



“The voice of SMEs in Europe”

Press Release

IMMEDIATE ISSUE:

Chemicals law moving in the right direction

- **Presidency and Parliament propose risk-based approach to chemical registration**
- **Parliament should take a leaf from Presidency book on compulsory data-sharing**

Brussels, 15 September 2005 UEAPME, the European small and medium business organisation, has given a general welcome to the approach by the Presidency and Parliament committees to the proposed EU chemical registration system (REACH), following the release of proposals by the UK Presidency and votes by the industry and internal market committees this week.

“Simplifying the procedures for registering chemicals, particularly those producing small quantities, is a vital step that will make SMEs better able to cope with REACH. It is clear that whatever form this regulation takes, smaller businesses will face disproportionate cost and administrative burdens: all the impact assessments and legislative tests have shown this,” said **UEAPME Secretary General Hans-Werner Müller**.

“The general move towards a risk-based approach for registering chemicals by the UK Presidency and the European Parliament committees will make the regulation much more manageable for small firms and makes the system in general more proportional.”

The proposal by the UK Presidency to make the sharing of all data (animal and non-animal testing) in the registration process compulsory is key to making REACH more workable for SMEs. UEAPME has expressed its regret that neither the industry nor the internal market committees adopted amendments on data-sharing in their votes on Tuesday (13 September).

“Requiring all small downstream users to gather the exhaustive data required by the registration process will make REACH prohibitive. Introducing the compulsory sharing of all data, as the UK Presidency has proposed, will help overcome this. If the parliament really wants to address the concerns of SMEs, as it claims, it is important that they also include this amendment.”

Both the Presidency and the parliament committees have proposed to reduce the obligations for registering articles where the release of a substance is not intended. UEAPME welcomes these proposals, which complement the principle of proportionality introduced by the overall risk-based approach.

“It is very positive that both the Presidency and MEPs have accepted the need to simplify the REACH proposals. The forthcoming vote in the Environment Committee and the plenary vote must build on this momentum to make REACH more workable,” concluded Mr Müller.

***** End *****

EDITORS’ NOTE: UEAPME is the employer’s organisation representing the interests of crafts, trades and SMEs from the EU and accession countries at European level. UEAPME has 78 member organisations, which represent crafts and SMEs across the whole of Europe, covering over 11 million enterprises with nearly 50 million employees. UEAPME is a European Social Partner.

Further information: **Richard More O’Ferrall, Press and Communications Officer**

Tel: +32 2 230 7599/ GSM: +32 477 44 38 42

Email: pressoffice@ueapme.com Web: www.ueapme.com/pressroom