

Copper REACH consortium set for first general assembly

26 February meeting to decide on cost - sharing

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A consortium to register copper metal and the by - products and intermediates that arise during production is set to hold its first general assembly on 26 February in Brussels. One of its key tasks will be to approve the annual budget for the consortium, which will have implications for the contribution to fees that members will need to pay.

According to the European Copper Institute (ECI), the consortium has a head start in terms of the research and analysis needed to prepare a REACH registration dossier and chemical safety report for copper.

Some 90% of this work has already been done, as the ECI received a mandate from the global copper industry to begin preparations for REACH in 2000. It submitted a voluntary risk assessment for copper metal and a small number of compounds in 2005. Member States ' review of this risk assessment is expected to be completed early this year.

The consortium comprises two sub - groups – one for copper metal and the other for a host of by - products and intermediates: Removal cathodes, spent anodes, copper (Cu) blister, Cu anode, Cu matte, Cu - Pb matte, white Cu matte, Cu cement, black Cu, slimes and sludges from Cu protection, speiss Cu, Cu slags, Cu slags - product sold for construction, Cu slags, fabricators, flue dusts, spent electrolyte demetalised, electrolyte, black acid, white acid, weak acid.

ECI is understood to be discussing with a third party the need for a separate consortium to register copper compounds.

A consortium agreement and cost - sharing mechanism have already been drawn up. These recognise the right of members of ECI and the International Copper Institute to compensation for the work they have already undertaken on risk assessment. Members of the two bodies on 1 January 2008, who remain members for the lifetime of the consortium agreement, are not required to pay the ' historic ' costs for the copper voluntary risk assessment. But all other consortium participants must pay a

tonnage - related share of the costs, the proceeds of which will be redistributed by ECI to members who supported the voluntary risk assessment.

All members will be required to pay a share of ECI ' s annual costs in acting as secretariat to provide administration and technical support to the consortium. They will also contribute to future annual research and analysis costs for the intermediates sub - group.

Late entrants to the consortium – after 26 February – will pay a further “ advantage compensation ” equivalent to 1% of the sum that those who joined before the cut - off date have to pay, per calendar month from 1 March 2008 to their date of accession.