

Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy

Public Consultation:

The Tractamotors Group is a tyre Producer in Ireland.

As suggested in the “Public Consultation Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy” document our commentary relates specifically to the area of Tyre Waste, Tyre Recycling and the need for a more comprehensive and inclusive proposal for Truck and Agricultural tyre waste as the plan for a Circular Economy is further developed.

Section 15 – Extended Producer Responsibility

As the Tyre EPR scheme is expanded to include Truck tyres, there is a need to recognise that these tyres are not a waste after “first life” and have been designed by the Manufacturers to be reused several times with a re-grooving and retreading strategy, which greatly reduces the net waste. The Waste Management (Tyres & Waste Tyre) Regulations 2017 presume incorrectly that truck tyres are a single use product. It is therefore not appropriate to apply a vEMC charge on all truck tyre purchases.

This may be a perfect opportunity to eco-modulate the environmental charge on retreaded tyres which can extend the life of a truck tyre carcass by a factor of 4.

It is important that, in the calculation of the vEMC charge applied to Truck, Agricultural and Industrial tyres, the charge reflects the actual cost of recycling the tyre waste. In the case of car tyres, the charge applied is €2.80 plus vat. Car tyre waste is collected and recycled for €130/tonne which equates to approximately €1.20 per tyre. The balance of €1.60 per tyre far exceeds the cost of running an efficient and cost effective Compliance Scheme, and while it is reasonable to expect Producers to pay the total cost of recycling their end of life products, it is equally reasonable to expect Department oversight on any additional costs particularly, as in the case of tyre waste, the Department has granted approval to a single compliance scheme and additional costs affect the competitiveness of transport companies and farm businesses.

No mention of the challenges posed by Brexit and the inevitable diverging waste policies has been addressed or recognised by the public consultation document. Environmental charges which are not calculated at market rates will lead to market distortion and evasion of waste legislation in Ireland.

Section 16 – Waste Enforcement

Today, under the Waste Management (Tyres & Waste Tyre) Regulations 2017, Local Authorities have only got an enforcement option through the Court system which is time consuming, costly and ineffective. Minor and persistent breaches of the Regulations cannot be effectively enforced. The RPS Review (commissioned by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment and on which the resultant 2017 Regulations are based) of the Producer Responsibility Initiative Model in Ireland, published in July 2014, identified enforcement as a key component of compliance and made several recommendations in relation to fixed penalty notices as a key component in the drive for

compliance. Any new Waste Action Plan must consider the introduction of fixed penalty notices.

16.5 Consultation Questions - Waste Enforcement

What, in your view, are the factors leading to waste crime (please tick one box)

Ineffective enforcement by the authorities	
Ineffective penalties	✓
Waste Market factors	
Lack of awareness	
Other	

Section 17: Waste Data and Waste Flows

“The EPA is responsible for compiling a variety of official waste (and other) statistics and compile validated data in line with reporting timelines under EU legislation. Such data is largely historical and is often reported with a time lag of 18 months or later, depending on the reporting requirements”, so says the public consultation document, yet the tyre information available from the EPA website is dated 2014. The Waste Management (Tyres & Waste Tyres) Regulations 2017 require at a minimum annual reporting of statistical information by the approved compliance scheme to the EPA. This information is not yet available on the EPA website.

This does not satisfy the the objective stated in section 7 “*For businesses, the circular economy reduces costs, improves the raw material supply chain and offers opportunities such as new business models and markets*”. New business models can only be identified with the provision of timely and accurate data supplied by the statutory bodies charged with collecting and publishing this data.

There should be an obligation on Compliance Schemes collecting waste data from stakeholders to design reporting protocols which recognise the way in which these businesses operate. In the case of the reporting requirements under the Waste Management (Tyres & Waste Tyre) Regulations 2017, Producers and Retailers are defined as distinct entities. Many tyre Producers trade concurrently as retailers. The reporting protocols in place do not recognise this reality and as a result, reporting cannot be systemised resulting in manual intervention, which in turn places an unreasonable administrative burden on what are largely SMEs. Producer Retailers ae required to report a portion of their trading activity to the Producer Register and additionally to the approved Compliance Scheme. There is no compatibility between the reporting protocols required by these two distinct entities.

As an example, there is no mechanism to receive credit for tyre exports by Retailers, warranty claims returned to manufacturers residing outside of the jurisdiction, truck tyres presented for retreading or tyres fitted as part of a tyre management programme, where tyres are rented and charged by the millimetres of rubber used or by the kilometres driven to transport companies.

Consideration needs to be given to stakeholders willing to provide accurate recycling data but unable to do so because the reporting protocols ignore the category trading model.

With the expansion of “tyres and waste tyres scheme” as outlined in section 15.5 as a short-term objective, the reporting requirements need to be adjusted significantly to reduce the administrative reporting burden on stakeholders. Agricultural and Industrial tyre waste comprise less than 15% of the total tyre waste stream by weight, yet there are 31 reporting categories in the Regulations whilst there is only one reporting category each required for car and truck tyres which comprise the bulk of the remaining 85% of the waste stream by weight.

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