



Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee

Mr A Bryson  
Producer Responsibility Unit  
Waste Management Division  
DEFRA  
Ashdown House  
123 Victoria Road  
London SW1E 6DE

23<sup>rd</sup> March 2007

Dear Andrew.

**Re: Batteries Directive**

I am writing to present the LARAC response to the implementation of the Batteries and Accumulators Directive, which is contained below, and I thank you for the opportunity to respond.

The comments below are sent on behalf of the Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee (LARAC). LARAC is an association of well over 400 local authorities across England, Scotland Wales and Northern Ireland whose waste management and recycling professionals' co-ordinate and operate waste management services. Membership is drawn from all types of authority including statutory Waste Collection (WCA), Waste Disposal (WDA) and Unitary.

Overleaf are our detailed comments with regard to the policy papers and general comments.

If you have any queries on this response or would like to discuss the matter further then please contact me on (phone) or (email).

Yours faithfully,

Nicole Atkinson  
LARAC Policy Team



Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee

## Batteries and Accumulators Directive

The Government must review and learn the lessons from the WEEE debacle. This will mean taking a strong lead from the start, setting firm but reasonable targets and monitoring compliance at every stage during implementation.

Compliance schemes: With regards to the different approaches LARAC feels that either option 1 or 3 should be considered.

An additional problem with only one compliance scheme and lots of collectors would be that collectors would choose the lowest cost per tonne options, without regard to the fact that a mix of batteries is needed to ensure compliance. There may be some collections that are high yielding but expensive, but DEFRA must ensure that all collections that are needed take place to ensure compliance and should take advice from WRAP following the conclusion of their current work.

With option 3, LARAC feel that DEFRA to consider a limitation on the number of schemes that could be set up. This is due to the fact that unlike WEEE, where there are good collection systems in place and a general level of awareness of how to dispose of these items amongst the public, for batteries this is not the case. There are few well established collection systems and so the need for good communication will be needed. There is also the factor that whereas for most items of WEEE it is not possible to dispose of these items in the household wheeled bin, for batteries this would be a simple action. With fewer compliance schemes it would be an easier task to co-ordinate the communication element that will be essential if the UK is to meet its challenging targets.

However, if restricting the number of compliance schemes isn't an option, then LARAC feels that there should be a fee payable by each compliance scheme towards a communications campaign to ensure consistency of message. This could be co-ordinated on a national level through one body, e.g. WRAP but there would also be a need for communications on a regional, sub-regional and local level. Compliance schemes do not have the experience of running large scale communication campaigns

There is also the issue of communication with collection schemes and LARAC agrees that this would be easier through one body. However, if there are multiple compliance schemes, maybe there could be an "administrative" body to act as a point of contact but also to be responsible for data collection.



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De minimis producers: LARAC agrees that all producers should have responsibility as long as it is fair and proportionate.

Collections: Mandatory interim targets are supported, although care will be needed on sanctions or penalties for non-compliance. These must be clear from the outset, probably a soft touch/no penalties in the first couple of years, but a promise that the Government will be more directive/tougher if producers don't achieve the initial targets.

There should obviously be no duty placed on Local Authorities (LAs) to collect batteries. However there should be the opportunity for LAs to collect and be recompensed. DEFRA should ensure that a fair and equitable payment mechanism should be set out that allows all LAs that wish to collect batteries, to be able to collect them and receive cost reimbursements. There shouldn't be a system where high density/high yield areas receive funding whereas more rural areas do not, as all should have the opportunity to collect. This should also be important to ensure the targets are achieved.

If the WEEE approach is adopted in relation to compliance schemes then there is a danger that Local Authorities could be approached by numerous schemes, leading to the communication issues mentioned in the policy paper in relation to schools.

Whilst LAs have a part to play in collections, they should not be relied on to achieve the targets and compliance schemes should be working with other bodies to ensure a wide collection system.

When setting up collection systems, a "coherent national collection infrastructure" that fits in with a national message should be considered. All retailer stores should be include, not only within regions, so that the public know that all "Argos" stores, "B&Q" stores, "Tesco" stores etc are collection points and it isn't different when they go to a different area.

Whilst I understand that WRAP have started work in relation to this, it is most important that ways are found of exempting small quantities of mixed batteries from the registration or permit requirements of the Hazardous Waste Directive, Waste Framework Directive and the Transport of Dangerous Goods legislation to stop disincentives for collection partners to engage.