

PRESS RELEASE

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Plastics Committee: Concern over EU shipment regulations

Problems that could arise for exporters as a result of the revision of EU Shipment Regulations came under scrutiny at the BIR Plastics Committee meeting in Athens. Past Chairman Peter Daalder of Dutch company Daly Plastics BV explained that, from July 12 this year, EU shipments of materials designated as waste were required to be accompanied by a form which effectively revealed the name of suppliers to the customer. Businessmen would therefore suffer potentially huge adverse consequences of this loss of confidentiality, he suggested.

Current BIR Plastics Committee Chairman Surendra Borad of Belgium-based Gemini Corporation NV also pointed out that, at the time of the meeting in Athens, China had yet to respond to these new EU regulations. If no reply is received ahead of July 12, it is possible that EU exports of plastic scrap could become subject to time-consuming and expensive "red list" requirements.

According to Jacques Musa of Veolia Propreté France Recycling, other major concerns surrounding exports to China included "constant" hikes in entrance taxes and inland transport costs, as well as the strength of the Euro in relation to the US dollar. "Reinforcement of quality controls by the Chinese authorities must be taken

into consideration,” he added.

As for the French market, Mr Musa noted a decline in available volumes of all forms of secondary plastic at a time of increasing demand. According to Marc Figueras, who also works for Veolia Propreté France Recycling, conditions in the Spanish market were quite healthy despite a period of “excessive” raw material prices. In Germany and the Netherlands, meanwhile, recyclers were proving to be “very competitive”, noted Mr Daalder.

In Australia, plastics consumption was largely “flat” and yet reprocessing was recording “double digit” annual growth, observed Mr Borad. At a time of “soaring” exports to China, Australia had set itself a plastics recycling rate goal of 30% by 2008. Also reporting on the Indian market, the Plastics Committee Chairman noted that only 26 industrial units were authorised to import plastics scrap - mainly in the form of LDPE and PET - and that no new permits were being issued.

Commenting on the South African market, Bertrand Reverdy of Green Bird in the Reunion Islands explained that a “booming” domestic economy had created a huge demand for packaging materials. These included PP and HDPE, as well as PET bottles which were currently enjoying a recycling rate of around 10%, he elaborated.

PET recycling also provided the focus for the Plastics Committee’s guest speaker Corrado Dentis of Dentis SRL in Italy, a company which operates two lines with a combined mechanical recycling capacity of some 35,000 tonnes of PET bottles each year. Its end products had been sold exclusively into the fibre market only a few years ago but the customer base had since expanded to include manufacturers of sheet material, strapping, bottles and automotive parts. According to Mr Dentis, modern recycling technology could overcome any issues relating to quality but the lack of available raw material constituted “a major problem” in Europe.

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