

PRESS RELEASE

1 February 2016

EFCTC Highlights Importance of Timely F-Gas Verification

Potential large stockpiles of HFCs could jeopardise the EU's ability to reduce HFC greenhouse gas emissions if checks are not carried out as soon as possible.

Data collected by the European Environment Agency (EEA)¹ on the placing on the market of Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases has led to considerable speculation as to the presence of large stockpiles of HFCs throughout the European Union. It has been suggested that potentially tens of thousands of tonnes of HFCs have been imported during 2014 in anticipation of a cap and phase-down mechanism that has taken effect on January 1, 2015. Consequently substantial quantities are believed to have been available for use in 2015 and much may still be available in 2016. They account for many millions of tonnes of CO₂ equivalent. Next to stockpiling, another potential cause of the substantial increase compared to previous years may be that importers failed to report their activities in earlier years as required by the old F-Gas Regulation (842/2006).

In practice, **any** large quantities of stockpiled HFCs may have the effect of delaying actions to implement the transition to lower-GWP fluids. This transition must begin **promptly** to avoid a shortage of higher GWP refrigerants that will result from the more severe reductions in the future required by the new F-Gas Regulation (517/2014).

In order to better understand the impacts of the potential HFC stockpiles on EU emissions and on the functioning of the F-Gas Regulation, it is vital that the data used in the calculations by the EEA are thoroughly checked. Therefore the verification processes should receive careful attention.

"Article 19 of the F-Gas Regulation covers the reporting and verification of data," noted EFCTC Chairman Dr. N. Campbell. "It states that every company that has placed 10,000 CO₂ eq. of HFCs on the market in a calendar year shall, by 30 June of the following year have its data verified by an independent auditor. Furthermore, Member States and the Commission can demand to see the verification report. With over 400 companies registered to import HFCs into the European Union, a thorough check of all the verification reports is a major task. Nevertheless, EFCTC believes that it is essential that Member States carry it out as soon as possible for 2014 import data. Without such a check on reporting, it is hard to demonstrate that the F-Gas Regulation is credible and that HFCs controls within Europe are working. Should it emerge that some importers have failed to comply with the reporting requirements under the old F-Gas Regulation, we would expect that Member States impose effective sanctions."

¹ <http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/fluorinated-greenhouse-gases-2014>

The European FluoroCarbons Technical Committee is a Cefic Sector Group that monitors the constantly changing legislation related to HFCs (hydrofluorocarbons), PFCs (perfluorinated carbons) and SF₆ (sulphur hexafluoride), CFCs (chlorofluorocarbons), HCFCs (hydrochlorofluorocarbons), in the EU and at global level.

Fluorocarbons are used as feedstock, as refrigerants, as solvents and as blowing agents for insulation plastic foams.