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**EPBA**  
EUROPEAN  
PORTABLE  
BATTERY  
ASSOCIATION

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**PORTABLE BATTERY INDUSTRY STILL CONCERNED ON THE BATTERY DIRECTIVE**

**Brussels, 22 December 2004** – The European Portable Battery Association welcomes the Council's political agreement on the proposal for a Battery Directive reached during the Environmental Council of 20 December 2004. Although the agreed text still contains unclear wording, it needs to be recognised that considerable progress was made on key-points in the last month.

The EPBA is pleased to note the general perception of most Member States that have expressed the need for having a realistic Directive. Although the collection targets tend to reflect a more realistic approach, it is however more the result of a political compromise than targets based on existing experience and reflecting the need for realistic, workable and measurable targets. The agreed target after 8 years is still too ambitious not only for the new Member States but also for countries from the EU15 of which not all have the required experience in the field of waste collection and recycling.

EPBA also believes that the political agreement fails to look to the practical side of the entire Directive. The lack of a sustainable financing mechanism remains a big concern as the expected costs for collection treatment and recycling exceeds significantly the earnings of the portable battery industry in Europe. Only a sufficient financing mechanism is the basis for an efficient and sustainable collection system.

In addition, the EPBA always advocated that its members collect and recycle all batteries. However, the possibility of a *de minimis* inclusion will provide a loop hole for free riders and will jeopardise the credibility of each national system. Also, holding the producers financially responsible for the collection of batteries by third parties on which the former have no contractual control goes beyond the principle of producer responsibility. All the actors in the chain need to take up their part of the responsibilities.

The EPBA looks forward to continue the constructive relationship with all decision makers and stakeholders in order to ensure workable battery legislation in the EU for all concerned.

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