

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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## **Mission Australia and IKEA give new life to old mattresses**

A new partnership between IKEA and Mission Australia will mean that thousands of old mattresses headed for landfill will be recycled, in a program aimed at protecting the environment and creating green jobs for long term unemployed and disadvantaged people.

Mission Australia's Mattress Recycling program is a social enterprise which rescues mattresses destined for the dump and breaks them down into their component parts for recycling.

Springs from the mattresses are baled and sold as scrap metal, foam is used for carpet underlay, timber is broken down into kindling and mulch, and textiles are reclaimed and used as punching bag fill.

According to Mission Australia Manager for Social Enterprise, Andrew Douglas, in the last year alone, 150,000 have been recycled through this program at its premises in the Illawarra and Western Sydney.

"What's more, the program has created sustainable jobs and training opportunities for long term unemployed and disadvantaged jobseekers, Mr Douglas said.

The partnership with IKEA builds the recycling program to an even wider audience. When customers purchase a new mattress from IKEA, they will now have the option of having their old mattress collected and delivered to the Mattress Recycling depot in Smithfield.

"Through the IKEA partnership we'll be able to recycle an additional 250 mattresses per month - that would mean around 2250 cubic metres of waste per year saved from landfill, or the volume of an Olympic swimming pool," Mr Douglas said.

"It also means that we'll be able to create positions for an extra three waste management traineeships, giving important job and training opportunities for people who would experience barriers in the open labour market."

IKEA Australia Sustainability Manager, Richard Wilson, said that mattress recycling turns a major community problem into a solution.

"At IKEA, we are committed to investing in new ways to improve our environmental responsibility and the mattress recycling program will further strengthen these efforts.

"Each year, around 1.25 million mattresses end up in landfill, and before they get there, many are dumped on our streets to avoid the council tip fees – this is a huge burden on the environment, as well as a waste of valuable, reusable resources. With Mission Australia's program we are putting these mattresses to good use and helping to create a greener and more responsible future while providing employment opportunities."

The service will initially be available at IKEA Rhodes and IKEA Tempe stores in Sydney, with plans to expand.

**For further information go to:**

<http://www.ikea.com.au/mattresstakeback>

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**About Mission Australia's Mattress Recycling Program**

Mission Australia Mattress Recycling was established in 2009, as a social enterprise to provide jobs and traineeships to disadvantaged traineeships in the Illawarra – a region that has suffered high unemployment in recent years, particularly among youth. Any profits from the sale of mattresses or recycled materials go back into the business, to provide further job opportunities and improve the environmental outcomes of the program.

**About the IKEA Mattress Takeback and Recycling Scheme**

For a no-profit cost of \$30, IKEA will collect the old mattress from your home and recycle it as part of their delivery service. All mattresses will be recycled into something new, diverting thousands of tonnes of waste from landfill each year.

**About IKEA**

Customers around the world have embraced the IKEA concept since its inception over 50 years ago. IKEA is the world's largest home furnishings retailer with over 350 stores in 44 countries, employing more than 151,000 co-workers. In 2013, a total of 775 million people visited IKEA stores globally, and in 2013 the IKEA catalogue app was downloaded almost 10 million times. Last year, the turnover for all IKEA stores was 29.2 billion euros (approx A\$42.8 billion).

The IKEA vision is to offer a wide range of well- designed and functional home furnishings at prices so low the majority of people can afford them.

IKEA achieves this through clever product design, cost-effective manufacturing, buying in bulk, transporting in flat packs and by asking the customer to do some of the work themselves: they select their own furniture, collect it from a massive self serve warehouse, take it home with them and then assemble it themselves. The big stores are an important part of making this concept work.