

15 November 2005

Cement Industry on track to achieve environmental objectives

The British Cement Association (BCA) has today (15 November 2005) welcomed the publication of the Environment Agency's sector plan for the cement industry. The sector plan is an important component of the cement sector's sustainability initiatives and demonstrates transparency and achievements as part of the industry's overall approach to openness and public consultation.

Speaking after the publication of the plan, Mike Gilbert, Chief Executive of the British Cement Association, said: "The cement industry has already made great strides in achieving progress against its challenges, most notably in reducing emissions, the use of natural resources and process waste. The cement industry has been a leader in the publication of environmental information, and progress towards the targets in the sector plan is published annually in BCA's *Performance report*."

Responding to the sector plan objectives, the cement industry rose to the challenge of reducing consumption of natural resources per tonne of cement manufactured by replacing 11.5 per cent of fossil fuel and 4.8 per cent of virgin raw materials with alternative materials in 2004. Added up, this represents over one million tonnes of waste being recovered in the year.

The industry has also continued to reduce the overall quantity of waste produced in the cement making process. The amount of cement kiln dust going to landfill sites fell from 110,000 tonnes in 2002 to 63,500 tonnes in 2004.

Direct CO₂ emissions from cement manufacture fell by around 24 per cent between 1990 and 2004. Substantial investment and improvements to kiln technology and pollution control equipment as well as sound environmental management at all four UK cement manufacturers will further reduce emissions. Lafarge UK's £20 million gas scrubbing system at Dunbar in Scotland will cut the works' emissions of both sulphur dioxide and dust by more than half, while Cemex is investing £6.5 million installing bag filters at its Rugby plant, resulting in a 40 per cent decrease in particulate emissions.

Buxton Lime Industries' new £110 million plant at Tunstead Quarry have reduced particulate emissions by 90 per cent and improved energy efficiency by 40 per cent. Castle Cement's new £62 million modern Padeswood kiln will reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 17.5 per cent per tonne of cement produced and acid rain gases by a staggering 75 per cent.

The UK cement industry has just completed a year-long process on how it will embed sustainability in all of its operations. The results were published in the British Cement Association's report, *Working Towards Sustainability*, on 01 November. The BCA also reviewed the social, economic and environmental performance of the UK cement industry in 2004 in its annual *Performance* report. The cement industry will report its 2005 performance against the sector plan targets in summer 2006.

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Notes to editors:

1. Jonathon Porritt, chair of the Government's Sustainable Development Commission and Forum for the Future, commended the cement industry's progress towards sustainability at the launch of the *Working Towards Sustainability* report in the House of Commons and said the industry was "on the right track".
2. The cement industry has taken a lead, not just in the UK but worldwide, in tackling the sustainability challenge. Through the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, ten industry leaders have developed The Cement Sustainability Initiative in 1999. With Lafarge, Heidelberg Cement (parent of Castle Cement) and Cemex UK Cement all involved, and BLI agreeing to implement the action programme, the UK industry is fully committed to delivering its aims and objectives.
3. The health and safety of its employees is the industry's number one priority. The second health and safety seminar, *Cementing Good Practice: Cement Vision and Targets*, will take place on 22 November in Worcester.
4. Copies of the *Performance* report and *Working Towards Sustainability* can be downloaded from the library section on the BCA website, www.cementindustry.co.uk.

5. The British Cement Association (BCA) is the trade and research organisation that represents the interests of the United Kingdom's cement industry in its relations with Her Majesty's Government, the European Union and relevant organisations in the United Kingdom. The members of the BCA (Buxton Lime Industries, Castle Cement, Lafarge Cement UK and Rugby Cement) are the major domestic manufacturers of Portland cement producing over 90% of the cement sold in the UK.

The cement industry has an annual turnover of £750 million and is a major supplier to the construction industry. It employs around 3,500 people directly with a further 15,000 jobs depending upon its operations.