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services
association

ESA PRESS STATEMENT

ESA and Environment Agency agree new partnership to raise standards and fight waste crime

LONDON, 31 July 2017: The Environmental Services Association (ESA), the voice for the UK's resource and waste management industry, and the Environment Agency (EA) are pleased to announce that high-level talks between the EA's senior management, and the CEOs of resource and waste management companies have reached agreement to pursue a collaborative approach to improving the environmental performance of this sector.

By leveraging the efforts of companies working hard to protect the environment, the EA will adopt priorities that clearly target environmental risk. Utilising the industry's technical expertise to assist the development of effective regulation will enable the EA to focus its resources where they will have the biggest impact.

Specific proposals will now be worked up jointly to seize opportunities in these priority areas:

- **The need to refresh the EA's approach to regulation** by sharing key challenges, e.g. waste fires, and agreeing how best to tackle them using the combined resources of the EA and the best performing operators.
- **A system of earned recognition** in the sector enabling the EA to focus resources on the poorest performing sites and waste criminals who ignore their obligations and pollute the environment and harm local communities.

- **Sharing intelligence and taking tough action against those who pass their waste on to illegal operators failing to deliver their Duty of Care.** Waste crime often occurs at the end of a supply chain where there have been failures in Duty of Care by those at the beginning.
- **Improving technical competence in the waste sector** – working with Government to ensure that waste is only handled by suitably trained personnel at sites operated by companies with sufficient financial reserves to meet their obligations

Dr Stewart Davies, ESA Chairman said:

“At a time when waste crime seems more entrenched than ever, it is vital that the regulator is able to trust ESA Members to do the right thing and focus its resources on criminals and poor performing operators. The industry is an excellent source of technical expertise which will be made available to help the Agency deliver its objectives. This is a fine example of regulatory best practice which can be an example to other sectors.”

Sir James Bevan, Chief Executive of the Environment Agency said:

“I’m extremely pleased to be strengthening our relationship with the Environmental Services Association to raise standards across the sector and fight waste crime.”

“We want to work with responsible operators to deliver more targeted regulations but also focus our resources on hitting the worst offenders which is good news for legitimate businesses, the economy and local communities. In addition, a more proactive approach to duty of care will plug weaknesses in the supply chain and prevent waste from leaking into the hands of criminals.”

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Notes to editors:

1. The Environment Agency’s blog post announcing this partnership can be found here: <https://environmentagency.blog.gov.uk/2017/07/28/tackling-waste-crime-together/>
2. The **Environmental Services Association** (ESA) is the trade association representing the UK’s resource and waste management industry, which is leading the transformation of how the UK’s waste is managed.

3. We work with all levels of government, regulators and the public to deliver a more sustainable waste and resource management solution for the UK. ESA's recent Circular Economy report '*Going for Growth – A practical route to a circular economy*', which outlines how a Circular rather than a linear economy can help manage resources sustainably, can be downloaded from the ESA website.
4. ESA's Members manage waste on behalf of the whole of society and we are recovering more than ever before. For example, the industry has helped quintuple the UK's household recycling rates over the last decade.
5. **The sector at a glance**
 - Total turnover: **£11 billion**
 - Direct Employment: **106,000 people** (*including waste collection, treatment and materials recovery*)
 - Municipal waste handled each year: **27 million tonnes**
 - Energy generated (across landfill gas, anaerobic digestion and energy from waste) each year: **approximately 11,867 GWh**, which is 3.5% of the UK's electricity
 - **9,083 GWh of that was renewable electricity** (taking out non-biodegradable portion of EfW) which is **11%** of UK's renewable electricity
 - Greenhouse **gas emissions down by 70% since 1990.**
 - The **top seven companies account for approximately 40% of turnover.** Many hundreds of SMEs provide either localised or more specialised services
 - Waste & recycling is the **most highly rated of all council services** by the public (2016 survey)

For further details please visit www.esauk.org

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