EUROPEAN
COMMISSION

Brussels, 23.9.2022
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COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 23.9.2022

granting an authorisation under Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council to Salzgitter Flachstahl GmbH for certain uses of chromium trioxide

(ONLY THE ENGLISH TEXT IS AUTHENTIC)

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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), establishing a European Chemicals Agency, amending Directive 1999/45/EC and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 793/93 and Commission Regulation (EC) No 1488/94 as well as Council Directive 76/769/EEC and Commission Directives 91/155/EEC, 93/67/EEC, 93/105/EC and 2000/21/EC[1], and in particular Article 64(8) thereof,

Whereas:

(1) Chromium trioxide is listed in Annex XIV to Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 and uses of that substance are subject to the authorisation requirement in Article 56(1), point (a), of that Regulation.

(2) On 19 February 2020, Salzgitter Flachstahl GmbH ('the applicant') submitted an application in accordance with Article 62 of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 for authorisation for certain uses of chromium trioxide. The uses for which authorisation was sought are functional chrome plating using chromium trioxide in closed reactor systems for the establishment of a 'conventional' hard chrome coating on working rolls applied in the steel industry for the pre-manufacturing of cold-rolled, high-quality textured sheet metal ('use 1') and Pretex® functional chrome plating using chromium trioxide in closed-reactor systems for the establishment of adjustable hemispherical surface structures on working rolls applied in the steel industry for the manufacture of cold-rolled, high quality textured sheet metal ('use 2').

(3) On 23 June 2021, the Commission received the opinions on the application adopted by the Committee for Risk Assessment (RAC) and by the Committee for Socio-economic Analysis (SEAC) of the European Chemicals Agency[2] and sent to it pursuant Article 64(5), second subparagraph, of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006.

(4) RAC concluded in its opinions that it is not possible to determine a derived no-effect level for the carcinogenic properties of chromium trioxide in accordance with Section 6.4 of Annex I to Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 and that therefore chromium trioxide

[1] OJ L 396, 30.12.2006, p. 1.

[2] https://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/219b0709-262a-4e3e-df67-e585309ff27a https://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/56521cf3-07c6-7a37-7f47-9e3fa29decff

is a substance for which it is not possible to determine a threshold for the purposes of Article 60(3), point (a), of that Regulation. As a result, Article 60(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 does not apply to that substance and an authorisation may therefore only be granted with respect to that substance under paragraph 4 of that Article.

(5) In its opinions on uses 1 and 2, RAC concluded that the risk management measures and operational conditions described in the application, and further detailed by the applicants at RAC's request, are appropriate and effective to limit the risk to workers and to members of the general population who could potentially be exposed via the environment. However, in order to address some shortcomings concerning the exposure assessment for workers and for members of the general population via the environment and to provide information on the trends in exposure and emissions over the authorisation period, RAC recommended monitoring programmes for both occupational exposure and environmental release of hexavalent chromium (Cr(VI)). Having evaluated the RAC assessment, the Commission agrees with that conclusion and recommendation.

(6) In its opinions on uses 1 and 2, SEAC concluded that it has no reservations on the quantitative and qualitative elements of the applicant's assessment of the benefits and the monetised risks to human health associated with the continued use of the substance. Taking into account SEAC's assessments of the socio-economic analysis, RAC's conclusion that the risk management measures and operational conditions are appropriate and effective to limit the risk, the combined estimated monetised risk of cancer associated with the continued uses in the order of hundreds of thousands of euro over the review period, the combined estimated monetised socio-economic benefits of the continued uses due to avoided relocation, transportation and acquisition of additional rolls costs at minimum in the order between tens of millions of euro and hundreds of millions of euro over the review period, the qualitatively assessed additional socio-economic benefits of the continued uses due to avoided environmental emissions and deaths in traffic accidents, related to additional transportation, as well as any relevant distributional impact, the Commission concludes that the applicant has demonstrated that the socio-economic benefits of continued uses of chromium trioxide outweigh the risk to human health and the environment arising from those uses.

(7) A suitable alternative should be safer, available, and technically and economically feasible. Where suitable alternatives are available in the Union, but not technically or economically feasible for the applicant or its downstream users, the applicant is required to submit a substitution plan. An alternative that provides the functionality and level of technical performance necessary for the use applied for should be considered to be technically feasible. Certain potential alternatives may provide some functionality but at some loss to performance or in a manner that involves technical compromises that would impair the functionality. In such cases, unless justified by particular circumstances, the Commission should not consider a potential alternative to be technically feasible for the applicant where the applicant has demonstrated that it or its downstream users are not able to accommodate such losses to performance or technical compromises by applying a reasonable additional effort, taking into account the circumstances of the case.

(8) In its opinions on uses 1 and 2, SEAC concluded that there were no suitable alternative substances or technologies available for the applicant by the time of adoption of the opinions. The Commission, after evaluating SEAC's assessment and all relevant

information available, notes that further research and testing are required to determine whether the identified most promising alternatives provide the performance needed in terms of certain key process and surface functionalities for the establishment of a hard chrome coating on working rolls applied in the steel industry. Therefore, the Commission considers that it cannot be deemed that any of the identified alternatives provides the functionality needed for the uses applied for. Consequently, the Commission agrees with SEAC's conclusion and considers that the applicant has discharged its burden of proof in demonstrating the absence of suitable alternatives both in the Union and for the applicant.

(9) Therefore, having regard to the conditions laid down in Article 60(4) of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006, it is appropriate to authorise the uses of chromium trioxide described in the application, provided that the risk management measures and operational conditions described in the chemical safety report are fully applied.

(10) The Commission has based its assessment on all relevant scientific evidence currently available, as assessed by RAC and SEAC, and, after having carried out a detailed examination, based its conclusions on a sufficient amount of material and reliable information allowing it to conclude. Nevertheless, additional scientific evidence would allow the Commission to perform its assessment on a more robust or broad evidentiary basis in the future. Hence, it is appropriate to require additional exposure and emission information be generated.

(11) In its opinions, SEAC recommended that the review period referred to in Article 60(9), point (e), of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 should be set until 31 December 2032 for uses 1 and 2. The Commission agrees with that recommendation, taking into account the relevant elements from RAC's and SEAC's assessments and, in particular, RAC's conclusion that the risk management measures and operational conditions are appropriate and effective to limit the risk, the emissions, the socio-economic benefits, the long-term contractual obligations, the high-customer requirements for the applicant's products, as well as its ongoing research and development efforts.

(12) The language used to describe the risk management measures and operational conditions in the application for authorisation may be different from the official language of the Member State where the use takes place. Therefore, in order to facilitate supervision and enforcement of compliance with the authorisation, it is appropriate to require the authorisation holder to submit, upon request, a brief summary of those risk management measures and operational conditions to the competent authority of that Member State in an official language of that Member State.

(13) This Decision does not affect the obligation of the authorisation holder to ensure that a use of a substance does not adversely affect human health or the environment, having regard to the principle set out in Article 1(3) of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006. Furthermore, this Decision does not affect the obligation of the authorisation holder under Article 60(10) of that Regulation to ensure that the exposure is reduced to as low a level as is technically and practically possible or the obligation of the employer under Article 4(1), and Article 5, of Directive 2004/37/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council[3] to reduce the use of a carcinogen or mutagen at the place of work,

[3] Directive 2004/37/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to carcinogens or mutagens at work (Sixth individual Directive within the meaning of Article 16(1) of Council Directive 89/391/EEC) (OJ L 158, 30.4.2004, p. 50).

in particular by replacing it, in so far as is technically possible, and to prevent workers' exposure to a risk to their health or safety. This Decision does not affect the application of Union law in the area of health and safety at work, in particular Council Directives 89/391/EEC[4], 92/85/EEC[5], 94/33/EC[6], 98/24/EC[7] and Directive 2004/37/EC, or any national binding occupational limit values which may be stricter than the applicable limit values under Union law.

(14) This Decision does not affect any obligation to comply with emission limit values or other requirements set in accordance with Directive 2008/50/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council[8] or Directive 2010/75/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council[9], nor any obligation to comply with emission limit values set to achieve compliance with the environmental quality standards established by Member States in accordance with Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council[10] or the environmental quality standards established in Directive 2008/105/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council[11]. Compliance with the provisions of this Decision does not necessarily imply compliance with any emission limit values or environmental quality standards under any other provisions of Union law, which may include further or more onerous requirements.

(15) The measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the Committee established by Article 133 of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

An authorisation is hereby granted in accordance with Article 60(4) of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 for the following uses of chromium trioxide (EC No 215-607-8; CAS No 1333-82-0):

Authorisation number	Authorised use
REACH/22/32/0	Functional chrome plating using chromium trioxide in

4 Council Directive 89/391/EEC of 12 June 1989 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work (OJ L 183, 29.6.1989, p. 1).

5 Council Directive 92/85/EEC of 19 October 1992 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding (tenth individual Directive within the meaning of Article 16(1) of Directive 89/391/EEC) (OJ L 348, 28.11.1992, p. 1).

6 Council Directive 94/33/EC of 22 June 1994 on the protection of young people at work (OJ L 216, 20.8.1994, p. 12).

7 Council Directive 98/24/EC of 7 April 1998 on the protection of the health and safety of workers from the risks related to chemical agents at work (fourteenth individual Directive within the meaning of Article 16(1) of Directive 89/391/EEC) (OJ L 131, 5.5.1998, p. 11).

8 Directive 2008/50/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2008 on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe (OJ L 152, 11.6.2008, p. 1).

9 Directive 2010/75/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 November 2010 on industrial emissions (integrated pollution prevention and control) (OJ L 334, 17.12.2010, p. 17).

10 Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy (OJ L 327, 22.12.2000, p. 1).

11 Directive 2008/105/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on environmental quality standards in the field of water policy, amending and subsequently repealing Council Directives 82/176/EEC, 83/513/EEC, 84/156/EEC, 84/491/EEC, 86/280/EEC and amending Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (OJ L 348, 24.12.2008, p. 84).

	closed reactor systems for the establishment of a 'conventional' hard chrome coating on working rolls applied in the steel industry for the pre-manufacturing of cold-rolled, high-quality textured sheet metal
REACH/22/32/1	Pretex® functional chrome plating using chromium trioxide in closed reactor systems for the establishment of adjustable hemispherical surface structures on working rolls applied in the steel industry for the manufacture of cold-rolled, high quality textured sheet metal

The authorisation is granted subject to the risk management measures and operational conditions described in the chemical safety report[12].

Article 2

The review period shall expire on 31 December 2032.

The authorisation shall cease to be valid on 31 December 2032 if the review report has not been submitted in accordance with Article 61(1) of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 by 30 June 2031.

Article 3

1. The monitoring arrangements set out in paragraphs 2 to 7 shall apply.

2. The authorisation holder shall carry out a monitoring programme for occupational exposure to Cr(VI). The measurements shall:

   (a) take place at least annually;

   (b) be based on relevant standard methodologies and protocols;

   (c) ensure a sufficiently low limit of quantification;

   (d) comprise personal and/or static inhalation exposure sampling;

   (e) be representative of all the tasks with possible exposure to Cr(VI), including tasks involving maintenance workers, of the operational conditions and risk management measures for each of those tasks, and of the total number of workers that are potentially exposed;

   (f) be recorded so as to include contextual information about the tasks performed during sampling.

3. The authorisation holder shall carry out a monitoring programme for environmental releases of Cr(VI) to air. The measurements shall:

   (a) take place at least annually;

   (b) be based on relevant standard methodologies or protocols;

   (c) be representative of the operational conditions and risk management measures used at the site where the authorised use takes place;

   (d) ensure a sufficiently low limit of quantification;

[12] https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/46118

(e) be recorded so as to include contextual information associated with each of the measurements.

4. The authorisation holder shall use the information gathered via the measurements referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3 and related contextual information to confirm and review, at least annually, the effectiveness of operational conditions and risk management measures in place. If needed, the authorisation holder shall introduce measures to further reduce workplace exposure and emissions to the environment of Cr(VI) to as low a level as technically and practically possible and in accordance with the hierarchy of control principles.

5. The authorisation holder shall document and maintain the information from the monitoring programmes referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3, including the contextual information associated with each set of measurements, as well as the outcome and conclusions of the review and any action taken in accordance with paragraph 4, and shall make that information, including pseudonymised or aggregated biomonitoring results, available, upon request, to the competent authority of the Member State where the authorised use takes place.

6. Following implementation of the risk management measures and operational conditions, the authorisation holder may reduce the frequency of measurements, once it can clearly demonstrate to the competent authority of the Member State where the uses take place that exposure of humans and releases into the environment have been reduced to as low a level as technically and practically possible and that the risk management measures and operational conditions function appropriately.

7. Where the frequency of a monitoring programme has been reduced in accordance with paragraph 6, and if there is a potential increase in emissions or exposure, the authorisation holder shall carry out without delay the monitoring programmes set out in paragraphs 2 and 3, in order to ensure that emissions and exposure continue to be reduced to as low a level as technically and practically possible. The authorisation holder shall act in accordance with the outcome of these programmes and document such actions.

8. Where the authorisation holder submits a review report, it shall include the information referred to in paragraphs 5 to 7 of this Article.

Article 4

Upon request, the authorisation holder shall submit a brief summary of the applicable risk management measures and operational conditions described in the chemical safety report to the competent authority of the Member State where the authorised use takes place in an official language of that Member State.

Article 5

This Decision is addressed to Salzgitter Flachstahl GmbH, Eisenhüttenstraße 99, 38239 Salzgitter, Germany.

Done at Brussels, 23.9.2022

For the Commission
Thierry BRETON
Member of the Commission

CERTIFIED COPY
For the Secretary-General

Martine DEPREZ
Director
Decision-making & Collegiality
EUROPEAN COMMISSION