

Meeting note - ASO Communicators' Network

Time	Thursday 20 October 2016, 9:30 – 12:00 (Brussels time)
Place	MCE conference centre, Brussels
Participants	<i>Accredited Stakeholders:</i> Mohamed Temsamani (AISE), Carolin Kranz (BASF SE - remotely), Dervla Gleeson (Cefic), Ann Jessica Johnson (Cembureau), Irina Dumitrescu (ECI), Marianne Rosborg (EDANA), Padmaja Kamath (ETRMA), Federica Iaccino (Eurometaux), Elisa Setien (FECC), Isabelle Pinzauti Babrzynski (IBMA) <i>Commission:</i> Susana Pratt, DG JUST, Jonath Blokker-Rowe, DG ENV <i>ECHA:</i> Lindsay Jackson (Chair), Tiiu Bräutigam (minutes), Adam Elwan

This was the fourth face-to-face meeting of the network, which was established to share best practice on communications and to discuss joint communication activities.

1. New microsite on chemicals for consumers

ECHA gave an overview of its plan to reach out to more consumers through a new microsite on chemicals that would be launched in late 2017. To get consumers' views on board, the Agency was running a survey about the content they would like to see on the new site. The main results of the survey so far were shown to the participants.

The stakeholders were interested in receiving the final results of the consumer survey. They were keen to understand how the microsite would interface with the information on chemicals on ECHA's main website.

They also recommended topics to add:

- innovation and sustainable chemicals should be added to the site.
- add information on how to react in case of accidents and whom to contact. Although they warned that we should be careful not to give quasi medical advice.
- "myth-busting" – adding a column or producing a video about false perceptions of chemicals.
- content on the microsite for children. Citing the UK's School science network and the Royal Society of Chemistry as potential partners.

Other recommendations for the site:

- Keep it simple and not to have too much information on it. ECHA website should be used to provide more detailed information.
- Find the right partners with the right background information. For example,
 - AISE has information for consumers about detergents and EDANA about preservatives used in cosmetics.
 - "keep caps from kids"
 - "cleanright.com" as good examples.

Action points:

- ECHA to share the consumer survey results with the stakeholders
- ECHA to add the ideas from stakeholders to their planning

2. ECHA's communication strategy for general public

ECHA introduced its draft strategy to reach out to general public using the microsite, social media, general media, videos and apps.

The participants discussed the German-led project on a European app scanning products' bar codes for SVHCs. The project had applied for LIFE+ funding from the Commission and ECHA had supported it. They highlighted that such apps increase transparency, but need to provide correct information – also about the safety measures in using the product correctly, not only about the substances it includes.

Regarding media relations, many participants shared their experience in educating journalists about scientific topics and dealing also with sensationalist media. Some highlighted the possibility of organising joint media briefings – for example, on the topics considered most important by consumers in the survey, such as child safety or chemicals and health issues.

Media coverage recommendations:

- consider press briefings on the basis of the highest ranking point of interest from the survey - for example toy safety.
- consider national briefings – perhaps jointly with EFSA and EMA - with the specialised media at national level. For example, womens' media
- They also recommended video snippets to accompany more consumer focussed news.

Social media:

- Watch what stories are being followed on Twitter/SoMe and try to relate our content to that.

Action point:

- ECHA to consider the stakeholder suggestions.

3. Communication priorities for ECHA in 2017 and 2018REACH 2018

ECHA pointed out that it was promoting the deadline with the REACH 2018 communicators' network with the Member States' authorities. Stakeholders' help was needed to reach out to companies in Europe.

The participants discussed how to reach the currently unaware companies. To raise awareness on the deadline, sector organisations have been in contact with their member companies. For example, FECC has sent out a letter to all its members, asking the larger distributors to reach out to their smaller clients in the supply chain and to create partnerships for collaborating on compliance issues. The results so far are encouraging.

Action point:

- ECHA to consider Newsletter story about the FECC partnership model.

CLP video

ECHA showed a video on CLP for consumers that will be launched in 2017 and asked for comments. The participants welcomed the video and proposed to make shorter teasers from it to be used on social media. The video could either be launched on the consumer day in March or a bit later in the spring. They also encouraged ECHA to try to get national authorities to use the full version in public TV slots.

Action point:

- ECHA to maximise the potential of the video

Infographics

ECHA showed its recent infographics on REACH benefits and asked participants for further ideas related to chemicals and their safe use.

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ECHA gave further updates on substitution, downstream user communications, social media and hot topics such as glyphosate and tattoo inks.

Stakeholders recommended making use of journalists who are talking about tattoos – like Channel 4's Katie (UK) <http://www.channel4.com/programmes/bodyshockers-nips-tucks-and-tattoos>

FECC introduced a new app on chemistry, Xperiment, containing experiments that children can do at home.

The next face-to-face meeting of the network would be back-to-back with the 2017 Accredited Stakeholder Workshop.