

Letter to all UK crematoria

4<sup>th</sup> January 2008

Dear Colleague,

### **Abatement of Emissions from Crematoria – Do you face closure?**

At a recent meeting of the Board of Directors discussion took place on the implications of the following voting by ICCM conference delegates:

#### **Are cremation authorities doing enough to protect the environment?**

Yes 18%

No 82%

#### **Should crematoria that cannot comply with environment legislation:**

Close completely 13%

Close their crematories, but continue to take services and cremate elsewhere 68%

Remain open until forced to close 19%

Certainly, the conference vote indicates that most professionals and authorities / companies would favour crematoria ceasing to cremate on site rather than paying to pollute via a burden sharing arrangement. The message is that any crematoria facing closure should attempt to seek an alternative to simply paying to pollute.

The ensuing discussion, following the conference vote, focused on the reported proportion of 23% of crematoria facing closure. Whilst this figure is constantly mentioned, there has been no survey result or research based evidence to support this estimate.

In view of the above delegate/member vote, the Institute has set itself two targets designed to assist those crematoria reportedly facing closure and these are as follows:

1. To quantify the actual number of crematoria that would be unable to install abatement equipment.
2. To enter into dialogue with the owners of such crematoria and formulate bespoke solutions that would prevent closure (and permit a continuation of income and commemorative facilities).

By addressing these targets, the Board aims to attempt to establish a credible figure for the number of crematoria facing closure (as a result of the need to abate) and also to bring cremation authorities / companies together to discuss possible joint arrangements that will work toward zero emissions and minimise costs to all parties. Such partnership schemes would encompass the principle of facility sharing

as opposed to burden sharing. The Board is of the opinion that these targets offer the best means of protecting the environment, minimising the use of fossil fuel and complying with legislation without imposing excessive charges on the bereaved.

In the first instance, the Board would like to hear from cremation authorities and companies that are unable to install abatement equipment at any crematoria under their control. The results will be analysed to establish a credible estimate for the number of crematoria that face closure in 2012.

Please let me know whether or not you consider any crematorium under the control of your authority /company faces closure as a result of the need to abate. Responses are required by the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2008. Nil responses will be assumed to indicate that your authority / company does not operate any crematorium facing closure.

The Board will publish the number of crematoria facing closure. Those cremation authorities / companies, owning crematoria that face closure, willing to consider establishing partnership working arrangements with surrounding crematoria will be freely offered the resources of the ICCM to pursue the option. They will also be invited to participate in a meeting of affected sites to discuss partnership working alternatives. Such partnership working offers the opportunity to establish a cost effective and environmentally sensitive approach to compliance with minimal impact on the bereaved and other users.

Thank you in anticipation of your co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'M' and 'B' followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Martin Birch, MICCM(Dip)  
Deputy President of the Institute