

Chemical Compliance Team

Annual Report 2012/2013 Summary

The Environment Agency's Chemical Compliance Team (CCT) continue to lead in the field of monitoring and enforcing chemical restrictions. We use product supply chain intervention to minimise adverse impacts of chemicals on the environment. Our approach is intelligence-led, adopting research and campaign techniques that apply the principles of Better Regulation to minimise the regulatory burden on industry.

Our work has developed in a number of new areas this year, including Fluorinated Greenhouse Gas (F-gas) and Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS), and projects for Chemical Source Control and Landfill Leachate. We also conducted research to inform regulatory impact assessment of any future legislation proposals regarding nanomaterials.

The Chemical Compliance Team (CCT) is part of the Waste and Industry Regulatory Service (WIRS). The team have responsibility for:

- carrying out campaigns and monitoring compliance with chemical restrictions
- co-ordinating enforcement for non-compliance with its partners and taking proportionate action
- responding to enquiries about restrictions from industry and other regulatory authorities
- developing UK proposals for environmental risk management of substances under Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and restriction of CHemicals (REACH) and evaluating proposals put forward by EU member states.

The CCT's regulatory remit covers:

- Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and restriction of CHemicals (REACH) Enforcement Regulations 2008
- Persistent Organic Pollutants Regulations 2007
- Environmental Protection (Disposal of Polychlorinated Biphenyls and Other Dangerous

Substances) (England and Wales) Regulations 2000

- Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases Regulations 2009
- Environmental Protection (Controls on Ozone-Depleting Substances) Regulations 2011.

CCT's Campaigns in 2012-2013:

We continually develop our campaign format - adopting the principles of better regulation and seeking to minimise undue burden on industry. This approach continues to deliver effective enforcement.

As a result of our continued success, additional resources have been transferred to the CCT to help address Water Framework Directive requirements for a second year.

In 2012-2013 we conducted campaigns to monitor and enforce compliance with chemical restrictions, and to investigate sources, of the following substances:

- di(2-ethylhexyl)phthalate (DEHP)
- nonylphenol and its ethoxylates (NP/NPEs)
- polybrominated diphenylethers (PBDEs)
- tributyl tin and its compounds (TBT)
- triclosan
- polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB - Food Sector)
- hexachlorobenzene (HCB - Fireworks)

Monitoring, Enforcing and Researching:

Highlights from this year's work include:

- launching the new helpdesk to provide business support services for F-gas and ODS regulations.
- ensuring the removal of more than 100 illegal mercury thermometers and blood pressure devices, and a further 17 F-gas products, equivalent to

286,000kg, of CO₂ from the UK online market place.

- improving management of persistent organic pollutants by identifying eight new holders of polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) Contaminated Equipment. This has led to 143 additional items being registered, containing a minimum total of 715 litres of PCB substance.

- identifying personal care products that were imported to the UK and non-compliant with restrictions on nonylphenol and its ethoxylates (NP/NPEs). The products contained 0.29% NPE; subsequent disposal of 2,500 units prevented release to sewer of 20kg of endocrine disrupting substances that are harmful to the aquatic environment.

- tracing a potential source of NP/NPEs in the UK environment through analysis of 100 textile items. The results showed that 29% of the items contained NPE, and 99.9% of the substance would be released to sewer after two washes.

- researching the production and use of nanomaterials by UK industry - on behalf of Defra, we surveyed 268 organisations about nano applications. We now hold a preliminary stakeholders list for further communications.

- undertaking a landfill leachate project. The project was designed to conduct a preliminary investigation into the composition of landfill leachates, the possible effects they may be having on the local groundwater and any related Environmental Quality Standard (EQS) failures.

Influencing and sharing knowledge:

We have continued to share our knowledge with UK and international partners through a range of activities. We have coordinated and led the Forum enforcement project on polycyclic aromatic

hydrocarbons (PAHs), involving 12 member states; we produced the final report of this work, which was presented in June 2012 at the European Chemical Agency (ECHA) REACH Enforcement Forum and was published by ECHA in February 2013.

Our involvement with the Chemical Legislation European Enforcement Network (CLEEN) has enabled us to share information, good practice and outcomes with other European Union member states. We presented the findings from our 2012 campaign on HCB at the 13th annual CLEEN conference in Lithuania, where we also shared our well-established methods for monitoring and intervention of online retail.

We are now working in partnership with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to co-host the 14th CLEEN conference, which will be held in London for the first time.

This summary relates to information reported in detail in the following output(s)

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03708506506

E: enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk