

# Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards (WELS) Scheme

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# Brief Background

- Established under the *WELS Act 2005*, with cooperative state and territory legislation, an IGA, and a Standard (AS/NZS 6400).
- Objects of the Act:
  - To conserve water supplies by reducing water consumption
  - To provide information for purchasers of water-use and water-saving products
  - To promote the adoption of efficient and effective water-use and water-saving technologies.

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# Brief Background

- Requires mandatory testing, registration and labelling of water using products supplied in Australia that are covered by the WELS Scheme.
- Also provides for minimum standards.
- *WELS Act* includes offences (with fines) related to product registration, labelling and performance.

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# WELS Products

- **Products currently covered by the WELS Scheme are:**
  - toilets (min WES apply for toilets);
  - clothes washing machines (min WES apply from 1/10/11);
  - dishwashers;
  - urinals;
  - taps;
  - showers; and
  - flow controllers (optional).

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# A WELS Label

The stars show water efficiency – aim for 4 or 5 stars

Look for the:

- average water consumption per use figure (dishwashers, washing machines, toilets, urinals)
- average water flow per minute figure (taps, showers)

The more stars the more water efficient

**WATER RATING**

A joint government and industry program  
XXXXXX clothes washers Model XXXX  
Load capacity X kg

Water Consumption

**XX**  
Litres per wash  
using XXXXX program

When tested in accordance with Standard AS/NZS 5400.  
For more information and to compare appliances, refer to:  
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# How the WELS scheme works

- WELS Program Section
  - Registration of products on WELS database
  - Compliance, including inspections and checktesting
  - Communication
- WELS Policy Section
  - Outcomes of 2010 independent review
  - Legislation and standards
  - Potential expansion of the scheme

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# WaterMark and the WELS scheme

- Currently, products that fall under the WELS scheme must comply with the WELS standard and be registered before being offered for sale.
- WaterMark certification applies at the time of installation.
- WELS compliant and registered products may be purchased without having WaterMark certification, meaning they cannot be legally installed.
- An amendment to the WELS Act agreed through Parliament will broaden the range of matters that can be included in a WELS standard.
- This will enable the minister to determine that WaterMark certification is a requirement for WELS registration.
- Determination is now being drafted



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# The Independent review of the WELS scheme

- The review of the scheme is a requirement of the WELS Act and was to be undertaken after the first five years of operation of the scheme.
- The Minister appointed Dr Chris Guest to undertake the review.

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# Review Terms of Reference

- Independent Review terms of reference included consideration of:
  - Appropriateness, efficiency and effectiveness of scheme to date
  - Opportunities for improvement
- Terms of reference also required stakeholder consultation

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# Review Process

- Commenced in Dec 2009
- Concluded June 2010
- Stakeholder consultation included:
  - 53 stakeholder meetings Feb & Mar 2010
  - Discussion paper and call for written submissions in Apr & May 2010
    - 28 submissions received
  - 4 additional roundtable meetings in Apr 2010

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# Review Findings

- A good public policy
- Strong stakeholder support
- Scheme's objectives continue to be appropriate
- National scope is appropriate and efficient

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# Review Findings

- Scheme provides considerable benefits to a broad range of stakeholders including consumers, industry, utilities and governments
- Scheme used across all states and territories in programs and regulations, and by water utilities in supply plans
- A similar initiative to WELS would be needed

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# Independent review: findings and recommendations

- Four significant issues require attention to improve the delivery of the WELS scheme:
  - Governance
  - Compliance
  - Administration
  - Level and Source of funding
- Dr Guest made 41 recommendations across 12 key areas

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# So where to from here?

- Release of independent review report
- Release of initial response for consultation
  - Not final: dependent on further consideration & consultation
- Staged process for developing / implementing a final response
- Target – new arrangements in place by 1 July 2012 and final response released



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# Progress to date

- Recommendations that were agreed
  - eg. checktesting, supplier forums, WELS stakeholder advisory group, three year strategic plan, minimum WES/labelling
- Recommendations that were agreed in-principle
  - eg. civil provisions and offences, remove gazettals, improve 'grandfathering' provisions
- Recommendations that were noted
  - eg funding, family of models, rebranding, administrative mergers, consistent labelling across products



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# By 1 July 2012

- Final response to the independent review released
- New arrangements for the scheme in place
  - Many agreed or agreed in principle recommendations already implemented
  - Others included in first three-year strategic plan
- Funding issues resolved
  - funding covers operating costs

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# Further Consultation?

- There will be further consultation opportunities including:
  - Stakeholder forums
  - Invitations for written comment
- Your views matter

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*Thank you*



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