



EU chemicals assessment authorities confirm no restrictions on Deca-BDE and support ongoing science

The EU Competent Authorities have confirmed the conclusions of an EU risk assessment report on the brominated flame retardant Deca-BDE, which did not identify any significant risks to the environment or human health.

At the meeting of EU Member States and the European Commission on 11 December, the EU Competent Authorities for chemicals policy reviewed the EU policy status of Deca-BDE and agreed to proceed to formal publication of the updated Risk Assessment Report. This will provide a complete basis for registration of Deca-BDE under REACH.

Commenting after the meeting, Dr. Michael Spiegelstein, Chairman of the industry group Bromine Science and Environmental Forum, said: "We welcome this EU agreement to confirm Deca-BDE's risk assessment conclusions and to approve the Risk Assessment Report's publication. I can reconfirm industry's commitment to press on with the scientific studies and the voluntary emissions control programme in conjunction with the EU authorities."

Background:

- Deca-BDE is a brominated flame retardant used to increase the resistance to fire of materials such as plastics and textiles in a wide range of applications such as transport, electrical and electronic equipment and furniture.
- An EU risk assessment report for Deca-BDE was initiated in 1994 and was concluded in 2004 with no environmental or health risks identified. Remaining concerns over the potential for Deca-BDE to present a risk in the future led to the EU Competent Authorities mandating two 10-year monitoring studies and one final toxicity test and supporting the initiation by industry of a voluntary industrial emissions control programme.
- Since 2004, Deca-BDE's risk assessment has twice been updated, the latest update dating from June 2007. The updated risk assessment, which now covers in the region of 1,000 environmental and health studies, did not identify any environmental or health risk.
- Meeting in Lisbon on 11 December, the Competent Authorities responsible for the EU's existing chemicals policy confirmed the updated Risk Assessment Report conclusions, agreed that the Commission should proceed to formal publication of the Risk Assessment Report. The EU Competent Authorities also agreed that the ongoing scientific and voluntary emission reduction programmes are progressing and committed to reviewing these programmes regularly under REACH.

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BSEF is the international organisation of the bromine chemical industry, whose remit is to inform stakeholders and commission science on brominated chemicals such as flame retardants.