

BIR CONVENTION - Francis Veys to step down as BIR director-general

By Martin Hayes

Shanghai 26/05/2013 - Francis Veys, who has been director-general of the Brussels-based BIR for 32 years, is retiring this year and will step down from his position in August. He will be replaced at the beginning of September by Alexandre Delacoux, currently general manager.

The Bureau of International Recycling (BIR) is meeting in China for its bi-annual convention, with around 940 delegates from the global recycling industry attending. This is below the levels seen travelling to some recent meetings - a record in excess of 1,400 was set last year.

Veys said at a briefing here that difficult economic times were proving to be a constraint, with many companies in the sector cutting back on travel.

Among the topics for discussion this week will be tight margins that are hurting many firms profitability, concerns over protectionism barriers, as opposed to free trade, as well as tightness in the scrap market.

BIR President Bjorn Grufman noted that there was perhaps around 30 percent less scrap available in Western markets, compared to a few years ago.

"A lot of companies are suffering as margins are low. We need to see more scrap coming back into the market."

BIR membership is growing, however, deposite challenging market conditions. Over the last year, some 73 companies have joined the group, including trader Trafigura Pte.

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