

Compliance Assessment Report CAR_NRW0042465

Permit being assessed: BV7443IP.

For: Abercynon Inorganics EPR/BV7443IP, **held by:** AB Connectors Ltd

At: Abercynon Inorganics Ynysboeth Trading Estate , Mountain Ash, Rhondda Cynon Taf, CF45 4SF.

Type of assessment: Site Inspection,

Reason: Routine.

On: 08/08/2023 between 10:00 and 11:00.

Parts of permit assessed: Site Inspection .

NRW Lead Officer: Dale Padfield.

Report sent to: Ian Tollan, Plating Shop Manager, on 15/09/2023.

1. Summary of our findings (full details in section 4)

Part of permitted activity assessed (compliance criteria)	Assessment result	Permit condition
IR2B - Operations - The site	Assessed (A)	

Result types are explained in more detail in the 'Important Information' section below.

Total non-compliances recorded	Total non-compliance score
0	0

How we use the non-compliance score to calculate your annual fee is explained in the 'Important Information' section below.

2. What action is required?

No action required.

3. What will happen next?

Any non-compliance we have identified and recorded on this form is an offence. It can result in criminal prosecution and/or suspension or revocation of your permit.

At this time, we do not intend to take any further action.

This statement does not stop us from taking additional enforcement action if further relevant information comes to light or offences continue.

4. Details of our assessment

AB Connectors Limited

EPR/BV7443IP

A site visit was conducted the AB Connectors facility on the 08th of August 2023. The primary purpose of the visit was to discuss the upcoming UK 'Best Available Techniques (BAT) for the surface treatment of metals and plastics sectors (STM).

Historically, the EU would publish new BAT Reference documents (BRef's) for specific sectors, and this would trigger a permit review for any site within that sector. Since the UK has departed the EU, the UK will now be publishing its own BRefs. The review process looks identify the best available techniques available for preventing or minimising emissions and impacts on the environment, using appropriate technology and the techniques used to design, build, maintain, operate, and decommission an installation.

At present, the STM BRef is at the initial information gathering stage and it will likely be some time before a BAT conclusions (BATC) publication is made. However, once published, AB Connectors will be subject to an NRW initiated permit review, whereby AB will need to provide information on how they either meet or intend to meet the BAT conclusions. A deadline is issued whereby the operator will be legally required to be compliant with any BAT conclusions, the timeframe allows installations to make any required changes.

NRW will keep you updated with any progress with the BRef process. The BATC are determined through an evidence-based approach with industry, regulators, and no-governmental organisations (NGO's) as such, AB may be invited to participate in the BRef process. AB supplied a comprehensive list of all plating and associated processes conducted at the site and these have been passed on to an internal NRW officer who is acting as lead within NRW for the UK STM BRef.

During the site visit, AB discussed on going trials being conducted at a supplier lab, whereby a tin-zinc solution was being trailed to replace the current use of cadmium. AB's new trade effluent consent (TEC) was discussed, AB's new TEC included some additional parameters and limits. AB had an initial concern regarding the sulphates limit, with an initial sample being slightly over the permitted limit ~ 1060 mg/l against a limit of 1000 mg/l. AB dose the effluent with metabisulphite to reduce the chromium 6 to chromium 3, as such DCWW increased the allowable concentration to 1500 mg/l. No further issues were reported, the ETP was seen to be in good order during the visit. A walk over the plating shop was conducted and there were no non-compliances seen during the visit.

End.

If you have any queries about this report, or to discuss completion of any actions, please contact the NRW Officer named above.

Important information

Legal status of this report

Your permit is issued to you under the Environmental Permitting Regulations. You have a responsibility to comply with the conditions of your permit and prevent pollution/harm of the environment. You must also ensure that you comply with any other relevant legislation that may apply to your site's operations.

This report explains the findings of our assessment and any action you are required to take. We categorise non-compliance using our guidance for assessing non-compliance at regulated sites.

When we find potential non-compliance/s we will normally give you advice on how to maintain compliance.

To correct non-compliance, we may:

- require you to take specific actions
- issue a notice
- review the conditions of your permit.

Any advice and guidance we give will be without prejudice to any other enforcement response that we consider may be required.

Assessment results and non-compliance categories (used in section 1):

Assessment result	Description
Assessed (A)	Assessed or assessed in part, no evidence of non-compliance found
Action only (X)	Action only relating to the activity assessment
Ongoing (O)	Ongoing non-compliance, not scored

Non-compliance category	Description	Score
C1 Major	Potential to have a major, serious, persistent and/or extensive impact or effect on the environment, people and/or property	60
C2 Significant	Potential to have a significant impact or effect on the environment, people and/or property	31
C3 Minor	Potential to have a minor or minimal impact or effect on the environment, people and/or property	4
C4 No environmental impact	Non-compliance at a regulated site that cannot foreseeably have any impact on the environment, people and/or property	0.1

How we use assessment scores

The number and severity of non-compliances recorded in a year will affect your annual subsistence fee the following year. A non-compliance factor is added to your site's Operator

Performance Risk Appraisal (OPRA) score when we calculate your fee to reflect the additional resource we use to assess permit compliance.

If your assessment result in Section 1 is suspended, what does this mean?

In line with our guidance, we may suspend scores for up to six months to allow time for remedial action to be taken. Suspended scores will be re-instated if the action is not completed.

Full list of Industry compliance criteria (used in section 1 and 2):

1. Management

- IR1A – General management
- IR1B – Finance (only applicable to Landfill)
- IR1C – Energy efficiency
- IR1D - Efficient use of raw materials
- IR1E - Avoidance, recovery and disposal of wastes produced by the activities
- IR1F - Multiple operator installations

2. Operations

- IR2A – Permitted activities
- IR2B – The site
- IR2C – Operating techniques
- IR2D – Technical requirements
- IR2E – Improvement programme
- IR2F – Pre-operational conditions
- IR2G – Landfill engineering (only applicable to Landfill)
- IR2H – Waste acceptance (only applicable to Landfill)
- IR2I – Leachate levels (only applicable to Landfill)
- IR2J – Closure and aftercare (only applicable to Landfill)
- IR2K – Landfill gas management (only applicable to Landfill)

3. Emission and Monitoring

- IR3A – Emissions to water, air or land
- IR3B – Emissions of substances not controlled by emission limits
- IR3C – Odour
- IR3D – Noise and vibration
- IR3E – Monitoring
- IR3F – Pests
- IR3G – Air quality management plans
- IR3H – Monitoring for the purposes of the Industrial Emissions Directive (this heading includes Large Combustion Plants)
- IR3I – Fire

4. Information

- IR4A – Records
- IR4B – Reporting
- IR4C – Notification

Enforcement response

Any non-compliance with a permit condition is an offence and we may take legal action against you. Action we take can include prosecution, serving a notice on you and/or

suspension or revocation of your permit. See our Enforcement and Sanctions Guidance for further information.

Data protection notice

You should make sure that anyone named in this report knows that the information it contains will be processed by Natural Resources Wales to fulfil its regulatory and monitoring functions and to maintain the relevant public register(s).

We may also use and/or disclose the report in connection with:

- offering or providing you with our literature or services relating to environmental matters
- consulting with the public, public bodies and other organisations (e.g. Health and Safety Executive, local authorities) on environmental issues
- carrying out statistical analysis, research and development on environmental issues
- providing public register information to enquirers
- investigating possible breaches of environmental law
- assessing customer service satisfaction and improving our service
- Freedom of Information Act or Environmental Information Regulations requests.

We may also pass it on to our agents or representatives to do these things on our behalf.

Disclosure of information – this report will be available to view on-line

If you think this report contains commercially confidential information that should not be placed on our public register, you must contact your local Natural Resources Wales office within **fifteen working days** of receiving this report, using the contact details in the accompanying email or letter. You must give a full explanation of why it should not be added to our public register, including specifying which information is commercially confidential. We will assess your request and respond to you within twenty working days to let you know if we agree to your request.

What do I do if I disagree with the report or have a complaint?

If you disagree with this compliance assessment report, you should contact the lead officer without delay to discuss your concerns.

If you are unable to resolve the issue with the lead officer or their line manager you should contact our Customer Contact team on 0300 065 3000 (Monday to Friday 08:00 to 18:00), or email enquiries@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk for details of how to raise your dispute further through our Complaints and Commendations procedure.

If you are dissatisfied with our response, you can contact the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales by phone on 0300 7900203 or by email at ask@ombudsman.wales

Welsh Language Standards

We are committed to establishing Natural Resources Wales as a naturally bilingual organisation. We will provide compliance reports in your preferred language.