

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

6 May 2003

Dear Sirs

Bromine Science and Environmental Forum

We act for the above and have been asked to write to you in connection with a campaign that our clients feel may be about to be waged against them by the World Wildlife Fund ("WWF"), and possibly one or two other environmental lobbies. This is expected to follow the publication of a new EU chemicals policy later this year that may recommend the banning of certain brominated flame retardants ("BFRs"). Our clients are between them the leading producers of BFRs throughout the world.

Our clients fear that the WWF or other environmental charities may be misinformed as to the nature of their business and that as a result they may receive press or other media coverage that would be grossly unfair and misleading. They have therefore asked us to write to all National Newspapers and television broadcasters to inform you of the relevant facts.

There are various types of BFRs. The main applications of BFRs are in textiles for upholstered furniture and in plastics for electric and electronic equipment, including internal parts and printed circuit boards. The television set industry moved out of using BFRs in their plastic housing across Europe in the early 1990s in the face of environmental pressure. Some 10 years later, most television manufacturers moved back to BFRs following concerns raised by consumer fire safety groups. As for furniture, the UK Furniture Fire Safety Regulations from 1988 provide the UK consumer with the highest levels of fire safety protection in the world. UK government scientists have estimated that over 3000 lives were saved in the period from 1988 – 2000 as a result of BFRs.

Concerns relating to BFRs are focused on Penta-BDE, a BFR used in the past in Europe for treating polyurethane foam. So far as our clients are aware, the UK electronics and textile industries have never used Penta-BDE.

Our clients recognise the need to develop a policy on chemicals used in products at EU level and all major commercial BFRs are currently undergoing EU risk assessments. Our clients fully support and co-operate with EU member states to provide the necessary research and data. Final EU risk assessment is also expected in the second half of this year.

Our clients do not foresee the phase out of BFRs, but rather a reduction in their emissions. Our clients are currently working with a wide range of industrial plants of BFR downstream users so as to

ensure that emissions are reduced to the lowest possible level. Regarding consumer use of products containing BFRs, our clients have commissioned independent research which has concluded that there is no consumer risk from exposure to such products.

Our clients are not in any way seeking to stifle any genuine debate on the issue of BFRs, and will happily answer any questions that you or any of your journalists may have in relation to them. To this end, if you or any of the journalists employed by you require any further information from our clients, please contact Lawrie McLaren on email: mail@bsef.com, telephone 00 32 2 733 93 70, Fax 00 32 2 735 60 63.

We should state for the record that our clients will be monitoring future press and media coverage on the issue of BFRs, and will not hesitate to pursue all remedies available to them should there be any incorrect or inaccurate statements in relation to BFRs that adversely affect our clients' businesses.

Yours faithfully

Harbottle & Lewis