

## PRESS RELEASE

---

### *Recent BIR World Recycling Convention & Exhibition in Miami (1-4 June 2014)*

## **Tyres Committee: End-of-life tyre market takes intercontinental turn**

Brussels, 6 June 2014

---

America's end-of-life tyre (ELT) landscape has been transformed over the last 20 years or so, the BIR Tyres & Rubber Committee meeting in Miami on June 2 was informed by Charles Astafan, General Manager of US-based tyre recycling equipment manufacturer Columbus McKinnon.

From the point in the early 1990s when domestic stockpiles contained a total of more than 2bn used tyres, all 50 US states now have some form of ELT regulation and stockpiles are down to 100 million tyres (with 75 million in one state). There is now "very high utilisation" of scrap tyres in the USA, with recent statistics showing around 38% going into tyre-derived fuel, 24% into ground rubber and 8% into civil engineering applications.

Industry consolidation has become "a big thing in the US", with six companies controlling 85% of all tyres. At the same time, "competition for (scrap) tyres is driving tipping fees down", Mr Astafan told delegates. Indeed, a shortage of material has emerged in certain geographical markets, partly due to shipments between continents. "Years ago, people would never have thought this would happen due to the high cost of moving material," he said.

However, Mr Astafan went on to warn that "new, higher-value markets are required for the industry to continue to grow", describing existing markets as "fragile".

---

**BIR – REPRESENTING THE FUTURE LEADING RAW MATERIAL SUPPLIERS**

---

Further insight into the US market was provided by Michael Blumenthal, Vice President of the Rubber Manufacturers Association. In reviewing ASTM standards for scrap tyre-derived materials, he noted the completion in May of a three-year approval process for a new standard specification relating to loose-fill rubber used as a safety surface under and around playground equipment, covering performance requirements, sampling, testing, size requirements, and metal and fluff content. A similar project for synthetic turf infill is expected to be completed later this year, with the issues to be finalised including amounts of non-rubber material and frequency of testing.

An overview of recent ELT developments in Europe was provided in Miami by BIR Tyres & Rubber Committee Chairman Barend Ten Bruggencate of VACO and RecyBEM Director Kees van Oostenrijk, both of the Netherlands. They emphasised the preparatory work and lobbying efforts already undertaken to facilitate a decision on end-of-waste status for ELT-derived granulates and tyre casings for retreading, with Mr Ten Bruggencate describing this as “an extremely big step”.

Mr van Oostenrijk agreed with Mr Astafan that the ELT market has become subject to “growing interaction from continent to continent”. He also estimated the global market volume at around 12m tonnes.

ends