.

Telstra is also part of a global movement to stop treating e-waste as only an “end of pipe” problem - where the e-waste that is generated is managed responsibly – and to start treating electronic equipment as a product stewardship and circular economy opportunity.

This approach will be presented and how work is needed throughout every phase of a products lifecycle. A core focus includes influencing product design and manufacturing so that whole products or components are more able to be re-used and or recycled.