



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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BIR Autumn Round-Table Sessions
Vienna, 27th-28th October 2003

**BIR International Environment Council
works on crucial EuroParl vote**

Time was running out to correct 'a very serious problem' contained in the revision of the EU trans-frontier shipment regulation governing the export of metals and other recyclables, the International Environment Council (IEC) meeting in Vienna on Monday, 27th October, was warned by BIR Environmental & Technical Director Ross Bartley. Although BIR had pressed the EU to fully transpose the 2001 Decision of the OECD, which recognised the role of the trader in maintaining a well-functioning market, the latest EU proposal was effectively 'writing the trader out of the market', he explained.

Mr Bartley confirmed that he would be contacting all National Associations ahead of a vote on amendments to these latest proposals in the European Parliament's Environment Committee during early November, and that he would be encouraging them to lobby their parliamentary representatives in a bid to counter amendments that were 'not good for the recycling industry as a whole'. Indeed, Mr Bartley considered that around half of the proposed amendments would be detrimental to recycling of which some were 'really, really bad'.

He underlined: 'We are coming to a critical moment over the next two weeks. We must make our views known and we must co-ordinate our activities.'

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Mr Bartley's comments followed a speech from Chris Cutchey of UK-based Catalyst Recycling Ltd which highlighted the fact that, under the latest shipment proposals, 'there is no room in the EU for the metal (waste) trader'. The proposals also required the provision of confidential commercial information with non-hazardous secondary material paperwork, including 'advising your supplier who your customer is', he complained.

Under the EU proposals, which prevent traders from notifying, every company would have need of its own specialist officer to arrange waste shipments while thousands of firms would be unable to move their "hazardous" recyclables, with 'disastrous effects on both the environment and also specialist recycling companies'.

This issue underlined the scale of the task facing the IEC, according to its Chairman Alvaro Rodriguez Martinez of Lajo y Rodriguez SA in Spain. The council had continued to gather together experts from around the world in order to generate a vital exchange of information on trade and environment issues. However, he called on all members to bring their information into the IEC so they can work together on solutions. 'You are the main experts on recycling,' he insisted. 'The IEC will help you - but you have to help the IEC.'

Two delegates in Vienna were able to provide valuable information about environmental developments in their own countries. Ruggero Alocci of Assofermet confirmed that two separate proceedings had been taking place in Italy over the waste definition issue, with one judge having forbidden the unloading of scrap from Third World countries if labelled as secondary raw material.

Ivana Radomirova, Executive Director of the Bulgarian Association of Metal Traders, confirmed that the waste management act introduced by her country in September would reduce the administrative burden on the recycling industry by replacing a permit regime with registration. In addition, newly-issued licences for scrap metal traders were to be of unlimited duration.

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