



Brussels, October 2015

Industry committed to the safe use of its substances

On 7th October 2015, ECHA registered the intention of the German Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (BAuA) to propose a risk-based measure under the REACH regulation for the industrial and professional use of diisocyanates. This is reported on the website of the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA).

The details of the scope of the intention are described as follows:

Diisocyanates shall not be used as substances on their own, as a constituent in other substances or in mixtures for industrial and professional uses, unless

a) the cumulative concentration of diisocyanates in the substance or mixture is less than 0.1% by weight, or b) measurements under realistic conditions have demonstrated according to Appendix M that only an acceptable residual risk is present if the substance or mixture is used as described and intended or c) the substance or mixture is used in accordance with the provisions described in Appendix N.

Shall not be placed on the market as substances on their own, as a constituent in other substances or in mixtures for industrial and professional uses, unless

*a) the cumulative concentration of diisocyanates in the substance or mixture is less than 0.1% by weight, or
b) measurements under realistic conditions have demonstrated according to Appendix M that only an acceptable residual risk is present if the substance or mixture is used as described and intended or*

c) the substance or mixture is supplied to a downstream user who uses the substance or mixture in accordance with the provisions described in Appendix N.[1]

[1] This can i.a. be assured if these persons have been trained by the person that placed this product on the market (product stewardship).

The expected date of the submission is 15th July 2016.

The intention will focus on integrating a training and certification scheme defining conditions for the safe handling of the substances. The training programs will be based on the existing regulations as well as the longstanding voluntary initiatives of the industry.

Diisocyanates are substances used in the manufacture of polyurethanes. They are employed in a wide range of applications, notably for the production of flexible and rigid polyurethane foam, in some adhesives and sealants, in binders, in coatings, and for the production of polyurethane elastomers.

Diisocyanates are processed during the production process of polyurethanes and are no longer present in the cured product.

ISOPA, ALIPA and trade associations representing the industrial and professional downstream users of diisocyanates at European and national level are strongly committed to the safe use of diisocyanates and safety at the workplace. The industry has successfully established a number of product stewardship initiatives for many years, educating on safe use of diisocyanates.

The industry is actively providing all relevant information on the substances and training and certification schemes already available across the industry.

Harmonized and clearly defined training schemes as the core of the BAuA approach are broadly supported by industry. The industry sees the BAuA approach as a logic advancement of the industry`s efforts over the last decades to further improve worker`s safety.

The industry is actively participating in the upcoming process with BAuA and with all other REACH competent authorities in Europe. The subsequent legislative process on EU level will typically last 2-3 years until regulation comes into force.

About Polyurethanes

Together with polyols, diisocyanates are the essential building blocks for the manufacturing of polyurethanes, a plastic material that exists in various forms. It can be tailored to be either rigid or flexible, and it is the material of choice for a broad range of end-user applications such as insulation (of buildings, refrigerators and freezers), adhesives, coatings, automotive parts, sportswear, bedding and furniture etc.

Polyurethane is a very sustainable material, as it offers tangible solutions for challenges like climate change and energy efficiency, and its durable and lightweight characteristics can enhance resource efficiency.

About the industry

The polyurethane industry contributes approx. € 230 bn to the European economy. Over 2 million jobs depend on polyurethanes across 420,000 companies in Europe, over 85% of them SMEs.

About the associations

ALIPA is the European aliphatic isocyanate producers Association

CEC is the European Confederation of the Footwear Industry

CECED is the European Trade Association for Domestic Equipment Manufacturers

CEPE is the voice of paint, printing ink and artist's colours in Europe

Deutsche Bauchemie is the German construction chemicals Association

EFIC is the European Furniture Industries Confederation

EPF is the European wood-based panels federation and represents the European manufacturers of particleboard, MDF, OSB, hardboard, softboard and plywood

Euratex is the European Apparel and Textile Confederation

Euromoulders is the European Association of Manufacturers of moulded Polyurethane parts for the Automotive Industry

Europur is the European Association of Manufacturers of flexible Polyurethane foam blocks Manufacturers

FECC is the European Association of Chemical Distributors

Feica is the Association of the European Adhesive & Sealant Industry

FSK is the Specialist Association of Foamed Plastics and Polyurethanes

Industrieverband Klebstoffe is the German Association for Adhesives

ISOPA is the European Diisocyanate and Polyol Producers Association

IVPU is the German Association of Rigid Foam Polyurethane Producers

Kennisplatform bundles the expertise on polyurethane spray foam in the Netherlands

PDA is the Polyurea Development Association Europe

PPA is the European Association for Panels and Profiles, represents the manufacturers of metal profiled sheets, sandwich panels and ancillary products on the European level

PU Europe is the single European voice for the polyurethane (PUR/PIR) insulation industry

VdL is the Association of the German Lack and Printing Ink Manufacturers

ZVEI is the German Electrical and Electronic Manufacturers' Association