IP Consortium contribution for the divanadium pentaoxide CLH Public Consultation. November 2019.

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Introduction

The Inorganic Pigments Consortium is the organization that manages the REACH and CLP obligations of companies that manufacture or import inorganic pigments into the EU. The Consortium currently includes 25 members from different European countries, mainly Spain, Italy, Germany and UK. The members of the IP Consortium are the largest producers in Europe for inorganic pigments.

Complex inorganic pigments are chemical substances manufactured by means of an industrial process, which involves a chemical reaction. In this process, a mixture of raw materials (typically consisting of metal oxides and salts) undergoes a calcination reaction at high temperatures forming a specific crystalline matrix. Divanadium pentaoxide is a key raw material for the manufacture of some specific complex inorganic pigments to obtain certain colour ranges and cannot be substituted. During the pigment manufacturing process, raw materials are transformed via calcination and the resulting inorganic pigments contain vanadium ions bound to the crystalline structure. These substances are exclusively manufactured at industrial sites by trained workers and their main end uses are ceramics, metals, plastics and paints or coatings.

The Inorganic Pigments Consortium fully supports the scientific and technical position of the Vanadium REACH Consortium in relation to the current Public Consultation to modify the existing entry for divanadium pentaoxide in Annex VI of the CLP Regulation.

Impact of the CLH proposal in our sector

The proposed harmonised classification and labelling for divanadium pentaoxide would have a negative impact in our sector mainly due to its use as raw material, but also due to potential stigmatisation of vanadium-containing pigments, even if scientific information show that vanadium ions are not released from the crystalline structure of pigments and therefore not bioavailable.

The following main consequences have been identified:

- Changes in the manufacturing and handling practices
- Market impact due to stigmatisation of all substances and mixtures containing vanadium compounds

- Stigmatisation of articles containing vanadium-containing pigments, even if their constituents are bound in a matrix and thus not biologically available.
- Changes to labelling, packaging and eSDS
- Additional investment and/or equipment costs
- Additional RMMs required
- Possibility for a future authorisation or restriction under REACH affecting vanadium-containing pigments
- Possible precedent setting for classification outside the EU
- Impact on other related legislation (e.g. waste, occupational health and safety legislation, etc)
- Impact for other raw materials where divanadium pentaoxide may be present as an impurity

All the above would result on an increase of operational costs and loss of competitiveness face to our competitors in the rest of the world and may trigger delocalisation.