

Press Release – REACH restriction dossier for diisocyanates moves to the European Commission

On 18 May 2018, the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) published the consolidated opinion of the Risk Assessment Committee (RAC) and Socio-Economic Assessment Committee (SEAC) on the restriction of diisocyanates. This is an important step in the legislative developments towards the final proposal of the European Commission.

ISOPA and ALIPA, representing diisocyanates producers, are pleased to see this process move forward and call upon the European Commission to continue to support the work that has been carried out jointly by industry and regulators thus far.

OPTIMAL PROTECTION OF WORKERS THROUGH MANDATORY TRAININGS

The restriction proposal put forward by German authorities focuses on setting up training measures for the safe handling of the substances. The intention is to integrate a mandatory training with a certification scheme that empowers workers to safely use the substances. The training programs will be based on the existing measures as well as the longstanding voluntary initiatives of the industry. ISOPA and ALIPA and downstream fully support this approach and are in progress to develop uniform and adequate training materials.

To the same degree, industry also supports the exemption route, which allows those product/use combinations with very low risk of exposure to be exempted from the restriction.

A POSITIVE STEP IN A LONGSTANDING COLLABORATION PROCESS

Throughout the past years, industry has worked with ECHA and the REACH competent authorities to achieve satisfactory protection levels for workers in the diisocyanate value chain. ISOPA and ALIPA have long been committed to the safe use of diisocyanates and have successfully established a number of product stewardship initiatives. This commitment has allowed the entire value chain to join efforts and closely cooperate with authorities to provide them with the most solid and relevant information during the regulatory process.

NEXT STEPS

The European Commission is expected to draft a proposal within three months for a REACH restriction of diisocyanates. The REACH authorities of the EU Member States will then discuss and agree on this proposal. The regulation is expected to be adopted by the European Union in 2018 or 2019. A transition period is expected to adequately allow for the introduction of the measures throughout the supply chain. In parallel, industry foresees the development of the training material and the actual training of all affected workers to be carried out over the next 6 years.