

The value of Occupational Hygiene in REACH Implementation

Guiding Statement

BOHS is a multidisciplinary learned and professional society acting as the voice for Occupational Hygiene (OH) in the UK, and is a founding member of the International Occupational Hygiene Association.

The Society strongly supports the aims of REACH to reduce any adverse health impact associated with the use of chemicals. The skills and competencies embodied in the role of professional occupational hygienists are uniquely placed to assist in the successful practical implementation of the REACH legislation.

Those areas where occupational hygienists make a key contribution to the multi-disciplinary team are:

- Providing advice to Manufacturers and Importers (M/I) on recognising, evaluating and controlling health risks from handling chemicals, all of which are key elements in the Chemical Safety Assessment.
- Helping M/I develop guidance for Downstream Users (DU) on practical and effective Risk Management Measures (RMM), thereby providing concise and comprehensible input for the Exposure Scenario within an extended safety data sheet.
- Assisting DU with site-specific advice on RMM to ensure compliance with REACH.
- Providing OH-specific guidance to supplement the Technical Guidance Document.
- Working with EU bodies and Competent Authorities to develop guidance relevant to the above.
- Organising events to ensure that occupational hygienists are aware of the opportunities and training/competency needs, and that industry are aware of the skills and services that occupational hygienists can provide to help them comply with their legal duties.
- Developing training modules for occupational hygienists and others to encompass the more specialist aspects of REACH.
- Impartially advising the Commission (ECB/Chemicals Agency) and industry – particularly SMEs - on key areas where its membership has practical expertise, including exposure assessment approaches, the effectiveness of RMM and practical implementation of control strategies.

BOHS views REACH as a real opportunity to further reduce exposure to chemicals in the workplace. The Society can help to achieve this by working in partnership with all involved to ensure that the skills and competencies of occupational hygienists are utilised in the most effective way.