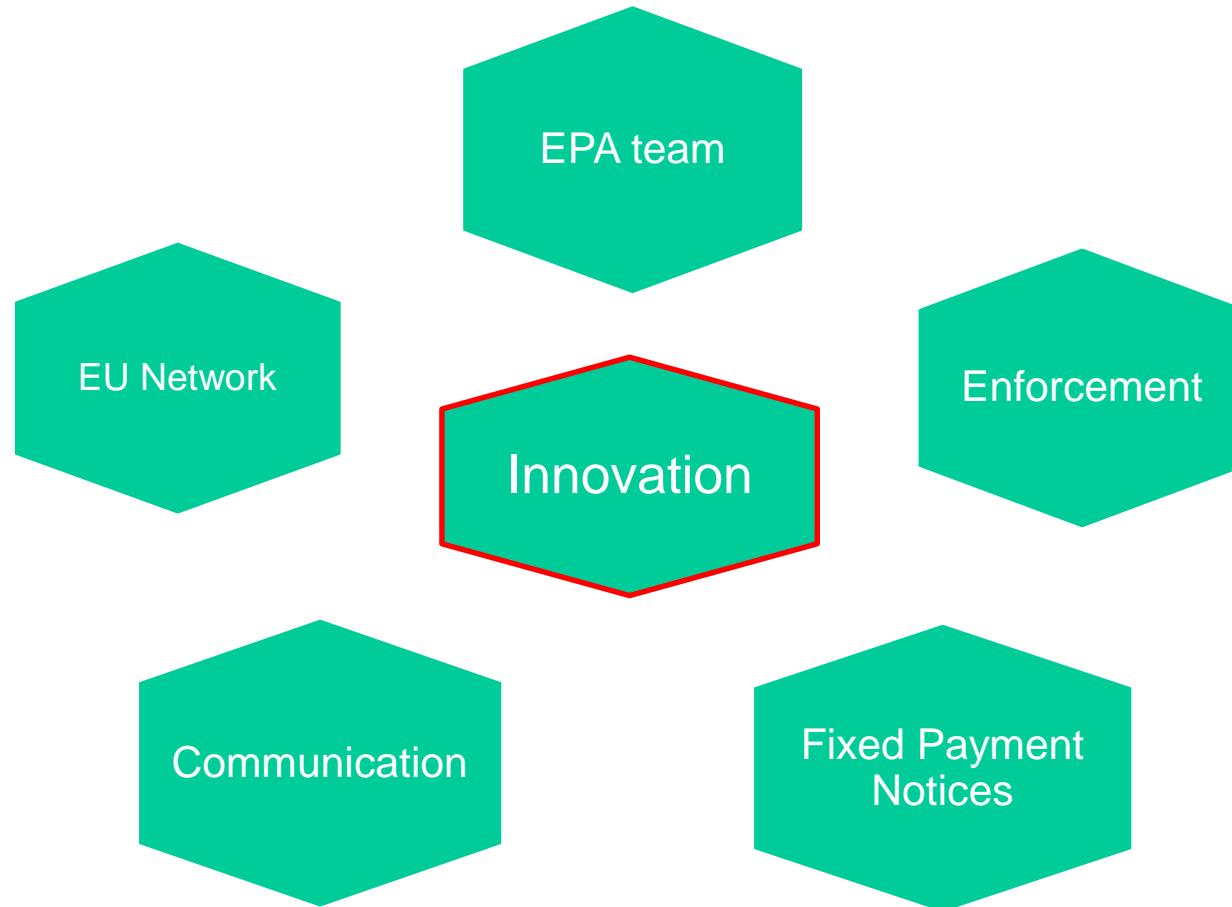


**Michael Owens**  
Environmental Protection Agency  
Ireland

**WEEE Ireland Conference**  
**Dublin 2018**

**Innovation in Enforcement**

# What I will talk about...



## Producer Responsibility Team

- The EPA team has four members and is based in Cork.
- Three Producer Responsibility Initiatives (PRIs) – WEEE, batteries and tyres.
- Activities include enforcement, communication, research, and provision of advice and guidance.
- Combination of EPA staff and contracted support staff.

## Enforcement Campaigns

- Prepare an annual Enforcement Plan which sets out the enforcement objectives for the year.
- Campaigns of B2B producer audits (60), distributor inspections (retail sector - 100) – Nationwide.
- Distance sellers (approx. 80 website inspections).
- Use EPA IT system to issue reports with findings, non-compliances, corrective actions and advice. Very little paperwork.
- Most enforcement is carried out using contracted resources.

## Enforcement Funding

- External funding to the EPA from producers.
- Provided through the compliance schemes.
- Annually at €250,000 – agreed until 2021.
- Funding for a new campaign against B2C free riders in 2018/2019 – targeting specific sectors.
- Also used to fund WEEE-related research in EPA.
- Could not do this work without the funding.
- A very innovative approach to enabling enforcement.

## Fixed Payment Notices

- EPA now can now issue 'Fixed Payment Notices'.
- Similar to a fine but not issued from a court – issued directly from the EPA.
- Covers certain offences such as failure to register.
- Amounts vary from €500 to €2,000 per offence.
- An innovative way to discourage non-compliance without having to engage the courts – The envy of others in EPA.

- Not all about inspections...
- Prepare an annual Communication Plan which sets out who we want to meet during the year.
- Meet with various stakeholders.
- Producers, sectoral representative groups, large retail outlets.
- Advise on compliance at a strategic level (e.g. at Head office) - assistive compliance.
- A complimentary effort to enforcement efforts at the 'shop floor' level.
- EPA is always available to assist on compliance.

- A new EU-wide enforcement network – Berlin 2017.
- European WEEE Enforcement Network (EWEN).
- Ensures that member states can communicate easily with each other on trans-border issues.
- Implementing Article 18 of the WEEE Directive.
- Particular emphasis on authorised representatives, free riders and challenge of online sales.
- EPA website inspections - a very good way to identify free riders based outside Ireland.
- We can easily report these to the relevant member state using the network.



## EU Enforcement Network (2)

- Standard complaint forms have been prepared:
  - Regulator - Send AR complaint to another member state.
  - Producer - Report free rider to authorities.
- The producer complaint form and the list of EU regulatory authorities are available on the EWRN website.
- Use of IMPEL facilities for document sharing and (hopefully) funding.
- Now considering other challenges to tackle.
- An innovative approach to EU wide enforcement.

- 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting held recently in Dublin (September)
- Compliance schemes, WEEE Forum and Eucolight and PRL invited to the second day.
- In Ireland we work closely with PRL and compliance schemes – emphasised at the meeting.
- Agreed (in general) the kinds of actions that should be carried out by compliance schemes and regulatory authorities.
- Awareness raising, legislative change.
- Overall view is that widespread co-operation is key to tackling free riders, particularly from outside EU.

- Described some innovations in enforcement.
  - Funding for external enforcement contractors.
  - Use of Fixed Payment Notices.
  - Communication efforts to spread the compliance message.
  - The new EU enforcement network
- But....challenge of free riders outside EU remains.
- Innovation and co-operation will be needed.
- EWEN (and EPA) wants to play a central role of the efforts to address this challenge.

...the end....

■ Thank you for attention...