

Waste Strategy Team  
1-J North  
Victoria Quay  
Edinburgh  
EH6 6QQ

6 October 2008

Dear Sir,

**Consultation on Potential Legislative Measures to Implement Zero Waste**

Please find enclosed a response to the above consultation. This response has been prepared by the Scottish Branch of EAUC, in consultation with the Association of Scotland's Colleges.

The Higher and Further Education Sector is strongly supportive of the concept of striving to attain a zero waste strategy in Scotland. There is, however, a widely held view that many of the steps to achieving this cannot be taken by Scotland in isolation. This view is expanded upon within the response we have submitted.

The profile of waste generated in the higher and further education sector is somewhat unusual when compared to organisations of a similar scale. This results from the wide range of activities that can be undertaken by each institutions including:

- Office/administrative activities
- Laboratory teaching, producing chemical waste
- Cutting edge, internationally recognised, research that may produce waste ranging from hazardous chemicals, through animal by-products to material produced by genetic modification and to nanoparticles.
- Medical, dental and veterinary schools producing clinical waste
- Construction and refurbishment of buildings
- Maintenance of large institutional grounds (including farms) and teaching of grounds based subjects such as golf course management.
- Maintenance of a transport fleet
- Provision of residential accommodation, catering services and retail outlets

As a result, many of the proposals within the consultation would have an impact on our activities and whilst this is the case the sector is often constrained in terms of resources in a way that may not apply in the commercial sector.

Whilst the enclosed document provides responses to some of the specific questions posed by the consultation I would like, in particular, to highlight some of the areas that are of particular concern to the majority of the sector:

- The definition of waste continues to be contrary to the best interests of the waste hierarchy and it is illogical that SEPA is required to use 'a work around' of this to apply common sense. Surely we should be able to find a reuse for non-hazardous waste wherever we can without being bound by the worries that we may be breaking the law? A better definition would certainly aid waste reduction.
- Some waste legislation has undergone a number of significant amendments (e.g. WML Regs. 1994). Production of consolidated Regulations is essential for clarity.

*In partnership with*



- Prior to making new legislation, existing legislation should be reviewed with a view to identifying any shortcomings and addressing these, rather than adding an additional layer of legislation.
- Any new legislation should be introduced as waste legislation, rather than under the auspices of, for example, climate change legislation.
- Whilst many of the aims proposed within the consultation would be welcomed if introduced as a UK wide approach there are significant concerns within the sector that there would be little enforcement and, as a result, poor compliance and outcome. In addition there was concern that the organisations and businesses that did comply may suffer a competitive disadvantage as a result of the resource consumed when compared to those businesses that did not comply.

I hope that the response that we have provided gives a clear picture of the view of the further and higher education sector. Should you require any expansion of the views expressed or any further input on this or other aspects of regulation relating to our sector please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours Sincerely,



Iain Patton  
EAUC Executive Director

