



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.

PRESS RELEASE

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‘Stiff’ target for used tyre recovery

‘Mixed’ progress towards the ‘stiff’ EU target of 100% recovery of used tyres was reported at the **BIR Tyres Round-Table** in London by **guest speaker John Dorken, Director of the British Rubber Manufacturers’ Association**. The landfilling of whole tyres had been banned since 2003 and shredded tyres would not be accepted at landfill sites from July 2006. ‘And so we have less than two years to get our act together in Europe,’ he warned.

Reviewing progress to date, he noted that the Scandinavian countries had achieved 100% recovery several years ago whereas Spain, for example, had recorded a rate last year of just 40%. Some EU countries - notably the UK and Germany - had favoured a free market approach to achieving the target, whereas others had opted for producer responsibility schemes or tax systems.

Mr Dorken anticipated that producer responsibility schemes would be in place in most states by 2006, not least because these provided a strong management framework where an ‘immature’ market existed. Where no such producer scheme was put in place, however, manufacturers could be expected to remain fully involved and to help where practical, ‘particularly with monitoring and auditing systems’.

According to Mr Dorken, major manufacturers wanted ‘close involvement’ in the pursuit of the 100% recovery goal because of a ‘growing acceptance of producer responsibility in dealing with the environmental impact of products’. This approach reflected corporate social responsibility but also ‘enlightened self interest’ since ‘governments will turn to manufacturers if things go wrong and so there is some advantage in pre-empting this possibility,’ he said.

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The Dutch recycling scheme for used tyres would succeed because of the level of controls in place throughout, the Round-Table was told by its **Chairman, Barend Ten Bruggencate of VACO** in The Netherlands. He said: 'It is a totally controllable system because money is involved from the start. Also, all the stakeholders are checked and if they are not qualified, they are out.' All collectors had to be accredited to ISO 14001, he pointed out.

The scheme revolves around a fixed fee for recycling and a responsibility imposed on manufacturers and importers to collect scrap tyres at zero cost in line with market share. By the start of 2005, 20% of these scrap tyres by weight had to be recycled as raw materials in useful applications such as sports pitches and safety tiles, explained Mr Ten Bruggencate.

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