

Draft BPD recommendations for rodenticide show likely trends

The draft recommendations for rodenticide active ingredients published so far by the European Chemicals Bureau under the Biocidal Products Directive make interesting reading.

These show the possible trends that the rodent control industry will have to follow and highlight the apparent difference in approach to rodenticide approvals between north and south European regulators. Scandinavian regulators have always been more restrictive in their requirements than their more southern European colleagues.

If finally implemented, the industry may face some significant changes in future.

One major requirement is the move to require pest control companies to visit treatment sites regularly to remove dead rodent bodies, thereby lessening the danger of secondary poisoning of wildlife.

These additional visits will have to be costed into a contract and could make the contract prohibitively expensive. Finland, for example, is recommending daily visits.

This trend has already been seen in the UK. As is reported in this issue of PCN, two prosecutions have taken place where failure to remove dead bodies has been cited as being illegal. The first resulted in a fine of £2,000 plus £400 costs.

The second case involving a gamekeeper is to be heard later this year.

Draft recommendations from Finland, Norway and Denmark have also included the requirement that rodenticides are restricted to professional users only.

Whilst this will please many pest controllers, it will hardly please manufacturers who will rely on amateur use sales at premium prices to recover a significant part of the cost of providing the new data packages necessary under the BPD. Without amateur sales, will the price of professional products have to rise to cover these costs?

It is interesting to note that neither the draft recommendations for difethialone nor brodifacoum have contained a requirement that these more potent products be for indoor use only. At the

moment, only the UK has imposed this requirement on brodifacoum and flocoumafen in an attempt to safeguard wildlife.

Another casualty of the BPD may be rodenticide concentrates. The UK is primarily a ready-to-use market but in Germany and France many pest controllers buy concentrates and manufacture their own bait. For health and safety reasons and the protection of operators, this may well change.

Finally, the use of the more potent rodenticides, such as brodifacoum, difethialone and flocoumafen may be restricted to treatments where the less potent products based on difenacoum and bromadiolone have not been successful, for whatever reason.

Many UK pest controllers have preferred to keep the more potent weapons in their armoury for difficult treatments. Many have felt that to lead with brodifacoum-based products was wrong and may welcome a legal restriction.

We shall all wait to see the outcome of the consultative process which will be taking place over the coming months.

