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PRESS RELEASE

PORTABLE BATTERY INDUSTRY WELCOMES BALANCED APPROACH ON BATTERY DIRECTIVE

Brussels, 16 December 2005 – The European Portable Battery Association (EPBA) welcomes the European Parliament's second reading of the Battery Directive carried out during the plenary vote on 13 December 2005.

The EPBA is pleased to note that the Members of European Parliament took into consideration the potential impact the proposal for a Directive will have on the battery market and on the functioning of the collection and recycling systems. This is reflected in the decision by the plenary meeting to reject unrealistic collection targets for portable batteries and including distributors among those with a shared responsibility for collecting spent portable batteries. It is also very important that the *de minimis* rule is deleted in order to avoid a loop hole for free riders. We also welcome the decision by the MEPs to reject an unjustified ban on batteries containing lead.

Certain issues of concerns for the portable battery industry remain on the table. The requirement to indicate the capacity on primary batteries is not possible in a meaningful format since it varies with the application and the way it is used. It will therefore only serve to confuse the consumer rather than help him with his purchase. In addition, the EPBA is concerned that a blanket requirement for producers to finance public information campaigns could result in them being presented with costs over which they have no oversight or control. EPBA believes that the shared responsibility approach should also be applied to public information.

Also recycling targets need to be ambitious but feasible and well founded in order to ensure the smooth operation of the Directive in the future. A target of 55% by average weight for waste batteries and accumulators will not be achievable because the market mix in certain Member States will not have sufficient recyclable material in the waste batteries. EPBA regrets that the vote does not foresee a sustainable financing mechanism to cover the expected costs for collection, treatment and recycling. The EPBA will look to Member States to provide a proper and sustainable financing mechanism in their transposition of the Directive into national law.

EPBA is looking to the Council of Member States to address these few points during their 2nd Reading and the conciliation procedure.

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