

Call for evidence on the challenges in substituting DecaBDE

Background document

Bis(pentabromophenyl)ether (DecaBDE) is a widely used general purpose flame retardant with applications in many different sectors. It is used in plastics/polymers/composite materials and by the textile industry. It is also used in adhesives and sealants, and in coating and inks.

Industry (in the EU but also in the US and Canada) has taken actions to minimize and control the use and the releases of the substance. In the EU, a Voluntary Emissions Control Action Programme (VECAP) was launched. In addition, the RoHS Directive (2002/95/EC) applies to DecaBDE since 30 June 2008.

DecaBDE was identified as a PBT and vPvB according to REACH Regulation and included in the candidate list for authorisation on 19 December 2012. It was subsequently included in ECHA's fifth recommendation for the inclusion of substances in Annex XIV (authorisation list). However, in parallel to the recommendation process, Norway has submitted a proposal to add DecaBDE to the Stockholm Convention for Persistent Organic Pollutants. To align the actions within the European Union with the fact that DecaBDE will be considered under the Stockholm Convention, the European Commission has requested ECHA to start the preparation of an Annex XV restriction dossier on DecaBDE in accordance with the REACH Regulation. Consequently, ECHA has removed DecaBDE from the draft recommendation list. If the restriction dossier demonstrates that action on EU-wide basis is necessary, ECHA shall suggest restrictions, in order to initiate the restriction process. ECHA intends to submit an Annex XV restriction dossier for DecaBDE on 1 August 2014.

In the preparation of the Annex XV dossier ECHA needs to identify potential uses where:

- substitution is not technically or economically feasible, and/or
- substitution could be technically or economically feasible if sufficient time is available for the transition.

For these uses derogations or longer transitional periods can be considered.

ECHA has launched this call for evidence in order to gather information from as many relevant stakeholders as possible for the preparation of the aforementioned Annex XV restriction dossier. ECHA is supported in the preparation of the Annex XV dossier by an independent consultant, Risk Policy Analysts (RPA). RPA will be collecting more in-depth information on the uses, emissions and alternatives (chemical and non-chemical) of DecaBDE and may have already approached you or your organisation on this subject. If you have already submitted information in the context of this work, there is no need to resubmit it by answering this call for evidence.

Additional information on the work of RPA on this subject can be consulted at: <http://www.rpald.co.uk/news-deca.shtml>.