Recycling program for old ACT Government computers saves $3m

By Gordon Taylor

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ACT Chief Minister Andrew Barr still uses his old laptop when in the Legislative Assembly but outdated software and general wear and tear means it is time for the device to be replaced.

It could be disposed of at Canberra's Mugga Lane landfill site, but such disposal puts an added burden on the system, and wastes the value the computer still holds.

To stop this from happening the Government has been working with Canberra-based company Reuse-RecycleIT to recycle computers that have reached their "end of life".

Through this partnership, which began in 2009, 100 per cent of the ACT Government's excess and superseded IT equipment has been saved from landfill.

PHOTO: Chief Minister Andrew Barr discusses recycling his old laptop with James Falzon from Reuse-RecycleIT (ABC News: Gordon Taylor)

MAP: Canberra 2600

The Government has earned $3 million from the sale of the old equipment.

Once the old devices are collected from the Government, they are then shipped to a reprocessing plant where the hard drives are sanitised and remanufactured, and any other repairs are undertaken.

The remanufactured computers are then ready to be sold, usually to developing countries, with many of the "new" devices being used by aid agencies.

A recent consignment from the ACT Government was sent to South Africa, after it was purchased by a United Nation aid agency for use in schools.

Mr Barr said the computers came from a diverse range of government workplaces including schools, hospitals and the public service.

"Through this process we are not only getting some value back for equipment," he said.

"But we are able to ensure that we're supporting disadvantaged communities both nationally and internationally where this equipment can often end up with a second useful life."

Reuse-RecycleIT estimates more than 100,000 pieces of equipment from the ACT Government including computer, printers and projectors have been recycled since 2009.

Topics: recycling-and-waste-management, environment, government-and-politics, canberra-2600, act, australia

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