

WEEELABEX: Standards that will take the WEEE management business to the next level

In the past four years, the WEEE Forum, an EU grouping associating 38 producer compliance schemes, developed proprietary standards in coalition with recyclers and producers. CENELEC, a European standards body, is now translating the standards into official EN standards. The standards will affect all parties collecting, handling or processing e-waste.

In 2008, the European Commission awarded funding under its LIFE programme to the WEEE Forum for 'WEEELABEX' (WEEE LABEL of Excellence), a four-year project (2009-12) the chief aspiration of which was to protect the environment through the development, on the one hand, of a set of European standards covering the collection, sorting, handling, storage, transportation, treatment and disposal of all kinds of waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE), and, on the other hand, rules to decide whether an undertaking's processes deserve to be WEEELABEX approved and procedures that will guarantee that trained auditors conduct the same type of audits of undertakings involved in those activities.

The standards will affect all undertakings with which the twenty-six producer compliance schemes ('WEEELABEX systems') of the newly created, Prague-based WEEELABEX organisation have a contractual relationship.

"This project has raised the WEEE bar in Europe and levelled the playing field", says Pascal Leroy, Secretary General of the WEEE Forum. "Undertakings are implementing higher standards, thereby reducing damage to the environment and improving working conditions. Dishonest companies or individuals involved in illegal activities are less likely able to dodge 'the system'."

The proprietary WEEELABEX requirements are being translated by experts in CENELEC, one of the three official EU standards organisations, into formal EN standards, affecting all operators on the market.

"With the approval of these standards, industry shows to be taking the principle of producer responsibility very seriously", says José Ramón Carbajosa, President of the WEEE Forum.

ENDS

About WEEE Ireland

WEEE Ireland (Waste, Electrical and Electronic Equipment) is a not for profit organisation, founded by producers of electrical and electronic appliances in order to help them comply with the legal obligations imposed by the WEEE Directive 2002/96/EC. WEEE Ireland manages the collection for recycling of household WEEE, lighting equipment and batteries from authorised collection points, on behalf of its Producer members. The WEEE Ireland Annual Environmental report can be found here: <http://annualreport2012.weeeireland.ie>

About the WEEE Forum

The WEEE Forum was founded in April 2002. It counts 38 WEEE producer responsibility organisations from Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Italy, Germany, Greece, France, Ireland, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and United Kingdom. All organisations are open, non-profit oriented compliance schemes run on behalf of a community of about 17,000 producers. Members in 2013: Amb3E, Appliances Recycling, Asekol, Asekol SK, Ecoasimelec, Ecodom, Ecolec, Ecologic, Ecoped, ecoR'it, Eco-systèmes, Ecotic, Eco Tic, EEPA, EES-Ringlus, ElektroEko, Elektrowin, El-Kretsen, elretur, el retur, Envidom, Fotokiklosi, Lightcycle, Lumicom, RAecycle, Recicla Canaria, Recupel, ReMedia, Repic, Retela, RoRec, SENS, SLRS, SWICO, UFH, Wecycle, WEEE Ireland and Zeos. Collectively, the members of the WEEE Forum collected and reported proper de-pollution and recycling of more than 2 million tonnes of WEEE. Being one of the world's only multinational e-waste centres of competence, the WEEE Forum's mission is to contribute to an expert and constructive debate based on facts and figures. See www.weee-forum.org.

About WEEELABEX

WEEELABEX is the acronym ('WEEE LABEL of EXcellence') of a project, run by the WEEE Forum in co-operation with stakeholders from the producers' community and processing industry. The project (2009-2012) is co-financed by the European Community under the LIFE programme (LIFE07 ENV/B/000041).

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