INTERVIEW

"For the automotive industry, ELV recycling strengthens resilience and supply security by transforming end of life vehicles into a reliable urban source of raw materials."

CHRISTIAN BLACKERT

Managing Director at TSR Resource GmbH & Co. KG

TSR
THE METAL COMPANY

ICM: Please give us a brief overview of the activities of TSR Group.

Christian Blackert: The TSR Group is one of the leading international companies specialising in the recycling of ferrous and non-ferrous metals and is part of the global REMONDIS Group. We operate around 190 business sites across Europe and have a workforce of approximately 4,600 employees. Together, we recycle almost 9 million tonnes of ferrous and non-ferrous metals every year, including steel, aluminium and copper.

We make the most of our modern plants to sort, analyse and process both pre-consumer materials from industrial production processes and post-consumer materials from everyday use and to transform them into different grades of raw materials with clearly defined specifications. By doing this, we are able to continuously return high-quality recycled raw materials to our customers. We ensure that industrial businesses have a reliable, long-term supply of high-quality recycled raw materials, helping to unite supply security and sustainable value creation in Europe.

We have also been making specific investments to further advance our recycling processes so that we will be able to continue to cover the growing demand for high-quality recycled raw materials in the future as well. The results of such investments include recycled products with guaranteed specifications – such as our TSR40 for the steel industry and our TSR130 and TSR136 for the aluminium industry. They can all be used to make high-quality products, such as those found in the automotive industry.

ICM: How important is the automotive recycling market to the group?

Christian Blackert: As neither Germany nor Europe have large supplies of natural resources, it is essential to ensure that all the materials that are being used by the industry as well as by private households are systematically recovered and recycled so that they can be reused. ELVs are an important source of raw materials that must be recycled and returned to supply chains.

This closed-loop approach is the guiding principle driving the further development of our recycling processes: we have taken a conscious step over the last few years to expand our activities in the automotive sector – something that has led us to becoming a shareholder in LRP, Germany's largest vehicle recycling business.

Our Europe-wide network of offices and plants covers all stages of the supply chain – from collecting and dismantling the materials, to processing complex material streams, all the way through to producing standardised recycled products for industry. Our work is playing an important role in helping the European industry to have their own supply of strategic raw materials and to become more competitive.

Achieving such circularity can only be done when we work closely with the automotive industry. Not only to ensure we meet their quality expectations but also to coordinate the material streams and to make sure that the ELVs remain in Europe and in European supply chains. We are already implementing this approach today in collaboration with OEM partners and are working together structurally along the automotive value chain. The focus is on systematically making recycled raw materials usable for automotive series production and developing joint, effective take-back systems. This will anchor closed cycles and secure raw material flows in the long term.

ICM: How confident are you in the future development of this activity?

Christian Blackert: We believe there is considerable potential to further develop ELV recycling. The mobility transition, the increasing demands regarding sustainability and transparency and the growing need to have resilient supply chains all mean it will be important to have high-quality recycling solutions.

What is key here, however, is having reliable framework conditions in place: clear regulatory requirements, realistic recycling rates and a recognition of recycled raw materials as a strategic resource are all central here if the existing solutions are to be scaled up and more investments made in technology and infrastructure. The revised version of the European End-of Life Vehicles Directive will also play a key role here. It needs to be passed quickly and then systematically implemented to enable companies to plan ahead and give them the security needed to invest in technology and infrastructure.

Clear and reliable regulations are the basis that is required to ensure, over the long term, that ELV recycling becomes an integral part of a competitive industry landscape in Europe with its own secure supply of materials.

ICM: You are sponsoring the IARC 2026 in March in Hamburg why is it important to the group to continue to be present at this event?

Christian Blackert: We see the IARC as being one of the main international platforms enabling discussions along the whole of the automotive recycling and value chain. This is where industry, recycling companies, technology suppliers and politicians can get together – the perfect set-up for further developing industrial circularity.

We believe it is important for us to be at the IARC as many of the key questions regarding ELV recycling cannot be solved in isolation: it's all about design decisions, regulatory frameworks, quality expectations and scalability. These issues can only be moved forward sensibly if those working on the ground, in industry and in politics discuss them together.

Being both a sponsor and an active participant, we will be using the IARC to put forward our practical points of view, to share our experiences of industrial recycling processes and to

discuss with our partners how supply security, circularity and industrial demands can best be united. It is precisely these open and professional discussions that make the IARC so important to us.

ICM: Delegates to IARC 2026 will visit your processing plant, what will they be able to see during the visit?

Christian Blackert: We will be visiting our plant in Harburg Harbour as part of the IARC. The participants will be able to see for themselves, up close, how ELV recycling is being carried out on an industrial scale. We will show them how the materials from the ELVs are transformed, step by step, into precisely defined recycled raw materials.

Focus here will be on our TSR40. This high-quality recycled product is made from post-consumer materials and can be used, for example, to make new cars. The delegates will be able to see from this visit how ELVs find their way back to car manufacturers.

We have made it clear with our third TSR40 production plant that this particular closed loop not only works in individual cases but can also be implemented to produce the relevant volumes needed. It is precisely this scalability that is crucial for making Europe's industry resilient and providing it with a reliable supply of raw materials.

We are looking forward to this opportunity to discuss all this and more with the participants and to see how ELV recycling can be moved forward and become a permanent and integral part of industrial value chains.

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About ICM AG
ICM AG is the international leader in circular economy congress organisation, specialising in the vehicle, electronics, and battery recycling industries, as well as e-mobility. These are some of the world's fastest-growing markets and waste streams. Headquartered in Switzerland, ICM AG is the reference in the circular economy congress industry and has been organizing conferences in Europe, North America, and Asia over 30 years.