



CEMR Position on the revision of the batteries directive

Draft directive on batteries and accumulators and spent batteries and accumulators (COM(2003)723)

GENERAL REMARKS

CEMR welcomes the approach chosen by the Parliament's Environment, Public Health and Consumer Policy Committee to regulate batteries and accumulators as well as the management of spent batteries and accumulators.

CEMR calls the Parliament to endorse this approach and to send out the strong political message that the long term objectives of the regulation on batteries and accumulators are to phase out the use of heavy metals and to achieve high collection and recycling efficiencies.

CEMR is very satisfied that most of its remarks have been approved by the Committee.

CEMR welcomes in particular:

- The introduction of limit values for the heavy metals contents of batteries and accumulators;
- The introduction of minimum requirements concerning the treatment of spent batteries and accumulators, including recycling requirements;
- The adoption of ambitious but achievable collection targets based on annual sales volumes;
- The precision given to how the producer responsibility shall apply;
- The rejection of the Commission's proposal regarding monitoring the municipal waste stream.

CEMR regrets though that the list of exemptions from the requirements on heavy metal content also includes applications, for which substitutes already are available.

Local authorities across Europe play a central role in the management of waste, and in guiding consumer behaviour. They would like to have a management system for spent batteries and accumulators that aims at minimising environmental and health impacts, whilst being workable and efficient.

CEMR therefore welcomes most of the amendments to the draft legislation that were adopted in Committee, which contribute to the strengthening of the Commission's proposal. We have set out below our recommendations for the vote, which we would urge you to take into account so as to ensure that the future directive is clear, workable and ensures a high-level of protection of the environment.

If you wish to discuss these recommendations, please contact: Clare Hudson, Local

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REMARKS CONCERNING THE INDIVIDUAL ARTICLES AND AMENDMENTS

Article 2. Scope.

CEMR welcomes the extension of the scope to include the applications into which batteries and accumulators are incorporated.

Article 3. Definitions.

CEMR welcomes the precision given to a number of definitions, in particular those of button cells and battery pack. Improvements can still be made and we will therefore recommend to support :

- Amendment 84: Portable batteries
- Amendment 85: Industrial batteries

And to reject

- Amendment 19: Treatment

We call on the Parliament to amend the text so as to include these additional clarifications.

Article 4. Prevention.

The introduction of limit values for the contents of lead and cadmium alongside with the already existing limit value for mercury is a very positive development. We therefore call the Parliament to support Amendment 23 and to reject Amendment 83.

Article 6. Monitoring of the waste stream.

We call on the Parliament to support Amendments 1 and 26 and to reject Amendment 89.

Article 9. Collection schemes.

Substantial improvement to the Commission's proposal has been achieved with the adoption in Committee of a number of amendments. We call on the Parliament to support Amendments 28, 29, 32 and 110 as a priority. And to support Amendments 107, 30, 108, 31 and 109 as well.

Article 13. Collection targets.

We urge the Parliament to adopt targets based on consumption (i.e. percentages) rather than volume. We call therefore on the Parliament to support Amendments 34 and 111 and to reject Amendment 119.

Article 15. Treatment operations.

CEMR supports the introduction of minimum requirements concerning the treatment of collected batteries and accumulators and the reference made to BAT and we call on the Parliament to support Amendment 39.

Article 18. Recycling targets.

The exemption from the recycling requirements of up to 10% of the collected portable batteries and accumulators is not justified from a technological point of view. We therefore call on the Parliament to support Amendment 42.

Article 20. Schemes for portable batteries and accumulators.

The costs associated with the collection of spent batteries and accumulators represent a large share of the total costs for the management of this waste stream. CEMR believes that producers' financial responsibility should also include this stage of the management of spent batteries and accumulators. We urge the Parliament to support Amendment 44.

In short, we call on the European Parliament's first reading of the draft legislation to approve the results of the vote in the Environment Committee:

- Extend the ban on the use of mercury in batteries and accumulators to cadmium and lead ;
- Extend the scope of the Directive to cover appliances containing batteries ;
- Reject the Commission's proposals regarding monitoring the Municipal Waste Stream ;
- Increase the collection targets and set them in terms of consumption rather than volume ;
- Reinforce the producer responsibility principle so that it also includes the collection of spent batteries and accumulators.