

23 September 2013

## Meeting minutes

### ASO Communicators' Network

<b>Time</b>	Monday 23 September 2013, 12:00 – 13:00 (Helsinki time)
<b>Place</b>	WebEx online meeting
<b>Participants</b>	<i>Accredited Stakeholders:</i> Alison Abrahams (EEB), Walter Claes (EuPC), Ann Jessica Johnson (Cembureau), Gilly Stoddart (Pisc)  <i>ECHA:</i> Lindsay Jackson (Chair), Mira Banerjee, Adam Elwan, Andreas Herdina, Virginia Mercouri, Maurizio Roncaccia, Päivi Jokiniemi (minutes)

## 1. How to work together to better reach and support SMEs

### 1.1. ECHA's activities to support SMEs

ECHA gave an overview of their plans and communication objectives targeted to SMEs. The approach is based on addressing the SMEs as three separate groups: downstream users, registrants and the companies which are unaware of their obligations. Reaching out to these groups requires different messages and different communication channels. ECHA is also working on simplifying its communications for the benefit of all these target audiences.

In the light of available survey results, awareness raising among SMEs is much needed. The level of awareness of small downstream users related to their legal obligations is low. Cooperation with other platforms and European networks is one important way to reach the SMEs.

A new survey of SME registrants is also being prepared for ECHA to better understand what the key areas of support needs are. The survey will also map how SMEs are using consultants.

It was also mentioned that the Commission will organise an SME workshop in Brussels on 10-11 December.

### 1.2. Discussion topics

ECHA asked how the participating organisations are communicating and supporting SMEs.

Several participants mentioned their Newsletters as the main communication tool. ECHA suggested that it can provide material for the Newsletters if it would be helpful. It was agreed that where ASOs would welcome some input from ECHA, they would get in touch through [stakeholder@echa.europa.eu](mailto:stakeholder@echa.europa.eu).

Other ideas mentioned were using experienced SMEs to give advice to those who are not familiar with the legislation. This could be in the context of events, articles or other communication tools.

Another idea was to make use of the market pressure and national inspections. Increased consumer awareness would efficiently encourage the companies to meet their legal

obligations, as well as inspections.

## **2. Development of ECHA's web pages for the general public**

### **2.1. Status update and future timing for the project**

ECHA presented the first section for the revised "Chemicals in our life" web section, the workers' pages. The draft pages were sent to all participants in advance. ECHA plans to launch the workers' pages on 12 November, in connection with the European Employment Forum.

The Accredited Stakeholders were encouraged to comment on the draft pages. The deadline for the comments is 9 October. Comments should be sent to email address [stakeholder@echa.europa.eu](mailto:stakeholder@echa.europa.eu). After 9 October the text will be finalised and translated.

The remaining parts of the "Chemicals in our life" web section targeted at the general public, will also be revamped. The whole new section will be launched on 15 March 2014 on the European Consumer Day. ECHA told that the Stakeholders will see a mock-up of the new section and a preview of the next set of pages in the next meeting on 28 November.

### **2.2. First comments on the workers' section**

No comments were received at this point.

## **3. Sharing information of upcoming stakeholder communications activities**

No activities were reported.

## **4. Next meeting**

### **4.1. Time and place**

ECHA suggested that the next meeting would be held face-to-face in Brussels on 28 November, 10:00 to 12:00 (GMT +1). Invitations to the meeting will be sent out soon.

### **4.2. Topics**

ECHA suggested that for example following topics could be discussed in the next meeting:

- Status update on ECHA's website section for the general public. This would include a mock-up for the rest of the pages.
- Feedback from the registrant survey (if the results are ready by the time of the next meeting).
- Communications plans for 2014.

Participants were welcomed to send further suggestions to ECHA using the email address [stakeholder@echa.europa.eu](mailto:stakeholder@echa.europa.eu).

## **5. AOB**

No other topics were raised.

## **6. Closing of the meeting**

The Chair thanked all the participants for their attendance and closed the meeting.