Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Process of PRTR data review in the UK: Guidance, methodology and future steps

Nicholas Obe, Policy Advisor, Industrial Pollution Control

Scope

Data review is a key part of PRTR implementation in the UK

- There is an annual review of the national dataset involving a variety of stakeholders, supplemented by monthly teleconference meetings

- All environment agencies in England and Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Department for Energy and Climate Change attend

- It is forum-based, with significant elements of challenge and discussion between all participants

- Discussion is focused on results and analysis produced by environmental consultants and subject matter experts

Focus of the review

The national review is both specific and general:

- Analysis of trends of specific group pollutants (POPs, GHGs, Heavy metals)

- Analysis of sectors - i.e. Iron and Steel, Waste (landfill) over last two years

- Spreadsheet dump of all outliers, significant changes and missing facilities, etc

- Examination of level of consistency across national dataset

Requirements

All environmental agencies receive review documents ahead of discussion forum and:

- Are required to carry out further investigations into issues identified
- Make corrections where required and resubmit dataset to national register
- Take steps to ensure re-occurences are prevented
- Take steps to ensure operators and inspectors play key role in improving data quality

Reporting: guidance and methodology,

Currently, no 'UK level' set of documents are in place, however:

- Each agency has detailed sector-level guidance which is linked to the IPPC/Industrial Emission Directive regulatory regimes and reporting. England and Wales: http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/topics/pollution/32290.aspx; Scotland: http://www.sepa.org.uk/air/process_industry_regulation/pollutant_release_inventory/operator_guidance.aspx; Northern Ireland: http://www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/pollution-home/pol-emission-reg.htm

Future plans

UK competent authorities are keen to

(a) Develop a set of UK guidance documents which will, at least, clarify areas of ambiguity

(b) Resolve areas of divergence in implementation of legislation and enhance consistency for all UK operators and regulators.

Plans are still in very early stages and it will require a lot of effort, resource and co-operation among sector experts.