

Cobalt Institute

November 5 2019

Cobalt Institute Response to RoHS Annex II Dossier for 5 Cobalt Salts (Report No. 7, Version 2, 25/09/2019)

The Cobalt Institute (CI) is a global, non-profit trade association composed of producers, users, recyclers, and traders of cobalt (Co). We promote the sustainable and responsible production and use of cobalt in all its forms. The CI acts as a knowledge center for governments, agencies, industry, the media and the public on all matters concerning Co and Co containing substances. Our technical expertise includes Co related health, safety, and environmental issues.

The 5 Cobalt Salts (cobalt dichloride, cobalt sulphate, cobalt dinitrate, cobalt carbonate, cobalt diacetate) reviewed in the Annex II dossier are used as chemical intermediates to produce other cobalt containing compounds that will be present in the treated articles or components used in electrical and electronic equipment (EEE). None of these substances are found in EEE itself and are thus outside the scope of RoHS.

The CI therefore agrees with the conclusions of the Commission's consultants that none of the cobalt salts should be considered for inclusion on the list of restricted substances under RoHS. The CI notes that the assessment dossier refers to the ongoing REACH Restriction proposal for the 5 cobalt salts and considers that it is not the appropriate risk management option (RMO) for the 5 cobalt salts. Rather, a binding occupational exposure limit (bOEL) under the Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive (CMD) would be the best way to protect workers potentially exposed to cobalt compounds in the workplace.

The CI has some concerns about the process and transparency of the RoHS evaluation. In particular, we are concerned by the unilateral grouping and extension of the evaluation beyond cobalt dichloride and cobalt sulphate to the other 3 salts. The grouping decision was made using a methodology which is not yet finalised nor agreed. Industry was not made aware of the changes and thus was unable to fully contribute to the analysis. These concerns are shared by the wider industry, it is not for the Commission's external consultants to make proposals or suggestions for decisions without due consultation with industry. Finally, we also object to reference to the ChemSec Sin List which we do not recognise as a reliable nor transparent indicator of the risks associated with a substance.

The CI is happy to discuss these comments further.

Contact details:

Simon G Cook, Ph D

Vice President – Global Regulation

SCook@cobaltinstitute.org

You are solely responsible for evaluating the accuracy and completeness of any content appearing in this Communication. Whilst the Cobalt Institute (CI) has endeavoured to provide accurate and reliable information, it does not make any representations or warranties in relation to the content of this Communication. In particular, the CI does not make any representations or warranties regarding the accuracy, timeliness or completeness of the content of the Communication or in respect of its suitability for any purpose. No action should be taken without seeking independent professional advice. The CI will not be responsible for any loss or damage caused by relying on the content contained in this Communication.

18 Jeffries Passage, Guildford, GU1 4AP, UK

Tel: +44 1483 578877

email: info@cobaltinstitute.org

Fax: +44 1483 567042

www.cobaltinstitute.org