

INDUSTRY CALLS UPON MEPs TO BE THE F-GAS REGULATION'S WATCHDOG

Brussels, 4 July 2008: In a letter sent to Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) today, the European Partnership for Energy and the Environment (EPEE) insisted on the important role of MEPs to ensure the success of the F-Gas Regulation. EPEE called on MEPs to put pressure on the European Commission should Member States or stakeholders fail to comply with the Regulation.

EPEE, which represents the majority of the European-based air-conditioning, heat-pump and refrigeration industry, also took the opportunity on the first anniversary of the entry into force of the F-Gas Regulation to remind MEPs that the industry itself is **pro-actively involved in making the F-gas Regulation a success.**

EPEE firmly believes that containment is an excellent way to prevent F-gases from leaking out of cooling equipment. As different cooling technologies need to be adapted to diverse uses, EPEE strongly advocates maintaining the free choice of refrigerants, including F-gases which remain essential for many types of applications.

The challenge is now for the industry to live up to its commitment and demonstrate that it can achieve real and continued emission reductions. **EPEE's answer to this challenge includes several initiatives, both in terms of industrial adaptation and external communication:**

- EPEE members are manufacturers of cooling and heating equipments and producers of F-gases (the refrigerant). As such they are already complying with the requirements on labelling and leak checks and are preparing their staff to meet by 4 July 2009 the training and certification requirements established by Member States.
- National industry associations, which are also members of EPEE, have greatly contributed to disseminating information within Member States on how to comply with the F-gas Regulation. Workshops and information days are regularly organised by AFCE in France, FETA and ACRIB in the UK, and the FGK in Germany.
- Thanks to its network of commercial companies and national associations, EPEE has been able to assist in the broader understanding of the F-gas Regulation, thereby contributing to its proper implementation.

EPEE

- EPEE has produced several useful publications to educate users and handlers of F-gases on the Regulation. One of these initiatives is the EPEE FAQ, translated into several EU languages, which gives detailed obligations under the F-Gas Regulation in and which has been of great assistance to many institutional, industry, and NGO stakeholders.
- In order to understand the requirements of the F-gas Regulation, we have launched a new website in cooperation with the European Fluorocarbons Technical Committee (EFCTC). Hailed as a ‘virtual workshop’ on the application of the F-Gas Regulation, the website www.figaroo.org (figaroo standing for the "F-Gas Regulation Online Observatory") provides a national and international resource for all who need to understand and comply with the F-Gas Regulation.
- Finally, EPEE strongly supports governmental initiatives, which are essential to make the F-gas Regulation a success. Some countries have already been very active, such as the UK, where the Environment Ministry (Defra) has established a telephone helpline and a specific “F-gas Support” team dedicated to helping organisations understand their obligations.

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Notes to the Editor:

The European Partnership for Energy and the Environment (EPEE) is a group of businesses involved in the development and manufacture of cooling, heating and air conditioning applications, where energy efficiency and safety are important. It represents a broad-based group of responsible companies, national associations and European associations active in the European air-conditioning, heat-pump and refrigeration industry. It was formed in September 2000 to contribute to the development of effective European policies to reduce greenhouse gases from the use of refrigerants. Further information can be found on-line at www.epeeglobal.org.

Background to the F-gas Regulation

The F-gas Regulation ([842/2006/EC](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32006R0842)) was published in the Official Journal in June 2006.

The Regulation and the subsequently adopted implementation measures feature strict requirements for the containment of F-gases and the personnel handling them, such as detailed leak check procedures, labeling provisions, and high standards for the training and certification of staff. The Regulation is foreseen to be reviewed in four or five years' time.

For more information, please refer to EPEE's Frequently Asked Questions document on the F-gas Regulation, which is available on our website www.epeeglobal.org.

What are Fluorinated gases?

The fluorinated industrial gases (Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), Perfluorinated Carbons (PFCs) and Sulphur Hexafluoride (SF₆)) are widely used in daily-life applications such as refrigerators, air conditioning, thermal insulation and medical sprays. The gases are fluorinated to confer on them distinct environmental and safety benefits (non-ozone depleting, low toxicity and low flammability) for every-day use.

However, the high Global Warming Potential (GWP) of these gases has raised environmental concerns and the three gases were therefore included in the basket of six greenhouse gases identified in the Kyoto Protocol, together with carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O).

Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) are a family of industrial fluorinated gases. They are non-flammable, energy efficient, recyclable and have a very low toxicity. HFCs are used as a

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replacement for ozone depleting substance such as CFC and HCFCs. They do not deplete the ozone layer because they contain no chlorine.

Why are HFCs used in refrigeration and air-conditioning?

HFCs are widely used as a refrigerant because of their safety, energy efficiency and low toxicity which make them suitable for use in a range of applications. As compared to the existing alternatives, they offer – depending on the application – energy efficiency, which counterbalances their higher global warming potential. In addition, other refrigerants have specific characteristics that constrain their use, such as ammonia which is highly toxic and is mainly used in large out-of-town cold stores; or hydrocarbons such as propane which are very flammable and are used only in small amounts in products like household fridges.

Who is affected by the F-gas Regulation?

The domestic and commercial refrigeration and air-conditioning sector, food retailing sector, health care sector, the car industry (manufacturers and part suppliers), international transport industry, semiconductor industry, electrical grid operators, the fire fighting industry, the magnesium smelters, aerosols manufacturers and the building construction sector.

Is there a perfect refrigerant?

The perfect refrigerant does not exist. To choose the best refrigeration, users must balance the different properties of each refrigerant. The major factors are health, safety, environmental requirements, energy efficiency as well as economic and technical feasibility. The optimum choice of refrigerant may therefore vary case by case.

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