

PRESS INFORMATION

Brussels, 14th November 2006

BIR Autumn Round-Table Sessions Brussels, Belgium 30-31 October 2006

Meeting of the International Environment Council *Monday, 30th October 2006*

A new BIR publication designed to assist recovery and recycling companies in implementing an ISO-compliant Environmental Management System (EMS) with integrated OECD core performance elements was given its official fanfare at the latest meeting of the International Environment Council (IEC). "Tools for Environmentally Sound Management" is available freely to all recovery and recycling companies worldwide via the BIR website, while BIR members themselves will also receive a hard copy.

Frans Bijlhouwer of Quality Consultants, who helped devise the "Tools", explained to delegates in Brussels: "You don't need to invent anything - just customise these tools and make them fit what is going on in your own organisation."

According to BIR's Environmental & Technical Director Ross Bartley, "Tools for Environmentally Sound Management" was the first to demonstrate integration of the OECD Core Performance Elements and therefore complemented the different systems in place in different countries.

In his review of legislative developments, Mr Bartley confirmed that guidelines would

be published shortly on the environmentally sound management of used and end-of-life mobile phones as part of the Basel Convention Partnership Programme. The next step at UN-EP would be to focus on electronic waste, including computers.

Mr Bartley also outlined an important development in the “end-of-waste” debate: the rapporteur of the Environment Committee of the European Parliament had drawn up a priority list of materials for study in the context of the wider review of when waste ceases to be waste. This list included a number of materials relevant to BIR members, including paper, metals and used tyres, but significantly failed to prioritise second-hand clothing.

Meanwhile, BIR was lobbying for secondary raw materials to be left outside of the scope of REACH, the EU’s new chemicals policy. Taking ferrous scrap as his example, Mr Bartley suggested this material should not be covered by REACH because it represented “an intermediate” which was used to produce another substance and because it was destined for an IPPC installation, namely a steelworks, and because ferrous scrap competed with iron ore which is itself not covered by REACH.

Among the contributions from other delegates to the IEC meeting in Brussels, President of the US Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries Robin Wiener confirmed that a recently-signed Memorandum of Understanding would usher in the first-ever national mercury switch removal programme. The automotive and steel industries had agreed to contribute in equal measure to a US\$ 4 million fund, from which dismantlers and recyclers would be paid US\$ 1 for each switch. Roll-out of the programme was expected to begin early in 2007.

Ruggero Alocci of Assofermet in Italy explained to delegates that, after a long wait, new national waste legislation had been introduced in April this year. However, following a change of government in Italy, waste regulations were to come under further review - thereby opening up the possibility of another shift in the definition of secondary raw materials, he said.

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