

# ERDO-WG – EC DG ENER – ENEF Workshop

Supporting small European Member States in responding to  
and reporting on the EU Waste Directive

Luxembourg 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> December 2013

## 1 Summary

The workshop was organised jointly by the ERDO working group, the waste working group of the ENEF and the DG ENER of the European commission. After three introductory presentations, the work of six existing groupings concerned with waste management in the European Community was summarised. This was followed by individual presentations from 10 Member States and a discussion session on how to improve collaboration and facilitate responses to the Directive. The workshop was attended by 35 representatives from Member States and EC officials. The agenda is attached to this note and the presentations have been uploaded to the websites of the ERDO working group ([www.erdo-wg.eu](http://www.erdo-wg.eu)) and of the ENEF ([http://ec.europa.eu/energy/nuclear/forum/risks/waste\\_disposal\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/energy/nuclear/forum/risks/waste_disposal_en.htm)).

The workshop provided a good overview of the requirements placed on Member States by the Directive, of the help that can be given by the groups represented, and of the status in numerous Member States. It was clear that, in particular, small Member States face major challenges in meeting the Directive's requirements, that cooperated efforts between Member States can help, and that the single largest problem is the lack of adequate resources within the small Member States.

## 2 Overviews

Following welcome statements by the three organisations, the objectives of the meeting were set out. These were:

- to emphasise the fact that the waste Directive is a key document affecting all Member States however large and small,
- to provide an opportunity for Member States to present the status of their preparations and the challenges that they are facing,
- to discuss how cooperation between Member States might ease the burden for all, and
- to identify the specific areas where such cooperation might be of most value.

Thomas Kirchner of DG ENER informed the workshop of the status of the transposition of the Directive into the legal framework of Member States. 15 Member States had completed transposition by the deadline of August 13 and 13 Member States have achieved only partial or full transposition as yet. He emphasised that Member States should not confuse national reporting, for which the ENSREG provides guidelines, with a national programme, for which the guidelines have been produced by the ENEF waste working group. He also emphasised that “wait and see” is not an option and that a regional approach can be a pragmatic first step but it is not an excuse for Member States taking no action.

Gunnar Buckau then presented key aspects of the guidelines, which have been produced by the ENEF working group. He highlighted the items which are of particular importance for regional cooperation and stressed that significant challenges would arise relating to the cost implications of sharing programmes or even facilities.

Charles McCombie, speaking for the ERDO working group, laid out the potential benefits of Member States cooperating through all stages of waste management from sharing knowledge up to sharing facilities, including waste disposal projects. He drew attention to the work which the ERDO working group has already done in this area and which is available on the website of the group.

### **3 Presentations on specific EC working groups and initiatives**

Richard Adams of the ENEF transparency group pointed out that this aspect had been largely ignored before the Fukushima accident. It is now seen as critical in winning public trust. He presented a provocative list of questions which Member States should ask themselves when reviewing the adequacy of the transparency programmes.

Bengt Hedberg of ENSREG overviewed the work of this regulator body since its founding in 2007. Its two working groups of most relevance to the current topic are working group 2 on spent fuel and radioactive waste management and working group 3 on transparency. ENSREG's chief role in connection with the waste Directive is defining the structure and form of the reports which are required to be submitted to the European Commission every three years.

Ray Kowe described the efforts being undertaken by the newly established IGD-TP subgroup that is tasked with helping small Member States. IGD-TP is primarily focused on encouraging cooperation in research and development within the European community. Two workshops have been organised and a major conference is planned to take place on 24<sup>th</sup> to 26 June 2014 in Manchester, UK. In addition, the EC will host a workshop in Brussels in March and topics for the Manchester conference could be chosen then.

Christophe Davies summarised the Euratom programme for research and training, emphasising the benefits that small States could gain from participation. Around 75% of the EC resources in this area are allocated to activities run through the IGD-TP, which is the industry-led body whose

Executive Group is composed of waste management organisations from the more advanced Member States.

Gianluca Ferraro informed the meeting about the new Energy-Transparency Centre of Knowledge which is being established at JRC-IET to monitor public participation in energy policy and which has chosen radioactive waste management for the topic of a pilot project. Finally in this section, Tomaz Zagar described the Newlancer Project, which has just finished and has resulted in a catalogue of research projects in which new programmes can participate.

## **4 Presentations by Member States**

Presentations were given by 10 Member States, including some with nuclear power, some with no nuclear power as yet, and some with no intention of ever moving to nuclear power. As mentioned above, the presentations are available on the websites of the organising Working Groups. No attempt is made to summarise them here. It was very clear, however, that those Member States with operating nuclear plants were almost the only ones that are likely to have no large problems in meeting the requirements of the Directive concerning submission of a credible waste management strategy and programme by the 2015 deadline. A number of Member States reported that a dual track strategy including multinational options had been adopted or was being considered in their countries.

## **5 Discussions and Conclusion**

The second day of the meeting was devoted to discussions, based around the following list of topics prepared overnight by the ERDO-WG participants:

- What are the biggest problems / challenges that MS are facing in trying to meet Directive requirements?
- Can we identify and prioritise a list of possible topics for collaborative development to improve and harmonise national RWM programmes?
- Discuss practicalities of including a dual-track approach in a national policy and translating it into the national programme.
- Identify mechanisms for funding any / all of these projects, including distribution of funding between R&D and strategic planning.
- Identify and prioritise a list of possible topics for collaborative research that can be included in Horizon 2020 and discuss research funding distribution.
- What are the financial implications for small MS of establishing a waste management programme that will meet Directive requirements?

- Are there possibilities for better cooperation / coordination between the various groups that are active in this area (see section 3 above)?

The issue that was most discussed concerned establishing mechanisms for financially supporting small MS in their efforts to comply with Directive requirements. It seemed to participants that the funding provided by the EC to support MS in radioactive waste management was heavily weighted towards research activities that can mostly benefit the advanced programmes. Support for strategic initiatives to enhance waste management programmes in the smaller Member States appears to be difficult to obtain. Commission officials pointed out that there are mechanisms for financing the travel and subsistence costs of MS participants in formally established “expert groups”. This was recognised as being potentially useful, but does not address the problem adequately. The larger problem for small MS is adequately staffing their relevant national organisations and providing the financing needed to perform the tasks required.

Participants felt that ensuring resources to help in this way would contribute much more to enhancing European nuclear safety and security than does putting more funding into further research on geological disposal technology, which is already mature and well funded by large national programmes.

To improve the chances of all MS being able to meet the 2015 requirements of the Directive, several actions were suggested:

- **Set up a focussed expert group to establish joint projects on, for example:**
  - Legacy waste and sources
  - Inventory structuring
  - Geological options for repository siting in all MS with a dual track approach
- **Establish expert team visits to help resolve specific problems with Directive responses**
- **Organise site visits, for example:**
  - Invitation from Austria to Small Member States to the newly expanded waste management facilities at Seibersdorf in Austria
- **Submit a statement from the meeting participants on whether EC assistance and funding mechanisms are optimised and properly balanced:**
  - Approach (by Greece and other MS) to their representatives in the Atomic Questions Group about increasing support for strategic planning activities
  - Formal note to be submitted to the EC
- **Dual Track users meet to discuss:**
  - How to respond to the Directive
  - Next steps in setting up the ERDO
- **Coordinate better the work of the many European groups involved.** The groups potentially involved are - ENEF-WG, ENSREG-WG, IGD-TP-WG, ERDO-WG, Newlancer, E-TRAC, EDRAM, Club of Agencies. The possible collaboration efforts

involve differing levels of cooperation or commitment. The following topics may be best treated by the groups mentioned.

- Collaboration topics: 'non-committing':
  - education and training - all groups
  - safety case methodology - IGD-TP
  - facility siting strategies - ERDO-WG and ENEF
  - R&D - IGD-TP and Newlancer
- Collaboration topics: differing national boundary conditions:
  - public information material - all groups
  - harmonisation of regulations - ENSREG-WG
  - standardisation of inventory structures - IGD-TP-WG and ERDO-WG
- Collaboration topics: more committing – sharing ENEF-WG and ERDO-WG and IGD-TP-WG(?):
  - common waste treatment, packaging and handling methods
  - design of storage and disposal facilities
  - costing of storage and disposal facilities
- Collaboration topics: shared facilities:
  - siting, implementation and ownership of shared treatment, storage or disposal facilities - ERDO-WG and ENEF-WG

The final over-arching conclusions that can be drawn from the meeting are:

- **Given that around half of the EU MS have not managed to meet even the transposition deadline in August 2013, and given the acute lack of resources in many small MS, it does not seem credible that all MS will meet the 2015 deadline for producing a national programme, unless specific initiatives are launched.**
- **The most important of these is to identify or develop mechanisms by which the resources that can be provided by the EC to small MS are significantly increased.**
- **The further mechanisms that can optimise the activities required to meet Directive requirements mainly revolve around small MS collaborating to avoid needless duplication of work; the frameworks for such collaboration should be set up by coordinating the efforts of the multiple groups involved.**