

Supply chain communication - help yourself, use the tools

TEXT BY HANNA-KAISA TORKKELI

ECHA, sector associations and EU Member States have worked for two years to develop tools and templates to improve communication on safe use in the supply chain. The work has got off to a promising start: new tools, that help both registrants and downstream users have already been published and many more are in the pipeline.

WIN-WIN

Divina Gómez, Regulatory Affairs Manager at the Association of the European Adhesive and Sealant Industry (FEICA), says that the sector-specific harmonised use maps benefit all actors in the REACH chain.

“They help registrants to prepare more realistic chemical safety assessments for their REACH registrations. In turn, we downstream users, receive better quality information in the exposure scenarios from the registrants. They will also



Use chemicals? Use them safely!

be more comprehensive. With more realistic exposure scenarios, our members can provide consistent safe use information to their customers much more easily”, she says.

Clariant's *Erika Kunz*, who chairs the Chemical safety report/Exposure scenario (CSR/ES) Roadmap working groups of the European Chemical Industry Council (Cefic) and the German industry association VCI says that the tools developed enable the information to be delivered in a more harmonised way. “Harmonisation is likely to enhance the quality of industry's risk assessments and exposure scenarios”, she mentions.

Harmonised and structured information also minimises the unneces-

sary back and forth communication in the supply chain, which saves time and resources.

The use maps help downstream users to make sure their uses are covered in the registration dossier of a substance.

“It will also be easier for our members to check the compliance of their activity - whether their uses are covered in the information received by their suppliers”, Ms Gómez points out.

Also authorities benefit from the standardisation. “We expect that through the different tools the information in the dossiers will increase. This will help authorities to make the right decisions on substances that potentially need further scrutiny. More comprehensive and accurate information about the substance and its uses may also remove a potential concern”, says ECHA's *Andrew Murray*.

IMPROVING THE CONTENT

The CSR/ES Roadmap focuses on is the harmonisation of format and on improving the actual content, meaning how uses are described.

Ms Gómez thinks that the consistency of information on the use of chemicals (use description, use conditions) will be improved when all downstream user sectors provide such information on the same

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Downstream users are a very important as they play a key role in improving the safe use of chemicals in workplaces and in communicating safe use information both up to their suppliers as well as down to their customers.

template, using the same terminology.

“The information registrants receive will be more representative of the uses in the supply chain. Also the fact that the templates will be IT compatible, will help the registrants’ and downstream users’ tasks and ensure consistency”, she explains.

ECHA’s Andrew Murray agrees. “Through the use maps, registrants know where to look for information; they get the same information and are able to use that in their assessment. Downstream users can then put the information they receive from their supplier to their customers in a language that the particular sector can understand. They should also be able to identify more easily the content of the exposure scenarios and how they relate to their activities and workplace settings on-site.”

“The uses need to be better expressed, that’s one thing. But we also need to work on the exposure assessment side in terms of what parameters go into an exposure assessment”, Andrew Murray says.

GETTING EVERYONE ON BOARD

The work done under the CSR/ES Roadmap is responding to industry’s demands for good quality information in the supply chain.

“All of the products which we have been working on under the roadmap are designed to meet those needs. The hope is that through using the products, the information in the dossiers will improve”, Mr Murray explains.

The work still needs time to materialise. However, Ms Gómez believes that in the future, the communication in the supply chain will be on another level. “We are going in the right direction. Not all sectors are yet involved, but I hope more and more will come. Having meaningful and structured information throughout the supply

chain will eventually improve communication on safe uses and make complex risk assessments more transparent to the users of chemicals.”

Dr Kunz also encourages all actors in the supply chain to get active.’

“We have to realise that the benefits of the roadmap work will only come after the tools and methods are actually implemented. Many of them are already there and now we need to start using them.”

Further information:

CSR/ES Roadmap
<http://echa.europa.eu/regulations/reach/registration/information-requirements/chemical-safety-report/csr-es-roadmap>

Contact ECHA to get active in the roadmap work:
<http://echa.europa.eu/csr-es-roadmap/contact-form>

Downstream users
<http://echa.europa.eu/regulations/reach/downstream-users>

EsCom catalogue
<http://www.cefic.org/Industry-support/Implementing-reach/Guidances-and-Tools1/>

Exposure scenarios
<http://echa.europa.eu/regulations/reach/downstream-users/exposure-scenarios>

Safety data sheets eGuide
<http://view.pagetiger.com/ECHAe-Guide1-1/Issue1>

Approaches to generating safe use information for mixtures
<http://echa.europa.eu/regulations/reach/downstream-users/communication-with-customers/approaches-to-generating-safe-use-information-for-mixtures>

Safe use of mixtures (SUMI), DUCC
<http://www.ducc.eu/News.aspx#news5>

Specific consumer exposure determinants, A.I.S.E. news
<https://www.aise.eu/newsroom/newsroom/aise-publishes-new-tool-for-consumer-safety-exposure-assessments-reach-specific-consumer-exposure-determinants-sceds.aspx>

Terminology – in 23 languages
<http://echa-term.echa.europa.eu/>



HELP FOR SUPPLY CHAIN COMMUNICATION

Online now:

- ▶▶ Template: Specific consumer exposure determinants (SCEDs), April 2014
- ▶▶ Template: Exposure scenario, August 2014
- ▶▶ Format: Structured short titles (STT) for the exposure scenarios, November 2014
- ▶▶ IT exchange format: ESCom v.2.0 package, July 2015
- ▶▶ Standard phrases: ESCom v.2.0 package, July 2015
- ▶▶ Method and template: Safe Use of Mixtures Information template (SUMI), December 2015

Upcoming:

- ▶▶ Template: Sector use map, February 2016
- ▶▶ Template: Sector-specific worker exposure description (SWED), February 2016
- ▶▶ Template: Specific environmental exposure categories (SpERC), spring 2016