



**BIR**

Bureau of International Recycling

**BIR is the international trade association of the recycling industries. More than 50 countries are represented through their national trade associations and individual companies which are involved in recycling. BIR comprises four commodity divisions: iron and steel, non ferrous metals, paper and textiles, and has committees dealing with stainless steel and special alloys, plastics and rubber. BIR's primary goals are to promote recycling and recyclability, thereby conserving natural resources, protecting the environment and facilitating free trade of secondary raw materials.**

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Brussels, 3rd November 2004**

### **Chinese buyers remain a dominant force**

Significant progress towards improving the UK's bottle recycling performance was highlighted by the guest speaker at the **BIR Plastics Round-Table** in London.

According to **Lee Clayton, General Manager of Delleve Plastics Ltd** of St Helens, his company has invested £4 million (€ 6 million) in a bottle recycling plant in association with the UK government-backed Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP). Currently the only plant in the UK equipped to process mixed bottles, it has a capacity of 20,000 tonnes per annum and uses infra red technology to sort the different plastics. As well as producing industrial feedstock, the plant also manufactures 'added value' goods, including 7000 tonnes of drainage pipe each year. The company was also certified to ship processed material to the Far East, Mr Clayton underlined in London.

The meeting heard that one of the main problems encountered by Delleve Plastics had been high contamination levels, with waste content in bottle collections running at around 37%. Mr Clayton commented: 'We can't afford for 37% of what we pay for to be waste - this situation could finish a business like ours.' He went on to describe as 'embarrassing' the UK's plastic bottle collection rate of around 5%, adding that there was no collection agency within 100 miles of his company's St Helens plant.

According to **Plastics Round-Table Chairman Peter Daalder of Daly Plastics BV** in The Netherlands, the guest presentation highlighted the substantial volumes of plastics being dispatched to Asia. Container hold-ups in China earlier in the year had underlined the potential risks associated with export business, he added. 'We have to take care of international markets

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but also of our local reproprocessors,' he observed. In his own market report, Mr Daalder suggested that Western Europe's plastics recycling industry was in reasonably good condition and was able to make money, although material availability remained a problem.

According to **Jacques Musa of Soulier** in France, Chinese buyers represented a dominant force and prices had risen every month since the previous BIR convention in May 2004. Noting that competition was very strong and that demand was outstripping supply, he warned: 'It will be difficult for some of the smaller and medium-size recycling companies to keep their heads above water in the current market conditions.' The report submitted by **Marc Figueras of Peninplastic SL** in Spain also contended that domestic recyclers were 'not always able to follow the price increases at the same pace as the Asian markets'.

**Surendra Kumar Borad of the Belgium-based Gemini Corporation** noted that, in response to inflationary prices, the Indian government had reduced the import duty on plastic scrap from 20% to 15%.

Before closing the meeting, Mr Daalder reiterated the need to create a single, authoritative list of plastic scrap specifications to avoid any confusion when trading around the world. Such a list would help in drawing up contracts, solving legal disputes and dealing with customs procedures. Mr Daalder hoped that it would be possible to bring together key parties to address this issue jointly.

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