

PRESS RELEASE

Recent BIR World Recycling Convention (Round-Table Sessions) in Amsterdam (24-25 October 2016)

Stainless Steel & Special Alloys Committee:

Margins “still not sufficient”

Brussels, 27 October 2016

Persistent problems are continuing to challenge stainless steel scrap processors and mill producers, not the least of which is that “margins are still not sufficient”. So said Uwe Dierkes of German company Siegfried Jacob Metallwerke GmbH & Co. KG in his global market review presented to delegates at the BIR Stainless Steel & Special Alloys Committee meeting in Amsterdam on October 25.

Market participants had been hopeful of a stronger finish to the current year after nickel price gains in September, but sentiment was dampened early in the fourth quarter by a renewed weakening of the metal's value despite mine closure announcements in the Philippines and projections of a global nickel market deficit of up to 100,000 tons for 2016. Indeed, Mr Dierkes questioned the significance of the anticipated nickel deficit and of developments in the Philippines given “an estimated stock of 1m tons (of nickel) around the world”.

He went on to speak of “a big lack of confidence in the economic outlook” and expressed the hope that the US Presidential Election, once concluded, would bring about some “positive change”.

The rest of the meeting in Amsterdam was devoted to a guest presentation entitled “The challenge of recycling spent catalysts, metallic oxides and batteries”. Stéphane Chorlet, Sales & Marketing Vice President at Valdi-Groupe Eramet in France, explained that his company has developed its recycling knowledge around three families of industrial waste, namely spent catalysts from the chemical and petrochemical industries, batteries and metallic oxides/hydroxides, with the priorities of generating zero waste as well as cost efficiency for all parties involved.

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Mr Chorlet went on to reveal that Eramet has invested heavily in a brownfield project north of Clermont-Ferrand in central France where it will be maintaining the existing production of high speed steel and transferring the recycling technology currently used at two Valdi plants near Lyon and Limoges. Its recycling model, based on the pyrometallurgical approach, will be “unique” within Europe when operations commence at the beginning of 2017, Mr Chorlet declared to delegates.

It was also confirmed in Amsterdam that Rick Dobkin, Executive Vice President of Shapiro Metals, has joined the board of the BIR Stainless Steel & Special Alloys Committee as representative for the USA.

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