

WasteDataFlow

WASTEDATAFLOW NORTHERN IRELAND USER GROUP MINUTES

MEETING HELD 25th September 2008

Northern Ireland Environment Agency, Klondyke Building, Cromac Avenue, Gasworks Business Park, Belfast @11am.

Attendees:

Michael Lavery **ML** (Antrim BC)
Ricky Burnett **RB** (arc21)
Clive Catterson **CC** (Ards BC)
Liz Drew **LD** (Armagh & City DC)
Donna Carey **DC** (Ballymena BC)
Nigel McKeown **NMcK** (Ballymoney BC)
Brendan Murray **BM** (Belfast CC)
Jean Stewart **JS** (Carrickfergus BC)
Mark McAdoo **MMcA** (Cookstown DC)
Jonathan Wilson **JW** (Coleraine BC)
Mark McAdoo **MM** (Cookstown DC)
Caroline O'Donnell **CO'D** (Derry CC)
Colette O'Rourke **CO'R** (Down DC)
Paul Slowey **PS** (Fermanagh DC)
Noleen O'Malley **NO'M** (Lisburn CC)
John Murtagh **JM** (Magherafelt DC)
Janice Dunlop **JD** (Moyle DC)
Tara Cunningham **TC** (Newry & Mourne DC)
Lisa Mayne **LM** (Newtownabbey BC)
Peter McCoy **PMcC** (North Down BC)
Anthea Owens **AO** (Omagh DC)
Yvonne Lecky **YL** (Strabane DC)
Jason Patterson **JP** (SWaMP)
Keith Patterson **KP** (WRAP)

Nicola Duffin **ND** (NIEA)
Adrian Fitzpatrick **AF** (NIEA)
Stephen Gracey **SG** (NIEA)
Pamela Patterson **PP** (NIEA)

Apologies:

Maud Finney (Banbridge DC)
Paul Topley (Craigavon BC)
Elaine Smith (Larne BC)
Graham Byrne (SWaMP)

1. Welcome and Introductions

SG welcomed everyone to the meeting and as there were new members everyone introduced themselves.

2. Minutes of last meeting

Actions from previous meeting:

SG informed the group that on 15/05/08 AF re-released DEFRA guidance on the recording of WEEE within WDF.

PEPG has issued a letter to district councils giving guidance regarding WEEE / municipal waste.

Inclusion of all five WEEE Regulation categories was raised by **AF** at the WDF Operational Group on the 11/6/08; these categories will be included for the 2009/10 data.

NIEA issued guidance on Capture Rates to all councils on the 16/05/08

The NILAS allocation spreadsheet was sent to all WDF users on the 22/5/08 as requested.

The latest update from the Environment Agency regarding the UK MBT consultation guidance was that it was hoped that will be drafted by mid September for release in mid October.

New questions (Q16c, Q23 and Q70) are now present in the WasteDataFlow system and are being used to report this quarter's returns (April – June).

3. Proposal from Enviros for selection of material types.

AF explained to the group that Enviros, the WasteDataFlow IT contractors, had put a proposal through the Operational Group to improve the functionality in how materials were recorded in WasteDataFlow. The proposal would include *inter alia* councils being able to set up a "selection list" to record only the materials they collect rather than having to scroll through the whole material list, and being able to enter data in Q19 or Q35 either by material type or by facility. In the destination questions data can be switched between material type or facility during the data entry process.

The expanded materials list is due to be discussed at the Operational Group in London next week. Any suggestions are to be forwarded to NILAS Team by Monday 29th September.

There was some concern from the group that over segregation would occur due to the increase in the number of waste streams listed. **AF** explained that a more comprehensive list of materials would be beneficial to councils, and national authorities for reporting and planning purposes.

Action: NIEA to investigate further the relevance of some of the new waste streams added with the WDF Operational Group.

4. WDF Developments

AF updated the group on a number of recent and future developments on WasteDataFlow being undertaken by Enviros. Over the coming months a number of major developments are planned for WasteDataFlow. These are scheduled to take place with minimal disruption to users on 10th October, 28th November, and 9th January 2009. The development documents were issued to the devolved administrations during July for comment and approval. Some of the main developments are: improvements to the management of selection lists; introduction of data authorisation note for period; pre-populating household figures into relevant questions; creation of new reporting mechanisms; facilities to create monthly reporting for data entered monthly; and ability to produce reports by facility for destination and reprocessor.

Concern was raised as to whether previous years' data would be available for reporting purposes on particular waste streams such as small domestic appliances **AF** stated that this would be possible, i.e. data entered for period prior to April 2009 would not be affected by the changes, and would remain as entered. Enviros will be looking at the integration of the new material types with the existing data for comparison purposes.

5. Waste Statistics Regulations – how this affects District Councils

SG briefly explained a area of the NIEA NILAS Monitoring Team's work – The Waste Statistics Regulations Report - and how the new mechanisms NIEA are using to assist in complying with this report may impact on the burden of some of our local councils in terms of reporting.

European legislation states that each EU Member State submits a report to Eurostat every two years. The objective of this report, The Waste Statistics Regulations Report (WStatR), is to establish a framework for the production of European Union wide statistics on the generation, recovery and disposal of waste. This should create the basis for monitoring the implementation of waste policy and compliance with the principles of European Union waste legislation, with the aim of maximising recovery and safe disposal.

SG explained that WasteDataFlow returns are already used to capture municipal waste arisings and non municipal waste arisings were previously captured by means of surveying. NIEA's intention was to capture non municipal waste returns through a NIEA requirement placed on all licensed

sites to make quarterly returns on arisings entering and leaving licensed sites. The system for returns being made from these sites involved licensed sites returning online to NIEA using a standardised layout.

SG felt that this option would produce more accurate figures while creating lower costs to NIEA and a lesser burden to the waste industry in general. He also stated that it may be possible to use these returns in future planning of the waste industry infrastructure locally.

SG pointed out that the councils should not be greatly affected by these returns as individual licensed CA sites are already captured by Question 16c in WDF from April 2008, however council owned landfills now have to make returns regarding non municipal wastes entering the sites. The municipal data for landfills is captured through the NILAS returns made quarterly by landfill operators.

The group were concerned that the online returns may lead to double counting of municipal waste but were assured that this would not be the case. The group queried if the reports would be available for them to view.

Action: The Waste Statistics Regulations Reports for 2004 and 2006 will be added to the NIEA website as will the 2008 report when complete.

6. WasteDataFlow issues

SG told the group that it has been noted that entry users, admin users and WMG are not using the Validation Summary Spreadsheet; he requested that users familiarise themselves with its use as it is a vital WDF validation tool in terms of time saving and problem solving. It was also pointed out that some of the councils were not answering the new questions 9, 16C and 23 – this is not an option.

SG briefly discussed the ITV Tonight programme 'A Rubbish Service' which was aired on the 8th September 2008. The programme stated that of 131 English councils using mixed recyclable kerbside collections, 35% could not name even one of the final destinations of their collected waste streams. **SG** used this to both commend and remind the councils of their reporting responsibility. The group was concerned about the reporting of end destination of materials being transported overseas. It was pointed out that brokers often sell waste streams several times before reaching its end destination. **SG** felt it was appropriate in such a case to state the country of destination if that was all the MRF could provide.

AF pointed out that in quite a number of district councils the data entry officer and the data reporting officer were one and the same. NIEA have strongly encouraged all district councils from the outset of WasteDataFlow to have a designated data entry and reporting officer to ensure the integrity and quality of the data. Officers were urged to seriously consider their reporting structures and to share the responsibility to ensure data quality as there had been

occasions where data was not completed on time due to the “officer” being sick or on leave.

AF led a brief discussion on question 9 ‘capture rate’ and its calculation. The group felt it was still a difficult concept to come to terms with.

Action: NIEA will review the methodology for Q9 Capture Rates and issue a response to all users.

7. AOB

SG stated that the Final Reconciliation for the NILAS year 2007/08 was issued to district councils and Waste Management Groups on the 23/09/08.

It was also noted that the PEPG consultation paper regarding the BMW reduction to 64% was issued on the 19th September 2008.

Date of Next Meeting:

The date of the next meeting was not arranged due to the imminent return of Claire O’Neill (NIEA). NIEA will arrange a date for January 2009 in the near future.