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Onderwerp: ETUC and EMCEF alert their members to act as REACH and CLP ambassadors in companies

ETUC AND EMCEF ALERT THEIR MEMBERS TO ACT AS REACH AND CLP AMBASSADORS IN COMPANIES



European Trade Union Confederation [ETUC]
Confédération européenne des syndicats [CES]

13 September 2010

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and the European Chemical Workers' Federation (EMCEF) are convinced of the importance of the new chemical laws – REACH and Classification, Labelling, Packaging (CLP) – this is the reason why they are calling on their member organizations to alert employers to their responsibilities through a new campaign.

"I am confident that the successful implementation of these new laws will not only help enhance the competitiveness of the European chemical industry, but also deliver better protection for workers, consumers and the environment", said Joël Decaillon, ETUC Deputy General Secretary.

The European Trade Union Confederation and the European Chemical Workers' Federation are launching an extensive information campaign aimed at companies that market or use chemicals. The two European unions plan to draw on all their member organizations and their thousands of elected representatives in companies in Europe to raise awareness on employers' obligations under REACH and CLP regulations on chemicals.

REACH says that industrial operators must register any chemicals they manufacture or import in quantities above one tonne a year with the new European Chemicals Agency (ECHA). The CLP (Classification, Labelling), and Packaging) Regulation says they have to notify ECHA of the classification and labelling of all hazardous substances they place on the market, no matter what the production volume.

Too many firms in the EU, especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), still are not aware of these obligations, and could end up being fined or having some of their production lines stopped by the national enforcement authorities if they do not fulfil them on time.

The first deadlines – 30 November 2010 and 3 January 2011 – are rapidly closing in. So ETUC and EMCEF are looking to all their member organizations in Europe to pass on to employers an information leaflet prepared in collaboration with the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) and the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, who are both supporting the campaign.

"To fulfil the requirements of REACH is important to save jobs in the chemical industry. Workers in this industry are very much interested in the sustainable development of the sector based on high environmental values, social progress and economic success and therefore EMCEF supports this important initiative", said Reinhard Reibsch, the EMCEF GENERAL Secretary.

For his part, Geert Dancet, Executive Director of ECHA, said, *"We very much welcome this initiative from the ETUC. Reaching all companies with information about their responsibilities under the new regulations for chemicals is a challenge and we are grateful to trades unionists for their help in spreading the word."*

More information: the information leaflet on REACH and CLP aimed at workers' reps is available in all EU languages on the ETUC website (<http://www.etuc.org/r/830>) and the EMCEF website (<http://www.emcef.org/news.asp>)

The ETUC exists to speak with a single voice, on behalf of the common interests of workers, at European level. Founded in 1973, it now represents 82 trade union organisations in 36 European countries, plus 12 industry-based federations. The

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