

2008 Annual Report



EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF
ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONIC
WASTE TAKE BACK SYSTEMS

1. The President's message



Globally, the year 2008 will go down in history as a year of fundamental changes. The financial crisis shows that the quest for short term success, as it is required from companies listed on the stock exchange, in combination with the greed and avariciousness for bonuses, leads to catastrophe. In a time of complete loss of sense of direction on global as well as on local level, sus-

tainable values are required to give people strong support. The crisis has also added a new dimension to the essential requirements of company management: It is no longer enough just to manage a company; a new quality of leadership is called for.

In these turbulent times the WEEE Forum and its members provide stability to their stakeholders. We put into practice an essential part of EPR, the extended producer responsibility principle, on behalf of producers, and we are doing it while striving for good quality.

Also for the WEEE Forum, 2008 was a year of great changes. I am particularly proud that we managed to thoroughly reform the organisation's governance rules, and to secure EU approval of our ambitious project concerning a label of excellence.

The by-laws which the General Assembly approved in Vienna on April 3rd 2008 stipulate the fundamental principles of WEEE Forum governance. For the first time since the birth of the WEEE Forum in 2002, both the Directors in the Board and the Board chairman – the *de facto* President of the organisation – were elected by separate votes in the General Assembly. No seats are reserved in the Board for particular profiles of individuals or members. The one member, one vote, one fee was introduced: Each member pays the same financial contribution, regardless of its size (with the exception of micro-organisations from small states in Europe). In November, members also endorsed a Charter in which they commit their organisation to respecting certain fundamental rules. I strongly believe that these decisions have turned the WEEE Forum into a radically democratic and at the same time very efficient organisation in which all members, without privileges from the past, have an equal say.

In 2008 we also managed to have our project proposal for a "WEEE label of excellence" approved by the European authorities. In fact, this project, also known under its acronym "WEEELABEX", takes what we have been doing for some years to the next level. Our ambition is to develop a set of standards for all activities involved in WEEE management, i.e. from collection through transport to recovery, recycling and disposal. All electrical and electronic equipment falls within the scope of the

3 April 2009

project. Once the standards have been approved by the General Assembly, all members of the WEEE Forum will be expected to make sure that, through their tendering procedures, the principles of those standards are put into practice by their partners. No other organisation in the EU is able to implement standards in such an efficient way as the WEEE Forum and its members. The standards may cater for transition periods for less advanced recycling markets, but in principle it will affect everybody involved in e-waste management in Europe, from north to south, from west to east.

With our WEEE Forum Conference in Vienna in April 2008 we started our so-called “structured dialogue” with all stakeholders, especially with the producers family (mainly CECED, DigitalEurope, ELC and ORGALIME), but also with NGOs such as Greenpeace and the European Environmental Bureau, with the StEP Initiative (United Nations University), the electronics recyclers of EERA, PRO Europe (packaging) and others. In the context of the WEEELABEX project we created a so-called “WEEELABEX Stakeholders Group”, which provides all parties that have a stake in the project a platform to cooperate constructively and to exchange views and experience related to the implementation of the project. I want to stress that the stakeholders are an integral part of the project, i.e. we are committed to taking account of their views. I am confident that we can count on their support.

I am proud to be president of this small but efficient organisation. The results we reached are the result of great team work. So I thank the members of the Board for their cooperation. I thank all members who are involved in the Project Steering Group of WEEELABEX or in one of the working groups for their contributions. I thank all the consultants for their excellent work they did for the WEEE Forum during the last year. I also thank all our 40 members for their trust and their confidence in me and in the Board. And last but not least, I thank Pascal Leroy, our Secretary General, for his enthusiasm and commitment.

I look forward to tackling our next duties, together with all of you.

Andreas Röthlisberger
President

2. The WEEE Forum on the move



Two things will come to mind when we will think of 2008: the WEEE Forum conference in Vienna and the European Commission's decision to co-finance the "WEEE label of excellence" project.

On 3-4 April 2008, 200 people took part in the biennial WEEE Forum conference in Vienna, the capital of Austria. It was a perfect opportunity for our community not only to meet colleagues from manufacturing industry but also green activists, government officials, representatives of other compliance schemes and experts. I think that we can say with confidence that that conference managed to provide what was expected from the WEEE Forum: foster exchanges of best practice and of common concerns as well as a great deal of discussion among stakeholders.

A couple of months later, on 28 July 2008, the so-called "Life committee", a committee composed of both member state and European Commission administrators, decided to co-finance the WEEE Forum's "WEEE label of excellence" project. That decision provided a strong signal of trust in our organisation and formal support for our activities. It encouraged us to get into gear for a swift project start in 2009, in close co-operation with stakeholders.

But also in other respects, 2008 was an eventful year. We reformed the organisation [see "The President's message"]. We published for the first time a comprehensive report on the yearly "Key Figures", with an analysis of the most relevant trends. We also contributed to the European Commission's stakeholders consultation on the review of Directive 2002/96/EC on WEEE as well as on the revision of the "List of Wastes", formerly known as the European Waste Catalogue (EWC). And finally, we actively participated in the Commission's Green Week, the focus of which was on waste issues.

The fact that the WEEE Forum has been invited as speaker at quite a few conferences and public hearings, and that the Commission integrated a selection of facts and figures produced by the WEEE Forum in its Proposal for a recast of the Directive, is evidence for the fact that we are widely being acknowledged as a relevant competence centre for e-waste policy matters. I am confident that we are heading in the right direction.

Pascal Leroy
Secretary General

3. Projects and initiatives

3.1. Getting into gear for WEEELABEX

On 28 July 2008, the so-called “Life committee”, an EU committee composed of delegates of environmental protection agencies of the EU member states and chaired by the European Commission’s Environment directorate, decided, after a tough selection among competing project proposals, to award €532,300 for the WEEE Forum’s “WEEE label of excellence” project. It signified the EU authorities’ strong signal of support for a project which will be of crucial importance to all parties in Europe involved in e-waste collection, logistics, and recovery and recycling. The project will run from 2009 until end 2012.



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What came before – The “WEEE label of excellence” project can be seen as the further development and expansion of the WEEE Forum’s standardisation and harmonisation agenda. In 2006 and 2007, the WEEE Forum, jointly with CECED, the association of home appliance manufacturers, and EERA, specialist waste processors and recyclers, agreed on a set of requirements related to collection, transport and processing of refrigeration appliances containing the climate-friendly hydrocarbons (HC) as well as climate-endangering gases, such as HFC and ozone-depleting CFC and HCFC. We figured out that, if we are successful in developing standards for refrigerators, we should in principle also manage to develop a set of standards encompassing all 10 WEEE categories listed in Directive 2002/96/EC.

Furthermore, a working group of professionals was set up to research how to address the “CRT problem”, i.e. what to do with a growing mountain of waste CRT (cathode ray tubes) appliances that contain lead, strontium and barium, and the worldwide demand for which is dropping. On the initiative of Jan Vrba, Managing Director of Asekol, a study was commissioned into the market dynamics, existing recovery technologies and possible alternatives to closed-loop recycling.

Another group of professionals started studying the issue of flat screens (both plasma screens and liquid crystal displays (LCD)). The working group, led by Richard Toffolet, Technical Director at Eco-systèmes, gathered intelligence on quantities of end-of-life flat screens that are likely to arise in the (near) future based on sales in the past, understand different existing treatment technologies and the environmental issues that need to be addressed.

In other words, by the time we were impatiently waiting for the green light of the Life committee, many pieces of the jigsaw puzzle were lying before our eyes. What was needed next was a structure within which we could make the puzzle.

The project’s objectives – The project, better known under the project proposal’s acronym “WEEELABEX”, would not only provide a forum for research such as that

related to CRT and flat screen appliances, but would also aim at laying down a harmonised set up collection, logistics, handling and treatment requirements as well as management and reporting standards encompassing all 10 WEEE categories listed in Directive 2002/96/EC. Processors and other parties included in the scope of the project will apply for a label certifying that their operations are in compliance with that set of standards. An independent team of auditors will issue the certificate and label of excellence.

Communication – A programme was launched to start communicating about the project. It is important that all parties involved in the business of e-waste collection and recovery, notably the producer responsibility organisations of the WEEE Forum, the producers community, processors, civil society and public authorities, understand what the project aims to do and how they can contribute to it. The Secretary



General and the President presented the project to waste policy professionals in CECED and EICTA and at international conferences in Prague (PRO Europe, 15 May), Berlin (Electronics Goes Green, 9 September) and Phoenix (US) (E-Scrap, 17 September).

Setting up the institutional architecture – In the 2nd half of 2008, the institutional architecture within which the project would be run was set up. A “Project Steering Group” (PSG) was installed, the members of which were appointed by the Board at its web call on 7 November: Robert Hediger (chair), Christian Brabant (vice-chair), Willy Quinart, Jan Vlak, José Ramón Carbajosa, José Joaquín Santos, Fernando Lamy da Fontoura and Jan Vrba. The constitutive meeting of the PSG took place on 20 November. The PSG is supposed to provide strategic guidance to the project manager and is responsible for securing that the project is run within the quality, budget and time constraints.

In addition to the PSG, a “WEEELABEX Stakeholders Group” (WSG) was set up, in which the main stakeholders, i.e. producers, public authorities, producer responsibility organisations, civil society and academia, have a permanent seat. The WSG provides a forum for interested parties to express their views on the set of standards that is being created. The WSG’s constitutive meeting was on 23 January 2009 in Salzburg.

Project manager – At its web call of 7 November, the Board appointed Bert Vonkeman, former Managing Director of NVMP, as project manager. He will report to the PSG and be responsible for the day-to-day management of the project.

Consolidation of the project plan – In the months following the approval of the project by the Life committee, the project plan was further refined, both in terms of content and budget. It was agreed that 2009 would focus almost exclusively on the development of an “umbrella standard”, i.e. a basic standard that would hold for all

WEEE categories. The first milestone is 17 June 2009, at which the Technical Committee, the WEEE Forum body composed of the technical experts of all members, is expected to approve the first draft of the standard, to be prepared by a working group of external contractors and professionals seconded by some of the members.

By year-end, the Secretary General's mission of managing the pre-project phase was successfully accomplished: Everything was in place to allow the project take a swift start.

3.2. WF_RepTool, the WEEE Forum reporting tool

WF_RepTool and WF_RepLists are data structures that allow for the development of harmonised e-waste treatment and recovery/recycling results. It creates a structure that allows treatment and recovery and recycling facilities, such as dismantlers, shredders and smelters, to report the level of recycling and recovery of materials in a uniform, comparable manner. Harmonised classification of the use of final fractions as input to final technologies, and of technologies allow for the calculation of harmonised recycling and recovery quotas – a major advance compared to 2002 when data were incomparable.

WF_RepTool

WF_RepTool remains one of the pearls in the WEEE Forum's crown. In 2008, a majority of members were reported using the tool or having decided to start using it. Most other members are in the testing period or have expressed a keen interest. Some members are facing country-specific issues which make the application of the tool problematic.

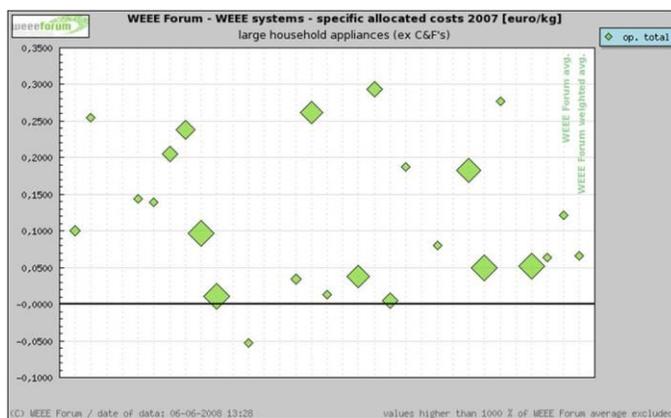
In its 2007 report "Towards sustainable WEEE recycling", EERA, the European Electronics Recyclers Association promoting the interests of e-waste processors and who reports treating 1.2 Mt, publicly refers to WF_RepTool as a commendable reporting tool that allows for harmonised reporting and ensuring that "recycling and recovery qualifications are applied uniformly throughout EU27".

In the 2nd half of the year, the WF_RepTool/WF_RepLists structure was used to calculate de-pollution results as well as recycling and recovery targets per treatment category among members of the WEEE Forum.

In 2009, Renate Gabriel and Wilhelm Haghofer, the consultants who developed the tools, will further upgrade them, partly within the budget of WEEELABEX.

3.3. Key Figures and WEEE Systems Overview

The two web-based tools that allow the WEEE Forum to profile itself as a centre of competence for e-waste matters are “Key Figures” and “WEEE Systems Overview”. The “Key Figures” tool compiles quantitative data, notably amounts “put on the market”, quantities collected and costs per type of equipment, per type of cost, and spanning multiple years, while the “WEEE Systems Overview” compiles mainly qualitative information related to legislative and regulatory requirements, registration procedures, financing of e-waste management, contracting, clearing houses and structural differences.



A continuously growing number of members of the WEEE Forum provide data to both applications. In 2007, more than 30 members were in a position to lodge data concerning their operations (the others having set up their business only recently).

In the 4th quarter of the year, the public version of WSO was put on the WEEE Forum website, allowing the public at large to study the profiles of the member systems.

3.4. Improving the collection of small items

The continuous improvement of the environmental performance of its member organisations is one of the WEEE Forum’s key missions. In that context, the “improve collection” project was launched. The project consists of different phases. In 2008, the research zoomed in on non-technical and communication aspects (phase one). Charity Teoh, also employed under contract with the United Nations University and the team of StEP Initiative, got into contact with the management teams of the systems to understand the focus of their communication policy, the tools they use to communicate about their activities, the results achieved so far, and, whenever possible, the cost-effectiveness of those activities. The project will be presented to the General Assembly on 3 April 2009.

4. 2008 balance sheet

2008 : From 01/01/2008 to 31/12/2008
2007 : From 01/01/2007 to 31/12/2007

ASSETS		Financial year	Last financial year
FIXED ASSETS		40.424,85	53.952,74
II. INTANGIBLE ASSETS		<u>33.385,77</u>	<u>44.917,37</u>
IT-Services	212000	32.872,49	32.872,49
IT-Projects	212001	3.282,30	3.282,30
IT-Reptool	212002	27.235,83	27.235,83
IT-WEEE Syst.	212003	3.985,66	3.985,66
IT-Website	212004	16.390,66	16.390,66
Depreciation of IT-services	212090	-50.380,97	-22.458,71
III. TANGIBLE ASSETS		<u>7.039,08</u>	<u>9.035,37</u>
B. PLANT, MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT		885,55	1.771,10
Office Equipment	231000	2.656,65	2.656,65
Depreciation of office equipment	231090	-1.771,10	-885,55
C. FURNITURE AND VEHICLES		4.514,01	5.078,25
Furniture	240000	5.642,49	5.642,49
Depreciation of furniture	240090	-1.128,48	-564,24
E. OTHER TANGIBLE ASSETS		1.639,52	2.186,02
Expenses fitting-out rented property	265000	2.732,52	2.732,52
Depreciation of Expenses fitting-out rented property	265090	-1.093,00	-548,50
CURRENT ASSETS		331.469,32	32.211,20
VII. AMOUNTS RECEIVABLE WITHIN ONE YEAR		<u>4.736,91</u>	<u>20.395,98</u>
A. TRADE DEBTORS			13.406,82
Account customers	400000		13.406,82
Doubtful debts	407000		11.509,50
Value decrease customers	409000		-11.509,50
B. OTHER AMOUNTS RECEIVABLE		4.736,91	6.989,16
VAT to be recovered	411000	1.928,91	4.187,60
Foreign VAT to be recovered	411200	10.481,95	10.481,95
Value decrease other amounts receivable	411290	-10.481,95	-10.481,95
Stichting NVMP	418000		2.801,56
Prepayment Social security	416400	2.810,00	2.810,00
IX. CASH AT BANK AND IN HAND		<u>325.484,71</u>	<u>11.723,98</u>
Bank account	550000	25.181,69	11.723,98
Business account	551000	300.303,02	300.303,02
X. DEFERRED CHARGES AND ACCRUED INCOME		<u>1.247,70</u>	<u>91,24</u>
Charges to be deferred	490000	204,65	204,65
Revenue to be accrued	491000	1.043,05	91,24
TOTAL ASSETS		371.894,17	86.163,94

2008 : From 01/01/2008 to 31/12/2008
 2007 : From 01/01/2007 to 31/12/2007

LIABILITIES

		Financial year	Last financial year
CAPITAL AND RESERVES		85.404,10	36.320,34
V. ACCUMULATED PROFITS		<u>85.404,10</u>	<u>36.320,34</u>
Result of the year 2006	140001	56.558,31	47.581,00
Roos & Partners 2006	140002		-11.168,75
Audit new member 2006	140003		25.905,56
Value decrease customers 2006	140004		-5.759,50
Result of the year 2007	140005	-20.237,97	-20.237,97
Result of the year 2008	140006	49.083,76	
CREDITORS		286.490,07	49.843,60
IX. AMOUNTS PAYABLE WITHIN ONE YEAR		<u>72.922,51</u>	<u>49.843,60</u>
C. TRADE DEBTS		60.591,13	18.050,43
1. SUPPLIERS		<u>60.591,13</u>	<u>18.050,43</u>
Account suppliers	440000	59.786,35	5.952,76
Credit notes to receive	442000	-1.057,67	
Invoices to receive	444000	1.862,45	12.097,67
E. TAXES, REMUNERATION AND SOCIAL SECURITY		12.331,38	31.793,17
1. TAXES			<u>11.019,33</u>
Tax deducted at source	453000		11.019,33
2. REMUNERATION AND SOCIAL SECURITY		<u>12.331,38</u>	<u>20.773,84</u>
Social security costs payable	454000		12.501,84
Holiday allowance payable	456000	12.331,38	8.272,00
X. ACCRUED CHARGES AND DEFERRED INCOME		<u>213.567,56</u>	
Costs to be charged	492000	647,56	
Life + Project	493000	212.920,00	
TOTAL LIABILITIES		371.894,17	86.163,94

5. The WEEE Forum conference in Vienna

On 2-3 April, 200 people gathered in the Marriott hotel in the Austrian capital of Vienna for the biennial WEEE Forum conference. At times, discussions were very lively, which goes to show that, in the run-up to the publication by the Commission of its Proposal for a recast of the Directive, the stakes for many participants were very high.

There was no central theme, but break-out sessions provided the opportunity of discussing the main issues of concern: Market trends, "WEEE Forum", Products, EPR, Finance, and Best practices in industry.

Next WEEE Forum conference is scheduled for 23-24 September 2010 in Zurich.



3 April 2009



6. Looking ahead

The two main areas of activities in 2009 will be the 1st phase of the “WEEE label of excellence” project, and the review of the Directive.

WEEE label of excellence – In 2008, the Board appointed a project manager and approved a project plan with detailed milestones and reporting steps. The constitutive meeting of the WEEELABEX Stakeholders Group will take place in the fringe of the International Electronics Recycling Congress in Salzburg in January. That will be the first opportunity to hear from the parties that have a stake in the issue whether they agree with the general thrust of the project and the direction it is heading. Early 2009, a working group is expected to start in earnest, i.e. reviewing the umbrella standard with specifications covering all types of equipment and all generic aspects of WEEE management from collection to processing. By the end of the summer recess, in September 2009, we should be in a position to clarify to the European Commission whether the project is still on track in terms of milestones and key activities.

WEEE review – Having published its Proposal for a recast of the Directive a couple of weeks before year-end, the decision-making institutions, the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers, will start their deliberations in 2009. MEPs are not expected to reach conclusions due to the upcoming elections in June, yet the working party in Council dealing with the matter will certainly start informal exchanges of views on the issues of greatest concern.

In its contribution to the discussions, the WEEE Forum will seek to explain that there are reasons to believe that the proposed new target, expressed in percentage of sales volumes, and imposed on producers, rather than on member states, will fail to address the problems that have arisen with the implementation of the Directive since it was introduced. A failure to lay down a requirement that all WEEE has to be handed over to producers, in combination with a new requirement for producers to finance all costs incurred by collection facilities, will create new unlevel playing fields. There are already several examples of unlevel playing fields in the WEEE area across Europe. The proposed changes will increase costs for producers dramatically and amplify the extent to which producers could be held captive by those that collect WEEE. The true objective of the Directive will not be achieved and the identified problems of illegal treatment and shipment will not be resolved. Instead e-waste traders, municipalities or other non-related third parties that have got hold of some WEEE or control the collection of WEEE will be able to dictate terms upon which producers or their compliance schemes may access such WEEE. There are already examples of this type of action occurring in some member. Rather than making this behaviour spread all over the EU it should be resolved in the member states where it occurs today.

7. Members of the WEEE Forum (2008)

Amb3E (PT)	El retur (NO)
Appliances Recycling (GR)	Envidom (SK)
Asekol (CZ)	ICT Milieu (NL)
B2B Compliance (UK)*	Latvijas Zaļais Elektron (LV)*
EcoAsimelec (ES)	Lightcycle (DE)
Ecodom (IT)	Lumicom (UK)
Ecofimática (ES)	NVMP (NL)
Ecolec (ES)	Recupel (BE)
Ecologic (FR)	REMA (CZ)*
Eco-RAEE's (ES)	ReMedia (IT)
EcoR'it (IT)	Repic (UK)
Eco-systèmes (FR)	Retela (CZ)
Ecotic (ES)	RoRec (RO)
Eco Tic (RO)	SENS (CH)
Ecotrel (LU)	Ser-Ty (FI)
EES-Ringlus (EE)	SEWA (SK)
ElectroCoord (HU)	SLRS (CH)
ElektroEko (PL)	SWICO (CH)
Elektrowin (CZ)	Tragamovil (ES)
Elker (FI)	UFH (AT)
El Kretsen (SE)	WEEE Ireland (IE)
el retur (DK)	Zeos (SI)

* Quit the organisation in July 2008.

All members of the WEEE Forum are European non-profit organisations, run on behalf of producers of electrical and electronic equipment.

8. Directors in the Board

At its meeting on 2 April 2008 in Vienna, the General Assembly elected a new Board of Directors and suggested Andreas Röthlisberger as possible chairman, and therefore de facto President of the association. This suggestion was, later that same day, endorsed by the newly elected Board.

The Board also appointed Helmut Kolba as Vice Chairman, Leo Donovan as Treasurer and Zoltán Tóth as statutory Secretary.

Pascal Leroy is the Secretary General.



From left to right: Pascal Leroy, Zoltán Tóth (ElectroCoord), Leo Donovan (WEEE Ireland), Roman Tvrzník (Elektrowin), Andreas Röthlisberger (SENS), Christian Brabant (Eco-systèmes), Jan-Olof Eriksson (EI Kretsen) and Helmut Kolba (UFH).

Did you know?

- It is too early to report consolidated data concerning sales, collection and costs for the year 2008. However, a preliminary calculation concludes that the total quantities collected increased from 1.17 Mt in 2007 (data from 31 systems) to roughly 1.5 Mt. That's about half the total WEEE reported and accounted for in Europe.
- If the European Commission's estimates of 8.3 Mt as total yearly amount of WEEE arising are correct, the 1.5 Mt collected (and properly treated) by members of the WEEE Forum represent only a fraction of the total WEEE arising.
- The average collection system in the WEEE Forum pays €90-95/t more for treatment than one year ago due to the drop in raw materials prices. Combined for all WEEE Forum systems, this adds up to approximately €120,000,000, and for all WEEE collection officially reported and accounted for €0.24bn.
- In total, 17,000 producers of electrical and electronic equipment are affiliated to the 41 collection and recovery systems that made up the WEEE Forum in 2008.
- Even if the picture of treatment improves cost-wise, the total operational costs for scrupulous systems who comply with standards and legislative requirements, such as those spelled out in Annex II of Directive 2002/96/EC, remain positive. Only one member managed to turn the total management, i.e. including administration, of waste large household appliances (excluding cooling appliances) into a profitable business.
- On 1 July 2008, the WEEE Forum published for the first time a comprehensive, public survey of "Key Figures", providing an analysis of recent trends and developments, and detailed facts and figures about sales, quantities collected and operational and non-operational costs in 2007.

The Board of the WEEE Forum wishes to thank all the members for their trust and support, and all the stakeholders and authorities with whom the WEEE Forum has co-operated constructively.

For more information on the WEEE Forum and a profile of each system and contact information, see www.weee-forum.org. Drop a line with the Brussels office: secretariat@weee-forum.org. Call us on (32-2) 706 87 01. Or pay us a visit: Diamant conference and business centre, Boulevard Auguste Reyerslaan 80, 1030 Brussels (Belgium).