

31 March 2005

Commission Proposes to Exempt Deca-BDE from EU RoHS Directive

The European Commission recently sent to the EU Member States a Commission proposal for a Decision to introduce additional exemptions to the Restriction on Hazardous Substances (RoHS) Directive. Included within the scope of this exemption Decision is the flame retardant Deca-BDE.

This proposal to amend the RoHS Directive follows:

- the inclusion in the Annex to the RoHS Directive of Deca-BDE as a priority candidate for evaluation;
- the conclusion in May 2004 of an EU risk assessment on Deca-BDE that found “no identified risks” to either human health or the environment from the use of Deca-BDE;
- a stakeholder consultation where more than 85% of the stakeholders responding fully supported Deca-BDE’s exemption from the RoHS Directive¹.

In line with the Directive, all the RoHS exemptions will be reviewed every 4 years to ensure adaptation to scientific progress. This will give the opportunity to present the progress of a voluntary programme to control and reduce industrial emissions of Deca-BDE².

The Commission’s proposed Decision is expected to be voted on 19 April by EU Member States and should be published in the EU Official Journal around the end of May.

Statement end

¹ Further details on the 1st Commission consultation and the stakeholder replies can be found at:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/waste/weee_index.htm

² The EU risk assessment pointed out the need for more information because trace amounts of Deca-BDE were found in the environment and biota. In response, the industry has initiated with the textile & plastic sectors a programme to reduce industrial emissions of Deca-BDE and to monitor regularly Deca-BDE in the environment and biota in Europe. An additional study has also been initiated.