

BIR Heralds Success Of Radioactivity Initiative

By

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The Bureau of International Recycling announced a major success in its efforts to support international institutions in their work towards equitable environmental guidelines and legislation.

BIR has been actively involved in the drafting of the [**Report on the Improvement of the Management of Radiation Protection Aspects in the Recycling of Metal Scrap**](#) recently published by the United Nations as the result of a joint initiative of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the European Commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency, with major input from the recycling industry.

Under the auspices of the UN/ECE, a team of specialists on radioactive contaminated metal scrap had been brought together in 1999, with representatives from steel and recycling industry, governments (via their national recycling associations) and international organizations to propose solutions acceptable for the harmonization of legislation at an international level. Their work was completed this year with the publication of the report.

The main purpose of the publication is to give recommendations on how to minimize the probability of any undesirable introduction of radioactive materials into the recycling loop, ensuring better protection of workers and the general public.

Apart from providing an overview of the scrap metal industry, the report explains how, despite stringent controls, radioactive substances can become incorporated into scrap and finished metal, how they can be detected and how to respond once detection is positive. In consequence, it represents an invaluable and highly recommendable guideline for prevention, detection and appropriate reaction with regards to radioactive material in scrap metal.

Further details are available in the 'News' section on the BIR website www.bir.org