

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **BIR World Recycling Convention & Exhibition Athens, 21-23 May 2007**

#### **International Environment Council: Worries over impact of EU Shipment Regulations**

Worries over the impact of revised EU Shipment Regulations dominated the International Environment Council (IEC) meeting in Athens, with BIR Environmental & Technical Director Ross Bartley warning of the possibility that important secondary raw material flows - such as steel scrap moving from the EU to Turkey - could be adversely affected.

Due to be applied from July 12 this year, the revision is also threatening to undermine commercial confidentiality by requiring supplier, seller and buyer details to appear on a single Annex VII form signed by the person arranging the shipment, the consignee and the recovery facility. "This is really a badly thought through concept," Mr Bartley lamented.

Delegates learned that BIR, among others, has put forward possible solutions to the business confidentiality issue, including the idea of a secure web repository for webforms/faxes. The world recycling body also sent out a press release during the Athens Convention to reinforce its concerns over the Annex VII loss of confidentiality and the potential for disruptions to EU export trade owing to the slowness of some governments in confirming to the EU that they will allow imports of recyclables, many of which their domestic industries have bought and used in large volumes for

many years. At the meeting in Athens, Mr Bartley expressed confidence that a response from China would be received ahead of July 12 and that a response from India had been made.

Also at the IEC meeting in Athens, Mr Bartley confirmed the start of the United Nations' Partnership Programme relating to computer recycling. Meanwhile, treatment guidelines from the organisation's Mobile Phone Partnership Programme had been published and were now to be tested - a process in which interested parties from the recycling industry could involve themselves, he pointed out.

The United Nations had also produced a publication containing recommendations on monitoring and response procedures for radioactive scrap metal which, according to Mr Bartley, "placed a big burden on the scrap industry". IEC Chairman Alvaro Rodriguez Martinez of Energis SA in Spain complained that the "finder pays" rather than the "polluter pays" principle was being applied erroneously to radioactive sources discovered in scrap.

Since its launch at the 2006 Autumn Convention in Brussels, BIR's "Tools for Environmentally Sound Management" has already been translated into Romanian, it was revealed at the Athens meeting. The publication is designed to assist recovery and recycling companies in implementing an ISO-compliant Environmental Management System (EMS) incorporating the OECD's Core Performance Elements. The document provided an efficient route to introducing an ESM regime - particularly for smaller companies with limited resources, argued Mr Rodriguez Martinez.

In his guest presentation, the Secretary General of the Hellenic Ministry of the Environment Evangelos Baltas described solid waste as "an important source of pollution and loss of resources". Through a number of measures, many of them enshrined in Greek law since 2001, the country had achieved a recycling rate of 20% and was aiming to reach 23% by the end of 2007, he said.

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