

# | SOLUTIONS

Summer 2017



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# Editorial



I started my position as Director General of ESIG only on 1<sup>st</sup> March, but already it feels like years and in the most positive sense. Learning quickly about how ESIG can better serve and represent the solvents industry has been my top priority, along with getting to know our members, partners and stakeholders. During this process, I've been involved in numerous initiatives, a few of which I'd like to share with you.

Ecolabels, product environmental footprint (PEF) and green public procurement are all trending topics in the EU's sustainability framework and circular economy package. I'm striving to bring them all together in a comprehensive overview, backed up with real action. This involves preparing for the regulatory challenges we might face. Our recently published Ecolabel position paper, submitted also to the European Commission, is the first step. We are also exploring possibilities for a PEF project in 2018.

Maintaining ESIG's values is another focus for me. This is especially true with our Generic Exposure Scenarios (GES) under REACH that have always been considered guiding principles, even beyond our industry. We will continue to highlight their advantages and benefits in discussions on more sector-specific exposure information.

You might have noticed that the Downstream Users Cooperation Group, ESVOC needed a logo. I'm happy to say that we finally created one that you'll see ahead.

Our ESIG team includes some new faces in addition to my own for you to read about. Together, building on ESIG's impressive legacy we will strive to ensure that ESIG remains an industry frontrunner for the years to come.

I look forward to meeting you at industry and ESIG events, and encourage you to contact me anytime at [cti@cefic.be](mailto:cti@cefic.be).

Cornelia Tietz

ESIG Director General

## MEET THE TEAM

Our team in Brussels is as accomplished and diverse as our members and partners across Europe. Visit us at the Brussels secretariat at Cefic, the European Chemical Industry Council, or send us an email. We want to hear from you.



**CORNELIA TIETZ** Director General

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- Oversees all activities from advocacy and communication to administration
- Enjoys meeting with business leaders and finding common ground with policymakers
- Speaks English, German, French and Dutch

**VÉRONIQUE SCHOUNE** Assistant

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- Runs all administration from membership to training workshops and more
- Enjoys helping members make the most of ESIG resources and opportunities
- Speaks English and French

**GERSON MARTIN** Science Manager

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- Monitors scientific developments and advises members on best practice
- Enjoys advancing policy based on sound science
- Speaks English, Spanish, Swedish and Finnish

**DAPHNÉ CHARLETON** Communications Manager

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- Supports all communication from the website to this newsletter
- Enjoys helping ESIG become more digital and align around key messages
- Speaks English, French and German

**MARCELO VOLLMANN** Advocacy Manager

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- Monitors EU policy and advises members on their advocacy activities
- Enjoys showing that our industry is responsible and sustainable
- Speaks English, German and French

## CATCH UP WITH ESVOC

ESVOC, the European Solvents Downstream Users Cooperation Group, has just revamped its logo like other ESIG groups before it. How familiar are you with ESVOC's history and purpose?

ESVOC is a unique platform that brings together representatives from the entire solvent value chain to facilitate the implementation of existing legislation. Together, participants work to harmonise approaches, collect data, offer advice and exchange best practices.



### Some history

As its name implies, ESVOC was originally focused on issues around Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC). But the group evolved to cover other topics of interest to industry and downstream users, becoming one of ESIG's most influential and active initiatives.

Today ESVOC not only promotes air quality throughout the value chain. It also covers topics including the Solvent Emissions Directive under the framework of the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED), Best Available Techniques Reference Documents (BREF) processes and other environment, health and safety (EHS) issues.

When REACH first came into force, an EHS subgroup assessed how to implement it considering the numerous solvent related substances and applications across Downstream User (DU) sectors. As a result, two additional sub-groups were created: the Generic Exposure scenarios (GES) Working Group, which covers the human health aspects, and the Specific Environmental Release Category (SpERC) Working Group, which deals with environmental aspects.

### Current working groups

Now several working groups operate under ESVOC, each with its own activities.

- **Core Group (CG)** monitors all VOC developments with a focus on data collection to establish the 2015 Solvent VOC inventories. It also encompasses the **Air Quality subgroup** and an **Indoor Air Quality subgroup**.

- **BREF Surface Treatment using Solvents (STS)** group reviews the ongoing BREF for STS, and is the only group financed by its members. During a technical workshop on 17<sup>th</sup> May, regulators and industries worked to find a common approach for solvent management plans, the basis for calculating VOC emissions.
- **GES** group ensures the ongoing utility and maintenance of Generic Exposure Scenarios (GES). The group continues to support research that underwrites solvents Chemical Safety Assessments, including a new experimental study on inhalation and dermal exposure to solvents during industrial spraying. The group reports to the ESIG Product Stewardship team.
- **SPERCs** group ensures that environmental exposure assessments are aligned with the latest GES Use Titles and general SPERC guidance.

## MAKING REACH COMPLIANCE EASIER

Helping solvents suppliers and users to handle products safely and comply with regulatory requirements is fundamental to ESIG's mission. Regular readers of this newsletter will be aware that ESIG has developed various tools to support solvent risk assessments under the EU REACH regulation. These tools, help suppliers and downstream users to save time, resources and costs.





Our latest efforts have been focused on making it more efficient to conduct and report solvents Chemical Safety Assessments using the European Chemical Agency's (ECHA) preferred tool, 'Chesar'. After conducting a substance exposure assessment, Chesar enables you to directly populate the outputs into a Chemical Safety Report (CSR) and the REACH Registration tool, IUCLID.<sup>1</sup>

For each title in our Worker GES library, we have prepared a supporting xml transfer file allowing the auto-population of the details into Chesar. You can then easily assess the specific substance in Chesar by refining the GES information.

For Consumer GES, exposure assessments are still to be carried out using our Solvents EGRETv2 tool, which is outside of Chesar. You can, however, now convert the assessment output from EGRET into an xml file that imports directly into Chesar.

Although the library of Worker and Consumer GES is most applicable to solvent suppliers for support on REACH substance registrations, they are useful for other safety assessments too.

You can still conduct exposure assessments using the existing GES excel tools, but without the xml files you must manually transfer outputs.

The xml files for the Worker GES and xml transfer tool for the Consumer GES will be posted soon in our GES library on ESIG.org. Just like other GES files, they will be free to download. Chesar is available from the ECHA website.

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1. The International Uniform Chemical Information Database (IUCLID) is a software application to record, store, maintain and exchange data on intrinsic and hazard properties of chemical substances. It is a key software application for both regulatory bodies and the chemical industry to implement regulatory programmes like REACH.



## TRAINING ON SOLVENTS

On 23<sup>rd</sup> May, we completed another fully booked training course on solvents. This time in Hamburg.

This introductory course to the solvents industry is designed for newcomers in the solvents sector and other professionals looking to 'refresh' their knowledge about solvents.

It is useful to those in commercial or administrative areas, and is given together with the UK-based Solvents Industry Association (SIA). The course is purposely kept small (max. 15 places) to ensure dynamic discussions.

### Registration

The next course is on 23<sup>rd</sup> November in Brussels. Register early at [esig.org](http://esig.org) or contact Véronique Schoune at [vsc@cefic.be](mailto:vsc@cefic.be) +32 2 676 7269.

### Topics

- The history of solvents
- An introduction to petrochemicals and solvents
- Where solvents come from
- Types of solvents
- Choosing the right solvent
- Solvent end-uses and applications
- Regulations related to solvents
- Transport and packaging
- Product stewardship across the supply chain

### Language

Trainings are typically conducted in English without interpretation.

### Fee

Free for ESIG members, and €250 for non-members. Food, beverages and training material are provided. Participants are responsible for their own travel.



## EU ADOPTS LIMITS ON AIR POLLUTANT EMISSIONS

On 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016, the new National Emissions Ceilings (NEC) Directive entered into force after over three years of lengthy discussion and significant scrutiny in the European Parliament and Council.

The new Directive sets binding emission reduction targets for key air pollutants in each Member State for 2020 and 2030, with indicative targets for 2025. **When fully implemented, the Directive should reduce the health risks from air pollution like respiratory disease by almost 50 per cent by 2030.** Collectively, Member States are expected to decrease VOC emissions by 34 per cent by 2020, and by 40 per cent by 2030.

Member States have until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2018 to implement the Directive into national law, which involves annual reports on their past and projected future emissions. By 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019, Member States must develop a National Air Pollution Control Programme that defines measures to reach their national emissions targets in close coordination with relevant stakeholders, including industry.

The Directive allows some flexibility for Member States. Compensation, for example, is allowed for non-compliance of one pollutant if there is an equivalent reduction in another for a limited time.

Together with downstream users, the solvents industry has taken a series of measures to reduce VOC emissions from solvents, in compliance with EU legislation. As a result, emissions from solvents have decreased significantly.

Looking forward, the solvents industry is in a good position to meet the national VOC targets set under the NEC Directive for 2020 and 2030. As implementation begins, ESIG will continue engaging with national regulators to ensure measures are based on sound science and preserve industry competitiveness.

## SETTING A STANDARD DEFINITION FOR MINERAL OIL

Mineral oil has lacked a clear definition for too long, largely because of the natural chemical complexity of such a product. This has led to uncertainty and confusion among regulators, industry and the scientific community.

The Hydrogen Solvents Producers Association (HSPA), which is part of ESIG, has partnered with other industry sectors, the research institute CONCAWE and downstream users related to the food industry to reach a common understanding about the composition and use of mineral oils and to establish a clear, science-based definition.

The group established MOCRINIS (Mineral Oil Cross Industry Issues) in September 2013 to engage with European and national regulators as well as leading universities.

Based on scientific evidence MOCRINIS concluded that Hydrocarbon Solvents should not be considered mineral oils because of the different carbon ranges of the two types of substances (i.e. the number of carbon atoms in each substance molecule). Carbon ranges included in solvents are up to C20, and above C20 for mineral oil.

When MOCRINIS meets next in October 2017, the group will try to finalise the definition based on this distinction and definitively exclude hydrocarbon solvents from any discussion around mineral oil. We look forward to sharing about the meeting results in the next edition of Solutions.



## IMPROVING REACH WITH PETCO

Making chemical reviews under REACH more streamlined, pragmatic and transparent has been the focus of industry dialogue with the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) over the last years. The Hydrocarbon Solvents Consortium's (HCSC) participation in the Petroleum and Coal substances (PetCo) group has helped to facilitate this dialogue in important ways.

PetCo represents over 300 different substances, including hydrocarbon solvents. Members share a common interest in improving REACH and have succeeded in 2015 to introduce informal discussions into substance reviews.



Now regulators can request preliminary answers and technical input from industry without formally launching expensive evaluation proceedings. Since 2015, the Hydrocarbon Solvents Consortium (HCSC) has met with ECHA nearly every quarter to discuss new concerns and priorities for evaluations, making the process more efficient.

PetCo continues to meet with ECHA and offer practical recommendations to improve engagement between manufacturers and regulators. This includes industry views on how to enable all parties to gather data sequentially, share technical information, update the chemical screening and prioritisation process, and improve dossier evaluation and communication.



## BIO-BASED SOLVENTS

Since the standards for bio-based solvents are still evolving, ESIG members have regularly consulted with policymakers and other stakeholders to advocate for evidence-based frameworks firmly rooted in science.

The European Committee for Standardisation's (CEN) Technical Committee 411 has a mandate from the European Commission to develop these standards within five different working groups. ESIG has the convener role in working group two, bio-solvents, where the only product standard is being developed.

At a meeting in Delft in May, Member State representatives, conveners and secretaries discussed progress, including how to promote and finalise the business plan for 2017.

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