

EU ISSUES UPDATE

FEBRUARY 2021



OPPORTUNITIES FOR DIALOGUE

European Parliament Committee votes to challenge the European Commission decision authorising the use of Chromium Trioxide under the REACH Directive

The December EU Issues Update reported that in December the European Commission authorised the CTACSub's¹ application for the use of chromium trioxide for 5 uses: Use 1 (formulation); Use 2 (hard chrome plating); Use 4 (surface treatment aeronautics and aerospace); Use 5 (miscellaneous surface treatment); and Use 6 (passivation of tin-plated steel). The European Commission deferred its decision on the use of chromium trioxide for functional plating with decorative character (Use 3) until this year. The authorisation would allow 1500 EU companies to continue to do business in the EU and safely use Chromium trioxide for plating and surface treatment until September 2024 and allow their customers to continue to use European sourced plated and treated components for the end products they assemble in the EU.

However, on February 23, the European Parliament's Legal Affairs Committee recommended that the EP bring a legal action with the European Court against the European Commission calling for the CTACSub authorization to be revoked. FIVA had assisted a CTACSub lobby of Committee members but while the vote was close, it did support EP legal action (13 in favour, 11 against, one abstention). CTACSub, with the support of FIVA, will now lobby to allow the full Parliament to vote on the matter.

In the event that the EP pursues a challenge, the Chromium Trioxide authorisation will be delayed until the Court concludes its deliberations (up to three years). This will also mean that the European Commission decision on the CTACSub's Use 3 (functional plating with decorative character) application may be delayed until the ruling.

¹ CTAC is one of a number of consortia which have applied for authorization for use of chromium trioxide for the purposes of chrome plating – but the CTAC application has the broadest scope as it is a joint application submitted by 7 applicants for the Consortium which consists of businesses across the supply chain – i.e. importers, formulators, dealers, and users of chromium trioxide

INFORMATION

Joint action calls for 1 million electric car charging points

A joint action by the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association (ACEA), environmental lobby group T&E (Transport and Environment) and the European Consumer Organisation (BEUC) have called on the European Commissioners for climate, transport, industry and energy to use this year's revision of the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Directive to require 1 million public charging points in the EU in 2024, and 3 million in 2029.

Car makers and oil refiners call on the

At a recent oil refining conference, ACEA and oil refiners called on the European Commission to provide greater support for liquid fuels, including e-fuels and biofuels, as part of its net-zero plans; while Energy commissioner Kadri Simson said that "by 2030 electric vehicles will be better developed and deployed for use in transport" but also expects that nearly 80% of cars on EU roads in 2030 will continue to be fuelled by petrol or diesel. Another Commission spokesperson noted that modelling exercises show that carbon neutrality cannot be achieved without e-fuels.

T & E says that battery production benefits raw material use

The environmental lobby Group T&E has published a study showing that impact of the raw materials used up to produce a typical car battery is small compared to that of the petrol burned during the lifetime of an internal combustion engine: the study found that the 17,000 litres of petrol burned during the (average) lifetime of a car as compared to 30kg of metals that are not recycled from an electric vehicle battery. The study also noted that the 30kg figure is the amount of metals that currently cannot be recycled and it went on to note that this figure will decrease as technology advances – possibly leading to a halving of the amount of lithium needed to produce a rechargeable battery by 2030. The market share of electric (including hybrid) models rose to more than 10% in 2020.

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The FIVA Legislation Commission members are: Lars Genild (Chairman), Giuseppe Dell'Aversano, Wolfgang Eckel, Carla Fiocchi, Laurent Heriou, Johann König, Stanislav Minářík, Bob Owen, Kurt Sjoberg, Harit Trivedi and Andrew Turner of EPPA works with the Committee.