



## **BOBS holds Seminar on Implementation of Plastics Standard-BOS 186:2006**

The Botswana Bureau of Standards (BOBS) held a one day seminar to brief stakeholders on the implementation of the new compulsory standard on plastic carrier bags and flat bags.

Welcoming participants BOBS Managing Director Dr. Elsie Meintjies, said the standard is with effect from May 12, 2007 after it was declared compulsory by the Minister of Trade and Industry.

Dr Meintjies informed local manufactures, traders and the general public of the terms of the standard which she said makes the manufacture, importation and use of plastic carrier bags which are less than 24 microns, illegal.

She however said the compulsory standard does not cover bread bags, refuse bags, bin liners, household plastics or primary packaging such as barrier bags.

“I therefore urge shop owners, take aways, supermarkets and other outlets to refrain from using these bags, which are less than 20 microns, as it is a violation of section 10(6) of the Standards Act,” said Dr. Meintjies.

She added that those found contravening the Act are liable to imprisonment of three years and a fine of P5000.00.

In his presentation on the standards for plastic carrier and Flat bags, BOBS Manager in charge of Compulsory standards, B.T. Kebapetse said they have to comply with thickness while markings such as address of the company supplying the bags should be indelible and legible.

Kebapetse said BOBS with the assistance of its partners will make sure that the standard is enforced through sampling, inspections and testing.

“Partners such as BURS will be helping while the police will also be on the look out to make sure that no person or organization violets the standard,” emphasized Kebapetse.

He added that BOBS will through various forums address the issue of mindsets so that individuals can appreciate the benefits of using the right carrier bags.

In his closing remarks, Deputy Permanent Secretary in the ministry of Trade and Industry, Mr. G. Kombani thanked BOBS for coming up with standard.

Mr. Kombani applauded the standard saying the standard will go a long in protecting the environment/ consumers and keeping the country clean.

“We can also reuse the same carrier bags which are not less than 20 microns,” advised Kombani.

## QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS RAISED DURING THE WORKSHOP FOR STAKEHOLDERS ON BOS 186

Questions and Comments	Response
<p>Pep Stores</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) The act is good, however, the enforcement, do we have capacity?</li> <li>(ii) Training of the community on the reuse of the plastics</li> <li>(iii) Penalty to the public?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Addressed through the model to be used, self declaration. The responsibility. Enforcement to be the responsibility of all stakeholders like the BURS, Police, BOBS, DWMPC.</li> <li>(ii) Consultation has been going on. BOBS alerted the stakeholders on the gazetting. Parliamentarians were briefed, the radio and the tv were also used. Press releases will be issued. Joint public education with DWMPC and manufacturers. Joint press releases for the tripartite.</li> <li>(iii) Waste management legislation to take care of the public. Waste mgt act currently under review. Bye-laws also enforcing.</li> </ul>
<p>Metro sefalana</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) No legislation on charging for plastics may lead to a situation where the plastic will continue to pollute as some of the retailers will not sell.</li> <li>(ii) The stock in the shelves, what action is to be taken, Suggests allowing time to clear.</li> <li>(iii) Cost of plastic will be transferred to the consumer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) RSA model assessed, and it clear that the costing issue is critical in controlling the use of plastics. There are many role players. The general levy on environment is under discussion. There is a need for consumers to feel the cost and attach value to the plastics</li> <li>(ii) Adequate notification to the industry done.</li> <li>(iii) Pricing and cost falls out side BOBS' mandate.</li> </ul>
<p>Woolworths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Suggests that the sale should be legislated to reduce littering.</li> <li>(ii) Turnaround time for testing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Falling outside BOBS' mandate.</li> <li>(ii) The testing should be done prior to importing. BOBS will be verifying products declared, these do not have to wait for testing to be done by BOBS before been placed on the market.</li> </ul>

Questions and Comments	Response
<p>Shoprite Checkers</p> <p>(i) The effects of the cost will reflect badly on the side of the retailers. There is a need for public education with regard to objectives and the ultimate goal of implementing the standard.</p> <p>(ii) Bulk stock currently with the shops, any plans for compensation in case of a need to dispose</p>	<p>(i) Issues of public education to be addressed by the stakeholders.</p> <p>(ii) Adequate notification to the industry done.</p>
<p>Starpack Distributors</p> <p>(i) Was the study on whether there is a reduction on use of plastics done?</p> <p>(ii) Permitted coverage of printing.</p> <p>(iii) Waste separation at household level.</p>	<p>(i) Volume for use reduced by 46 % for Shoprite Checkers (RSA)</p> <p>(ii) This was clarified. It was pointed out that the printing should not be confused with that on primary packaging, especially that the standard does not cover primary packaging.</p> <p>(iii) DWMPC dealing with the issue.</p>
<p>BURS</p> <p>Forms to be availed to the importers as BURS will not allow importation with the necessary forms.</p>	<p>The issue will be discussed between BOBS and BURS.</p>
<p>BURS</p> <p>(i) Availing of the samples of the plastics,</p> <p>(ii) Are we going to be using all ports of entry</p>	<p>(i) KPI donated the plastics to be issued as samples. Verification of compliance has not been done.</p> <p>(ii) The issue will be discussed between BOBS and BURS.</p>
<p>Kelly Murphy Somarelang Tikologo</p> <p>(i) ST recommended that plastics to be sold separately</p> <p>(ii) Appeals for inclusion of NGO in the process especially on public education. They are recycling, as such appealed to with noncompliant plastic to donate them to ST.</p>	<p>Both comments noted.</p>