

Press Release: Friday July 31 2009

A LEADING provider of REACH Management IT Solutions today warned time is running out for chemical companies to form Substance Information Exchange Fora (SIEF) - an essential part of the REACH substance registration process.

Malcolm Pollard, CEO of Baytouch Ltd, said companies do not fully appreciate the problems they will encounter in attempting to comply with the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and restriction of CHemicals (REACH) - the most complex legislation in the European Union's history.

The new law's 849 pages took seven years to pass and it has been described as the most important legislation in 20 years.

Mr Pollard warned that unless companies with registration responsibilities in the first wave begin their SIEF formation activities they will not achieve registration by the December 1 2010 deadline.

And without registering this data to comply with REACH, these companies will no longer be able to trade.

REACH places responsibilities on all European manufacturers and importers to identify and manage the risks chemical substances they manufacture and market may pose to human health and to the environment.

The formation and operation of the SIEF is crucial within REACH and the registration process as it allows fellow registrants to share data on the same substance and co-operate in reducing animal tests and costs.

Supply of substances to the European market which have not been pre-registered or registered is illegal and can be summarised under REACH as "No Data – No Market."

Mr Pollard said: "REACH is an all encompassing regulation which will impact industries throughout the world.

"Despite the fact that REACH covers nearly all products (except for food, medicine and biocides), an alarmingly high number of companies that have pre-registered (90%) haven't formed a SIEF as they think that other people in their grouping will step up to the plate and will do the work for them or that they have plenty of time. They won't and they don't.

"All sorts of things that are currently on the market could potentially just disappear as if there is no data, there is no market and this applies to EU importers too

"Other firms may be putting off getting involved because they don't have to register their substances until 2013 or later. But these companies are enjoying a false sense of security.

"The European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) has recently expressed great concern about this and, as their website states, the clock is ticking. Companies must form their SIEF now."

A major challenge at present is that there are too few experts around to help facilitate this process.

Baytouch has established a global leadership position in the provision of IT solutions to help companies implement REACH Compliance, and particularly assist with SIEF formation. It is one of only a handful of companies in the EU doing this and the only one in the UK.

ECHA publicly recognises the important role Baytouch has to play in providing the communications linkage and references them on their website.

Baytouch is helping some of the major consortia in Europe – where companies have established leadership roles in SIEFs and are bearing the major part of the workload towards registration. Therefore they are bringing some incredibly important chemicals for industry into registration by the December 1 2010 deadline.

Mr Pollard added: “Companies are very anxious at the scale of the task before them to ensure fair data-sharing between in some cases hundreds and even thousands of firms that manufacture or import the same substances which must be done fairly, transparently and non-discriminatory

“As a result Baytouch has developed the software to drive this process forward safely and securely and has responded to ECHA's call for SIEF urgency by offering companies the means of initial communication with their SIEF members for free using our industry leading REACHsuite SIEF Communication tool.

“It is in every company's self interest to now work smarter and faster to form their SIEF and progress to REACH registration within the set deadlines.

“It would be foolhardy not to take this opportunity.”

- To take up Baytouch's time-limited SIEF communication tool free offer go to www.REACHsuite.com/freeSIEFoffer It is reliable, easy to use and does not cost SIEF members to access.

ENDS

Note to editors:

For further information or for interview opportunities with Malcolm Pollard, please call Caroline Innes at Active Profile on 0151 601 8688 or email caroline.innes@activeprofile.co.uk

Alternatively visit www.baytouch.com or www.REACHsuite.com

Background:

Baytouch is one of the European leaders in the provision of REACH Consortia Management IT Solutions.

Based in Lancashire and Brussels, they have enjoyed strong connections with the chemical industry since the early 1990's and now operate in a global context.

Baytouch is growing rapidly – doubling in size every six months, with consortia customers such as:

- Lower Olefins and Aromatics (LOA)
- Higher Olefins and Poly Alpha Aromatics (HOPA)
- European Aluminium Federation
- European Association of Mining Industries (Euromines)
- Petrol Additives
- Epoxy Resins Consortium and others

Baytouch is providing the communications linkage for 500 substances covering in excess of 50,000 SIEF members and helping these consortia bring some incredibly important chemicals for industry into registration by the December 1st, 2010 and subsequent deadlines.

Baytouch Ltd is a long established provider of added-value solutions for management systems compliance. It has specialised in compliance software and performance monitoring, principally Environmental Health & Safety solutions for the Anglo-American chemical industry, where IT system robustness and reliability are key.

REACHsuite development was begun in 2006 in anticipation of the regulation's introduction. Encompassing substance-specific planning, systematic management of REACH processes, control of supply chain communications, consortium and SIEF management and with a variety of possible configurations, REACHsuite is fast becoming the system of choice for many leading companies and consortia.

With in-house experience of industrial chemical regulations and toxicology, Baytouch understands the pressures brought about by REACH and can help manage them.

Integration with other systems is acknowledged as a key aspect and Baytouch has forged strategic partnerships with other international IT companies and service providers to provide a holistic service with integration options for SAP and other ERP systems.

What is a SIEF (Substance Information Exchange Forum)?

REACH places the responsibility on industry to provide hazard data to the EU Commission. Much of this data is generated from animal toxicology experiments. Concerned that this would result in an increased and unnecessary amount of new animal testing, procedures were promoted by the British and Hungarian governments for potential registrants of the same substances to come together and share their data and make only one proposal for any new animal data.

- Under REACH Article 29, those who pre-register the same substance shall be in a SIEF
- It is not a Legal Entity, not a Consortium, but could form basis of potential Consortia
- Aims of the SIEF:
 - Facilitate data sharing
 - Agree classification and labelling
- Obligations of all SIEF participants:
 - React to information requests from other SIEF participants
 - Provide other participants with existing studies on request

Whilst there is an obligation to work with what may be one's competitor in SIEFs, EU competition law still remains paramount in all dealings.

There were 2,700,000 pre-registrations by the end of 2008 covering 145,000 substances from 65,000 EU legal entities and whilst in large SIEF memberships, surveys show that only 15-30% are planning to register or have left their options open, only 10% of SIEFs are believed to have fully formed and are working their way to full registration.