

## Steel Packaging Recycling Report Card Released for Australia

A report released this month into the recycling of steel cans, commissioned by the Steel Can Recycling Council, found that Australia's environmental report card is good, but there's room for improvement.

A recovery rate of 56% of all steel cans means Australia has been shown to be 'greener' than the UK and New Zealand, but is still lagging behind Japan, most of Europe and the US. This was revealed as a result of an extensive report conducted by research group Nolan ITU.

"The comprehensive analysis and calculation of Australia's steel packaging recycling rate means we can stand on the world stage as key players in the recycling of steel packaging, but more needs to be done," says Joe Stefano, Chair of the Steel Can Recycling Council (SCRC).

Country	Steel Packaging Recycling Rate 2003
Japan	88%
Switzerland	79%
Europe - average	61%
US	60%
Australia	56% *
Italy	56%
UK	44.5%
New Zealand	36%
International figures source: APEAL *The Australian rate is calculated for financial year 2003/04	

"Now Australians have a real target to work towards," Mr Stefano adds.

The report also shows that the numbers of steel cans being recycled is comparable to the recycling rates of other packaging materials within Australia, and in some instance better than expected.

According to the Packaging Council of Australia, with 56% of steel packaging being recycled, steel is now hitting the recycling bin more than plastics (20%) and glass (35%). Only paper and cardboard (64%) and aluminium (64%) have better recovery rates than steel.

Unlike these other materials, steel is 100% recyclable and does not have any degradation in product quality through endless recycling. The trusty steel can, one of the first packaging materials, is shown to have

innumerable lives - being able to be recycled into whitegoods, cars and construction steel, as well as back into canned products.

"Local councils provide steel can recycling facilities to around 92% of Australian households, so there is no reason for us not being able to increase our steel packaging recycling rate," says Mr Stefano. "This global benchmark will assist us in raising the awareness of consumers that they can recycle their cans, and give us a constructive way of comparing our participation with other countries."