An overview of REACH
Background to REACH

What is REACH?

Regulation (EC) no. 1907/2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals

• New EU Regulation that became law in the UK on 1 June 2007
• It’s big and broad in scope
  AND
• It’s not just for the chemical sector
The broad nature of REACH:

... environmental protection

... environment-related public health

... worker protection

... work-related public health

... consumer protection
• 10 years in the making

• Set against a lack of knowledge on chemicals

• Aims to ensure a high level of protection of human health and the environment
REACH replaces a patchwork of previous legislation with a single system

Existing framework:
• Inappropriate balance - Directive 67/548/EEC placed stringent requirements on new substances
• Inappropriate responsibilities - Existing Substances Regulation puts burden on Member States
“This Regulation is based on the principle that it is for manufacturers, importers and downstream users to ensure that they manufacture, place on the market or use such substances that do not adversely affect human health or the environment”

Article 1
Objectives of REACH

Article 1

• to ensure a high level of protection of human health and the environment
• the promotion of alternative methods for assessment of hazards of substances
• the free circulation of substances on the internal market
• enhancing competitiveness and innovation
Overview of REACH requirements

Registration
(pre-registration)

Supply chain

End use

Evaluation
Authorisation
Restriction
Key players in REACH

• The European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) – based in Helsinki.
• Defra – has the policy lead on REACH and acts on behalf of the devolved administrations.
• The UK Competent Authority (CA) – located within the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), responsible for the day to day running of REACH in the UK.
• The ‘seven’ enforcing authorities
Key features of REACH enforcement

- REACH is a Regulation (not a Directive)
- Supported by the REACH Enforcement Regulations 2008
- Defra responsible for developing and implementing the enforcement regime
• Neither REACH or the Enforcement Regulations are ‘relevant statutory provisions’ of HSWA

• Separate (but familiar) enforcement regime for REACH

• Though multi-agency enforced
Relevance of REACH to your work

Will greatly improve information in the supply chain
Better risk management measures
Facilitate compliance with COSHH
Encourage the use of safer alternatives
Lead to improvements in occupational health
Its effect will grow and grow with time
For HSE:
- Importance of liaison with other enforcing authorities
- Enforcement may be more heavily influenced by external factors

For HID:
- Relevance to COMAH application (e.g. different classifications, safer alternatives etc)

For FOD:
- Key role of Regional Champions