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European Fluorocarbon Producers Sponsor Illegal Trade Action Line

In response to rapid emergence of illegal traffic of Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs- or refrigerants) across the European Union, the European trade association of fluorocarbon producers¹ has launched a programme to fight against this illegal trade. One of its features include an “Action Line” that will permit any individual to report alleged suspect HFC offerings confidentially to a trusted and independent contractor.

In application of Regulation (EU) N° 517/2014⁽¹⁾ the EU Commission installed a phase-down programme for HFCs. Companies have been required to gradually reduce the placing on the EU market HFCs and were allocated individual quotas by the authorities. The enforcement of the Regulation was delegated to Member States. This Regulation has been instrumental in the fight against climate change.

As a consequence of this EU programme and its application by companies, the quantity of HFCs, is progressively reduced by 2030. In 2018, the first major reduction (37 percent vs baseline) took effect. Unfortunately, this has triggered illegal imports and trafficking in the EU.

“We have seen a surge in offerings of illegal HFCs on the internet and other unsolicited sources,” says Dr. Nick Campbell, EFCTC chair, “which blatantly defy Member State and European law. As such, Member States struggle to collect sufficient evidence on suspect offerings and, therefore have been slow to take necessary enforcement action.”

In order to assist the EU and Member States EFCTC, European Fluorocarbons Technical Committee, has engaged the services of a specialized consultant that has considerable experience in identifying illegal trade.

Through an Action Line powered by EQS, a leading provider of digital compliance solutions, anyone can report a suspicious offering of HFCs in full confidence using a webform (in any language). “It will not be necessary to provide conclusive evidence, just a sufficient lead enabling the consultants to follow up,” said Dr. Campbell. “We expect that these leads will create a more detailed picture of the illegal HFCs supply chain which can be shared with the EU/national authorities” he added.

Use of the Action Line will be confidential and independently operated by the consultant. EFCTC members will have no access whatsoever to individual reports that come into the Action Line. If desired, anyone reporting a suspect offering can remain anonymous, but the consultant would prefer to have an opportunity to follow-up on a reported case. For more details on the Action Line please

click this <https://efctc.integrityline.org>.

¹https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2014.150.01.0195.01.ENG

The European FluoroCarbons Technical Committee is a Cefic Sector Group that monitors legislation related to HFCs (hydrofluorocarbons), and HFOs (hydrofluoro-olefins) in the EU and at global level. Fluorocarbons are used as feedstock, as refrigerants, as solvents and as blowing agents for insulation plastic foams.

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