



environmental
services
association

ESA PRESS STATEMENT

Red tape review: Enforcement should be the focus when it comes to regulation say ESA

LONDON, 04 March 2016: The Environmental Services Association (ESA), the voice for the UK's resource and waste management industry, today commented on the government's review of red tape across the sector, and highlighted that enforcement is the key when it comes to the regulations.

Sam Corp, Head of Regulation, at ESA said:

"On balance the review outlines a number of positive initiatives and commitments to remove red tape and to encourage smart, proportionate and risk based regulation of our sector.

The key for us is not necessarily the regulations themselves but their enforcement and we are pleased that overall the review appears to recognise ESA's key priorities i.e. to ensure that there is:

- *Consistent but robust application of the rules by the regulators and recognition that complying with regulations can come with a cost but regulations are in place to protect the environment and human health.*
- *Proportionality of regulation, with the focus on criminal activities which harm the environment and human health, rather than minor technical breaches by normally compliant operators.*

Clearly, regulations need to be smart and outcome focussed, and should not restrict legitimate businesses from doing the right thing. However, whilst we support the reduction in unnecessary administrative burdens, these should not be at the expense of the environment and human health.

In particular, we support the proposals to improve and speed up the permitting and ‘duly made’ process as any delays have a direct negative economic impact on operators.

Never the less, we look forward to working with the Government to develop the commitments outlined in this review which we hope will benefit both business and regulators.

Highlighting the overlap of obligations between different organisations, and the issue of Duty of Care, he continued:

“We are also pleased that the Government appears to recognise industry’s concerns relating to the existing fire prevention plan guidance and has committed to exploring the need to reduce overlap and duplication with obligations imposed by other organisations such as the Fire and Rescue Service, insurance companies or the Health and Safety Executive. However, our members have significant concerns relating to the current guidance out for consultation, which we believe requires substantial revision to make it fit for purpose.

Whilst we were not in favour of the decision to scrap hazardous waste premises registration we are never the less keen to work with Government to explore the potential for an electronic system for tracking of hazardous waste. In theory, this should improve both traceability of specific waste consignments and the ease of reporting.

Finally, the focus on improving the regulation of waste Duty of Care Requirements is helpful and an issue that ESA is also pushing through our ‘Right Waste, Right Place’ campaign to raise awareness of Duty of Care.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

1. 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.
2. 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](#).

3. 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.

4. 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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