



## **EFCTC URGES FURTHER ACTION TO PREVENT ILLEGAL IMPORTS OF CFCs AND PRODUCTS REGULATED BY THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL**

Brussels, 17 October 2006. The European Fluorocarbons Technical Committee (EFCTC) takes the opportunity of the opening of IKK 2006 (*the main European refrigeration and air-conditioning exhibition*) in Nuremberg to draw the attention of users and authorities to the persistence of illegal importation of Ozone Depleting substances, and other Fluorinated Greenhouse gases, in improper packaging with inaccurate labelling.

Despite the positive initiatives taken in particular by the European Commission and successful actions from the Customs authorities both in Greece and in Poland which have resulted in the seizure of illegally imported material, numerous infringements are still common practices in other countries, e.g. Cyprus and the Baltic States. Imports originating from SE Asia are now reported to be channelled through trading companies located in other geographical areas, making the tracing of potentially illegal imports more difficult.

In addition to the legal consequences, EFCTC raises concerns regarding negative impact on the compliance with the objectives of Regulations to protect the ozone layer. Furthermore, these illegal imports are made without licences and the quality of the imported products and the presence of impurities could pose significant safety and health risks.

*"It is time for national authorities to take new actions to better apply the law in all countries"* said Tim Vink, vice-chairman of EFCTC. *"These imports do not just infringe EU law, they also constitute a serious threat to the safety of the personnel using the product in good faith"*.

*"We urge the Commission and the Member States to stay vigilant and to enforce the EU legislation vigorously"* added Vink. *"This is especially needed in view of the entry into force of the F-gas Regulation (842/2006) which prohibits the import of F-gases in disposable cylinders from July 4, 2007 onward"*.

End users should also take their full responsibility in this matter and not participate or encourage these practices by carefully examining the nature and the origin of the products they purchase, in particular the validity of the import licences.

### **Background:**

Importing Ozone Depleting Substances in disposable cylinders is prohibited under art 16 para 3 of the ODS regulation (2037/2000). The cylinders do not have adequate

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safety devices and have not been approved under the EU pressure vessel regulations. In some cases, the cylinders have been inaccurately labelled, as R-134a for example, when the content was, at least in part, an ozone depleting substance such as HCFC or CFC.

The European Fluorocarbon Technical Committee (EFCTC) represents the producers of fluorocarbons in the EU and the European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC) working party on Climate Change.

ENDS

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You can also visit the website: [www.fluorocarbons.org](http://www.fluorocarbons.org)

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