

2pp

RECEIVED
OPPT NCIC

2000 SEP -6 PM 12:57

May 2000
Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
Existing Chemicals Task Force Meeting

PFOS Assessment Approach in OECD

The recently circulated information on PFOS and its associated derivatives raises a number of important questions regarding this chemical technology and the appropriate steps to take in light of the decision by the major manufacturer to phase out production for most uses during the current year.

An extensive set of studies and other information on PFOS and its derivatives has been developed by 3M Corporation and other companies. Efforts are underway between US EPA and 3M to distribute this information to Member countries, possibly via CD-ROM. A group of OECD Member countries have developed an informal understanding to co-ordinate efforts leading to preparation of a screening level risk assessment on PFOS and its derivatives. These countries plan to divide responsibilities for various aspects of the assessment and then to combine this work to prepare a screening level assessment of the human and environmental hazards, environmental fate, uses and exposures, and risks associated with PFOS and its derivatives. This assessment would be used to inform countries regarding the issues associated with the possible phaseout of specific uses and provide a basis for informed judgements regarding critical uses of PFOS. This work could also contribute to better understanding of the issues which must be considered in evaluating substitutes which are being proposed as alternatives to PFOS and its derivatives for the critical uses as well as other uses. To assist in this co-operative effort, the OECD Secretariat has been requested to ask OECD Member countries (and, through IFCS, non-Member countries) to provide information regarding ongoing production, import, and uses of PFOS and its associated derivatives in individual countries or regions. Several countries have already initiated efforts to collect information on PFOS and its derivatives. Countries and industry will also be encouraged to provide information on potential substitutes for specific uses of PFOS and its derivatives. Ideally, this would include information regarding human and environmental hazards, environmental fate, exposures and releases, etc. of the alternatives. Since examination of potential substitutes is currently an ongoing effort, such information should be provided as it becomes available.

The results of the collaborative assessment and the information obtained by the Secretariat would be reviewed in a tentatively planned informal expert meeting organized by one of the collaborators possibly in a

September-October 2000 timeframe. The goal of this meeting will be to prepare an assessment at a level similar to that of a SIAR with additional international exposure information mentioned above on PFOS and its derivatives. The assessment will include robust study summary level information on key studies (human and environmental hazards, pharmacokinetics, environmental fate, biomonitoring, etc.), more extensive exposure and use information than is typical of a SIAR under the refocused program (the information available from 3M provides a fair degree of detail on ongoing production and uses by that company, additional information will be developed via the OECD request to Member countries and others; there is also relatively extensive information on biomonitoring with more information expected from 3M), and an initial screening level assessment of hazards, exposures, and risks. The countries will also attempt to develop initial information (and, where possible, judgements) regarding the critical uses of this class of chemicals, consider the issues associated with and gaps in understanding regarding proposed substitutes, identify needed steps, and develop proposals for continuing necessary work. The results of this effort would be communicated to the Joint Meeting in November 2000 to inform that body as to developments and to obtain guidance regarding additional activities as appropriate by OECD.

The parties which have already indicated an interest in collaborating in this assessment effort include the United States, the United Kingdom, the European Commission, Canada, and Japan. The initial thinking regarding division of labor for assessing existing information is as follows: health effects and pharmacokinetics of PFOS (US) and selected PFOS derivatives (Canada); environmental effects (UK, Canada); environmental fate and distribution (?); human biomonitoring (US); environmental (bio)monitoring (Canada); exposure and uses (to be co-ordinated through Secretariat). Japan will let the other collaborators know as soon as it decides on areas it can collaborate on. Other interested OECD Member countries are encouraged to indicate their interest in contributing to this effort. Countries are also encouraged to consider initiating new (bio)monitoring efforts to further characterize human and environmental presence (details on the analytical method developed by 3M are available.) Consideration by individual countries and regions of the issues presented by the possible phaseout of PFOS and its derivatives should continue even as collaborative work is being initiated.