

23 October 2009

Notice of amendment to Mass Balance calculation for Quarter 1 2009/10.

The Environment Agency with agreement of Defra, introduced Question 19a to incorporate recycling from residual waste collection in the LATS mass balance. This was done because some authorities with 'back allocation' for National Indicators were already by default having recycling from residual waste collection included in their mass balances and we needed to make the change to ensure a consistent approach to calculating the mass balance for England.

It was always known that this introduction would affect the BMW landfilled and therefore LATS allowances used, and this affect could be an increase or decrease depending on the biodegradability of the recyclate recorded. This is used in the calculation by including the tonnages in the total diverted waste (DivT) which therefore reduce the total residual waste (ResT). However for some authorities, particularly those recycling large quantities of non biodegradable waste such as incinerator bottom ash (IBA), this has affected the calculation by making the biodegradable content of the residual waste (ResB) higher than the ResT.

The Environment Agency has therefore looked for a solution to this and has agreement on a way forward with Defra. The amendment is that recyclate from processes that change the biodegradability of the input material will be excluded from the Mass Balance calculation. So IBA for recycling and any Char/Slag to recycling from Thermal Treatment will be deducted from DivT. Incinerator metals will not be netted off as they have not had their biodegradability changed

The values will still be in Question 19a, which will then still appear on the main materials table, but the values will be taken from Question 54,55,57 and deducted from DivT (ie netting them off).

The revised calculation will be retrospectively applied to all quarter 1 2009/10 data. We will provide those authorities effected by the change a before and after quarter 1 figure. The existing Question 19a guidance on WDF will be amended accordingly.