



Press Release

European Copper Alloy Ingot Makers look anxiously into the future

The situation of the European copper alloy manufacturers has changed only insignificantly compared to the previous year. This was stated by the re-elected President of the Association, Mr. Anton Bauer, G. Alt & Co. GesmbH, Austria.

This year's General Assembly of the OECAM took place at the location of the association in Berlin. Statistically speaking, there was a small increase of 1% compared to the previous year for the production, but the discussion around the subject lead in copper alloys causes great uncertainty. This is also reflected in the economic survey. Approximately 90% of the involved companies assess their current situation as usual for the season, the outlook is also assumed as worsening from 90% of the involved companies. For example, brass business is running bad recently. The economy is influenced in a negative way by the Brexit and the struggle with Russia. This also has a negative impact on the car industry as well as on the machine building industry. The civil building industry is also facing a weaker phase. It is not clear if this is a long decrease phase or a short one.

Focus of the General Assembly were the expected effects of the European discussion around the categorisation of lead as environmentally hazardous as well as the consequences of the inclusion of lead metal in the REACH candidate list and possible inclusion in the registration list.

Even the already obligatory categorisation of lead as reprotoxic is connected with a significant – also financial – expense for the relative small companies of the copper alloy ingot makers. The inclusion of lead into the REACH candidate list leads is a further burden of the branch. If additional challenges are be added to the environmental categorisation, for example through the preparation of expert opinions and emergency plans, it would have consequences on the exposure limits of the companies. This counteracts the contribution of the copper alloy ingot industry to the recycling from copper scrap and the major contributions to conserving resources.

It has to be accomplished that the evaluation methods under hazardous substance law should be oriented more risk-based, in order to come to a realistic evaluation of substance properties for base metals.

If lead content scrap metal can no longer be recycled, it will be destroyed the politically intended well working circular economy. The resource-conserving recycling of scrap is a

valuable contribution for climate protection, which would be dropped. The consequence would be the application of primary metal, which production increases the greenhouse gas development by the factor 4.

Beside the mentioned environmental issues the complete board was new elected. President, Anton Bauer, G. Alt & Co. GesmbH, vice president, Peter Schneider, Heinrich Schneider NE-Metallurgie GmbH, Rebecca Hillebrand-Busch, Franz Hillebrand KG and José Maria Iglesias de Blas, LATONES DEL CARRION, Spain were re-elected.

The association consists of 14 companies from 7 countries.

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