

**Australian Government**  

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**Australian Greenhouse Office**

# **Australia's Energy Efficiency Labelling Experience**

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# Australia's position

- **Labelling schemes** promoting environmental and energy conservation outcomes **can adversely affect trade**
- Like other forms of technical standard setting, labelling schemes, must be designed in a manner that is **least trade restrictive**
- The **TBT Agreement provides a clear framework** for the preparation, adoption and application of technical standards and regulations, including those related to labelling



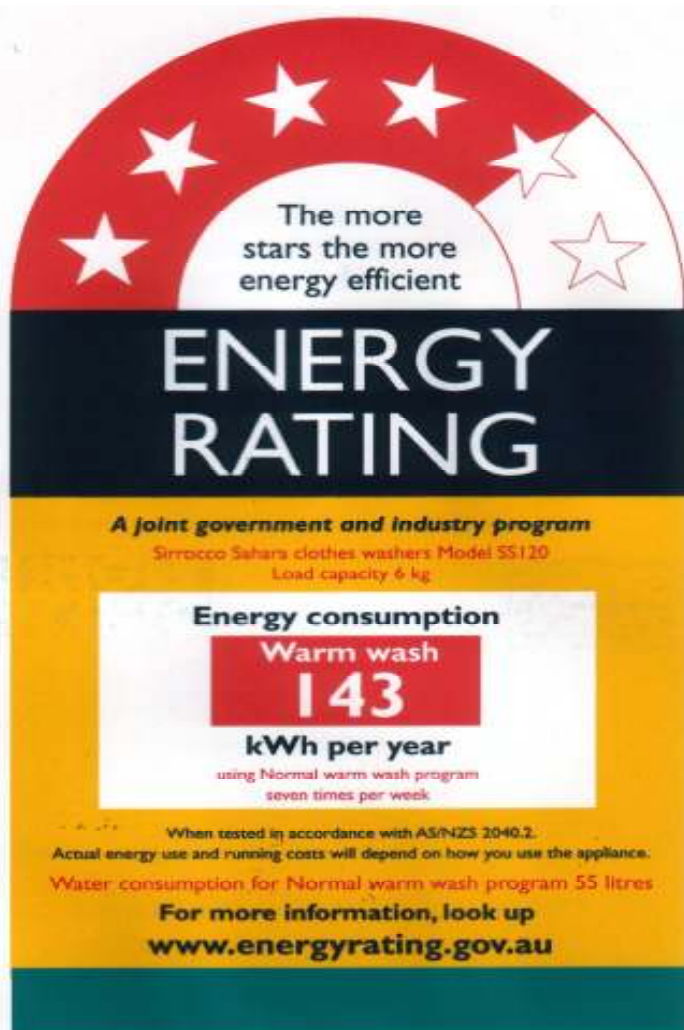
# The Australian experience

The Australian experience with energy conservation schemes shows that:

- Labelling needs to be treated like other technical standards;
- In ensuring that unnecessary obstacles to trade are avoided, **transparency** and the **willingness to consider alternatives** are vital.
- The information contained on labels should be factual and not subjective.



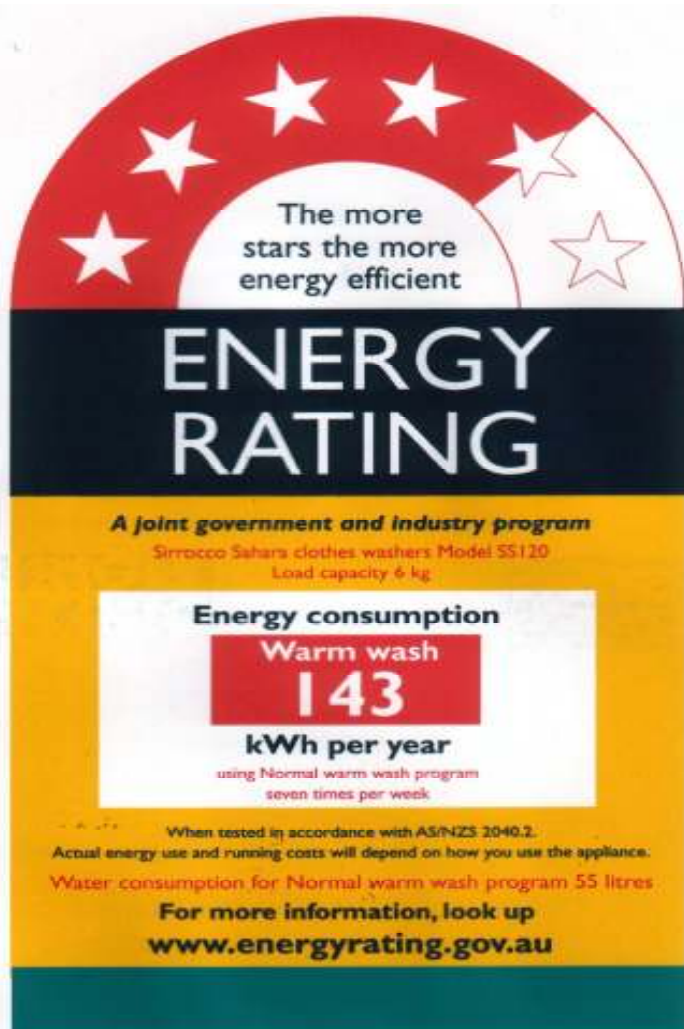
# Australia's regulatory approach



- Commenced in some areas in 1986 and nationally in 1992
- Applies to refrigerators, freezers, clothes washers & dryers, refrigerators and dishwashers
- Label specifications are stipulated in the Australia Standard



# How the Australian label works



- The star rating provides a visual comparative assessment (based on the familiar hotel and restaurant guides)
- The comparative energy consumption (usually kilowatt hours/year) provides an estimate of the annual energy consumption in idealised circumstances



# Aims of the scheme

The aim of the Australian system is to provide consumers with information and to contribute to energy conservation in a manner that avoids unnecessary obstacles to trade.



# **It starts with transparency**

- Labelling requirements are notified years in advance to suppliers with imported product so that they can influence proposed label changes
- Labelling requirements are published and are easily accessible by potential new entrants
- Labelling requirements are notified to the WTO TBT committee



# **It only continues with economic justification**

- *Can the energy saving be achieved without legislation (ie using voluntary labels)?*
- *Are alternatives to labels viable?*
- *What are the likely additional costs from regulating the label and are these costs likely to be offset?*





# It relies on international testing

- There is no “one-size-fits-all” approach
- In some instances, Australia uses methods-of-test developed by the relevant international bodies (IEC, ISO, etc), consistent with Article 2.4 of the TBT Agreement
- Regional standards are also used, for example, between Australia and New Zealand



# **It recognises that labels must be culturally appropriate**

- The Australian label achieves very high recognition levels (85- 90%)
- Each country must use label images that communicate effectively to their citizens
- The same label throughout the world for non-international goods is not practical or even desirable



# **It does impose sanctions if labelling claims are inaccurate**

- The labelling scheme is jointly promoted and enforced by government authorities, local manufacturers and importers





# **It has achieved measurable results**

- The labelling scheme has the support of importers and manufacturers alike and has achieved measurable results.



# Technical Assistance

- Australia is actively explaining and discussing our labelling scheme through international bodies like the IEA and APEC
- Australia is also assisting NGOs operating in this field to develop standards and labelling schemes in developing countries (eg CLASP, partially funded by GEF)
- Australia is engaging in an increasing number of bilateral and regional arrangements aimed at sharing information about standards and labelling schemes



# For further Information

Please refer to:

- [www.energyrating.gov.au](http://www.energyrating.gov.au)
- [www.standards.com.au](http://www.standards.com.au)

Specific questions can be emailed to:

- [energy.rating@greenhouse.gov.au](mailto:energy.rating@greenhouse.gov.au)

