



**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, 30<sup>th</sup> January 2004**

### ***EU recycling traders' future under serious threat***

The Bureau of International Recycling and the European Federations EFR, EUROMETREC and ERPA express serious concern about the revision of the EU Waste Shipment Regulations, for which the European Council is now determining its position.

In particular, early in the legislative process, the Commission had added a 'notifier hierarchy' that would from 2006 seriously restrict licensed collectors, registered dealers, brokers and traders from carrying out their specialist business. Currently these businesses are licensed, registered or permitted by their national authorities. The Commission never publicly justified this 'notifier hierarchy', its origin remaining a mystery. This 'notifier hierarchy' restriction slipped through the EU Parliament's first reading and is now submitted to the Council. Without change, this legal text will damage currently well functioning markets, by removing the specialist operators.

As an example of the benefit of specialists, the role of a dealer/trader/broker in the management of metal containing drosses, ashes and residues has a long history of a most positive effect on the efficiency of the metal recycling industry, and is well recognized by the OECD for maintaining a functioning market.

For the whole range of other recycling materials (now up to 50% of all materials used by industry) no dealer, trader or broker would be allowed to arrange export to industrializing countries which require notifications, and no dealer, trader or broker in those materials would be allowed to arrange export to Latvia, Hungary, Malta, Poland and Slovakia, these requiring notification through the Accession Treaty arrangements. This will damage business, and unintended will encourage industrializing Countries wanting these materials, yet requiring notification, to drop their controls.

The role of a dealer/brokers/trader is similar to that of a real estate agent or an insurance agent. Their knowledge of the recycling market place is as specialist as the knowledge of estate agents and insurance agents of their 'market'. Preventing or

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restricting the real estate agent's activity will not make the house seller or house buyers task any easier, nor will preventing or restricting the insurance agent activity make the task of finding an insurance policy easier, more efficient or more cost effective, likewise the 'notifier hierarchy' is retrogressive.

BIR and the European Federations EFR, EUROMETREC and ERPA have been working on this issue over the past two years. BIR recently highlighted this threat at its 2003 World Recycling Convention urging action at national level, yet the text persists and time is running out.

As the Commission still supports curtailing the role of these specialists, and the European Parliament was not allowed to consider the issue, it is up to the Member State experts at the European Council of Ministers to support the very businessmen that their administrations license, register or permit.

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