DIGITAL WASTE TRACKING UPDATE AND CONSULTATION

FEBRUARY 2022

UPDATE

WASTE TRACKING PROJECT PARTNERS

ESTABLISHING A DIGITAL WASTE TRACKING SERVICE

The Environment Act 2021 gives governments of all four nations in the UK powers to introduce regulations to establish a digital waste tracking service.

A four-nation consultation 'Introduction of mandatory digital waste tracking' was launched on 21 January 2022.

It sets out proposals for a new approach to track waste and resources in real time throughout the economy and ensure that all waste movements are recorded, checked and managed correctly.

Responses will help inform the design of the service, refine the proposals and produce regulations to support the waste tracking service.

BENEFITS OF A DIGITAL WASTE TRACKING SERVICE

Implementation will help users to:

- track waste and resource flows
- tackle waste crime, including fly tipping and illegal waste exports
- support the effective regulation of waste
- identify actions to support a shift to the circular economy, helping businesses unlock the full potential value of waste materials and resources
- facilitate strategic decision making on waste policy and infrastructure
- support businesses to make informed choices about how their waste is managed

UPDATE ON PROGRESS: BREAKING DOWN A COMPLEX PROJECT

Service Standard

2. Solve a whole problem for users

Work towards creating a service that solves a whole problem for users, working with other teams and organisations where necessary.

- Experience from the first prototypes we developed in 2020 indicated we should break this complex project into smaller chunks
- This has been done by specific service applications that <u>solve a problem for users</u>
- Four problems (products) have been identified:
  - Where is waste going to?
  - Who is handling the waste?
  - What happens at waste sites?
  - How much waste is recycled?

TACKLING PRODUCT 1: WHERE IS WASTE GOING TO?

- In November 2020 we started developing a prototype online service for a user who needs to inform an agency about an export of green list waste
- Green list waste has a relatively small number of users and is governed by UK legislation so all four UK agencies are working to the same requirements
- In July 2021 an early version of the prototype passed an alpha assessment
- Since then we have been adding additional functionality to the prototype and testing it with users

GREEN LIST WASTE PROTOTYPE

TACKLING PRODUCT 2: WHO IS HANDLING THE WASTE?

- October 2021 we started work on Product 2 'Who is handling the waste?'
- Initial focus is on developing functionality for completing and agreeing a hazardous waste consignment
- Hazardous waste was chosen as it is a three party movement and provides an opportunity to explore charging and payment options for waste movements
- User research with hazardous waste users is underway
- More general research with local authorities planned

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN SCOTLAND?

- Digital waste tracking (DWT) is a priority for Scottish Government and SEPA, featuring in the Climate Change Update Plan and SEPA's AOP for 2021-22
- SEPA is to receive £900k Low Carbon funding from Scottish Government for additional resources to implement waste tracking over next 3 years
- SEPA is increasing its waste tracking team and starting to develop a readiness plan to set out how it will prepare staff, processes and technology for DWT. As SEPA rebuilds its systems post-cyber there is an opportunity to ensure DWT is embedded across the business
- Research project undertaken to help understand the likely impact on Scottish local authorities as they transition to digital waste tracking

CONSULTATION PROPOSALS

KEY QUESTIONS IN THE CONSULTATION

The consultation is seeking views on the practical aspects of implementing waste tracking including:

- What waste activities and information will need to be recorded
- What current waste reporting will be replaced by the new service
- How users will enter information onto the service
- Who will be required to enter information and when
- Data access controls
- Cost recovery
- Compliance and enforcement
- How we should go live with the service, including questions about the costs and benefits to users

WHAT WILL BE TRACKED?

Waste types
- Controlled waste, encompassing both hazardous and non-hazardous household, commercial and industrial waste
- Extractive waste from mines and quarries
- Waste containing persistent organic pollutants (POPs)

Waste activities
- Full journey of waste from the point it is produced and transferred to another person or site, to the point it reaches its end fate
- Next destination for end of waste products and materials
- Waste treatment
- Waste that has been discharged, disposed of or recovered

WHAT WILL IT MEAN FOR USERS?

- **Business disposing of waste** will have a digital record for waste removed from their premises. Their waste carrier will be able to enter this record for them, but as now, they will need to check the details are correct.

- **Waste site operator** will need to record details of the waste received on site and then subsequently what happens to it

- **Waste exporter** will need to record details of waste to be exported under Green List Waste controls

- **Waste carrier, broker, dealer** will need to ensure a digital record is created in the service for a waste movement before the movement takes place and record details of the waste collected from the producer and transported to the receiving site.

WHAT WILL IT MEAN FOR USERS?

- **Householder** council bin collections will remain the same. Other waste, put in a skip for example placed there by the householder or a tradesperson, will have a digital record created by the business collecting the waste. They will give the householder a unique reference, which can be used to see what happens to their waste, if they wish.

- **Local authority** waste collected from households will need to be first recorded when the waste arrives at a receiving site. Waste collections for commercial business or industrial premises will need to be recorded from the producers' premises

- **Environmental regulatory officer** will have access to comprehensive and timely information about all waste movements and activities within their area

WHAT REPORTING REGIMES WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE SERVICE?

Many existing reporting requirements for businesses and local authorities will be included in waste tracking.

In Scotland separate reporting will no longer be required for:

- Quarterly permitted/licensed site returns
- Hazardous waste consignment notes
- Complex exemption returns
- Local authority waste collection and treatment information (WasteDataFlow)
- Annex VII forms for waste exports

CHANGES TO EXISTING SYSTEMS AND LEGISLATION

Introduction of the waste tracking service will mean that some existing IT systems will become redundant. This includes the Electronic Duty of Care (EDOC) and WasteDataFlow.

Amendments will also be required to legislation across the UK including:

- the waste duty of care
- hazardous waste
- transfrontier shipments of waste
- waste permitting and licensing

WHEN INFORMATION MUST BE RECORDED

The ambition is for all waste movements and transfers (except where there are existing prenotification requirements) to be recorded on the waste tracking service in real time.

The consultation seeks views on the timescales for businesses to adapt to this way of working.

Movements/transfers of…	Less than 1 year	1-3 years	3+ years
Hazardous Waste			
Non-hazardous waste			
Green List Waste imports/exports			

OTHER KEY QUESTIONS

The consultation also seeks views on:

- when waste tracking will not be required
- what information will need to be recorded
- how best to record waste recovery treatments and disposal methods
- Dangerous Good Regulations
- roles and responsibilities for waste holders
- different ways to enter information onto the service
- information access for different users
- provisions for digitally excluded persons
- options for transitioning businesses onto the service
- the costs and savings for businesses to transition to digital waste tracking
- how future costs should be recovered

RESPONDING TO THE CONSULTATION

Consultation runs for 12 weeks and closes on 15 April 2022.

Responses are welcomed from:
- businesses and organisations involved in the management of waste including local authorities, waste management companies, waste carriers/brokers and exporters
- other organisations such as professional and membership organisations, NGOs, consultants, and charitable organisations who have an interest in how waste is managed in the UK
- producers of waste
- members of the public

Please respond directly using the Defra online citizen space consultation tool:
https://consult.defra.gov.uk/environmental-quality/waste-tracking/