

06 July 05

Ms Maria Atkinson
Executive Director
Green Building Council
PO Box Q78
QVB NSW 1230

Dear Maria,

I sent a letter to you dated 7th June 05 of which I have not had any reply. I have attached a copy of the letter for your reference.

We have contacted and been contacted by several other interested parties regarding the issues we have raised in this letter.

According to Ministers The Hon Teresa Gambaro and John Thwaites, the Green Building Council (GBC) has advised that the issues raised by Instyle have been addressed, as follows.

“The Council advised that your representations to it on these issues have already been considered, and addressed, in the stakeholder submission feedback report”.

However, the GBC’s decision to:

- exclude sustainable rapidly renewable content and locally produced materials ie wool textiles (and carpets),
- preference in the case of textiles (and carpets), less desirable imported recycled PET textiles (and carpets) which have been produced from plastic bottles and,
- the conflict of interest with regards to one of the largest recycled PET textile (and carpet) manufacturers having representation (and the sole representative of the textile industry) on the GBC Board and Technical and Marketing Groups.

has not been addressed nor justified. This is despite numerous communications with the GBC since June 2004 including the submission of a significant volume of technical and scientific information supporting the use of rapidly renewable materials and the health and environmental risks associated with recycled PET textiles and carpets.

Recycled PET textiles and carpets can contain “antimony, arsenic, chromium (III), cobalt, formaldehyde, VOC’s trichloroethane and zinc”. Upholstery and carpets abrade during normal use therefore they will be off-gassing and abrading hazardous particles which might be inhaled or swallowed. PET is a derivative of the oil/petroleum industry and the textiles are not manufactured locally therefore will need to be imported. In eliminating the choice of sustainable rapidly renewable content, the GBC has preferenced recycled PET textiles and carpets in the Green Stars – Office Interiors (GS-OI) rating tool.

I have attached a copy of the independent evaluation of a recycled PET textile where the above issues were documented and highlighted.

I am therefore extremely concerned that the GBC has made false representations on the issues INSTYLE has raised. I would request that the GBC refrain from making such representations until our concerns have been addressed.

Further these matters have been raised in the NSW Parliament and will be addressed again when the Parliament resumes in September/October.

I request an immediate response to the three issues raised in my letter dated 7th June 05.

Kind Regards

Michael Fitzsimons
Managing Director

cc.

GBC Board Members:

Peter Verwer, Bob Nation, Che Wall, Ken Maher,
Chris O'Donnell, Brendan Crotty, Daniel Grollo,
Warren Lear, Craig Heaton, Michael Barnes, Daniel
Labbad, Dennis O'Regan, Chris Johnson, Tony
Arnel

Minister for Environment
NSW Premier
VIC Premier
Shadow Minister for Primary Industries:
VIC Minister for Environment
NSW Minister for Environment
SA Minister for Administrative Services
SA Shadow Minister for Environment
Parliamentary Secretary
General Manager Woolmark
Aust Wool Growers Ltd
ACTU
TCFU

Senator the Hon Ian Campbell
The Hon Bob Carr MP
The Hon Steve Bracks MP
The Hon Duncan Gay
The Hon John Thwaites MP
The Hon Bob Debus MP
The Hon Michael Wright MP
The Hon Iain Evans MP
The Hon Teresa Gambaro MP
Leah Paff
Charles Ollsen
Steven Mullins
Igor Nossar