

HOT ISSUES

Materials, Engineering &
Manufacturing Policy Newsletter
Hot Issues

Issue 18: September 2005

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the latest edition of our Hot Issues Newsletter.

Included in this edition are the European Commission's Air Quality Strategy, Business Resource Efficiency and Waste (BREW) programme and R&D tax credits. Any new subject ideas for future issues of the newsletter can be sent to terry.martin@dti.gov.uk who will be happy to take these on board.



Should you wish to discuss issues affecting your sector please feel free to contact us. Your first port of call to arrange a meeting should be your relationship manager. Contact details are included in the newsletter should you need them.

Influence and Impact Team
Materials, Engineering and Manufacturing Policy

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Hot Issues

European Commission's Air Quality Strategy

The European Commission's Air Quality Strategy was presented by the Environment Commissioner on 21 September.

The strategy sets the overall stage for future European legislation on air quality up to 2020, and is accompanied by a proposed new Air Quality Framework Directive.

In part this is a tidying up process in the interests of better regulation. The Framework Directive will consolidate several items of existing legislation.

Some main substantive points of note are:

- A new measure definitely proposed is the introduction of new standards for fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}). The Commission suggests that Member states should set a target of 20% reduction by 2020, but does not suggest that achievement of this level should be made legally binding.
- There is also a possibility of future action on small combustion plants. The Commission will examine whether IPPC should be extended to sources below 50MW
- The Commission intends to propose a revision of the National Emissions Ceilings Directive to bring its emissions ceilings into line with the objectives of the Strategy - ie to ensure reduced emissions of nitrogen oxides, sulphur dioxide, volatile organic compounds, ammonia and primary particulate matter consistent with the interim objectives proposed for 2020. [The Commission's impact assessment suggests that the burden will fall upon agriculture, energy, road transport, shipping, and possibly aviation, and that there will be no direct costs to manufacturing industry - though we will need to be alert to indirect effects (eg higher transport costs) and the possible unintended capture of industrial processes.]
- In addition, a range of other possible measures will be examined, such as the introduction of a new "Euro V" set of car emission standards and other initiatives in the energy, transport and agriculture sectors, the Structural Funds and international cooperation.

Contact: David.Williams@dti.gsi.gov.uk

Web links

News release from the Commission:

<http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/1170&format=HTML&aged=0&language>

The strategy document:

- http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/air/cafe/pdf/strat_com_en.pdf

Business Resource Efficiency and Waste Programme (BREW) - Consultation on 2006/07 funding proposals

As reported in the March edition, the Business Resource Efficiency and Waste (BREW) programme recycles revenue generated through increases in Landfill Tax to fund a range of free services and targeted support for businesses. The programme specifically targets waste minimisation, the diversion of waste from landfill and improvements to resource efficiency.

Following the BREW stakeholder event on 15 July, Defra has received a number of proposals for the second year (2006/07) of the BREW programme and is now seeking stakeholder views on these proposals.

A web-based discussion forum has been developed, where a paper on the proposals can be downloaded and views can be submitted. Full details can be found on the Defra website below.

- Website: <http://www.eqw.defra.gov.uk/E-SF/Main.asp>

Water Abstraction and Impounding

Defra have issued a consultation on proposed procedural changes to the water abstraction and impounding licensing system. Views are also sought on proposed changes to the Water Resources (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2003 to implement changes required by the Public Participation Directive.

In summary, the consultation deals with

- applications for an abstraction or impounding licence, or for a variation to, or revocation of, a licence
- abstracting and impounding by the Environment Agency
- enforcement, works and conservation notices
- providing for public participation in drawing up of plans and programmes relating to the environment

The consultation period for the Environmental Impact Assessment regulations ends on **31 October 2005**.

The consultation period for all other aspects of the document ends on **28 November 2005**

Contact: david.williams@dti.gsi.gov.uk

Web link to the consultation:

- <http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/waterresource-regs/letter.htm>

R&D Tax Credits

The Government is looking at improvements in the delivery of the credit can be maintained and built upon, and how best the credit can be enhanced to support the future world-leading, innovative firms. The Chancellor announced in Budget 2005 that the Government will consult with business on this issue and Treasury has just published a discussion paper entitled 'Supporting growth in innovation: Enhancing the R&D Tax Credit' to this effect." See Treasury website at http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/documents/enterprise_and_productivity/enterprise_and_innovation/science_innov/sci_rd_taxcredit.cfm

The paper in question is at http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/2FA/E9/RDtax_credit.pdf and it has a deadline for comments (on particular areas specified by Treasury in the paper) of 12 October (further details in the paper at p31).

- Deadline for input: **12 October 2005**
- Hot Links: http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/2FA/E9/Rdtx_credit.pdf

Making Migration Work for Britain

A major overhaul of UK migration routes has begun as the Government launched a consultation aimed at implementing a simpler, clearer more selective points-based system for managed migration.

Immigration Minister Tony McNulty launched the 16 week consultation, which has been designed to target employers, educational institutions, prospective migrants and the public more broadly, to gain their views on how the new five-tiered system should work in practice. The Government will announce firm proposals for change and a timetable for implementation in the Spring of 2006.

The new system will ensure that Britain attracts the skilled labour force it needs to perform key jobs in areas such as, engineering, the financial sector as well as education and the health service. Migration already makes a valuable contribution to our public services where more than nine% of the workforce is made up of migrants.

The intention is not to increase or reduce the number of people coming to the UK. Rather, its aim is to ensure that those who can contribute most to the UK are selected for entry and that the country takes in only as many people as our economy needs at any one time.

The consultation is part of the on-going implementation of the five year strategy on immigration and asylum published in February this year which underlined the Government's commitment to deliver strict, flexible and fair immigration controls that work in the interests of Britain, sweeping away the complexity of the current system.

The main aims of the new points-based system will be to:

- improve public confidence in the system;
- fill skills gaps;
- attract highly productive and highly skilled workers and students;
- attract investment and increase productivity and flexibility in the labour market; and
- ensure people leave at the end of their stay.

- **Deadline for input: 7 November 2005**
- Hot Links:
- Condoc:
http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/ind/en/home/laws_policy/consultation_document/current_consultations.html
- Contact: Pointsbased.consultation@ind.homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Other Issues

Climate Change Programme Review

The UK Climate Change Programme, which was published in 2000, set out the Government's strategic approach to the challenge of climate change. It focused on practical action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through to 2010 and included a framework of policies and measures to reduce emissions across all sectors of the economy.

The Government launched a review of the Climate Change Programme in September 2004. A consultation seeking views on the Review ran from 8 December to 2 March. The review will be published later in the year.

- Website: www.defra.gov.uk
- Hotlinks:
<http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/climatechange/index.htm>
- contact: keith.avis@dti.gsi.gov.uk

Emissions Trading Scheme

The EU Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS) is a community-wide scheme established for trading allowances to cover the emissions of greenhouse gases from permitted installations. Along with a number of other sectors, steel production is captured by the scheme, as are any combustion plants that have an aggregated thermal input of over 20MW.

The UK allocation for phase 1 of the scheme (2005 – 2007) is based on 736 million allowances, with the non-energy supply industries receiving an allocation based on need. More generally, the Government continues to pursue an allocation based on 756 million allowances.

The Government consultation on its intended approach to the second phase of the scheme ended on 27 September. Government officials will be considering responses to the consultation and working towards consultation on the draft National Allocation Plan (December 2005/January 2006 – March 2006)

- Website: www.defra.gov.uk
- contact: keith.avis@dti.gsi.gov.uk

EU Better Regulation

We are working with the European Commission and other member states on the EU Better Regulation agenda aimed at modernising regulatory frameworks and processes through effective consultation, high quality impact assessment more and better use of alternatives to regulation and simplification. The UK sees this agenda as an essential element of economic reform. EU better regulation is a top priority for the UK Presidency.

Current Situation and Next Steps

Following on from the European Commission's 2002 Better Regulation Action Plan and the 2003 Inter-institutional Agreement on Better Law-Making, the new Commission published its Communication on Better Regulation for Growth and Jobs in March 2005. This placed the better regulation agenda firmly in the context of the revitalised Lisbon Strategy and signalled a renewed commitment from the Commission to make real progress. The Communication contained a number of significant pledges, including:

- A renewed commitment to accompany all legislative proposals with an impact assessment, including competitiveness testing to determine the impacts on business.
- A pledge to withdraw proposals already on the table that are not necessary, especially if they are not accompanied by an adequate impact assessment.
- Commitment to redouble efforts to simplify EU rules and to come forward with a comprehensive Communication by October 2005, having consulted stakeholders.
- Commitment to make initial results of pilot phase on administrative burdens available by October 2005.
- Commitment to include practitioners from the economic field in new better regulation advisory network to Commission.

The Communication and the other documents mentioned above can be found on the Commission's better regulation website (address below).

The Commission announced the results of its screening exercise on 27 September. It will withdraw 67 proposals and carry out economic impact assessment work on a further six. This initiative was warmly welcomed by the UK Presidency as a clear demonstration that the Commission is serious about delivering regulatory reform.

Details of the withdrawals, the March Communication "Better Regulation for Growth and Jobs" and the other documents mentioned above can be found on the Commission's better regulation website (http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/regulation/better_regulation/index.htm).

The Commission's 2005 work programme and roadmaps can be found at http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/atwork/programmes/index_en.htm. We would strongly encourage businesses to use these roadmaps in early discussions with the Commission, and contribute to consultations and comment on Commission impact assessments. Information on current EU consultations may be found here http://europa.eu.int/yourvoice/consultations/index_en.htm. One ongoing consultation on this site is "10 minutes to improve the business environment", which asks for simplification suggestions. Your ideas could be instrumental in the Commission's simplification work programme.

In addition, businesses can join the European Business Test Panel (EBTP), designed to allow companies to feed in views at an early stage on specific issues or areas of the Commission's work. Contact Anna Soanes at the DTI for more information or see the Commission's [Your Voice](#) website (you can also apply to join the EPTP online on this site).

Further Information and Contacts

Cabinet Office Regulatory Impact Unit: Natasha Coates (020 7276 2175, natasha.coates@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk)

Website: <http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/regulation/europe/index.asp>.

DTI: ewt.ebtp@dti.gsi.gov.uk for the European Business Test Panel

General queries: Anna Soanes (020 7215 4384, anna.soanes@dti.gsi.gov.uk)

EU CHEMICALS STRATEGY (REACH)

REACH is a proposed new regulation of chemicals and other substances (eg, metals, minerals, ores) adopted by the European Commission on 29 October 2003 and is now the subject of negotiations that are expected to last into 2006. REACH stands for Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation of Chemicals.

REACH will fill gaps in our information about the properties and uses of 30,000 chemical substances marketed (produced or imported) in the EU. The Government's long-term objective, as a strong supporter of the human health and environmental aims of REACH, is to remove substances of very high concern from the market. REACH will rationalise the existing regulatory system for chemicals and other substances, which currently relies on over 40 pieces of legislation.

Companies will be required to seek authorisations of substances of very high (e.g. carcinogens). Such authorisations may only be granted where the risks associated with the use of the substance are under adequate control or where the applicant can demonstrate that there is a strong socio- economic case for continuing to use the substances in the absence of feasible alternatives.

At the same time the Government recognises that one size doesn't fit all and appreciate that metals, for example, are not easily substituted. The Government is therefore working with other Member States, the Commission and European Parliament to deliver a regime that is proportionate and prioritises those substances of very high concern that are not under adequate control.

The Government is committed to making significant progress on REACH under the UK Presidency with the aim of seeking political agreement by the end of the year.

- Websites:
- <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/chemicals/eufuture.htm>
- Contact: necs@defra.gsi.gov.uk.

Consultation on draft legislation to outlaw Age Discrimination in Employment and Vocational Training

On 14 July, Alan Johnson, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry launched the Government's consultation on draft regulations that will for the first time outlaw age discrimination in employment and vocational training.

The 'Coming of Age' consultation will end on 17 October 2005. Subject to Parliamentary approval the Government intends that the legislation should come into force on 1 October 2006, implementing the final strand of the European Employment Directive. This reflects

Government's commitment to tackling ageism in employment and vocational training, and to creating an environment where people are judged on the basis of the skills and competences they bring, not on unacceptable ageist assumptions.

Closing date for responses **17 October 2005**.

A response can be submitted by letter, fax or email to:

Age Legislation Team
Department of Trade & Industry
1 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0ET
Tel: 020 7215 5000
Fax: 020 7215 5319

- Website: www.dti.gov.uk
 - consultation document: www.dti.gov.uk/er/equality/age.htm
- Email: age.response@dti.gsi.gov.uk

Groundwater Directive

The proposed European directive on groundwater achieved political agreement at the European Environment Council meeting on 24 June. It will now proceed to a second reading in the European Parliament, anticipated for later this year.

The proposal for a Directive aims to prevent and control groundwater pollution by establishing criteria for the assessment of good groundwater chemical status, for the identification and reversal of significant and sustained upward trends in pollutant concentrations in ground waters, and for the definition of starting points for trend reversals. In particular, the draft directive aims to enable Member States to set threshold values for certain pollutants according to the circumstances of the national river basin.

The draft covers nitrates, pesticides, and the following specific pollutants:

Arsenic, Cadmium, Lead, Mercury, Ammonium, Chloride, Sulphate,
Trichloroethylene, Tetrachloroethylene

Hot Links: is at:

- <http://register.consilium.eu.int/pdf/en/05/st10/st10746.en05.pdf>
- Contact: David.Williams@dti.gsi.gov.uk

European Commission proposals for an eco-design for Energy-using Products (EuP) framework Directive

The European Commission adopted a proposal for a framework Directive on the eco-design of energy-using products, such as electrical and electronic devices or heating equipment, on 1

August 2003. The proposal does not introduce directly binding requirements for specific products, but does define conditions and criteria for setting requirements regarding environmentally relevant product characteristics (such as energy consumption).

The EuP proposals were presented to a meeting of the EC Energy Council Working Group in September 2003 and were discussed by Ministers at the full meeting of the Energy Council on 15 December 2003. Political agreement on a text was agreed at a meeting of the Energy Council at the end of June 2004.

At the same time however, MEPs in the Environment Committee of the European Parliament had been considering their Report on the Commission's text and came up with just under 350 amendments to the original text. A plenary discussion of the Directive took place in May 2004, where the list of amendments was reduced but it was too late for a final text to be agreed with the Energy Council and adopted before the then-current European Parliament was dissolved.

The new Parliament began its second reading of the proposals earlier this year and agreement on a compromise text (Following discussions with the Luxembourg Presidency and the European Commission) was achieved in June. A final text was adopted on 6 July 2005.

Discussions on a potential list of initial priority products or product categories are likely to begin in the Autumn, with adoption of the first implementing measures in 2007.

- Website: http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/eco_design/index.htm
- <http://www.dti.gov.uk/sustainability/EUP.htm>
- Contact: Steven.Andrews@dti.gsi.gov.uk

EU Integrated Product Policy

As reported in previous issues, the European Commission adopted a Communication on Integrated Product Policy (IPP) on 18 June 2003 that outlined its strategy for reducing the environmental impact caused by products. IPP represents a new approach and puts emphasis on three dimensions:

- Life-cycle thinking - when pollution reduction measures are identified, consideration is given to the whole of a product's life-cycle from cradle to grave;
- Flexible - as to the type of policy measure to be used, working with the market where possible;
- Full stakeholder involvement

The Environment Council reached its formal conclusions on the Commission Communication in October 2003 and the European Parliament produced a Draft Report on 1 March 2004, which is still under consideration.

The Commission has now also established a formal Network with Member States and is holding regular meetings. The purpose of these meetings is to monitor and promote the

implementation of the Commission's Communication on IPP. It is also a forum for the Commission to report to Member States and stakeholders on its IPP related activities and for the Member States and stakeholders to report back to the Commission.

The first meeting was held on the 24th of February 2004, a second on 20th September 2004 and a third on 2nd March 2005. The next meeting of this network is scheduled to take place in Brussels on 28th November 2005.

- Website: <http://europa.eu.int/comm./environment/ipp/ippcommunication.htm>
- <http://www.dti.gov.uk/sustainability/IPP.htm>
- Contact: Steven.Andrews@dti.gsi.gov.uk

EU Battery Directive

In December 2004 the EU Council of Ministers reached political agreement on a common position on the draft directive on batteries and accumulators. The directive aims to maximize the separate collection of spent batteries and accumulators, and to reduce the disposal of batteries in the municipal waste stream. It sets challenging collection and recycling targets for spent consumer batteries and introduces a partial ban on the marketing of consumer nickel-cadmium batteries. The draft directive further prohibits the disposal of spent automotive and industrial batteries in landfill or by incineration, and makes battery producers financially responsible for the end of life management of spent batteries. The dossier will now return to the European Parliament for its second reading, which is expected to take place in December 2005. It is anticipated that the draft directive will be adopted by mid 2006.

- Website: www.dti.gov.uk/sustainability/ep/batteries.htm
- contact: paul.creary@dti.gsi.gov.uk

Industry Support

National Metals Technology Centre (NAMTEC)

To celebrate the expansion and development of NAMTEC into a research and training organisation for the metals industry, the company held a national launch at Church House, Westminster, London on 14 June 2005. This included an address by the Minister for Industry and the Regions. A regional launch to be held at the newly refurbished Swinden House conference and training centre is also being planned for later in the year.

For those we want to attend, will need to contact rachael.spooner@namtec.co.uk - 01709 722 462

For further information contact:

NAMTEC
Q Block, Swinden Technology Centre
Moorgate Road
Rotherham, S60 3AR
Telephone: (01709) 724990

- Website: www.namtec.co.uk
- contact: info@namtec.co.uk

Noise and Vibration Roadshow 2005

HSE is working in partnership with EEF – The manufacturers organisation, to run a series of seminars on Noise and Vibration around the country in the Autumn. The seminars are for anyone using noisy equipment, or machinery or hand held, hand guided, hand-fed vibrating equipment or operating industrial vehicles or plant.

The seminar is aimed at Managing Directors, Production Managers, Health and Safety Advisers, Safety Representatives etc. The programme will include and explanation of the new regulations and what they mean for you.

To book a place at the Roadshow or general enquiries contact:

Abigail Clow at the EEF

Email: aclow@eef-fed.org.uk

General enquiries

Contact Graeme Royal

Tel: 020 7717 6834

Email: graeme.royal@hse.gsi.gov.uk

- Website: www.hse.gov.uk
- contact: graeme.royal@hse.gsi.gov.uk

The Materials Innovation & Growth Team

Former DTI Minister Jacqui Smith launched the **Materials Innovation & Growth Team** (MatIGT) on 26th January 2005 in London. Its **key objective is to define a Materials Strategy for the UK that will enable the UK to optimise the benefits new materials developments will offer**. Representatives from the materials producing and using industries, the regions and government aim to secure agreement on a shared vision for the future of an industry that employs over four million people

in the UK. Wyn Jones OBE, Chair of British Alcan Aluminium, part of Alcan Inc, leads the team.

An Advisory Group oversees the work of the IGT and 5 Task Groups:

- Science & Technology (S&T)
- People & Skills (P&S)
- Best Practice (BP)
- Assets & Infrastructure (A&I)
- Impact & Policy (I&P)

If you want to participate in any of the Task Groups please contact the appropriate member of the Secretariat Team listed below:-

(S&T + P&S) = Jackie.buttefield@iom3.org

(BP + I&P) = jan.weston@dti.gsi.gov.uk

A&I = robert.quarshie@dti.gsi.gov.uk

You can also keep up to date with progress and participate in the debate by registering on the Advanced Materials Forum website: www.amf.uk.com

Manufacturing Forum

The role of the Forum is to ensure the effective implementation and evolution of the [Manufacturing Strategy](#). The Forum has identified its [Initial priority areas](#) bringing together Government, industry, trade unions, Regional Development Agencies, and other stakeholders to support manufacturing.

The Forum;

Monitors the progress of the Manufacturing Strategy and comments on and helps steer policy that impacts on manufacturing

Engages actively in areas where increased participation of business, unions and other stakeholders can make a significant impact

Helps to promote key messages on manufacturing and develop the profile of the manufacturing sector.

The Forum will produce a concise annual report on delivery of the Manufacturing Strategy, and an assessment of overall health of the manufacturing sector based on [key performance indicators](#).

- Website: <http://www.dti.gov.uk/manufacturingforum/index.htm>
- contact: stuart.barthropp@dti.gsi.gov.uk

MANUFACTURING ADVISORY SERVICE (MAS)

The Manufacturing Advisory Service (MAS) reveals in its latest newsletter that since its launch in April 2002 it has created an added value of over £155 million for manufacturing industry.

In that time, MAS has responded to almost 56,000 enquiries from manufacturing firms, carried out over 11,000 on-site diagnostic health checks, completed over 3,000 in-depth consultations, and held over 1,300 training events for local businesses.

By providing access to free hands-on advice and assistance from professional experts, MAS has become the major source of support to Britain's manufacturers, helping them to improve their productivity and achieve a vital competitive edge through adopting global best practice in manufacturing.

You can download a copy of the newsletter from the national MAS website at www.dti.mas.gov.uk or contact your local Regional Centre by ringing the MAS helpline at 0845 658 9600.

- Website: www.dti.mas.gov.uk
contact: MAS helpline at 0845 658 9600.

Advanced Materials Forum

Membership - Total membership of the forum is now 380 individual members and is rising steadily.

Site Developments

The **Collaboration Space** is now fully up and running and is available for any individual or group to use for a communications forum or a document management system. Private areas can be set up for use by the system administrator. If you would like to use the area for your group, please contact [the administrator](#)

For those users whose company firewalls do not allow them to access the site, guidance is now available on firewall and active scripting settings to enable access.

A system update is due in the next couple of months. We are hoping that this will not cause any disruption to the service.

What's New?

Collaboration Space

The Materials Innovation and Growth Team is making use of the Collaboration space to post documents for discussion. These include outcomes and presentations from the People & Skills and Science & Technology Town meetings held in June. These are visible to all AMF users and the team would welcome your comments on the work of the team.

Composites Portal

The National Composites Network (NCN) has revamped the portal to reflect their work with Composites community

Technical Textiles

New pages on Technical Textiles have been added to the site.

New members

If you have not already registered on the forum, please do so using the self registration portlet on the guest home page at <http://www.amf.uk.com>

For any queries, comments or suggestions on improvements to the site, please contact [the administrator](#).

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Website NEW MEMBERS area:
http://wam.iom3.org/wam/login.htm OR <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members www.iom3.org |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

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