

Tyres



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ELV workshop - Renault lays claim to recycling coup

French car manufacturer Renault has achieved what it describes as a 'European best performance' by incorporating 17% recycled plastics into its Laguna III model. And while most of this recycled material was being recovered from vehicle scrap, a small proportion was coming from post-consumer 'household' sources, it was revealed at a joint BIR Shredder Committee and Media & Metal Separation Committee workshop entitled 'The EU ELV Directive and the challenges for car manufacturers and shredder operators'.

Jean-Philippe Hermine from the car manufacturer's strategic environmental planning department explained that 'more than 100 parts' of the Laguna III were manufactured from recycled plastics. In this way, the company was opening up new outlets for recycled material which, in any case, was less expensive than the virgin alternative. Renault was aiming to boost the proportion of recycled plastics in its cars from an average of 10% at present to 20% by the year 2015, the speaker confirmed.

'Dismantling and post-shredding plastic sorting are complementary and both necessary to fulfil recycling quotas,' he also stated.

JPSA Peugeot Citroen was reliant on the expertise of shredder operators and vehicle dismantlers, the workshop was told by Dr Rozenn Le Borgne from the company's environmental affairs department. 'It is really a professional domain,' she said. As a result of post-shredding technologies, shredder operators were best placed in economic terms to achieve the EU Directive's objectives for the year 2015, according to the speaker. She insisted: 'We have to find solutions together to reach the targets, otherwise there is no way to reach them.'

According to European Shredder Group Vice-Chairman Manuel Burnand of Derichebourg Environment in France, the first of the ELV Directive's targets of 85% recovery was eminently achievable with more dismantling or plastics recycling - although 95% 'seems to be unlikely' under free market conditions, he added. High oil prices would help to underpin the plastics recycling chain, he also observed.

Let the good times roll for used tyres

A liberal quantity of good news was provided at the BIR Tyres Committee meeting in Monte-Carlo by its Chairman Barend Ten Bruggencate of the Netherlands, particularly with regard to the rising volume of EU scrap tyres going forward for material or energy recovery rather than for landfilling.

On the legislative front, Mr Ten Bruggencate noted that used tyres were featured on the so-called 'indicative list' of commodities to be considered at EU level in the context of when a waste ceases to be a waste.

A positive outcome to these deliberations would provide a significant boost to tyre recycling, he suggested. Meanwhile, research projects conducted by several eminent bodies had ruled out health and environmental risks associated with the use of rubber granulate in artificial turf. In the Netherlands alone, he added, some 400 sports pitches comprised rubber granulate derived from used tyres.

Mr Ten Bruggencate went on to quote latest figures from the European Tyre & Rubber Manufacturers Association (ETRMA) which indicated that some 89% of the 2.789 million tonnes of used tyres arising in the EU-15 during 2006 were subjected to reuse (4%), export (6%), retreading (12%), material recovery (37%) or energy recovery (30%) at a total management cost of Euro 600 million. For the EU-27, arisings in the same year totalled 3.238 million tonnes, of which 87% were subjected to one of the above-mentioned 'treatment' options, including 34.1% material recovery and 31.6% energy recovery.

At the same time, many countries in the EU faced the problem of 'historic stockpiles' of used tyres which, across the 27 member states, amounted to

some 5.5 million tonnes - equivalent to 1.73 times the total arisings in 2004. Mr Ten Bruggencate pointed out that a large proportion of this total was the result of 'illegal dumping'.

Falling costs

The guest speaker at the Monte-Carlo meeting outlined the progress of Aliapur in helping tyre companies in France to meet their producer responsibility obligations. Logistics Manager Pierre Henri Remy confirmed that Aliapur had handled some 284 000 tonnes of used tyres in 2007, with around 122 000 tonnes going for material recovery. Companies responsible for putting new tyres on the French market pay towards financing Aliapur's activities which cover collection, transport, traceability and research/development. According to Mr Remy, these costs had fallen since the formation of Aliapur five years ago. □



BIR Tyres Committee Chairman Barend Ten Bruggencate of the Netherlands.