

PRESS RELEASE

Development in international agreement on inadvertent radioactive contamination of traded scrap and semis

Vienna, 31 January 2012

Vienna, Austria. This week, government experts at the International Atomic Energy Agency are intent on finalising the draft *'Code of Conduct on the Transboundary Movement of Scrap Metal and Semi-finished Products of the Metal Recycling and Production Industries that may inadvertently contain radioactive material'*.

Large scrap yards and metal melting facilities that are at risk of inadvertent radioactive contamination should have invested in monitoring equipment. By doing so, they are best placed to monitor for radioactive sources that governments lost control of or never controlled, and so give a service to society as well as ensure the quality of their products. The positive experience from the Spanish Protocol, a voluntary agreement, has shown that the recycling sector's cooperation is the key to solving such contamination problems. Currently the scope of the Code of Conduct includes both ferrous and all non-ferrous metals as scrap and semi-finished products.

At the meeting, industry is represented by experts from the scrap sector: Mr Ross Bartley of the world federation of the recycling industries BIR, as well as national association experts such as Dr. Passvoss (Germany), Dr. Alvaro Rodriguez de Sanabria (Spain), and Mr. John Gilstrap and Mr. Ray Turner (USA).

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In essence, it is proposed that every transboundary movement of ferrous and non-ferrous scrap metal or semi-product will need to be monitored for radiation and a 'Radiation Monitoring Report' should be provided in paper form or electronically. Mr Bartley explains: "Not every metal is at risk of inadvertently containing radioactive material, for example primary aluminium semi-finished products such as ingot, slab, coil or billet should be considered for exclusion from the scope of this Code of Conduct".

Following this weeks' work, the Code of Conduct will have to pass through the IAEA Board of Governors and the General Conference for political agreement.

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