

Instruction Note

Tasks designed to trust agencies

What is SWICO?

SWICO is the Swiss Commercial Association for Information, Communication and Organisational Technology. Its members include Swiss subsidiary companies and general importers of international computer and consumer electronics groups as well as manufacturers of telephone and office equipment, Swiss software companies, wholesalers, specialists and companies that supply the graphics industry. Some 440 members with more than 46,000 employees represent annual sales in excess of CHF 26 billion.

What is the SWICO Recycling (SR)?

On behalf of the SWICO members, the SR deals with used equipment and the appertaining accessories. Used equipment has been handed in by consumers and been professionally recycled since April 1994. The system was designed with electronic office and informatics equipment in mind and over time has been modified to include mobile telephones, graphics industry equipment and telephone switchboards/terminals as well as dental equipment. It is financed via advance recycling fees (ARFs) imposed on new equipment.

Who can take part in the SR?

Manufacturers and importers become members by signing the Convention for Recycling and Disposal. The Convention, and the appertaining Practical Guideline, provide for the rights and obligations of the signatories. Participants are divided into A and B groups. A-participants organise the recycling of their used equipment themselves, and consequently administer the ARF funds. B-participants assign the recycling and financing to SWICO environmental commission. Accordingly the control sheet for B-members contains fewer details.

Why does the SR require a trust receipt?

The SR is a voluntary sector solution. It is important that participants know their rivals are using the system correctly too, and that they are not faced with a competitive disadvantage (e.g. if a member were to state lower ARF rates).

Therefore the system provides for the signatories' six-monthly reporting on the control sheet regarding income and expenses to be checked by their trust agencies.