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ACE Paper 11/2023
For information on 10 July 2023

Proposal on Tightening the Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) Limits of Regulated Architectural Paints and Extending the VOC Control to Cleaning Products

Background Note

PURPOSE

This paper serves to set out the “Proposal on Tightening the Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) Limits of Regulated Architectural Paints and Extending the VOC Control to Cleaning Products” (*ACE Paper 10/2023*) for discussion at the Advisory Council on the Environment (ACE) meeting scheduled for 10 July 2023.

BACKGROUND

2. The use of VOC-containing products will release VOCs contributing to photochemical smog and related air pollution problem. To improve the air quality, the Air Pollution Control (Volatile Organic Compounds) Regulation (Cap. 311W) (the Regulation) was enacted in 2007 to prohibit in phases the import and local manufacture of regulated products with VOC content exceeding the prescribed limits set out in the Regulation.

3. The Regulation controls the VOC contents of architectural paints/coatings, printing inks and six selected categories of consumer products (air fresheners, hairsprays, multi-purpose lubricants, floor wax strippers, insecticides and insect repellents) in phases starting from 1 April 2007 (Phase I). The Regulation was amended in 2009 to extend the control in phases starting from 1 January 2010 to cover vehicle refinishing paints/coatings, vessel and pleasure craft paints/coatings, adhesives and sealants (Phase II). The Regulation was further amended in 2017 to cover fountain solutions and printing machine cleaning agents with effect from 1 January 2018 (Phase III).

4. During the course of making / amending the Regulation as mentioned above, the ACE was consulted in the following meetings and members expressed support to the relevant control -

Phase	Relevant ACE Meeting	Topic	Relevant paper / minutes
I	118 th meeting on 9 August 2004	A Proposed Scheme to Require Registration and Mandatory Labelling of the Content of Volatile Organic Compounds in Paints, Printing Inks and Selected Consumer Products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ACE Paper 27/2004 ● Confirmed Minutes of Meeting
	130 th meeting on 30 November 2005	Proposed Control on Volatile Organic Compounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ACE Paper 27/2005 ● Confirmed Minutes of Meeting
II	156 th meeting on 10 November 2008	A proposal to control the contents of volatile organic compounds in vehicle refinishing paints, marine vessels paints, pleasure craft paints, adhesives and sealants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ACE Paper 29/2008 ● Confirmed Minutes of Meeting
III	219 th meeting on 12 December 2016	Proposal to Control Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) in Fountain Solutions and Printing Machine Cleansing Agents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ACE Paper 18/2016 ● Confirmed Minutes of Meeting

5. In the upcoming meeting, the ACE will discuss the proposal to further amend the Regulation to tighten the VOC content limits of 22 types of regulated architectural paints and to extend the VOC control to 7 types of cleaning products.

ACE Secretariat
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