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services
association

ESA PRESS STATEMENT

ESA calls for stronger implementation of Defra's Hazardous Waste Strategy

LONDON, 11 February 2016: The Environmental Services Association (ESA), the voice for the UK's resource and waste management sector, today urged Defra and the Environment Agency to step up implementation of the government's Hazardous Waste Strategy, in order to raise standards of hazardous treatment, and bear down on waste crime.

Defra has been carrying out a light touch review ("temperature check") of its 2010 hazardous waste strategy for England. The department has sought views on whether changes to the strategy are needed to improve the environmentally sound management of hazardous waste, and to encourage investment in hazardous waste infrastructure in the UK.

In its response to Defra, ESA commented as follows:

"ESA supports the principles on which the 2010 Strategy is based, but believes that Defra and the Environment Agency have given insufficient priority to the implementation of the Strategy on the ground. Hence it has not been as effective in raising standards of hazardous waste treatment as it might have been."

"ESA believes that rather than re-wording the Strategy, action should be taken as follows:

- ***Defra and the Agency should give guidance as to what they consider to be the best overall environmental option (BOEO) for dealing with key hazardous wastes.***
- ***Defra should provide clear policy direction by making a decision on the future of the 3xWAC derogation for HW landfill.***

- ***Defra and the Agency should indicate whether they consider there is a continuing role for hazardous waste landfill in the future and if so for which wastes and over what timescale.***
- ***Defra and the Agency should continue to bear down on waste crime of all kinds, particularly those involving hazardous waste which pose the biggest risks to human health and the environment.”***

ESA's views are in line with the findings of a report into hazardous waste management in ten EU Member States, including the UK, which was published by the European Commission in January 2016. That report recommends the UK authorities should take the following actions:

- Promote the waste hierarchy for the overall management of hazardous waste to avoid sham treatment and foster high-standard treatment;
- Enforce the implemented legislation on hazardous waste to support investments from industry in Best Available Technologies (BAT);
- Promote the usage of the WM3 guidance document for operators in industry and especially address SME's;
- Support the correct classification, labelling and packaging of HW;
- Change the record keeping system to an electronic version.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

1. ESA's response to the Defra consultation on the HW Strategy can be found here:
http://www.esauk.org/160211_Defra_HW_Strategy_-_final.pdf
2. The 'Strategy for Hazardous Waste Management in England' can be found here:
https://www.dropbox.com/s/iz4el6o45j2n37w/Hazardous_waste_strategy_England_2010.pdf?dl=1
3. The EU study into hazardous waste management in ten EU Member States including the UK can be found here:
<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/studies/index.htm>
The recommendations addressed to the UK are on page 149.
4. The **Environmental Services Association** (ESA) is the trade association for the UK's resource and waste management sector. We work with our members to transform waste and resource

management across the country. This work helps enable our members to turn Britain's waste into valuable resources, whilst continually protecting the environment.

5. 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 here: http://www.esauk.org/esa_reports/Circular_Economy_Report_FINAL_High_Res_For_Release.pdf
6. 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 quadruple the UK's household recycling rates over the last 10 years.
7. **The sector at a glance**
 - Total turnover: **£11 billion**
 - Direct Employment: **95,000 people**
 - Municipal waste handled each year: **over 26 million tonnes**
 - Energy generated (from waste combustion and landfill gas) each year: **approximately 6,700 GWh**, 1.5% of the UK's total electricity supply and around 20% of our 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

For further details please visit www.esauk.org

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