Producer Responsibility Organisations – Experience from Switzerland

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Dr. Deepali Sinha Khetriwal
+91 9930891172
What is a Producer Responsibility Organisation?

- Set up to implement the EPR principle for take-back and recycling of post-consumer products

- A collective system where several producers collaborate and mutualise their responsibility through a specific organisation

- Independent entity – can be for profit or not-for-profit

- Many avatars – Producer Compliance Organisation, Product Stewardship Organisation, Compliance Scheme

- Between 1998 and 2007, it is estimated that more than 260 PROs were established in Europe
What does a PRO really do?

- Manages the financing of the system
- Organises and supervises the activities the collection and recycling activities
- Maintains integrity of the system through standards and audits
- Conducts awareness raising programs
- Manages the corresponding data
- Provides reporting and compliance on behalf of its members
A day in the life of a PRO

- awareness
- access to waste
- cost of collection
- cost of transport
- recycling cost/revenue
Why Switzerland?

- One of the earliest systems >> longest operational history
- Based on EPR and polluter pays principles
- Second highest per capita collection rate in Europe - 16.10 kg/ inhabitant in 2015
- Scope: all WEEE product categories covered
- Sustainable financing model >> financed through an Advanced Recycling Fee (ARF) on new products put on market
- Setting the pace for technical standards >> precursor to European CENELEC
The Swiss System

- 3 Producer Responsibility Organisations
  
  **SWICO**
  - Started in 1994 by the Swiss IT industry Association
  - Focus on recycling of IT & CE products
  - Not-for-profit entity

  **SLRS**
  - Started in 1991 as an independent not-for-profit foundation
  - Focus on recycling of domestic appliances

  **ORDEE**
  - Started in 2000 by industry
  - Focus on lamps

1998 The “Ordinance on the Return, the taking back and the Disposal of Electrical & electronic Equipment”

2005 ORDEE adds Tools, Gardening and Hobby, Lighting Products, Recreational Equipment and others as of 1. January 2005
Total WEEE collected >> 134,000 tonnes
Total costs >> EUR 160 million
A Swiss PROs Perspective

Specifications
- Guideline
- Factsheets

PRO: SENS SWICO SLRS

techn. Commissions

ORDEE (sets the WEEE management rules)

state Government

audits

operation licence

export licence

national Government

General laws
- envr. laws
- labor laws, etc.

Recycler (independent private enterprise)

contract

money

audits

tender

WEEE

money

audits

Refinery (abroad)

contract

raw

money

audits
Pillars for a successful system

System

Framework
System Design
Infrastructure
Stakeholder Mgt.
Communications

Basic structures
Secret sauce

- Economies of scale (e.g. administrative burden, communication, data reporting, surveillance is centralised);

- Simplicity of the system (e.g. for producers who have a single organisation to join to fulfil their responsibilities, and for municipalities who have a single partner to organise waste collection, no need for additional clearing house level);

- Verification of compliance (in particular the monitoring of progress towards targets and control of free-riders) is simplified;

- Helps ensuring the quality of waste management and avoids ‘cherry picking’ (in order to lower costs, competing PROs would tend to cover geographical areas or waste types which generate less costs);

- Higher transparency and surveillance levels.
Thank you for your attention

Dr. Deepali Sinha Khetriwal
deepali.sinha@sofiesgroup.com
Managing Director, Sofies India