Minister for Lands, Planning and the Environment, Peter Chandler, confirmed today the Government will continue funding the Territory’s popular recycling scheme.

“The Country Liberals Government is still paying for Labor’s mistakes and cleaning up their mess.

“To provide reassurance for Territorians we will continue to pay the 10 cents refund for each container collected while the scheme’s exemption from Commonwealth legislation is finalised,” Mr Chandler said.

“However, we have urged the Commonwealth to move quickly – they have indicated they will try and finalise the regulations before the Australian Government goes into election mode.

“Quick delivery of the new regulations will get the scheme back to normal with drinks companies participating and paying their share.

“The Territory Government is facing a huge debt left by Delia Lawrie’s former Labor government and now we must meet the costs of the recycling scheme. We forewarned Labor many times that the scheme would not stack up with the Commonwealth Mutual Recognition Act.

“We were forced to do battle in the courts, fighting a fight we should never have had.

“Labor was well and truly informed on all the failings and on the remedies available but our warnings, advice and suggestions were ignored.”

On March 27 the Country Liberals Government supported the scheme with eight weeks funding after the major drinks companies pulled out following their successful action in the Federal Court of Australia.

The court ruled they did not have to comply with requirements under the Territory’s recycling legislation as the Commonwealth Mutual Recognition Act overrode the Territory law.
In the first year of the recycling scheme families, schools, community organisations and commercial operators redeemed $100,000 a week at depots with more than 52 million containers recycled.

“Work is under way to address some operational issues, for example, containers have been sorted into 24 different categories by material and brands, compared to nine in South Australia where the scheme has been in use for 30 years.

“Reducing the need for so much sorting will increase efficiency at the collection depots and it will be easier for people bringing in containers.”

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