

Working Groups



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The focus of the Group is to promote the national and international competitiveness of the member companies who provide sampling, laboratory, field-testing and associated services to clients in support of pollution control and prevention, remediation and sustainable development. Most of these activities are within a regulatory framework. These laboratories need to be aware of regulation in general so as to operate as an informed stakeholder and also have a forum in which to offer comment on new legislation.

The last year saw a rise in the number of organisations in the EIC and this was reflected in a growing Laboratories Group. The last 12 months has also seen the start of many new regulations or changes, including the Priority Substances Directive under the Water Framework Directive (WFD), the outputs from the Soil Guideline Values Taskforce and the MCERTS scheme for Direct Toxicity Assessment (DTA).

MCERTS for Soils

This accreditation scheme has been established for just over two years. The Group still seeks to promote its use as a means to provide more defensible data for the decision making process of land quality. The Environment Agency is to review its usage to ensure best practice within the Agency and Defra has endorsed its use within England and Wales. The Group are in contact with SEPA to promote the scheme in Scotland. From July this year, MCERTS (UKAS) accreditation will be available for hydrocarbon banding.

MCERTS for DTA

These became available this year. EIC laboratory members input into this standard and one of its roles is to support assessment of discharges under the IPPC Directive. Approved laboratories are listed on the Agency website.

Waste Acceptance Criteria

Although the scheme has operated for nearly two years, it is apparent that some companies in the waste chain are having difficulty with the requirements, whether it is classification, appropriate treatment or disposal. Group laboratories may be able to assist with evaluating the efficacy of pre-treatments or identify dissolved organic matter (DOC) that is causing a numeric exceedance of a limit, for example. Some of these issues are, or will be, addressed by the Agency through stakeholder fora.

From 30 October 2007, the Landfill Directive requires all non-hazardous waste to be treated before landfill. Unlike hazardous waste, there are no standards or limit values - what is required is that the waste be treated. This treatment is defined as physical, thermal chemical or biological. To comply at a basic level, will only require the waste to be sorted with a proportion of the sorted waste being recycled. More advanced processes are in operation, supported by laboratory testing, which allows biodegradable waste to be composted and remaining waste, after recyclates have been removed, to be incinerated, ideally as CHP.

Industrial Air Pollution Control

The UK has a strong record in industrial air pollution control, underpinned by effective, forward looking, pragmatic legislation and a strong supply industry, working in partnership with industrial operators.

The Air Pollution Control Working Group provides a reasoned and knowledgeable voice to policy makers and regulatory bodies on the adoption and implementation of legislation effecting industrial air pollution, the capabilities of the air pollution sector and the environmental benefits of best practice in the air pollution sector. Legislation of particular focus includes:

- Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Directive (IPPC) including the BREF process and UK implementation via PPC and sector notes
- Waste Incineration Directive (WID)
- Large Combustion Plant Directive (LCPD)
- Local authority controlled industrial plant (Part B processes)

Current priorities for the Air Pollution Control Working Group are participation in the following reviews, consultations and initiatives:

- IPPC BREF revisions (Europe and UK)
- Pragmatic legislation enforcement (IPPC permits)
- Transparency of information (pollution emissions register)
- Process guidance revisions and Part B regulation
- Air quality strategy

The EIC's Air Pollution Control Working Group represents the views of members across the air pollution sector including, test houses, environmental consultancies, air pollution control equipment suppliers, universities and the suppliers of dust and gas monitoring instrumentation. Members include both the UK offices and distributors of overseas air pollution companies and UK based manufacturers.