

### Background to CAMEO scheme

- 1.1 A requirement to remove mercury from all cremations highlighted the difficulties some Operators would have installing the abatement equipment and processes. Sector wide surveys confirmed that some Operators could not install abatement equipment. In order to enable these important community facilities to continue operating, whilst contributing to the abatement of mercury, a solution involving the entire sector was necessary.
- 1.2 In 2005, Defra introduced a requirement for the cremation industry to remove mercury from 50% of cremations. The national target, based on the available science, achieves a proportionate response for removing mercury from cremations, whilst not burdening the bereaved with excessive cost and the possibility of closing of local crematoria.
- 1.3 Along with the 50% target the principle of “burden sharing” was introduced, a process whereby Operators who could install abatement plant do so, and the cost is shared with those could not install such abatement equipment. Defra recognised this as the most equitable way of achieving the target, whilst the cost, or “burden” was shared by the entire sector. All Operators are therefore required to abate and/or burden share a minimum of 50% of the qualifying cremations they carry out.
- 1.4 Industry representatives recognised the need for a national scheme to enable the sharing of the financial cost or “burden” between Operators abating and those not doing so. As a result CAMEO has been created as the lead organisation to introduce a framework for providing and managing a national burden sharing scheme. In order for an Operator to obtain the necessary operating permit from the relevant Regulator, it must obtain a compliance certificate from CAMEO or by other appropriate evidence from a comparable audited burden sharing arrangement or scheme.
- 1.5 The CAMEO Burden Sharing Scheme is based upon identifying the additional cost incurred by Operators which have abated. Having identified the cost on a per cremation basis, Operators which have not abated are charged for the number of mercury abated cremations necessary to meet the requirements of their operating permit. The resulting income, less an administrative fee to fund the scheme, is shared amongst the Operators that have abated and are participating in the CAMEO Burden Sharing Scheme.
- 1.6 In Cheltenham’s case, the cost of participation in the CAMEO scheme is currently around £50,000 per annum. Once the Council has new cremators with working mercury abatement equipment installed, the current cost of paying into the CAMEO scheme will no longer be incurred and the Council will instead receive a payment from the scheme based on the number of abated cremations. The level of payment is not guaranteed into the future, as it depends on the number of operators continuing to operate with unabated cremation plant.