

## **UK CHEMICALS STAKEHOLDER FORUM EXPLANATORY NOTE**

### **UKCSF guidance for SMEs and downstream users on REACH Authorisation**

The UK Chemicals Stakeholder Forum (UKCSF) has today published SME-friendly advice on a key element of the EU's REACH Regulation.

It follows a recommendation made by the Prime Minister's Business EU Red Tape Task Force that the European Commission and the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) should provide more understandable guidance for smaller businesses. The UKCSF has taken up this challenge and produced business-friendly guidance on REACH Authorisation. At its fifty-sixth meeting today the Forum signed off this guidance which is now being published, and signposted to a wide business audience by Forum members and others, including the UK REACH Competent Authority.

Authorisation is one of the REACH processes for managing the risks of certain hazardous substances and promoting their replacement with safer alternatives. Substances that are subject to Authorisation may not be used in the EU unless a company has been authorised to do so. This will mean that such substances are eventually phased out of all non-essential uses. The guidance explains how businesses will be affected by Authorisation. It provides answers to a number of key questions around the Authorisation process for example, where to find out information on how to substitute chemicals; what the key steps and processes are; how to monitor what's going on and practical advice about applying for Authorisation. It also includes a number of links to relevant guidance material from industry, the UK REACH Competent Authority and ECHA.

Environment Minister Lord de Mauley has welcomed this guidance, and commented: "This Forum and its members play a key role in supporting businesses that need to adhere to REACH, avoiding confusion and removing barriers to growth. I have encouraged my officials to assist the European Chemicals Agency and the Commission with their own initiatives in this area to help businesses".

ECHA SME Ambassador Andreas Herdina, who today attended the meeting of the UKCSF, added his support for the Forum guidance. He noted: "It is important for REACH guidance to reflect the needs of those who have to comply with this legislation. I appreciate that the UKCSF has taken this national initiative of publishing this useful piece of guidance which fully lives up to these expectations."

In thanking the members of the Forum sub-Group on raising awareness of REACH with SMEs, which carried out this work, the UKCSF Chairman, Professor David Phillips, said: "I encourage all Forum members to share this guidance widely. The Forum sub-Group will continue its work on priorities for REACH guidance in the form of advice to ECHA as recommended by the Prime Minister's Business Task Force. At the same time the Forum recognises the importance of the 2018 REACH Registration and this will now be the subject of a specific project for the Forum sub-Group"

EEF, the manufacturers' organisation's chief executive Terry Scuoler said: "SMEs are the lifeblood of our economy. Yet they are often stretched and under pressure. Too often guidance doesn't meet their needs. EU guidance on REACH compliance is crucial to understand but suffers from being both extremely complex and lengthy.

The Prime Minister's EU Red Tape Business Task Force rightly identified this as a shortfall that needed addressing. This guidance is an important step in meeting the needs of our smaller companies."

Steve Elliott, the Chief Executive of the Chemical Industries Association said "Anyone who has grappled with REACH knows that it is complicated. We have called for more pragmatic and understandable guidance in our response to the Prime Minister's EU Red Tape Business Task Force. This clear guidance is a positive step to delivering better communication and closer working cooperation throughout the supply chain. A recent CIA survey suggested that 40% of businesses will have to deal with authorisation in the future. "

**Notes:**

1. The UK Chemicals Stakeholder Forum was set up in September 2000. Its terms of reference and membership can be found on the Forum website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/policy-advisory-groups/uk-chemicals-stakeholder-forum#>
2. Defra provides the secretariat for the Forum, which also works closely with the UK REACH Competent Authority. UKCSF quarterly meetings are open to the public and the specialist chemical press. Forum papers and minutes are available on the Forum website.
3. The Forum sub-Group on raising awareness of REACH with SMEs comprised: EEF - the manufacturers' organisation (Chair), the Chemical Industries Association, the Royal Society of Chemistry, Greenpeace, the Society of Chemical Industry, as well as representatives from Defra and the UK REACH Competent Authority. The Federation of Small Businesses was also consulted.
4. The report of the Prime Minister's Business Task Force on EU Regulation can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cut-eu-red-tape-report-from-the-business-taskforce>
5. ECHA's web pages on REACH Authorisation can be found at:  
<http://echa.europa.eu/web/guest/regulations/reach/authorisation>  
<http://echa.europa.eu/addressing-chemicals-of-concern/authorisation/applications-for-authorisation/afa>  
[http://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/13637/factsheet\\_applications\\_authorisation\\_en.pdf](http://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/13637/factsheet_applications_authorisation_en.pdf)

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