



European Union Network for the  
Implementation and Enforcement  
of Environmental Law

## WEEE Directive Implementation and Enforcement *Brominated Flame Retardants in WEEE plastic*



### Introduction

In this Project Abstract the focus is on Brominated Flame Retardants (BRFs) in waste of electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) plastic. There will be separate Project Abstracts on WEEE Annex VI and the classification of WEEE.

### Executive Summary

Waste of electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) is one of the fastest growing waste streams in the EU, with some 12,3 Mt (16,6 kg/inh) generated in the EU 2016 (and 44,7 Mt worldwide), and expected to grow to more than 52,2 Mt in 2021 worldwide (The global E-waste Monitor UNU-IAS, 2017).

WEEE contains a complex mixture of materials and components, which are partly hazardous. Not properly managed WEEE can cause major environmental and health problems. In addition, the production of electronics requires the use of scarce and expensive resources. The improvement of collection, treatment and recycling and avoiding illegal export (to countries with poor treatment facilities) of electronics at the end of their life is essential to contribute to a circular economy.

In 2017 and 2018 the focus was on brominated flame retardants in WEEE plastic, on Annex VI of the WEEE Directive (minimum requirements for shipments) and the classification of WEEE.

### TARGET GROUP

- Environmental authorities
- Customs and Police
- Other enforcement authorities dealing with the WEEE Directive

### EU LEGISLATION

- European Waste Shipment Regulation (EC) No 1013/2006
- Directive 2002/95/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 January 2003 on the restriction of the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment (RoHS)
- Directive 2011/65/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 8 June 2011 on the restriction of the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment (RoHS recast)
- Directive 2012/19/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 July 2012 on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE)
- The Basel Convention

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In 2017 two questionnaires have been send out to the participants, one on Annex VI and one on BFRs. In June 2017 a workshop was held in the Netherlands to discuss the outcome of the questionnaires and to present and discuss best practices. In 2018 another workshop was held, discussing BFRs in WEEE plastic, a draft guideline on the inspections of Annex VI of the WEEE Directive, and a draft document on the classification of WEEE.

Conclusions and recommendations BFRs in 2018 (see also [Report](#))

In 2018, a workshop was held in which best practices for inspection, detection methods and thresholds for BFRs were discussed. For many countries inspection on BFRs in WEEE is very complicated and not often done.

To improve this situation the following steps could be considered:

- a common understanding on classification of BFR containing WEEE plastic;
- binding threshold for all BFRs (including DecaBDE);
- list of detections methods for BFRs for Bromine alternatively;
- new waste code for plastic containing BFRs;
- clear steps how plastics containing BFRs should be derived from waste stream at WEEE treatment operator or at subsequent steps (e.g. requirements in Austria);
- obligation for waste treatment companies to report the removal and the treatment of WEEE plastic containing BFRs.

The main objective of the Waste and TFS Expert Team is on improving the implementation and enforcement of the WEEE-Directive. The focus is on:

- Annex VI of the WEEE Directive, developing an uniform enforcement strategy;
- To share knowledge on how to deal with the hazardous substances (BFRs) in WEEE in relation to recycling with a focus on the role and possibilities for enforcement authorities;
- Classification of E-Waste, making an overview how WEEE is classified and developing an uniform guideline on classification.

### LINKS

- [Report Implementation and Enforcement WEEE Directive - BFR in WEEE plastic \(2018\)](#)

### KEY WORDS

- Waste and TFS
- WEEE Directive
- BFRs
- WEEE plastic
- Classification