

## PRESS RELEASE

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### *Recent BIR World Recycling Convention & Exhibition in Singapore (19 - 22 May 2019)*

#### ***Shredder Committee:***

#### **China's shredder population surges to just short of US levels, latest statistics reveal**

**Brussels, 27 May 2019**

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In a "dramatic" development, the number of shredders installed within China has soared by around 250 over the last two years to a new total of 317, it was revealed to the latest BIR Shredder Committee meeting by its Chairman, Alton Scott Newell III of Newell Recycling Equipment in the USA.

Shredder numbers elsewhere in the world have been largely static, with the global total of 1158 comprising significant contributions from the USA and from Europe of, respectively, 322 and 300. Fourth on the list, and the only other country with a three-figure shredder population, is Japan on 110.

At the committee meeting in Singapore on May 21, the drama extended beyond these statistics as board member Torben Nørgaard Hansen of Denmark-based H. J. Hansen Recycling Industry Ltd AS showed a compelling video of a fire at his company's yard just outside of Copenhagen. Thought to have been caused by the addition of an e-bike containing a lithium-ion battery to an existing scrap pile, the fire developed within minutes but took three days to extinguish.

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**BIR – REPRESENTING THE FUTURE LEADING RAW MATERIAL SUPPLIERS**

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**BIR (aisbl)**  
Avenue Franklin Roosevelt 24  
1050 Brussels, Belgium

**T. +32 2 627 57 70**  
**F. +32 2 627 57 73**

**bir@bir.org**  
**www.bir.org**

Fires of this type “are getting more and more common”, Mr Hansen told delegates. Lithium-ion batteries represent a particular problem, he added, because of their proliferation and the impossibility of achieving 100% hand-sorting. “No way can you find them all,” he lamented. Doug Kramer of Spectrum Alloys LLC in the USA added: “Batteries like this are ridiculously powerful and extremely dangerous. We are dealing with a problem we didn’t create.”

Mr Hansen identified three possible options to help mitigate the impact of such incidents: temperature-sensing cameras trained on scrap piles; installation of seawater pumps; and the placement of tubes within scrap piles that are capable of delivering high-pressure water. Other delegates recommended the use of fire suppressants and, if possible, the practice of “shredding to zero” every day rather than allowing scrap piles to develop beyond a certain size.

Mr Newell revealed in Singapore that the BIR Shredder Committee intended to conduct a safety questionnaire for shredder owners and operators in order to build a picture of the different types of shredder incidents and their relative frequency, with the aim of promoting best avoidance and response practices.

Also during the Shredder Committee meeting, Dr Thomas Papageorgiou of Anamet SA in Greece outlined the “complexities” of compliance issues for shredder operators as a result of the EU’s Industrial Emissions Directive. Requirements include the implementation of an environmental management system with documented procedures, as well as waste acceptance and emissions monitoring procedures.

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