



Arnhem, 22 May 2015

To whom it may concern

The European Electronics Recyclers Association (EERA) is a non-profit organization that promotes the interest of recycling companies who are treating waste from electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) in Europe. EERA members include the largest electronics recyclers in Europe who, together process over 2 million tons of WEEE annually.

EERA is directly concerned about the decision of the Stockholm Convention defining HBCD as a new POP and the subsequent discussion within the European Commission to establish very low and we believe impractical contamination thresholds under the EU POP Regulation which are significantly lower than the limits set by REACH, since E-Waste plastics represent a considerable percentage of the total E-waste stream and since brominated flame retardants, such as HBCD have also been used in E-waste plastics, particularly in HIPS.

We have been informed that proposals are being formulated that the unintentional trace contamination levels set in Annex I of the EU POP Regulation could be defined as low as 100 ppm. If this were to apply to materials produced from recycled e-waste it would pose significant challenges for our industry and the authorities. In a similar way a low POP limit below 1000ppm would also pose significant challenges due to impact on the materials which can be recycled.

Apart from the fact that analysis methods for a reliably method to measure the concentrations of HBCD at such low concentration levels does not exist today and any detailed analyses of individual Brominated Flame Retardants are extremely costly and time consuming, a trace unintentional contamination limit of 10ppm, and similarly a low POP limit for waste identification of below 1000ppm, would have the potential to bring the recycling of existing E-Waste plastics to an end, with a huge impact on the planned E-Waste recycling targets and the developing industry of E-Waste recycling.

There are three overall reasons and many smaller reasons that restrictions at very low levels like these place a much larger and more expensive burden on recyclers than they do on virgin suppliers and thus significantly increase the costs of offering recycled plastics to the market:

1. Achieving the low levels of legacy additives generally would require the repeated use of aggressive, multiple, sophisticated and expensive separation techniques in order to assure compliance with confidence. Without these expensive techniques it would only be possible to identify brominated plastics not the actual presence of the legacy POP. Unrealistically low threshold levels, below 1000ppm would bring the recycling industry of E-Waste plastics to an end.

2. As a consequence recyclers would be forced to incinerate and discard more “good plastics” and other organics than necessary – creating more CO₂ than necessary. Recyclers would produce less recycled product at higher production cost, thereby making recycling of these E-Waste plastics economically unviable.

3. If supported, the proposed restrictions would place an expensive burden on recyclers, because every batch of materials would have to be tested to identify small amounts of substances that might still be present. The test to measure compliance to such small levels of legacy additives become extremely expensive and complex and is driving up the costs and risks of doing business for material recyclers. Virgin plastic suppliers do not need such tests even under the current version of RoHS and REACH, which is already a disadvantage for recyclers.

EERA communicates that the presence of brominated flame retardants in WEEE in general does not create technical problems for recycling and waste treatment. However, lowering the threshold limits for any particular brominated flame-retardant such as HBCD to the levels proposed would make it economically difficult if not impossible to recycle E-Waste plastics for re-use in new electronics equipment or other consumer products.

EERA therefore recommends that for the purpose of supporting recycling of plastics the threshold limits for HBCD are set at limit of 1000 ppm.

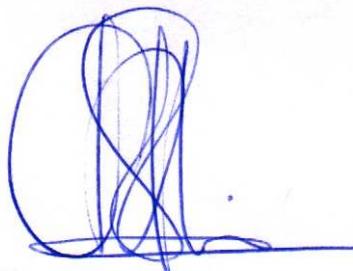
Continuously defining new threshold values for ever more substances in the EU legislation generally impacts the developing recycling industry of these technical plastics negatively and hence has a negative impact on the development of a recycling society and circular economy that the EU Commission is seeking.

The EU WEEE Directive already prescribes the removal of all Brominated Flame Retardants including HBCD from Electronic Wastes with levels for waste below 1000 ppm and hence the legislative framework is already available to this extent to phase out any new POP's, including HBCD.

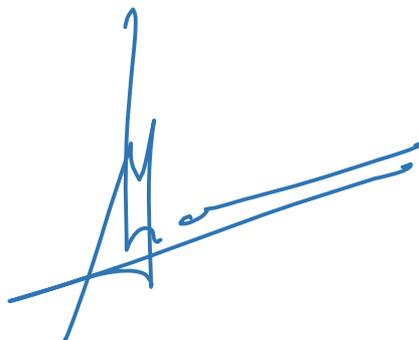
In summary EERA fears that investments in the recycling of technical plastics from E-Waste might come to a halt, if new and unrealistically low threshold values for HBCD are defined by law and therefore suggests to not lower the threshold for HBCD below 1000 ppm.

We look forward to hear from you.

Regards,



Chris Slijkhuis
Board Member



Norbert Zonneveld
Executive Secretary