

Applying for an accreditation to reprocess or export UK waste packaging



The Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations 2007 'the regulations' (as amended).

For Northern Ireland, the regulations are The Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007 (as amended).



Northern Ireland
Environment
Agency
www.ni-environment.gov.uk



An Agency within the Department of the
Environment
www.doeni.gov.uk

Please read these guidance notes carefully before making your application online using the National Packaging Waste Database.

Contents

- 1 About the accreditation system
- 2 Applying for accreditation
- 3 Fees
- 4 Deciding on your application
- 5 Suspending and cancelling accreditation
- 6 Enforcing the conditions of your accreditation
- 7 Public Registers and Disclosure of Information

8 Further help and guidance

- Annex A: Accreditation conditions
- Annex B: Procedures for issuing ePRNs and ePERNs for specific waste materials
- Annex C: Acceptable efficiency standards for reprocessors
- Annex D: Recovery and recycling activities we accept
- Annex E: Guidance on 'broadly equivalent' evidence for exporters
- Annex F: Example letter from a foreign regulatory authority showing that their reprocessing sites meet standards which are 'broadly equivalent' to environmental standards in the UK

1 About the accreditation system

In 1997, the Environment Agency and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency developed a voluntary accreditation system which allowed businesses approved by us to issue evidence that they recover and recycle waste packaging produced in the UK.

We issued guidance on that system in July 1997 ('Guidance on evidence of compliance and voluntary accreditation of reprocessors'). Guidance document 'ACC-GN01: Applying for an accreditation to reprocess or export UK waste packaging' replaces the parts of that guidance which refer to the accreditation process, so you should use this document when applying to us.

You can apply for an accreditation if you are a UK business which:

- recovers or recycles UK waste packaging; or
- exports UK waste packaging for recovery or recycling.

By 'recovering' waste, we mean burning it as a fuel or using it to create energy in some other way. By 'recycling' waste, we mean creating new products from materials which have been thrown away. The new products can have the same or a different purpose as the original materials.

The National Packaging Waste Database (NPWD) is an online system which includes the application process for accreditation. Once accredited, it allows these operators to issue the electronic evidence (there is more about this in section 2 and Annex A).

This document tells you what conditions you need to meet to get an accreditation and explain how to apply. You can find full details in the annexes.

- Annex A (page 6): Accreditation conditions
- Annex B (page 8): Procedures for issuing ePRNs and ePERNs for specific waste materials (see note below)
- Annex C (page 10): Acceptable efficiency standards for reprocessors
- Annex D (page 10): Recovery and recycling activities we accept

What the accreditation system is for

The accreditation system aims to:

- make sure businesses are consistent when gathering and supplying evidence of recovering and recycling UK waste packaging; and
- help us monitor the recovering and recycling that accredited businesses have done.

If your business is granted accreditation, you may receive payments from registered producers (or schemes acting on their behalf) for issuing:

- electronic waste packaging recovery notes (ePRNs); or
- electronic waste packaging export recovery notes (ePERNs).

There is more information about the way you should invest this money in 'Business plan' (page 3).

From 1 February 2007, paper copies of PRNs and PERNs have been replaced by electronic ones (ePRNs and ePERNs). Electronic PRNs and PERNs are now the only acceptable evidence that registered producers can offer. For more details about this change, please read the guidance note NPWD02 (www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/topics/waste/32208.aspx).

2 Applying for accreditation

a The application

If your main place of business is in England or Wales you should apply to the Environment Agency.

If your main place of business is in Scotland, you should apply to the Scottish Environment Protection Agency.

If your main place of business is in Northern Ireland, you should apply to the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA).

We do not accredit people or businesses based outside the UK. Applications for accreditation can now be processed online using the National Packaging Waste Database (NPWD). Please refer to guidance note 'How to apply for accreditations as a reprocessor or exporter of packaging waste using the National Packaging Waste Database NPWD06' for more details (www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/topics/waste/32208.aspx).

To apply, you need to do the following.

- Fill in your application online
- Upload a business plan. (There is more about this on page 3.)

- Upload a sampling and inspection plan. (There is more about this on page 3.)
- If you are filling in the export form, upload evidence that the site you are exporting the waste to meets the same environmental standards as similar sites in the UK. This is known as ‘broadly equivalent’ and you can find out more about this on pages 2, 12 and 13.
- Pay the application fee. (There is more information about fees on page 4.)

Accreditations last for a maximum of one year only. You must send us the filled-in form by 30 September if you want your accreditation to start from 1 January of the following year. We normally process applications we receive after 30 September within 12 weeks of receiving them. This may mean that your accreditation will not be in place for the full 12 months from 1 January to 31 December.

Applying for more than one accreditation

For reprocessing waste, we accredit each site separately.

For exporting waste, we accredit each material separately.

If you are applying for more than one accreditation, you must keep all relevant documents separate. If you transfer any waste packaging between accredited sites, you must clearly record this.

You must make sure that ePRNs/ePERNs are not issued twice for the same waste packaging. For example, if you receive packaging waste and then pass it on to another accredited site for reprocessing/export you must make sure you do not issue ePRNs/ePERNs on that waste.

b Summary of accreditation conditions

- When you apply, we must be satisfied with all the information you have provided, including a suitable business plan and a sampling and inspection plan (see page 3).
- You must keep to the conditions of schedule 5 of the regulations – for more information, see ‘Annex A: Accreditation conditions’ on page 6.
- You must keep to any conditions we specify when we grant accreditation – for more information regarding the action taken for not complying with these conditions, please refer to Section 5 Suspending and cancelling accreditation.
- You must set up a system for managing documents which accurately records the activities you do that are connected to reprocessing or exporting (or both) UK packaging waste.

c Accreditation for reprocessing waste packaging

When applying for an accreditation to reprocess waste, you will need to provide suitable evidence to confirm that you will reprocess UK waste packaging. We will normally agree with you what evidence is needed, but you must always provide details and prove:

- where the UK waste packaging comes from;
- the weight of the UK waste packaging you receive and reprocess;
- you have kept to the relevant laws;
- how efficient your reprocessing plant is, and that it meets the appropriate standard (for more information, see ‘Annex C: Acceptable efficiency standards for reprocessors’ on page 10); and
- what the material you reprocess is to be used for.

d Accreditation for exporting UK waste packaging

To apply for accreditation for exporting waste, you will normally need to provide evidence to confirm you will export UK waste packaging to specific overseas sites for reprocessing. See Annex E for the new rules on broadly equivalent evidence. We will agree with you what evidence is needed, but you must always provide details and prove:

- where the UK waste packaging comes from;
- the weight of the UK waste packaging you export (by load, container and so on); and
- where in the UK you will export the waste from.

You may also have to prove:

- the order from overseas for the waste packaging;
- whether the waste shipment has cleared customs in the country you have sent it to;
- the overseas reprocessor has accepted the waste; and
- the waste has been received for reprocessing by the overseas reprocessor you have named in your application.

To be accredited to export UK waste packaging, you must do the following.

- You must own the waste at the time you export it (or the overseas reprocessor must own it).
- You must either:
 - 1 export the UK waste packaging to a reprocessing site you have named on a part C of your application, which:
 - reprocesses waste packaging for a purpose we approve (for more information, see ‘Annex D: Recovery and recycling processes we accept’) and
 - has reached an appropriate reprocessing standard agreed with the appropriate authority (for more information see ‘Annex C: Acceptable efficiency standards for reprocessors’):
 - or
 - 2 export the UK waste packaging to a country you have named on a part C of your application and in line with the conditions of export (for more information ‘Annex E: Guidance for accredited exporters on ‘broadly equivalent’ standards overseas’).
- You must keep to the conditions of the Waste Shipments Regulations. These regulations are about supervising and controlling shipments of waste in and out of the European Community – for more information, see below.
- You must have evidence that any overseas reprocessor you have named in your application meets broadly equivalent environmental standards as reprocessors in the UK.

International Waste Shipments (IWS)

The controls which apply to shipments of waste are specified by the Waste Shipments Regulation (1013/2006/EC). The way in which these controls apply depends on the requirements specified by both the country of destination and the overriding rules of the regime. The country to which the waste is exported may also apply local controls or restrictions with which you must comply. You must be able to demonstrate your compliance with these rules for every shipment you make. Further guidance on IWS is available from www.environment-agency.gov.uk/wasteshipments and from our International Waste Shipments Team by phoning 01925 542143 or emailing shipments@environment-agency.gov.uk. Colleagues dealing with IWS at the NIEA and SEPA can be contacted via the details on page 6.

What 'broadly equivalent' means

If you export waste packaging, it should be treated and recovered at sites where the processes meet environmental standards that are 'broadly equivalent' to the standards that apply in the European Union. This means that the country the site is in must have standards in place to make sure waste is recovered or disposed of without:

- putting people's health in danger; or
- using processes or methods which could harm the environment, in particular without:
 - harming water, air, soil and plants and animals;
 - causing a nuisance through noise or smells; or
 - having a negative effect on the countryside or places of special interest. Places may be of 'special interest' if they have special cultural, architectural, historical, scientific or other interests.

The standards should also make it illegal for the overseas reprocessor to dump waste or get rid of it in ways that are not controlled. It is essential that the country has a way of assessing whether the site has kept to the standards set out above and that the standards can be enforced against the operator of the site. There is more detail about this in Annex E, page 12.

e Business plan

You need to provide a business plan with your application. The plan should provide measurable targets for each year. The plan should contain information about how you will use the funds you get from issuing ePRNs and ePERNs, for the following areas:

- development of capacity and new markets
 - how you will collect and reprocess more UK waste packaging (for example, improving the amount of waste your equipment can reprocess, buying new equipment, or providing funds to support other organisations which collect waste);
 - how you will develop new markets which will use the recycled waste packaging (for example, increasing the number of businesses you can sell the waste to, supporting environmental organisations – ideally those approved under landfill tax laws – specifically designed to develop an existing market, developing new markets, and funding research into new uses for recycled packaging materials);
- your arrangements for collecting and sorting waste packaging; and
- your strategy, including your communications strategy, (that is, how you plan to tell your suppliers and customers your plans) for achieving all of the above.

Renewing your accreditation

If you want to renew your accreditation, you should revise your business plan to reflect your strategy for the new accreditation period.

You must take reasonable steps to put your business plan in place. We will expect to see some evidence of how you have put in place business plans you have sent to us before. You should justify any major changes from your previous business plan about how you use money you get from issuing ePRNs and ePERNs, or we may refuse to accredit your business.

If you are applying as an exporter for more than one material, you can send in one business plan. If you are applying as a reprocessor for more than one site, you can send in a single business plan but it must contain a section specific to each

site. The plan should give details about the following:

- Your arrangements for collecting and sorting waste.
- How you will develop your business to deal with more waste.
- What type of materials you reprocess or export.

f Sampling and inspection plan

You should include a sampling and inspection plan with your application. This plan aims to make sure that any waste you receive or export which ePRNs or ePERNs are issued for is waste packaging from the UK. The plan must include details of:

- your checks with suppliers to make sure the packaging waste you receive or export comes from the UK;
- the samples you take from time to time of loads to check how much waste packaging you are receiving or exporting;
- how you inspect documents, for example, weighbridge tickets (these are issued by a public site that weighs vehicles' contents, or by your site's own weighing facility), receipts, invoices and so on; and
- your system for inspecting the waste you receive.

We have developed a number of procedures you can use to work out how much of each waste is contained in different loads you receive. For more information, see 'Annex B: Procedures for issuing ePRNs and ePERNs for specific waste materials' (page 8).

Mixed-waste packaging

Sites that we accredit to reprocess specific types of waste packaging are encouraged to only accept that type of material.

For example, if we have accredited your site to reprocess plastic waste packaging, you should (if possible) make sure that loads of plastic packaging waste are not mixed with other types of waste, such as non-packaging related waste or production residues.

If you cannot avoid receiving mixed loads, we may agree to this if you have a procedure in place for taking samples of the content of mixed-waste loads, and waste packaging makes up a set percentage of those loads.

If your site accepts and processes mixed loads of waste (for example, loads that contain packaging and non-packaging waste), it may be accredited based on an agreed standard packaging content of the mixed loads. You may agree a standard factor for all mixed loads you receive or establish separate factors for mixed loads from each of your suppliers. You should do this by starting a sampling system where received loads are weighed and the packaging content of them is identified. It is your responsibility to undertake and fully document the sampling procedures and keep records.

Records of what the waste you receive contains and where it came from must support all these arrangements and a sampling system (at agreed times and under agreed conditions) must be approved by the appropriate authority. If your main place of business is in England or Wales it is the Environment Agency. If your main place of business is in Scotland, it is the Scottish Environment Protection Agency. If your main place of business is in Northern Ireland, it is the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA). It is your responsibility to run and fully record the sampling procedures. The relevant authority may need further samples of the waste to confirm whether the conversion factors you use are accurate.

All quoted averages based upon sampling of packaging waste content at reprocessors will have a 95% level of confidence that figures will fall within 10% of the true average over a specified period. For example, the true average for a figure

quoted as 30% should fall within the actual range of 27% to 33% with 95% confidence.

Agreements will usually be about individual reprocessors. You may, in exceptional circumstances, make an agreement with a range of reprocessors to cover all your operations based on an acceptable sample of all your activities. If you do not have a specific agreement for a time-based sampling system as mentioned above, you must put in place a sampling system for each batch of mixed waste you receive.

Mixed-waste loads delivered to UK reprocessing facilities can be:

- mixed with non-packaging waste of the same material (for example, plastic waste packaging mixed with other waste plastic);
- mixed with waste packaging of another material (for example, plastic waste packaging mixed with paper waste packaging); and
- waste from the UK mixed with imported waste packaging.

If you want to issue ePRNs or ePERNs for mixed-waste loads, you are responsible for developing an appropriate procedure for accepting mixed-waste loads, and sending it to us. You should base this on a strong and well-documented sampling procedure. It should include:

- a description of the waste packaging loads your site receives;
- the reason you need a procedure for accepting mixed-waste loads;
- how you developed the procedure for accepting mixed-waste loads;
- for mixed waste you receive (packaging and non-packaging), the percentage of the mixed waste you will be issuing ePRNs for; and
- when you plan to review your procedure.

g Independent audit report

If we accredit you to issue ePRNs or ePERNs for more than 400 tonnes of waste packaging, you must give the appropriate authority an independent auditor's report by 28 February after each year you are accredited. Under the NI regulations this is only required when more than 5000 tonnes of ePRNs/ePERNs have been issued. The report must show that the ePRNs or ePERNs you issued in the previous year are consistent with the weight of packaging waste you received or exported in that year. This report should include the carry-forward period for ePRNs or ePERNs issued in that year. The 'carry-forward' period is the January after the December covered by your accreditation. During this period you can issue ePRNs and ePERNs for waste packaging you received in December.

You can find more specific guidance about the information needed in an independent audit report in 'GN03: Independent audit report guidance (www.environment-agency.gov.uk/static/documents/Business/GN03_Version_2_4_nov_09.pdf).

If you fail to supply an independent audit report by the date it is due, we will normally suspend any current accreditation. We can also ask you to amend your report, or produce a new report, if it does not meet the conditions in the regulations. In 2009 NIEA and SEPA did not require an Independent Audit Report. For further information contact NIEA and SEPA, contact details on page 5.

h Other supporting documentation

Additional supporting documents will also need to be uploaded onto NPWD and will include, for example,

process flowcharts, and details of the plant and equipment. For exporters, it will include a flow diagram showing the end route to the final reprocessor and may include broadly equivalent evidence.

3 Fees

You must pay a yearly application fee to the Environment Agency, SEPA (for Scotland) or NIEA (for Northern Ireland) depending on where your business is based. Fees are based on the amount of ePRNs and ePERNs you plan to issue for waste packaging you reprocess or export during the year for which you are applying for an accreditation.

- If you plan to issue up to 400 tonnes as ePRNs or ePERNs, the fee is £505
- If you plan to issue over 400 tonnes as ePRNs or ePERNs, the fee is £2,616.

You need to pay the fee when you apply.

If you pay the lower fee but you then issue ePRNs or ePERNs for more than 400 tonnes, you will have to pay the balance of the £2,616 fee (that is, £2,111). You must pay this within 28 days of issuing the ePRN or ePERN for the 401st tonne of waste packaging. Payment can be done through BACS. Please contact the appropriate authority for further details (see section 8).

4 Deciding on your application

We will normally process applications we receive after 30 September within 12 weeks, and the accreditation will run from the date we make our final decision on your application. If this date is after 1 January of the year you want the accreditation for, this means the accreditation will apply for less than 12 months. We will not backdate your accreditation and all accreditations will end on 31 December.

Once we receive your application, we may pass it to the nearest office we have to your site. One of our environment officers may then contact you to arrange a site inspection. They will discuss any issues relevant to your application when they inspect your site.

We will send you a notice to confirm the outcome of the application, which will be either granting or refusing an accreditation.

Once you have been accredited, you can use NPWD to go online to:

- record the waste packaging you have received for reprocessing or exported;
- fill in your three-monthly returns for packaging waste you have received and reprocessed, or in the case of exporters, waste exported; and
- issue ePRNs and/or ePERNs.

Please refer to guidance note NPWD03 (www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/topics/waste/32208.aspx).

If you have any difficulties with the NPWD, phone our support line on 08708 506506.

Refusing accreditation

We can refuse to accredit your business for a number of reasons – for example, if you have not given us all the information we need. We can now also take into account any relevant convictions, or if you have not kept to the Transfrontier Shipment of Waste Regulations (TFS). If we refuse your application and you do not agree with our decision, you can appeal. For more information, read 'Your right to appeal' on page 5.

If we refuse your application, we will not refund your application fee.

5 Suspending and cancelling accreditation

We may suspend or cancel your accreditation if we think you have:

- failed to meet any of the accreditation conditions in schedule 5 of the Packaging Regulations, or specific conditions the Environment Agency, SEPA or NIEA set for your site (for more information, see Annex A on page 6);
- given false information in your application;
- given false information to meet any of the conditions of your accreditation; or
- issued ePRNs or ePERNs incorrectly.

In these circumstances, we may have to make the ePRN or ePERNs you have issued invalid, in which case you may be breaking your contract with your customer. We may also take action against you to enforce the regulations.

We will also cancel your accreditation if you:

- no longer hold a relevant authorisation from the Environment Agency, SEPA or NIEA allowing you to legally handle waste at your site;
- stop reprocessing or exporting waste; or
- ask us to cancel it (from the date you tell us).

Giving you notice that we are suspending or cancelling your accreditation

Before suspending or cancelling your accreditation, we will give you a notice in writing explaining:

- our decision to cancel or suspend the accreditation;
- the reasons for our decision;
- your right to appeal; and
- the date the suspension or cancellation will start.

If we tell you that we plan to suspend your accreditation, we will tell you how long the suspension will last, or explain what you need to do to avoid or end the suspension.

While the suspension applies, you must not issue any evidence (ePRNs or ePERNs). Once we end the suspension, you must not issue any evidence against waste packaging you received or exported while the suspension applied.

Your right to appeal

You may appeal to the Secretary of State (or the Planning Appeals Commission in NI) if you disagree with our decision to:

- refuse your application for accreditation;
- attach conditions to your accreditation under schedule 5(q) (iii) of the packaging regulations;
- cancel your accreditation; or
- suspend your accreditation.

6 Enforcing the conditions of your accreditation

Under the regulations, specific offences have been introduced for accredited reprocessors and exporters who fail to meet certain conditions of their accreditation. If you break the conditions of your accreditation, we will investigate and may take action to enforce the conditions. We can do this by:

- sending you a warning letter;
- giving you a formal caution; or
- prosecuting you.

If we take action against you to enforce the conditions of your

accreditation, we can still suspend or cancel your accreditation as well if we think this is appropriate.

7 Public Registers and Disclosure of Information

By law, we must place on the public register:

- the name and address of your registered office; or
- your main place of business for each accredited site.

To provide an efficient system and to help producers and schemes get ePRNs and ePERNs, we may also make the following information about your business available to the public:

- the type of material you reprocess or export;
- your reprocessing 'R' code for the type of reprocessing activity you are carrying out;
- your fee band (which depends on whether you reprocess or export less or more than 400 tonnes);
- the name of the person you have given as a contact on your application form;
- your business phone number;
- the address of your site;
- your agency reference number, which you are given when you register;
- any three-monthly returns and yearly returns we have not received from you;
- whether we have sent you a notice to suspend or cancel your accreditation; and
- whether we have suspended or cancelled your accreditation.

From time to time, we will also publish the following information for all accredited reprocessors and exporters as a whole. This information will not identify individual businesses. This information will include:

- the total amount of UK waste packaging received by all the businesses we accredit;
- the total amount of UK waste packaging reprocessed and exported by all the businesses we accredit;
- the total number of ePRNs and ePERNs issued and sold;
- the total money raised from issuing and selling ePRNs and ePERNs, and what this money has been spent on; and
- how much of each type of waste all the reprocessing sites we accredit are able to deal with.

If you think we should keep any information you provide about your business confidential, please let us know and explain why, for example if the information is commercially confidential and what harm would it do to your business if released. However, we are obliged to respond to requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (for Scotland 'Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (for Scotland 'The Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004'), and although we will try to consult you about release of information you have suggested is confidential, we may have to disclose your information in accordance with those laws.

8 Further help and guidance

For England and Wales

For information on the packaging regulations, go to www.environment-agency.gov.uk/packaging

For questions about accreditation as a reprocessor or exporter

of packaging waste, e-mail packaging@environment-agency.gov.uk or phone 08708 506 506.

For information on the controls that apply to waste moved into and out of the European Community, go to www.environment-agency.gov.uk/wasteshipments, e-mail nattfs@environment-agency.gov.uk or phone 08708 506 506.

For Scotland

For information on the packaging regulations, go to www.sepa.org.uk/producer/

For questions about accreditation as a reprocessor or exporter of packaging waste e-mail producer.responsibility@sepa.org.uk or phone 01786 457700.

For information on the controls that apply to waste moved into and out of the European Community, go to www.sepa.org.uk/regulation/waste/trans/ or phone 01786 457700.

For Northern Ireland

For information on accreditation as an exporter of packaging waste and the controls that apply to the waste moved into and out of the European Community, go to www.ni-environment.gov.uk/waste-home/regulation.htm

For questions on accreditation as a reprocessor or exporter of packaging waste e-mail packaging@doeni.gov.uk or phone 028 9056 9338.

For questions about waste moved into and out of the European Community, email tfs@doeni.gov.uk or phone 028 9056 9742.

Annex A: Accreditation conditions

Schedule 5 of the Packaging Waste Regulations

If we accredit you, you must meet the conditions set out in schedule 5 of the regulations. The conditions of accreditation relate mainly to the issuing of ePRNs and ePERNs, record keeping and reporting. We have set out below how we will ask you to do this.

1 The National Packaging Waste Database (NPWD), ePRNs and ePERNs

We have introduced an online system for:

- recording the waste you receive for reprocessing or export;
- authorising and issuing electronic evidence (ePRNs and ePERNs); and
- recording your sets of three-monthly returns.

This is to:

- help prevent fraud; and
- allow us to analyse information to a higher standard than we were able to before.

The database is not to be used for trading and will only track and record evidence that has been issued. The system will not record any business transactions and contracts that exist between reprocessors or exporters issuing evidence and the companies which buy the evidence.

If you do not want to use the NPWD, you can still send us three-monthly reports (quarterly reports) and yearly information in a hard copy. However, we will have to enter this information into the system manually. Because ePRNs and ePERNs will have to be issued electronically, if you do not use the NPWD system yourself, you will have to ask us to do this on your behalf.

You can find more information about the new system in guidance note NPWD02 (www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/topics/waste/32208.aspx). If you have any problems, you can email the NPWD helpline (packaging.waste@environment-agency.gov.uk) or phone 08708 506506.

Issuing ePRNs and ePERNs

For accredited reprocessors: You can only issue ePRNs for the UK waste packaging (in tonnes) you received in the calendar year for which your business is accredited, and from the date the accreditation begins. Once you have received the waste, you can issue an ePRN for the weight you have received, but only if the material goes on to be reprocessed and meets specific process levels.

For accredited exporters: You can only issue ePERNs for the UK waste packaging (in tonnes) that you own and export in the calendar year for which your business is accredited, and from the date the accreditation begins. Once the waste has been exported from the UK, you can issue an ePERN for the weight of packaging material you have exported. Exporters can issue ePERNs when it has passed through UK customs. For Northern Ireland applicants, please contact the Northern Ireland Environment Agency for clarification on the point of export.

Whether you have a reprocessing business or an export business, once your business is accredited you can issue ePRNs or ePERNs for the weight of packaging waste you receive or export in the calendar year. These can be issued from the date your accreditation begins until 31 January the year after. After 31 January, you cannot issue ePRNs or ePERNs for UK waste

packaging you received or exported during the previous year. ePRNs and ePERNs can only be issued by a UK accredited reprocessor or exporter of packaging waste. Producers cannot share ePRNs or ePERNs.

Reprocessors and exporters no longer need to issue surplus ePRNs or ePERNs to the agencies. NPWD works out the surplus ePRNs and ePERNs and details are included in the quarter four report on packaging waste recovered and recycled in the UK. You can read the report on NPWD.

If you have accreditations for a number of sites, you may find it useful to issue ePRNs or ePERNs (or both) from a central point. Please ask us for our approval first. Remember, even if you issue ePRNs or ePERNs from a central point, you must still keep separate records, returns, ePRN and ePERN accounts within NWPD for each accredited site.

What packaging waste can an exporter or reprocessor issue ePRNs or ePERNs against?

- 1 If a product is not intended to be used as packaging (for example, if it is process waste that has not been formed into packaging), it cannot be considered as packaging waste and cannot have ePRNs or ePERNs issued against it when reprocessed.
- 2 'Non-obligated packaging': this is where packaging has been made but has not been declared by a producer. For example, the producer handles under 50 tonnes of packaging and does not have to register. It can still be considered as UK packaging waste for reprocessing purposes, and an ePRN or ePERN can be issued against it. This includes packaging waste from mines and quarries.
- 3 Redundant packaging which never gets to the pack filling stage can have ePRNs or ePERNs issued against it when it is reprocessed.
- 4 Evidence cannot be issued on offcuts.
- 5 Evidence can only be issued against UK waste packaging.

Filling in ePRNs or ePERNs

- You must fill in all sections of ePRNs and ePERNs. So, you should make sure you have all the information you need before you agree to issue the evidence.
- If you issue ePERNs for UK waste packaging you have exported, but that waste is not reprocessed, the ePERNs are not valid. However, if you can show that you exported other loads which were reprocessed, but had no ePERNs issued on them, you can use these loads to offset any previous loads which were not reprocessed. You will need to balance any tonnes of waste packaging not reprocessed in your records.
- You can only fill in the ePRN or ePERN if you have an accreditation.
- You should not make changes to the ePRN or ePERN after you have issued it. If you need to make any amendments, you should cancel the first ePRN or ePERN, and then issue a new ePRN or ePERN to replace it.
- If you export waste packaging, you need to show that the overseas reprocessors meet our appropriate standards (see 'Annex C: Acceptable efficiency standards for reprocessors') and that the material has been reprocessed in line with the correct procedures (see 'Annex B: Procedures for issuing ePRNs and ePERNs for specific waste materials'). If the waste is not reprocessed for any reason (for example, because the waste has been mixed up with other materials) you must balance the ePERNs you have issued against the packaging waste actually

reprocessed (whether it is your fault or not that the waste is not reprocessed).

- You should not issue any ePRN or ePERN with a date on that is earlier than any ePRN or ePERN you have already issued.

'Carry over'

- Obligated producers can use an ePRN or ePERN that relates to packaging waste delivered or exported for reprocessing in any December, to show you have met your recovery and recycling responsibilities either in that year or the year after.
- Only people authorised to do so under our accreditation can issue carry-over ePRNs or ePERNs. However:
 - to issue carry-over ePRNs, the person must be accredited at the time the material is received, and the ePRN issued must relate to waste packaging they received to reprocess on the accredited site; and
 - to issue carry-over ePERNs, the person must be accredited at the time the material was received, and the ePERN must relate to waste packaging they exported to be reprocessed at a site or sites named in the accreditation.

Whole tonnes

The tonnes shown on an ePRN or ePERN must be a whole number. At the end of the year, you should round any packaging waste tonnages to the nearest tonne. For example, 5.4 tonnes would be rounded down to 5 tonnes but 5.5 would be rounded up to 6 tonnes.

Replacement ePRNs and ePERNs

The previous system of issuing replacement evidence has changed. If you need to change an ePRN or ePERN you have already issued, you need to cancel the original entry for that evidence in the NWPD so that it is no longer valid. You can then issue new evidence into the NWPD (up to the amount of waste packaging shown on the evidence you are replacing).

You should issue ePRNs or ePERNs to replace the original evidence when you are asked to do so by a producer, scheme or their representative that holds the original. After 31 January for each year, you cannot issue replacement ePRNs or ePERNs for waste you received for reprocessing the year before.

2 Management and records

You can only issue ePRNs or ePERNs to:

- producers;
- organisations running schemes; or
- their representatives. If you are issuing an ePRN or ePERN to a representative, you should fill in the ePRN or ePERN with the name of the producer or scheme, not the representative.

You should keep records as shown on the reporting form we provide. You should update your records every three months and keep each record for at least four years. We may audit these records when we monitor and assess applications.

You need to give us reports every three months with the following information:

- the weight (in tonnes) of waste packaging you received or exported for reprocessing in those three months;
- the weight (in tonnes) of waste packaging you reprocessed in those three months; and
- the number of ePRNs and ePERNs you issued in those three months.

The reports must reach us by the following dates:

- the report for January, February and March must reach us by 21 April;
- the report for April, May and June must reach us by 21 July;
- the report for July, August and September must reach us by 21 October; and
- the report for October, November and December must reach us by 28 February.

You must also send us a yearly report, for the previous year, by 28 February. The report must include:

- all the information you provided in your three-monthly (quarterly) reports for the previous year;
- the amount of money you received in the previous year from issuing ePRNs or ePERNs; and
- a statement of what you spent the money on.

Note: The NWPD system will allow you to fill in and send these reports online.

Our conditions

We can set other conditions you must meet to get accreditation. This section sets out guidance on conditions that we and other agencies will specify for all reprocessors and exporters. If we need to set conditions that relate to your business only, we will normally discuss these with you before we grant accreditation. We will include all our conditions in your notice of accreditation.

Annex B: Procedures for issuing ePRNs and ePERNs for specific waste materials

Paper packaging

If you receive mixed waste paper, old kraft lined straw (KLS) or old corrugated containers (OCC), usually referred to as cardboard, we will accept the following.

Mixed waste paper

Where mixed waste paper (1.01 and 1.02) is received you can establish a sampling arrangement to determine the packaging content. This sampling arrangement will be agreed with you at the application stage and we will monitor its application during the period you are accredited.

Where mixed waste paper (1.01 and 1.02) is received and there are no existing sampling arrangements in place to determine the packaging content, a nationally agreed percentage of 12.5% can be applied to the tonnage of waste paper received to provide a tonnage value for the packaging content and for the purpose of issuing ePRNs. This percentage figure was originally agreed with the Paper Federation.

Old KLS or old corrugated containers (OCC) or both

We will count deliveries as made up of 100% waste packaging if there is only a very small percentage of other material within loads. We grade old KLS and OCC as:

- supermarket corrugated paper and board (1.04);
- old corrugated containers (1.05);
- used corrugated kraft 1 (4.02);
- used corrugated kraft 2 (4.03);
- used kraft sacks (4.04);
- mixed packaging (5.02); and
- liquid board packaging (5.03).

Plastic packaging

ePRNs and ePERNs cannot be issued against the weight of production residues and skeletal waste.

Wood packaging

ePRNs and ePERNs cannot be issued against the weight of wood offcuts.

Packaging mixed with scrap steel

The steel industry has well-established procedures for recycling steel, and packaging is often mixed with other scrap steel. It is not always possible to separate the packaging from the steel. The below percentages of packaging content in the steel scrap were originally supported by the British Foundry Association, the British Metals Federation and the United Kingdom Steel Association. A review is planned of these percentages. If you handle the grades of steel listed below, you can issue ePRNs or ePERNs for the percentages set out in the right-hand column.

Grades of scrap steel	Percentage of waste packaging in the scrap steel
1 and 2 (mixed)	0.55
2	1.1
Fragmentised	4.7
4C	10.6
4E	5
8B	10.6

For example, if you export 1,000 tonnes of fragmented steel, you can issue ePERNs for up to 47 tonnes of waste packaging.

We will accept these percentages of waste packaging listed above without you having to provide any extra proof of the amount of waste packaging that makes up the load.

You **must** still keep to the percentages shown above if you handle loads made up of 100% of:

- 210-litre drums;
- 25-litre drums;
- baling wire; or
- banding and strapping.

Other grades of scrap steel and waste packaging are not covered by this document.

If you want to apply a percentage of packaging waste to other grades of scrap steel, you will have to justify the percentages by providing samples that we accept. You should agree the sampling methods with us as part of your sampling and inspection plan. We will assess each sample you provide separately.

Packaging mixed with scrap aluminium

The aluminium industry has well-established procedures for recycling scrap aluminium, and packaging waste is often mixed with other scrap aluminium. It is not always possible to separate the packaging from the non-packaging element. The Aluminium Packaging Recycling Organisation (ALUPRO) has worked with us to set percentages which you can use to assume how much packaging waste is in scrap aluminium.

If you handle the grades of aluminium listed below, you can use ePRNs or ePERNs for the percentages set out in the right-hand column.

Scrap grades	Percentage of waste packaging in the scrap aluminium
Old rolled aluminium	13.6
Mixed aluminium alloy cuttings	9.3
New pure aluminium	6.2
New scrap of one aluminium alloy	9

For example, if you export 1,000 tonnes of new pure aluminium, you may issue ePERNs for up to 62 tonnes of waste packaging.

We will accept these percentages of waste packaging listed above without you having to provide any extra proof of how much packaging there is in each load of scrap you receive.

Other grades of aluminium are not covered in this document. If you want to apply a percentage of packaging waste to other grades of scrap aluminium, you will have to justify the percentages by providing evidence that we accept. You should agree the percentages with us as part of your sampling and inspection plan. We will assess each application separately.

Creating energy from waste

Municipal waste (including bulky rubbish and waste from civic amenity sites)

If you receive municipal waste to incinerate and recover energy from that process, you can issue ePRNs on 19% of the municipal waste put through the incinerator. The 19% figure only applies to the municipal waste throughput. If you put

other waste streams through the incinerator, you will have to establish a sampling arrangement to determine the packaging content of these other waste streams.

Clinical waste

If you have a contract to burn clinical waste in an incinerator to create energy, you can issue ePRNs for 6% of the total weight of the clinical waste.

Annex C: Acceptable efficiency standards for reprocessors

These standards help make sure that PRNs are only issued for waste that is actually recycled (not lost during the process).

There are standards for how much waste must actually be recycled for each of the five main types of packaging material we have listed in the table below. The quality of the waste you receive is very important, because losses are mainly caused through other materials contaminating the waste.

You may issue ePRNs or ePERNs (or both) against 100% of the weight of the waste packaging you receive, as long as it is reprocessed in line with the following efficiency standards.

Waste packaging you receive	Percentage of waste which must actually be recycled (% recycling efficiency)
Paper and cardboard packaging	85
Glass (at the container works)	98
Glass (at the cullet processing facility)	96
Steel (from the foundry, basic oxygen steelmaking, and electric arc – see the note below)	98
Aluminium	98
Plastics	75

Note: Basic oxygen steelmaking uses pure oxygen to produce steel from liquid blast-furnace iron and scrap. The electric-arc method uses electricity at a high current to melt scrap steel into liquid steel.

If the recycling efficiency is close to the minimum percentages set out above or if it falls below the minimum, we will ask you to explain why before we allow you to issue ePRNs against 100% of the waste packaging you receive. We may also ask you to provide more evidence of why the problem has happened. If the recycling efficiency is much lower than the minimum set out above, we may not accredit your site.

The amount of ash, clinker and other residue from burning waste can vary a great deal. Below, we have set out the maximum percentage of the waste you burn in your process that we accept will be lost as residue.

Equipment you use to burn waste that also generates energy from the process	Maximum percentage of waste (by weight) lost as residue
Municipal incinerator (for burning household waste)	28
Dedicated incinerator (for separated packaging waste)	6

We will only accept higher levels of residue if you can give us reasonable evidence of why the level of residue should be higher for a particular type of waste or a particular method of burning it.

Annex D: Recovery and recycling activities we accept

We accept the following processes for recovering waste packaging (as one of the conditions of your accreditation).

Recovery code	Process
R1	Using waste mainly as a fuel or for other ways of creating energy (that is, recovering energy)
R3	Recycling or reusing organic waste such as paper, cardboard, wood and plastics (which are not used as solvents). This includes the process of composting and other biological processes
R4	Recycling or reusing metals and metal compounds (for example, steel and aluminium)
R5	Recycling or reusing inorganic waste (for example, glass or ceramics)

This annex sets out our principles for deciding which processes we will accredit under the regulations.

General principles

- ‘Recovery’ means burning packaging waste as a fuel or using it to create energy in some other way. Under the Packaging Directive 94/62/EC, ‘recovery’ means any of the 13 recovery codes set out in Annex IIB to the Waste Framework Directive (2006/12/EC). The codes that apply to waste packaging are shown in the previous table.
- Under the Packaging Directive 94/62/EC, ‘recycling’ means processing waste materials so they can be used again, for the same or a different purpose. It includes organic recycling such as composting, but does not include using waste to create energy (for example, by burning it). Recycling involves a greater amount of effort or processing than recovery.

Recycling processes we accredit

We apply tests to each process you carry out to help us decide whether your process can be considered as recycling. In creating our tests, we have taken into account general recycling practices in the recycling industry and how the recycled material will be used. We will consider accrediting your process if:

- it processes packaging waste to produce a material which has the same properties and functions as the material the waste was made from; and
- the material you produce will be used instead of material that comes from natural resources
- there is a beneficial output that does not need further reprocessing.

We will consider each on its particular facts. However, as a general guide we will usually grant accreditations in line with the descriptions we have provided in the table.

Some reprocessing may be carried out in several stages (for example, reducing the size of a material). We can only accredit one of those stages to avoid the risk of counting waste twice. We will accredit the last stage, which results in material that will be used in place of natural resources. We have to take into account:

- what the reprocessed materials will be used for;
- the type and quality the reprocessed material needs to be for it to be used in the way you intend (including whether

there are any nationally-agreed standards we have accepted to make sure the material can be recycled again after it has been used); and

- whether the material will actually be used in the way you claim or whether it may be used for something else.

At this stage we will usually ignore any general quality-control checks that would also be applied to natural resources. We will only consider quality-control checks at the point of recycling if they form part of the process you use to separate the material from other materials.

Some waste packaging can be used to make compost or soil substitute. The regulations provide a specific test to measure whether recycling has taken place. The test is that micro-organisms have been used under controlled conditions to produce methane or stable organic substances (such as compost) from the biodegradable parts of waste packaging. This does not include landfill sites. We will normally grant an accreditation for the process that actually creates the compost or methane.

Some packaging waste can be used as a fuel for creating energy. We only consider that recovery takes place when the waste is burned to release the energy from it. You must be able to measure the energy created. Blending packaging waste (whether with different packaging waste, other waste or other materials) to create a fuel supply is not enough to count as recovering the waste packaging.

For the purposes of accreditation, the waste packaging you reprocess must have been thrown away in the UK.

Wood packaging and accreditation

Wood packaging which is repaired or remade is classed as re-use and is not recovery or recycling. Reconditioning of pallets is not an accreditable activity. Re-use cannot be considered for accreditation. If UK wood packaging waste is reprocessed through production, the agencies will recognise the reprocessing activity to be recycling for the purposes of the Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations 2007 (as amended). The agencies will allow accredited wood reprocessors to issue wood recycling ePRNs for the UK wood packaging waste they receive and reprocess into a new product.

Energy recovered from UK wood packaging waste will continue as a recovery activity and only recovery ePRNs can be issued for UK wood packaging waste which is reprocessed in this way by accredited reprocessors. A business that processes wood packaging waste to supply to an energy-from-waste facility would not be accredited for that processing activity. The accreditation point for this use will be at the energy-from-waste facility.

If you manufacture chipboard, you will be able to get accreditation for packaging you process into chipboard, whatever the specification or quality of the material you receive. This material should come with the appropriate Duty of Care documents, for example, transfer notes. You will need to get evidence from your suppliers about the tonnage of incoming chips that are from wood packaging which became waste in the UK. If your site produces wood chips (from packaging waste) and supplies them to a chipboard manufacturer, you cannot get accreditation for this material (only the chipboard manufacturer can).

The production of recognised products (for example, animal bedding, garden mulch or fencing from packaging waste) can be classed as recycling operations and can normally be accredited, as long as you can show that the end product will be used in a beneficial way.

Drum reconditioning and accreditation

Drum reconditioning is not an accreditable process. It is classed as re-use of packaging.

We have provided the following summary of the reprocessing activities that can normally be accredited under the packaging regulations.

Activities that can be accredited

Material	Accreditation
	We will normally grant accreditation to businesses which produce the following from waste packaging.
Glass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glass containers or fibreglass • Fine glass material such as sand substitute, (for example, in sandpaper and sandblasting) and fluxing agents (for example, moulds that metal is poured into or material used in welding) • Aggregate (crushed concrete, bricks and so on used in building roads) made to a recognised standard ready to use or sell to somebody else to use • Decorative crushed glass ready to sell to the person who will use it
Paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper or board • Animal bedding or packaging material ready to sell to the person who will use it
Plastic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plastic pellets ready to use or sell to somebody else to use • Plastic products made direct from shredded waste plastic packaging (for example, shredded plastic bottles)
Wood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wood board (for example, chipboard or OSB) • Decorative woodchip or arena chip (used in riding arenas, fuel, temporary car parks and so on) ready to sell to the person who will use it • Animal bedding ready to sell to the person who will use it
Metals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metal (aluminium or steel ingots, sheets or coils) from waste packaging
Organic recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organic compost which will not break down any further • Soil substitutes • Methane
Energy recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy from packaging waste
Other recovery	We will consider accreditation for processes not listed here based on your individual circumstances

Mobile plant operators can be accredited rather than sites.

If the law changes, we will review the point at which we consider recycling to have taken place and we may revise this annex in line with any changes.

Annex E: Guidance for accredited exporters on 'broadly equivalent' standards overseas

This annex relates to packaging waste which is exported to countries outside the European Union. We will review it at specific times and we may change or withdraw it at any time.

This guidance does not affect the requirements of the Waste Shipments Regulation (EC No. 1013/2006), in particular Articles 18 and 49. If you plan to export waste you must check that the country you are exporting to is willing to accept that waste for reprocessing. You must also find out what controls will apply and make sure that each shipment is in line with these restrictions.

Accreditation as an exporter under the packaging regulations allows you to issue evidence of recovery overseas but does not allow you to export waste.

This annex is aimed at accredited exporters of UK packaging waste or anyone who wants accreditation as an exporter of UK packaging waste. Evidence of recovery may only be issued if the exporter can show that the exported packaging waste will be dealt with under conditions that are 'broadly equivalent' to the environmental standards that apply in the European Union.

If you cannot provide us with satisfactory evidence that the waste will be dealt with under 'broadly equivalent' conditions in the country you are exporting to you will not be able to issue on packaging waste you export to that country.

Meaning of 'broadly equivalent'

'Broadly equivalent' means that the recovery or recycling operation will be carried out in a way which achieves the level of environmental protection set out in the Waste Framework Directive. This means that the overseas reprocessor must work within the regulations, and makes it illegal for the overseas reprocessor to dump waste or get rid of it in ways that are not controlled. Any regulations should also have a requirement which says that waste must be recovered or disposed of without:

- putting people's health in danger; or
- causing processes or methods which could harm the environment, in particular without:
 - harming water, air, soil and plants and animals;
 - causing a nuisance through noise or smells; or
 - having a negative effect on the countryside or places of special interest. (Places may be of 'special interest' if they have special cultural, architectural, historical, scientific or other interests.)

The regulations may make it a requirement for sites to hold permits. It is essential that the country has a way of checking that the site has kept to the standards shown above and that the standards can be enforced.

Evidence of broadly equivalent standards

We need to check broadly equivalent standards for reprocessing facilities that are outside the European Union. We normally make it a requirement for you to show us that each overseas reprocessor you use works to broadly equivalent standards. There are two exceptions, as shown below.

We prefer evidence from you confirming that your overseas reprocessor is regulated by the relevant authority. You can do this by providing a statement from the authority which shows that the reprocessing site is regulated and works within a system that meets broadly equivalent standards as set out above or by providing a photocopy of the relevant environmental licence or permit. A list of acceptable types of

evidence has been produced and is available from the appropriate authority.

If you cannot provide this, we may consider a statement from the reprocessor that the site is regulated, and works within a system that has broadly equivalent environmental standards to those that apply in the European Union. If you cannot provide evidence from the relevant authority you must explain why.

We also expect you to provide supporting information including:

- details of the regulations which the site must work to;
- contact details for the relevant environmental regulators;
- a photocopy of a recent inspection report from the environmental regulator; and
- details of any certificates the reprocessing site holds which relate to environmental standards.

All documents, evidence and statements can be photocopies and must come with a certified translation if the originals are not in English. We will allow broadly equivalent status to be shown in other ways such as with confirmation from national government or the relevant regulator that all facilities work within suitable regulations. (Trade associations may want to try to get confirmation for the benefit of their members and material sectors.)

If you cannot provide satisfactory evidence that an overseas reprocessor meets environmental standards broadly equivalent to standards in the European Union, we will not give you permission to issue recovery evidence on UK packaging waste you export to that reprocessor.

Do I need to provide the supporting documents each year?

We have introduced a process that will allow you to rely on supporting documents for three-year periods at a time. (There will be exceptions where the original supporting documents had a time limit, for example if a permit or licence runs out within the three years or is no longer acceptable. Documents will still need to be uploaded each year onto NPWD.)

Are there times when you won't need evidence that the site meets broadly equivalent standards?

You do not need to provide us with specific evidence for each overseas reprocessor if:

- the exports of UK packaging waste are going for recovery in an OECD country; or
- the exports are to a non-OECD country outside the European Union and we are satisfied that a set of conditions have been met. The list of OECD member countries is available at: http://www.oecd.org/countrieslist/0,3351,en_33873108_33844430_1_1_1_1_1,00.html.

These conditions are as follows:

- a) The packaging waste has been source separated or has been processed to make sure that it is exported within a shipment of similar material. For example, if the shipment contains steel drinks cans and steel scrap and is not a general mix of one material and another (such as paper and plastic) or a mixture of different grades of the same material (for example, different plastic polymers.)
- b) There is a well-established international technical specification system for the exported packaging waste material and the exported material meets the specifications. The specifications are a quality assurance system between companies along the supply chain;
- c) The material needs only limited processing overseas before it is recovered and the recovery process has losses

in line with industry standards in the European Union.

- d) Processing before recovery should not need any hand sorting of the waste material which may cause significant harm to human health.
- e) The material goes through a recognised form of recovery and is unlikely to cause significant harm to the environment.

Our view is that the above conditions are only likely to be met for exports of metal packaging waste, including metal packaging waste within shipments of the right grades of scrap metal.

If you believe that these conditions apply, you will need to confirm this when you apply for accreditation. You will need to keep documents to show that you have met these conditions for any exported material.

Annex F: Example letter from a foreign regulatory authority showing that their reprocessing sites meet standards which are ‘broadly equivalent’ to environmental standards in the UK

This is an example of a letter we would accept as evidence that the relevant authority in charge of the foreign reprocessing site has confirmed the reprocessing will meet the environmental standards that apply in the UK.

“We confirm that if

[details of reprocessor]

reprocesses the following waste at the following sites, by law, their reprocessing will have to achieve the standards shown below.

Details of waste (paper, plastic and so on)	Name and address of sites where this waste is reprocessed to the standards shown below

By law, the reprocessor must recover or get rid of the waste in a way that does not put people’s health in danger or harm the environment. In particular, the reprocessor must not:

- harm water, air, soil or plants and animals;
- cause a nuisance through noise or smells; or
- have a negative effect on the countryside or places of special interest. (A place of special interest is somewhere with special cultural, architectural, historical, scientific, or other importance.)

Also, by law, the reprocessor is not allowed to dump or get rid of the waste in a way that is not controlled.”

