



EUROPEAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRY COUNCIL

NEWS RELEASE

www.cefic.org

www.fecc.org



EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF CHEMICAL DISTRIBUTORS

For further information:

Pierre de KETTENIS
Hendrik ABMA

+3226767729
+3226790260

pdk@cefic.be
hab@fecc.org

Chemical Manufacturers and Distributors agree on a voluntary Health, Safety and Environment Assessment Scheme for Distributors

Brussels, 15 October 2004 – A Memorandum of Understanding was signed today by FECC, the Federation of Chemical Distributors and Cefic, the European Chemical Industry Council, to support ESAD II, a renewed¹ European assessment scheme for chemical Distributors.

ESAD II is a standardised assessment system of a voluntary nature used by Chemicals Manufacturers for assessing the health, safety and environmental standards of Distributors' operations, meaning that Distributors will no longer have to undergo multiple assessments by Chemicals Manufacturers. ESAD II will be used by Distributors for assessing compliance with their Responsible Care programme.

The ESAD II questionnaire is used by independent auditors to assess a Distributor's site. The questionnaire, consisting of some 500 questions, covers all areas of site operations, facilities, processes and employee training. Assessments are repeated every three years. Auditors are independent and trained by a joint FECC / Cefic team. 30 auditors from most European nationalities were trained in June and have now started to perform assessments.

ESAD II is based on the same founding principles as for the Cefic Safety Quality Assessment System (SQAS): objectivity, neutrality, transparency and open access to the system for users.

The ESAD II organisation has been aligned with the Cefic SQAS system and will benefit from the experience of the SQAS assessment schemes already managed through Cefic for transportation of chemicals by road and rail. Cefic and FECC members have shared control over the ESAD II documentation, training and systems through a joint Steering Group.

All companies supplying chemicals through Distributors in Europe can join the ESAD Service Group. The members of the Service Group have access to the ESAD II assessment reports of the assessed Distributor through a central database, subject to the Distributor's approval.

Cefic Director General Alain Perroy commented: "Benefits of using ESAD include stimulating continuous improvement regarding SHE performance in the supply chain, reducing risk of accidents and incidents, and offering a uniform industry approach while reducing repeated assessments to be carried out by individual Chemicals Manufacturers, thus saving internal resources".

Cefic and FECC see ESAD II as a good indicator of SHE performance and a suitable assessment of Responsible Care in action. Recognition by authorities should increase with the number of Chemicals Manufacturers and Distributors demonstrating their effective implementation of ESAD.

FECC have developed a second dimension to ESAD II by using it as a third-party assessment of Responsible Care. ESAD II is structured around the 8 principles of Responsible Care and will become a third-party Responsible Care assessment system for FECC members.

FECC Director General Hendrik Abma commented "The partnership approach between Chemicals Manufacturers and Distributors marks another milestone in the development of Responsible Care along the supply chain and builds upon the improvements in SHE performance achieved by Distributors to date"

The Memorandum of Understanding signed today was proposed by FECC to develop a mutual, transparent and official understanding of the common and respective objectives.

*****ENDS*****

1/ ESAC, the European Suppliers Advisory Council of FECC developed in 1998 a European Single Assessment Document (ESAD). An improvement programme was proposed by ESAC in 2002, which caused the development by Cefic and FECC of ESADII, a uniform RC and HSE site assessment protocol for Distributors. The new assessment questionnaire was completed with sections covering food, pharmaceutical, cosmetic and chlorinated products.