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AMDEA Meets Energy Minister to Discuss WEEE

In July 2007 the main trade associations affected by the WEEE Directive: AMDEA, Intellect, and SEAMA raised their concerns over the implementation of the WEEE Directive in the UK with Malcolm Wicks MP, Minister of State at the then Department of Trade and Industry. In particular, the associations stated that the current regime would lead to a market for the trading of WEEE at prices in excess of the actual costs for its collection and treatment. This message was

re-iterated on 13 December when AMDEA, represented by Uwe Hanneck and Douglas Herbison, and Intellect and SEAMA met with Mr. Wicks. The trade association representatives called for flexibility to allow schemes to collect and treat WEEE in line with their market share. The Minister listened with interest and asked his staff members present to continue discussions with our industry representatives.

"Time to Change" Links Up with Severn & Wye Energy Agency

AMDEA and Severn and Wye Energy Agency have agreed to work together to promote energy efficient appliances through various means. The partnership is part of the Proefficiency programme, and EU funded initiative which focuses on increasing the use of energy efficient lighting, fridges and freezers. The project will run from 2006-2009.

AMDEA and Severn and Wye discussed several possible projects such as setting a workshop to update energy advisors in the Energy Efficiency Advice Centres across the country. This will brief them on the most up-to-date findings on energy efficient technology, achievable energy savings, the latest on energy labelling and ways to optimise the performance of new appliances. They would also be briefed on wider issues concerning the lifespan of cold appliances and the environmental impact of their disposal and manufacture. This is a new opportunity to present our Time to Change Campaign to potentially 48 consumer advice centres across the UK.



Signing of agreement (from left to right): Kaye Welfare, SWEA Assistant Director; Anne Nistad, AMDEA Association Executive ; Douglas Herbison, Chief Executive AMDEA; Stuart Davies, SWEA Project Manager

Recent Activity on Appliance Safety Standards

Stuart MacConnacher recently attended the IEC TC61 meeting in Malaysia where work has started to prepare the 5th edition of the basic safety standard for appliances.

An AMDEA concern over unfair treatment by test houses when a product uses voltage maintained thermal cut-out has been resolved by changing the text. This will make it impossible for test houses to demand unnecessary tests.

A UK proposal on appliance couplers that rely on weight e.g. kettle connectors, was not accepted. Since this is of interest to our members there will be a need to consider the matter again so that a proposal with a better chance of acceptance can be submitted now that we can see the objections from other countries

A new standard on UV water treatment appliances was discussed for the first time and a revised proposal will be re-circulated in the New Year.

A proposal to reduce the temperatures allowed

on oven doors prepared by a working group chaired by Stuart MacConnacher was briefly discussed and will now proceed to a formal proposal to change. This work originated from pressure on the subject from the EU Commission but was passed to IEC to hopefully arrive at a world wide solution.

Stuart MacConnacher also attended the CENELEC meeting of TC61 Safety of Appliances in November at the German standards body VDE in Berlin.

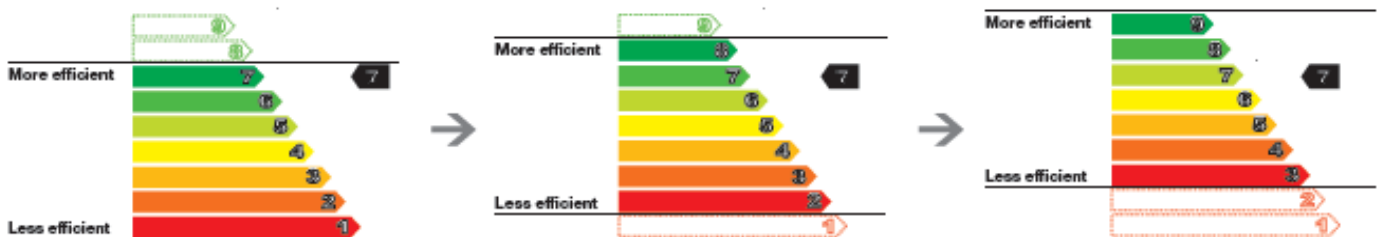
Work is underway in Europe to consider possible changes to the standards to account for use of appliances by vulnerable people such as children. At the same time similar changes have been made in the IEC. A decision was taken that amendments to the scope from IEC would have a date of withdrawal of existing standard extended to 60 months so that if further European proposals for change were subsequently accepted then it would not require two changes to the 'instructions for use' in a short time for manufacturers.

The Industry Unveils Proposals on the Review of the EU Energy Label

A press launch was held on 4 December in Brussels, attended by journalists, MEPs and manufacturers at which CECED unveiled its proposals for the review of the energy label.

The industry stressed the need for the revision as European household appliances have outgrown the existing energy label. To ensure the label continues to be a powerful tool, household appliance manufacturers are calling for a new

dynamic open-ended numerical scale to be introduced. This would replace the existing A to G scale with a scale from 1 to 7, with 7 being most efficient. This system would allow further progress to 8 or more whilst also eliminating the lowest categories. AMDEA has already informed DEFRA of the industry's preference for this approach. CECED is also calling for refrigerators and freezers in the current Class "A" to be phased out entirely by law by 2013.



AMDEA Discusses with Treasury Introducing Cash Incentives for Buyers of Efficient Appliances

Member States Finance Ministers met in Brussels on 13 November to discuss the possibility, first suggested by the UK and France in July, to reduce VAT rates on certain environmentally friendly goods. This issue was further discussed on 4 December. The green products in question include cars with reduced CO2 emission, insulation materials, efficient light bulbs and energy-efficient appliances. The leaders proposed a 5% EU-wide VAT rate for such products.

On 13 December, AMDEA met with representative of HM Treasury to discuss this proposal.

Changes to EU tax rules must be agreed unanimously by all 27 member states, making it a complicated initiative. The Treasury team indicated that discussions would continue during 2008.

AMDEA stated at the meeting that the home appliance industry believes reduced VAT rates are not the best way to promote the uptake of the most environmentally friendly goods. Direct tax credits to the consumer, as has been implemented in certain EU Member States, are a better alternative.

Government Moves Ahead with Its Proposals under the Energy White Paper and Budget Announcement

In May the Government issued its Energy White paper which set out a programme of actions including a commitment from Government to improve the take-up of energy efficient products. DEFRA has now implemented a commitment stated in the White Paper to publish a series of papers analysing how the performance of a range of energy-using products will need to improve over the next 10 – 20 years. Eleven separate papers have been published including domestic cold appliances, wet and cooking appliances. The responses will inform the Government's view on such policies as the EuP Directive, energy label-

ling and CERT. Meanwhile, the British Retail Consortium, and the UK Government have announced they are working on an initiative to phase out energy-intensive consumer electronics products. Such an initiative was announced in the Budget 2006. A summit of manufacturers has been convened to build on this commitment. The meeting is planned for January and will be hosted by Intellect, the trade association for the UK technology industry.

AMDEA will be following these developments closely.

Flame Supervision Devices Required on Gas Cookers

As members have been informed previously, from 1 January 2008 only gas cookers fitted with flame supervision devices (FSDs) will be fitted by CORGI in flats and other multi-dwelling buildings. This also covers multi-purpose flats such as those above shops and offices, but does not cover properties used for commercial use only.

An FSD must be fitted to each burner, except for

oven burners with an uncontrolled heat input of less than 0.6kW. The consequences of this requirement have been considered by several AMDEA Committees and Panels this year.

There is evidence that in the future the requirement to fit FSDs to gas cookers will apply to all dwellings but the exact timeline for this is still uncertain.



Amendments to WEEE Published

Amendments to the WEEE Regulations were laid before Parliament on 11 December 2007 and will enter into force on 1 January 2008. The WEEE (Amendment) Regulations 2007 will clarify how reuse can be counted as part evidence compliance and the recording of WEEE arising. There are no major policy changes. A report is also available on progress on the development of the UK WEEE system, as are updated guidance notes. The main changes in the guidance document reflect the amendments to the WEEE Regulations and the chapters relating to scope, reuse, local authorities/DCFs and evidence.

Friends of the Earth Publishes Report

In the report entitled: Home Truths, Dr Boardman of Oxford University sets out a blueprint for delivering an 80% cut in carbon emissions from UK homes.

The report acknowledges the benefits of the energy label, but calls for it to be accompanied by other policies for it to be influential. It calls on everyone

to participate in the debate: manufacturers, consumers and retailers.

With rising energy consumption due to the increase in the number of appliances in each household, the report recommends, among other things, the introduction of tough, mandatory minimum standards for appliances.

AMDEA will be contacting them to discuss the report.

AMDEA has recently circulated the following documents to Members.

- standby definitions as made by CENELEC/TC 111X "Environment " to the EuP Consultation Forum
- WEEE Update
- Report on Low Carbon Economy
- IEC Vacuum Cleaners for Commercial Use
- Report of meeting on Machinery Directive in Milan 2/10/07
- Device to alert on hob fires as discussed at meeting on 25 October 2007
- AMDEA proposal to test glass hob covers for thermal shock
- Letters to/from Minister regarding SAGE report from Health Protection Agency
- British NC proposal to ACEA for an IEC Environmental Group
- DEFRA Consultation on Energy-Using Products

The AMDEA Secretariat Wishes All its Members a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

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Merry Christmas to All!