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1. INTRODUCTION

This Guidance in a Nutshell explains in brief the provisions of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 (REACH Regulation) that apply to substances in articles.

This Guidance in a Nutshell is aimed at managers and decision-makers of companies producing, importing and/or supplying articles in the European Economic Area¹ (EEA), particularly if they have little experience with chemicals regulatory affairs. Reading this document will allow them to decide whether they need to read the full [Guidance on requirements for substances in articles](#) or not, in order to identify their obligations under REACH concerning substances in articles.

Companies located outside of the EEA may use this Guidance in a Nutshell to understand the requirements for substances in articles the importers of their products in the EEA have to fulfil.

¹ The European Economic Area is composed of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and the 27 EU Member States.

2. ESSENTIALS TO UNDERSTAND

2.1 What is an article?

Most of the commonly used objects in private households and industries are articles, e.g. furniture, clothes, vehicles, books, toys, and electronic equipment. An article may be very simple, like a wooden chair, but it could also be rather complex, like a computer.

The REACH Regulation defines an article as “an object which during production is given a special shape, surface or design which determines its function to a greater degree than its chemical composition”.

In this regard, the shape, surface and design of an object represent its physical appearance and can be understood as other than chemical characteristics. **Shape** means the three-dimensional form of an object, like depth, width and height. **Surface** means the outermost layer of an object.

Design means the arrangement of the ‘elements of design’ in such a way as to best accomplish a particular purpose. For example, the design of a textile may be determined by the twist of fibres in the yarn, the weave of threads in a fabric and the treatment of the surface of the textile.

The term “**function**” in the article definition should be interpreted as meaning the basic principle determining the use of the object rather than the degree of technical sophistication. In this sense, for example, the function of a printer cartridge is basically to bring ink onto paper, and the function of a battery is to provide electric current.

2.2 What is an intended release of substances from articles?

Substances may be intended to be released from articles in order to provide an “added value”, where this accessory function is not directly linked to the main function. Scented children’s toys, for example, are articles with intended release of substances, because fragrance substances contained in the toys are released in order to provide an added value, namely a pleasant smell.

2.3 Are there substances which are of particular concern?

There are certain substances which are of particular concern, because they may have very serious effects on human health and the environment. These substances can be found in the “Candidate List of Substances of Very High Concern for Authorisation” in the [ECHA Chem section of the ECHA website](#). Substances are included on this candidate list after it has been agreed by a formal procedure that they fulfil the criteria for being substances of very high concern.

If a substance listed on the candidate list is contained in articles, this may trigger additional obligations for companies producing, importing and supplying these articles.

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