

# BASA Bulletin

INFORMED COMMENT FROM THE ADHESIVES & SEALANTS ASSOCIATION FOR THE UK & IRELAND

## BASA Sports Day 2025: A Sun-Soaked Celebration of Competition and Camaraderie

June 18th saw BASA members enjoy a sun-soaked day of competition, camaraderie, and celebration at this year's Sports Day networking event. With golf, shooting, and croquet spread across two stunning venues, the day was packed with action, laughter, and a few hard-fought victories.



From standout performances on the golf course to tactical croquet play and a lively evening dinner, the BASA spirit was on full display. Whether competing, cheering from the sidelines, or simply enjoying the sunshine and camaraderie, everyone played a part in making the event a memorable one. A huge thank you to our event sponsors – IMCD, Newport Industries, and Omya – for helping make the day such a success.

[Read the full results on page 3.](#)

*Welcome*

CTA Industrial Ltd

Blagden

ROCKWOOL

PALEUS ACRYLICS

EnviroStik

We welcomed five new members to BASA during June and July. You can view the member directory at: <https://members.basa.uk.com/activememberdirectory>



**Weekly Drop-Ins: Your Friday Fix for Industry Updates & Member Support on Page 4.**

## BASA Position Paper: UK REACH Consultation

BASA (the Adhesives & Sealants Association for the UK and Ireland) welcomes the UK Government's consultation on UK REACH, particularly the proposal to extend current registration deadlines. This is a necessary and pragmatic recognition that the current timelines are too short for businesses to comply effectively, especially given the complexity of the chemicals supply chain.

*Continued on Page 5.*

# Lorna's Leadership Lens



**Lorna Williams,**  
CEO of BASA  
secretary@basa.uk.com

As we move through another challenging year, economic uncertainty continues to weigh heavily on our industry. The impact of global supply chain disruptions, exacerbated by geopolitical tensions and new tariffs, is being felt across the adhesives and sealants sector. Given our industry's dependence on a complex network of international raw material suppliers, these disruptions are more than just an inconvenience; they threaten business continuity, increase costs, and reduce flexibility.

At the same time, regulatory pressure continues to mount. Manufacturers are grappling with duplicated requirements between the UK and EU, adding cost and confusion without clear benefit. We welcome proposals from both the EU and UK to develop smarter regulation that understands how vital it is to have a healthy chemicals manufacturing sector. The ongoing uncertainty around the final form, deadlines, and implementation of UK REACH only adds to the strain. For our members, this combination of supply chain fragility and regulatory ambiguity creates a perfect storm of challenges.

That's why the support offered by BASA is more important than ever. Our association provides guidance, shares best practice, and acts as a collective voice to ensure the concerns of our members are clearly heard by policymakers. By working together, we can help government understand the real-world impact of regulation and work towards solutions that minimise unintended consequences for UK manufacturers.

## BASA Awards: Final Sponsorship Opportunities Available for November Event

The Adhesives & Sealants Association (BASA) is gearing up for its highly anticipated Awards Night, taking place on Thursday 6th November 2025.

This key industry event brings together professionals from across the adhesives and sealants sector for an evening of celebration, networking, and recognition.

For companies looking to boost their visibility in front of an active and engaged membership, some sponsorship opportunities remain. A few award categories are still available for headline sponsorship, offering a premium chance to align your brand with innovation and excellence in the sector.

For businesses looking for cost-effective yet creative visibility, we're also offering special sponsorships at just £500 – including:

- The **Drinks Reception**, where your brand will be front and centre as guests arrive and network.
- **Table Menu** sponsorship, giving you exposure at every table throughout the dinner.
- The ever-popular **Photo Booth**, where your logo will feature prominently on every shared memory.

These unique touchpoints provide excellent brand recall and help sponsors stand out in a fun and memorable way.

Sponsoring the BASA Awards isn't just about exposure on the night. It's an opportunity to get involved with a vibrant and forward-looking industry, meet key decision-makers, and show your support for the future of adhesives and sealants in the UK.

Don't miss your chance to be part of this standout event! To explore sponsorship options, please get in touch with Rebecca Williams at: [rebecca@basa.uk.com](mailto:rebecca@basa.uk.com).

**BASA AWARDS 2025**

**BOOK YOUR TICKETS NOW**

Join us for an evening celebrating the best in the adhesives and sealants industry, recognising excellence, innovation, and leadership.

**6 NOVEMBER 2025**  
East Midlands Conference Centre,  
Nottingham

[www.basa.uk.com/basa-awards/](http://www.basa.uk.com/basa-awards/)

Thank you to our current Sponsors:

F. Ball and Co. Ltd.

## Join us at the BASA Open Industry Forum – 27 November 2025!

BASA is excited to invite you to this year's Open Industry Forum, held at the Village Hotel Coventry (VWorks suite).

This free-to-attend event for members will focus on the consumer product sector and the key regulatory developments shaping its future.

We're delighted to (hopefully) welcome James Dancy (DEFRA) to discuss UK REACH and Leo McDaid (HSE) to explore the proposed regulatory reforms. Topics will include the Product Regulation and Metrology Act 2025, CE/UKCA marking, dual-use substance regulation, and other substance-specific challenges relevant to consumer products.

This is a fantastic opportunity to gain valuable insights, ask questions, and network with industry peers, all while enjoying a buffet lunch in a relaxed, professional setting.

Book your tickets now and support this vital industry event.

We look forward to seeing you on 27th November!



# BASA Sports Day 2025: A Sun-Soaked Celebration of Competition and Camaraderie



June 18th saw BASA members gathering for the much-anticipated Sports Day, held across two stunning venues. With glorious sunshine from start to finish, the only thing brighter than the weather was the spirit of the participants. Though the golf courses and shooting ranges were a few miles apart, the sense of BASA community was unmistakably united, helped when everyone came together for the croquet at 16:30 followed by the presentation dinner.

## Golf at Hawkstone Park – Where Skill Met Sunshine

Thanks to generous sponsorship from IMCD, the golf segment was once again split between the Championship Course for the 9-hole Texas Scramble and the Hawkstone Park Course for the full 18-hole “Glue Pot” Trophy. The Texas Scramble kicked off the day with plenty of banter, bunkers, and birdies (I don’t actually think there were many of those, but it sounds better than banter, bunkers and bogeys) – and an impressive performance from Stephen Birch (FSI Limited), Darrell Tibbins (H B Fuller (UK) Ltd) and Danny Ashburner (Rakem Ltd), who claimed victory with a score of 28. The scoring was tight this year – just 3 points separated 1st and 3rd place. How about having some catchy team names for our groups in 2026?

Later in the day, all eyes turned to the Glue Pot Trophy, where Sam Lillie of LKAB Minerals Ltd rose to the top, securing the win in a tightly contested field. A slight tweak to the scoring rules this year (capping the maximum handicap at 28 and also – controversially – applying a minimum handicap of 6) caused a little head scratching during the evening presentation, especially from BASA’s lowest

handicap golfer. But rest assured: Sam’s triumph was well earned, edging out the runner-up by the narrowest of margins. We then had the Longest Drive winner, Paul Marshall from Henkel UK Ltd, and the Nearest the Pin winner, Darrell Tibbins from H.B. Fuller (UK) Ltd, scooping up the final two prizes.

## Sharp Shooters at the West Midland Shooting Ground

The West Midland Shooting Ground played host to a dynamic day of rifle, catapult and clay pigeon shooting, sponsored once again by Newport Industries. The morning featured four mixed shooting events, including the much-loved return of the catapult competition, where Ken Berry from Synthomer stunned the field with a score of 40. Mike Kenyon also from Synthomer won the air rifle with 50, Paul Hodgett from Mapei came first in the Multicaliber with 40 and we had a three-way split for the 0.22 rifle, with Damian Wilson from Azelis UK Ltd, David Bray from IMCD and Andrew Saunders from IMCD all scoring 40. In the end, as sponsor Andrew stepped down and the overall morning score for all activities was used to separate David (110) and Damian (80). David Bray was named the winner.

The afternoon brought high stakes and high tension with the 50-bird Glue Gun competition, which ended in a dramatic shoot-off after a tied top-score of 38. In the end, Ian Lancey of Power Adhesives held his nerve and managed to retain his title. Well done to Lucas Johnstone from Azelis UK for pushing Ian right to the end and narrowly missing out on this year’s trophy win. In third place was Paul Hodgetts from Mapei, who

was having a good day. The day rounded off with a lively 2-man flush, testing reflexes, teamwork, and endurance after a long day on the range. This was won with a score of 15 by Ian Lancey and Stephen O’Brien from Rakem Ltd.

## Croquet – Tactical Play in the Sunshine

Meanwhile, back on the lawns, the Croquet Competition, kindly sponsored by Omya, drew another strong turnout. With the sun blazing and the pitch... let’s just say “textured”, the matches were equal parts tactical and unpredictable. A cheeky call was made for a cut and roller before next year’s event – duly noted! In the end, it was David Moore of Omya who best navigated the bumps, showcasing a mix of skill, strategy, and a healthy dose of good fortune to take home the title. The day finished with a well-attended dinner and presentation ceremony. Henkel also picked up their 35 years of BASA Membership award as they had been unable to collect it at the AGM in March.

## One for the Books

With sunburnt smiles and friendly rivalry, BASA Sports Day 2025 was another resounding success. A big thank you to our sponsors – IMCD, Newport Industries, and Omya – and to everyone who took part or helped behind the scenes. Thinking of joining in next year? Why not try a mix-and-match day – golf in the morning, shooting in the afternoon. Save the date for next year: **Wednesday 24th June 2026** – and book your Hawkstone Park hotel early, as rooms go fast! As one participant put it, “this is the best networking event of the year” – so we hope to see you there.



## GOLF & SHOOTING NETWORKING EVENT



**SAVE THE DATE**  
The next BASA Sports Day will be Wednesday 24th June 2026.





European  
Commission

## European Commission Expert Group on Waste

### Background

In 2015, the European Commission's Directorate-General for Environment ('DG ENV') set up an expert group on waste ('the group') composed of Member States' experts to provide the Commission with advice and expertise regarding the development and implementation of EU waste legislation.

In the next years, DG ENV will have to deal with the preparation of many secondary pieces of EU legislation and new policy initiatives in the area of waste, including the move to a circular economy system that maximises resources efficiency, minimises waste and brings back materials in the economy. This will require regular advice not only from Member States and EEA EFTA States, but also from a number of industry organisations and NGOs concerned regarding the development and implementation of EU waste legislation.

In light of the above, and for the sake of efficiency, DG ENV has taken the initiative to expand the group's membership via a continuously open call for applications to EU umbrella associations and federations from industries and NGOs in the area of waste, to set up sub-groups for the different waste streams, and to dissolve other existing expert groups relating to specific waste streams (ship recycling, RoHS, extractive waste).

### FEICA News

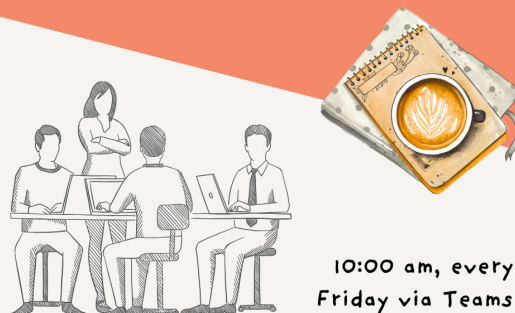
We are pleased to inform you that the official list of members of the European Commission Expert Group on Waste has now been published, and FEICA has been selected to participate. Among the 59 organisations included are also EuRIC – the European Recycling Industries' Confederation – and FEAD – the European Federation of Waste Management and Environmental Services.

FEICA's inclusion alongside these key stakeholders reinforces our relevance in this important policy area.

Jana Cohrs – Rahmoun FEICA's Public and Regulatory Affairs Director told members *'This development is a clear sign that our advocacy efforts are delivering results and that FEICA's influence within EU institutions continues to grow.'*



## Weekly Drop-Ins: Your Friday Fix for Industry Updates & Member Support



10:00 am, every  
Friday via Teams

Did you know BASA runs a **weekly drop-in session every Friday at 10am on Microsoft Teams**? These sessions are a great opportunity to stay informed, ask questions, and hear from experts- all from the comfort of your desk.

Whether you're after regulatory updates, sustainability insights, or just want to listen in, the drop-ins are designed to be useful, informal, and relevant to your business.

You can find the Teams link and upcoming topics anytime on the **BASA Info-Hub**, so it's easy to plan ahead and join when the topic suits you.

Here's just a snapshot of what we've covered recently:

- Pathway to Net Zero, Sustainability, ESG & CSR
- The Cyber Defence Centre: Practical cyber security insights
- European Packaging Regulations & EPR with Valpak
- Mental Health Awareness in the Workplace
- Best Practice for Workplace Defibrillators
- UK REACH Updates and Member Feedback
- HSE consultation on CLP, Biocides and PIC
- Construction Products Regulations Update

We also run general drop-ins, perfect if you have questions or want to hear what's happening across the Association.

### Why join?

- Quick, informal updates
- Hear directly from industry experts
- Stay ahead of regulatory changes
- Connect with other members
- Easy to access via Teams

The next drop-in is this Friday — why not give it a try? Check the Info-Hub for the link and upcoming sessions.



# BASA Position Paper: UK REACH Consultation

BASA (the Adhesives & Sealants Association for the UK and Ireland) welcomes the UK Government's consultation on UK REACH, particularly the proposal to extend current registration deadlines. This is a necessary and pragmatic recognition that the current timelines are too short for businesses to comply effectively, especially given the complexity of the chemicals supply chain.

We also want to highlight a key structural challenge: the ongoing divergence between UK REACH and EU REACH. While we acknowledge that the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) can no longer undertake activities under EU REACH due to the UK's departure from the EU Single Market, we are concerned that maintaining two separate, but parallel regulatory systems impose a significant burden. Even if UK and EU provisions are identical, the duplication of registration and compliance costs remains a market barrier—especially for SMEs and multinational manufacturers operating across both markets.

The adhesives and sealants sector, along with the raw materials we use, is part of a globally integrated supply chain. The UK and EU industries are deeply connected, and it is vital that regulatory frameworks do not disrupt this integration. BASA is particularly concerned about the limitations of dynamic alignment. While it might ensure technical consistency with the EU, it would leave the UK without any influence over future regulatory developments. This could include policy shifts away from risk-based decision-making, which is a core principle for our industry.

We call for urgent action to resolve the key post-Brexit barriers that are currently holding back innovation and the introduction of new products into the GB market. One solution would be for the UK Government to accept and recognise existing EU REACH registrations. The UK REACH Registration phase should be closed for holders of EU REACH registrations “grandfathered” into UK REACH, with no further data submission requirements to complete it, alongside the recognition of EU REACH registrations as being valid in GB. This would reduce duplication and allow businesses to focus resources on innovation. More importantly, this doesn't need EU



agreement, and won't adversely impact protection of human health and the environment.

BASA does not support the proposed Alternative Transitional Registration Model (ATRM) for substances already registered under EU REACH. We believe this model is unnecessarily burdensome for both businesses and regulators, and does not add meaningful value given the existing safety data and compliance mechanisms already in place. If the HSE needs data not publicly available for substance evaluation it should have the powers to ask for them from those with a joint interest in the substance on a substance-by-substance basis – not for the hundreds of thousands of uses ATRM requires. Evaluation should focus on substances of greatest concern, with a view to authorisation and restriction.

BASA also believes that the current requirement for a New Registration of an Existing Substance (NRES) under UK REACH presents a significant and unnecessary barrier to innovation and competitiveness for UK businesses. UK downstream users are required to source substances from a narrower range of UK-registered suppliers, limiting supply chain flexibility and stifling competition. This situation places an undue burden on SMEs and discourages new entrants or innovation within the sector. It also creates a commercially challenging environment, where businesses must navigate complex compliance obligations that offer little added environmental or safety benefit.

BASA urges UK authorities to exempt existing EU REACH-registered substances from the NRES requirement. Streamlining this process will protect UK industry, support innovation, and maintain access to a wider, more diverse supplier base, without compromising on safety or environmental standards.

Looking ahead, we urge the UK Government to deepen regulatory cooperation with the EU as part of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement. Enhanced data-sharing and collaboration between UK and EU regulatory bodies would help minimise divergence, avoid unnecessary duplication of testing, and facilitate smoother market access for all. There should also be powers to recognise other international chemicals assessments where they are of equivalent competency.

Ultimately, decisions around alignment or divergence should be purposeful, science-led, and based on risk—not ideology. BASA stands ready to work with government and other stakeholders to ensure that the UK chemicals regulation framework supports competitiveness, innovation, and safety in equal measure.

## Upcoming Events

10-12 September 2025  
FEICA Conference & EXPO

24 September 2025  
CIRS Global Chemical Conference

1- 2 October 2025  
EURADH & EXPO

**6 November 2025**  
**BASA 2025 Awards Night**

**27 November 2025**  
**BASA Open Industry Forum (OIF)**

20 - 21 May 2026  
CHEMUK EXPO

**24 June 2026**  
**BASA Sports Day 2026**

Head to the BASA events calendar on the website for more information and booking details.

**[www.basa.uk.com](http://www.basa.uk.com)**

# Caroline's Compliance Corner



**Caroline Raine,**  
BASA Regulatory Officer

Welcome to Caroline's Compliance Corner. Your go-to update on the ever-evolving world of chemicals regulation. I'll be shining a light on the latest developments impacting BASA members to help you stay informed and compliant. In this issue, we're diving into three key regulatory topics you need to know about:

## > HSE Chemicals Legislative Reform

HSE is consulting on proposed changes to GB CLP, Biocides, and PIC, with aims to cut duplication and modernise the UK system. Key proposals include simplifying classification, removing some notification duties, and allowing faster technical updates. BASA is reviewing the plans and encourages members to respond before the 18 August deadline.

## > EU CLP Omnibus (Omnibus VI)

The EU's latest "Omnibus VI" reforms to the CLP Regulation introduce greater flexibility in label formatting, new digital contact requirements, and updated rules for online ads and small packaging. These aim to reduce admin burdens, especially for SMEs. If you sell into the EU or Northern Ireland, make sure your labels and listings are compliant.

## > UK REACH Registration Deadlines

Defra is proposing new timelines for transitional UK REACH registrations due to delays in the Alternative Transitional Registration Model. BASA supports Option 2 as the most practical, the consultation closes on 8 September - don't miss your chance to have a say.

Stay tuned, stay compliant, and as always, get in touch if you've got questions or feedback!

## HSE Chemicals Legislative Reform

The HSE have opened a public consultation which launched on 23 June 2025, covering the GB Biocidal Products Regulation (BPR), GB Classification, Labelling & Packaging (CLP), and GB Prior Informed Consent (PIC) regimes.

Great Britain's (GB) chemicals regulatory framework—encompassing GB BPR, GB CLP, and GB PIC—derives from retained EU legislation. Under the UK Government's "new approach" to regulation and the Regulatory Action Plan, HSE is now consulting on proposed reforms to modernise these systems. The objectives include reducing duplication, cutting business costs, enhancing regulatory agility, and supporting innovation, while preserving high standards of health and environmental protection

### GB Classification, Labelling & Packaging (CLP)

#### Proposed Reforms:

1. Streamlined classification (Articles 37/37A): Merge Articles 37 and 37A into a single, simplified classification process. A fast-track route for classifications aligned with UN GHS is proposed, cutting evaluation from ~24 to ~12 months. HSE would also no longer be required to automatically consider all RAC opinions—though consultation remains possible for substances relevant to GB.
2. Elimination of notification requirements: Remove the Article 40 duty to notify classifications to a GB inventory and the associated database maintenance duty (Article 42)—considered unnecessarily burdensome and of limited enforcement value.
3. Relocation of explanatory notes: Transfer the notes associated with Mandatory Classification & Labelling (MCL) entries from Annex VI legislation to the HSE website's spreadsheet format—enabling faster updates and administrative efficiency.
4. General update powers: Grant HSE authority to amend GB CLP for future technical, scientific, or international developments—including alignment with UN GHS—through secondary legislation.
5. UK NI internal market considerations: The consultation seeks views on whether some EU CLP changes (six new hazard classes, revised MOCS rules, labelling updates) should be adopted in GB to reduce divergence

and ease trade with Northern Ireland, which remains aligned with EU law.

### GB Biocidal Products Regulation (BPR) Key Proposals:

1. Recognition of foreign approvals: Authorisations granted in trusted jurisdictions (e.g. EU) could be recognised for GB, avoiding duplicate evaluations—subject to safeguards and standards parity.
2. Risk-based re-evaluation model: Replace fixed expiry dates with a "call-in" approach—active substances remain approved indefinitely unless new risk data triggers review.
3. Essential use derogations: In critical circumstances (e.g. public health emergencies), temporary use of certain products may be authorised even if full compliance has not been reached, under tight safeguards.
4. Enhanced future flexibility: Introduce statutory powers allowing HSE to amend GB BPR technical procedures and Annexes via secondary legislation, speeding up regulatory updates.

### GB Prior Informed Consent (PIC) Reform Elements:

1. Removal of SRIN system: Eliminate the Special Reference Identification Number procedure for small-quantity exports (≤10 kg/year) intended for R&D—seen as an outdated legacy mechanism not required under the Rotterdam Convention.
2. Simplifying import consent waiver rules: Standardise waiver criteria for imported chemicals listed under Rotterdam Convention: allowing one-year waiver if importing nation doesn't respond to requests, intended use is excluded, and evidence of recent import/use exists.
3. Empowering future amendments: Provide HSE capacity to update PIC obligations via secondary legislation, enabling timely implementation of international changes and flexibility in risk-based adjustments.

The consultation is active from 23 June 2025 to 18 August 2025 (8 weeks), with responses invited via online survey, email, or post.



<https://consultations.hse.gov.uk/hse/chemicals-legislative-reform-proposals/>



# EU CLP Omnibus (Omnibus VI)

The European Commission published the Chemical Industry Action Plan on 8 July 2025, setting out a roadmap to modernize EU chemical regulation as part of its industrial and sustainability strategies. As part of this, the 6th Simplification Omnibus (Omnibus VI) targets the CLP Regulation (EC No 1272/2008), along with cosmetics, fertiliser and related legislation, aiming to reduce regulatory friction, while maintaining high safety standards.

Key CLP Reforms under Omnibus VI:

## 1. Label Format Flexibility

- Introduces optional flexibility in font size, line spacing, and layout of hazard labels.
- Allows fold out labels to present information more sustainably and compactly.

## 2. Digital Contact Information

- Labels must include an online contact point, enabling faster communication with enforcement bodies and improving traceability.

## 3. Packaging Exemptions for Small Containers

- Products under 10 ml no longer require demonstrable unsuitability for full labelling—streamlining compliance for micro packaging.

## 4. Advertising & Distance Selling Rules

- New obligations for online listings and ads: must include the phrase “Always read the label and product information before use.”
- Overall reduction of information required in marketing materials and online listings.

## 5. Label Update Timing Relaxed

- Removes rigid six-month deadline for label updates after classification changes. Instead, updates are expected “without undue delay”.

## 6. Transitional Provisions

- Delayed application of formatting, label update, and distance selling provisions under Regulation (EU) 2024/2865, giving firms more time to adapt.

The European Commission expects these changes to streamline administrative burdens and boost competitiveness—especially for SMEs—without diluting safety safeguards.

# UK REACH consultation

Defra launched a consultation on 14 July 2025 about extending UK REACH transitional registration deadlines

- Current UK REACH deadlines are set at October 2026, October 2028, and October 2030, depending on tonnage and hazard profile.
- Since Brexit, businesses must register substances with the UK regulator (HSE). Existing EU REACH registrations aren’t automatically transferred, prompting transitional provisions including phased “dossier” submissions.
- Development of the Alternative Transitional Registration Model (ATRM)—intended to reduce duplication of EU dossiers and better align data with GB-specific exposure and use contexts—is still ongoing. Delays in finalising ATRM mean it’s not feasible to implement and provide sufficient transition before the current 2026 deadline.

## Proposed Options

Defra is consulting on three alternative deadline models:

1. Option 1 (Government’s preferred): October 2029, October 2030, October 2031 - A 3 year extension to the first deadline with 1 year gaps thereafter.
2. Option 2: April 2029, April 2031, April 2033 (BASA’s preferred option) - Roughly 2.5 year spacing, preserving current gap structure.
3. Option 3: April 2029, April 2030, April 2031 - A compact schedule with one-year intervals, concluding earlier.

Under all options, the HSE’s compliance check requirements (i.e. auditing 20% of dossiers under Article 41(5)) would be realigned to follow the new deadlines to ensure effective regulatory oversight.

The Chemical Business Association (CBA) expressed frustration, citing “excruciatingly slow” progress on UK REACH and warning that delays

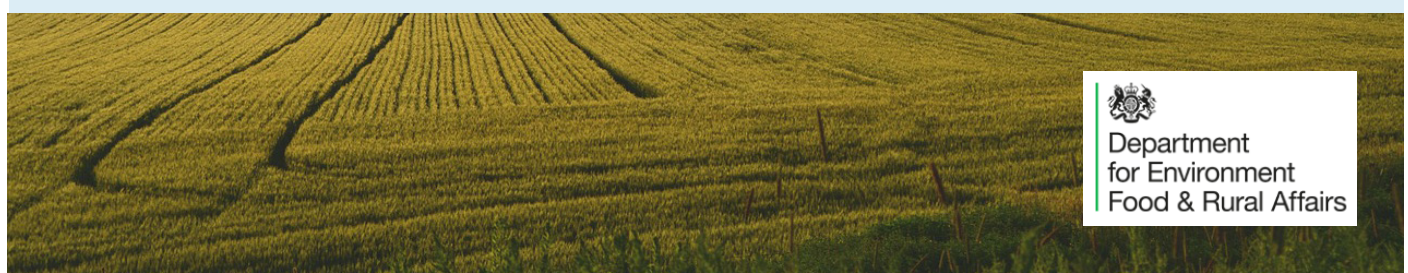
undermine investment and innovation. They stressed the financial and administrative burden of duplicate registrations and pressed for clarity and decisive action.

Broader industry groups continue to emphasise the high cost to businesses (estimated at £2–3.5 billion) and the need for a workable ATRM to provide regulatory certainty.

**Deadline for submissions: 8 September 2025.** Defra will publish responses and its decision within 12 weeks of consultation close, including any legislative changes via statutory instrument and supporting impact assessments.

<https://consult.defra.gov.uk/reach-policy/extending-the-uk-reach-submission-deadlines/>

BASA have produced a position paper on the topic which is reproduced on page 5.



# Low VOC Adhesives & Sealants: Cutting Through the Fog of "VOC-Free"

As the push for greener, healthier buildings continues to grow, the demand for low VOC (Volatile Organic Compounds) adhesives and sealants is stronger than ever. While this is a step in the right direction for indoor air quality and environmental responsibility, the conversation around VOCs is often murky – especially when it comes to vague terms like “VOC-free” and what that really means.

## What Does "Low VOC" Actually Mean?

VOC content in adhesives and sealants is regulated in many parts of the world, particularly for use in construction and interior environments. In the UK and across the EU, the Construction Products Regulation (CPR) and the EU Ecolabel set clear standards for what constitutes a low VOC product. Similarly, LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) and BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) projects often specify the use of products that meet stringent VOC content and emissions criteria.

These guidelines usually define “low VOC” in grams per litre (g/L), depending on the product type and intended use. There’s also EN 16516, a harmonised method for assessing emissions from building products, used to determine what levels are considered safe for indoor environments.

But here's where it gets confusing: some manufacturers label products as “VOC-free,” despite them still containing trace VOC levels. The term “VOC-free” isn’t legally defined in many regions, and in reality, it’s extremely difficult to formulate a truly VOC-free adhesive or sealant. Instead, many so-called “VOC-free” products simply fall below certain detection thresholds – leading to what is effectively a marketing phrase rather than a scientific guarantee.

## Certification Schemes That Help Clarify

To help cut through the fog, several third-party certification schemes have emerged to provide clearer guidance:

→ EMICODE (by GEV) – Classifies products as EC1, EC1PLUS, etc., with EC1PLUS representing the lowest emissions currently measurable.



→ Blue Angel (Germany) – Recognised across Europe, this label is awarded to products with low emissions and good environmental performance.

→ GREENGUARD – Common in LEED projects, GREENGUARD certification verifies that a product meets strict chemical emissions limits.

→ Indoor Air Comfort (Eurofins) – Combines compliance with both EU regulations and voluntary labelling schemes.

These certifications are useful tools for specifiers and contractors looking to ensure product safety and compliance.

## The Case for Higher VOCs (Sometimes)

While low-VOC and low-emission options are ideal in many settings, some high-performance adhesives and sealants simply can’t be made without a higher VOC content – at least, not yet. Industrial or exterior applications, or those requiring fast curing under demanding conditions, may need more robust formulations. In these cases, performance can take priority, particularly where durability, strength, or weather resistance are essential.

That’s not to say safety is compromised. The key is proper handling. During installation – when VOC emissions are at their peak – good ventilation is crucial. Most VOCs off-gas during this early stage, so ensuring installers have access to fresh air and suitable personal protective equipment (PPE) is enough to minimise

risk. For building occupants, once the product has cured, the VOC emissions typically fall to negligible levels.

## Innovation Without Compromise

The good news? Manufacturers are constantly working on new technologies that reduce VOC levels without sacrificing performance. Advances in water-based formulations, reactive chemistry, and improved raw materials have led to a wave of sealants and adhesives that meet low-emission standards and still deliver on durability and ease of application.

There’s a growing trend to go beyond simply ticking the “low VOC” box, and instead focus on total indoor air quality, user safety, and environmental impact. The industry’s moving fast – but it’s also being realistic. Sometimes, the best product for the job may not be the absolute lowest in VOCs, and that’s okay – provided the right precautions are taken.

## Summary

Low VOC adhesives and sealants are essential for healthier buildings, but the term “VOC-free” is often misleading. Certifications help identify genuinely low-emission products, and where higher VOC content is necessary, safe handling and good ventilation ensure there’s no ongoing risk. With manufacturers pushing boundaries every day, the future of adhesives and sealants is looking cleaner, greener, and smarter.



# Recent Updates from Behavioural Economist Roger Martin-Fagg: Tariffs, Tensions & Turning Points

From Trump's tariff turbulence to UK infrastructure hopes, the global economy is bracing for change. In this eye-opening mid-year review, behavioural economist Roger Martin-Fagg unpacks the rising risks of stagflation, the shifting roles of central banks, and why bond markets—not ballots—may be the real check on US power. With UK consumers saving more, AI reshaping employment, and commercial property at a crossroads, this update offers a clear-eyed view of what's really driving markets, confidence, and policy.

Don't miss the full insight—from the role of SMEs in UK recovery to the real impact of Trump's tariffs and China's strategic pivot. Members can read more on the BASA info-hub.



## I AM ON STAGE BREAKOUT I

**FEICA® 2025**

**European Adhesive & Sealant  
Conference and EXPO**

**10-12 September 2025**

Kursaal Congress Centre, San Sebastian, Spain

**FULL  
PROGRAMME**



**CHEMUK2026**  
GROUP OF EVENTS

20TH & 21ST MAY 2026 NEC, BIRMINGHAM, UK



**BASA**

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STAND A140

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# Jim's Technical Takeaways



**Jim Palmer,**  
BASA Technical Officer

BASA's technical working groups continue to be the driving force behind our industry's progress, navigating a fast-changing regulatory landscape and offering top-tier resources through the BASA Info Hub. Here's what's new:

## **Product Regulation and Metrology Act 2025**

We have been closely monitoring the introduction and implications of the Product Regulation and Metrology Act 2025. This Act, which came into force on July 21, 2025, regulates the marketing, use, and measurement of products within the UK, covering England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. It includes provisions that address emerging safety concerns, such as the risks associated with lithium-ion batteries and e-bikes. Furthermore, the Act gives the Secretary of State the power to align UK regulations with relevant EU laws to mitigate environmental impacts, although specific products like food and aircraft components are excluded.

As this is product legislation, it doesn't necessarily fall neatly into the Chemicals Legislation group, as potentially it can affect revisions to legislation for Construction Products and Toys or other safety critical products, and so this is a cross-working-party topic. We have tried to tag all of the affected working groups.

## **Chemical Legislation Working Group**

The release of Globally Harmonised System (GHS) Revision 11 will take place in September 2025. This revision introduces updates to classification criteria for aerosols, skin sensitization, a new classification for substances that contribute to global warming, and more comprehensive precautionary labelling requirements. These changes are aimed at improving clarity and usability for manufacturers and end-users of chemical products.

In addition, see Caroline's article for the latest on the UK REACH alternative transition model, the HSE consultation on chemical legislative reform and the moves within Europe to simplify the regulatory framework.

## **Environment & Sustainability Working Group**

In 2022 In 2022, FEICA, IVK, EFCC, and DBC updated and expanded the European Model Environmental Product Declarations (Model EPDs) to cover more substances and formulations. The group has expanded these declarations to cover additional chemical technologies, such as products based on butyl chemistry, polysulfides, and vinyl chloride polymers. These updates are now available to members and can be accessed via the FEICA website. These declarations help companies demonstrate their commitment to sustainability and provide transparency regarding the environmental impact of their products.

## **Construction & Adhesives Working Group**

The CAWG met in June, with its minutes and reports available on the BASA website. The group remains engaged with key technical committees like CEN/TC 193/SC 1 (Adhesives for wood and derived timber products) and BSI CB/300 (Screeds and in-situ floorings), ensuring that BASA members are informed about the latest developments in construction adhesives.

A notable focus is on the continued Acceptance of CE Marking within Great Britain. BASA has issued a guidance note clarifying compliance obligations for CE-marked products in the UK market, particularly for construction products under designated standards.

## **Sealants Working Group**

The activities of CEN/TC 349 (Sealants for joints in building construction) and BSI B/547 (Sealants for building and construction), with BASA input are available on the website. As with the Construction & Adhesives group, compliance with CE marking and UK regulations remains a central theme.

## **Packaging Adhesives Working Group**

The FEICA Packaging Adhesives Working Group continues to address the role of adhesives in sustainable packaging. Through the publication of several reports, including guidance documents on Packaging Recycling, the group has helped stakeholders understand the essential role of adhesives in the recycling process, food safety, and sustainability. The most recent report focuses on labelling adhesives in packaging recycling, which provides valuable insights for producers, converters, and legislators seeking to improve the sustainability of packaging materials.

## **Conclusion**

BASA's working groups continue to play a pivotal role in the ongoing development of industry regulations and sustainability initiatives. Through active participation in legislative updates, industry standards, and environmental efforts, BASA is ensuring that its members are well-equipped to meet the evolving challenges and opportunities within the adhesives and sealants sectors. The collective work of these groups is vital in maintaining product safety, enhancing environmental performance, and supporting industry compliance with emerging regulations.





# Tony's Sustainability Snapshot



**Tony Bingham,**  
BASA Sustainability Officer

Whilst nursing training in the early 1970's, my wife wrote an essay which highlighted the major environmental issues of concern at the time and in particular those affecting human health. These include air pollution, industrial and transport; water pollution from industrial run-off, farming and effluent discharge; social (mental health) issues surrounding living in high-rise flats.

Today, many of the above issues have been, or are being, addressed through legislation and the focus is on the effect we are having on the planet, as well as human health.

A reminder of some of the challenges our industry faces are outlined below.

The adhesives and sealants industry in the UK faces several sustainability challenges as it adapts to environmental regulations, consumer expectations, and global decarbonisation targets. These challenges span raw material sourcing, product formulation, waste management, and lifecycle impacts.

## **1. Dependency on Fossil-Based Raw Materials:**

A significant sustainability challenge lies in the industry's reliance on petrochemical-based feedstocks. Many conventional adhesives are derived from fossil fuels, contributing to greenhouse gas emissions and limiting circularity. The transition to bio-based or renewable raw materials is hindered by supply constraints, higher costs, and performance trade-offs compared to traditional materials. Some

sectors like lubricants re-use or recycle their products and can demonstrate circularity however this is generally not possible in adhesives and sealants.

## **2. VOC Emissions and Regulatory Pressures:**

Volatile organic compounds (VOCs), commonly found in solvent-based adhesives and sealants, can contribute to air pollution and may pose health risks. UK and EU regulations, such as REACH, are tightening limits on VOC content, pushing manufacturers to reformulate products. However, developing low-VOC alternatives that maintain durability, curing performance, and substrate compatibility remains a technical and economic challenge.

## **3. End-of-Life and Recycling Issues:**

Adhesives may complicate the recyclability of bonded materials in sectors like construction, automotive, and packaging. Once substrates are bonded, separation becomes more difficult, potentially resulting in contaminated waste streams. There is a growing need for adhesives that are compatible with mechanical or chemical recycling, debond-on-demand technologies, or biodegradable solutions — all of which are in early stages of commercial viability.

These solutions must not reduce the durability of the bond in applications that require a longer working life. Having an easily recyclable/de-bondable sealant that only has a 5-year lifespan compared to one with a 20-30 year (or more) working life is probably not a good solution and may actually impede net zero ambitions.

## **4. Packaging and Waste Management:**

The use of single-use plastic cartridges and bulk containers generates considerable industrial waste. While some manufacturers are moving toward

recyclable or refillable packaging, widespread implementation is limited by infrastructure, logistics, cost barriers and performance of the end product.

Again, it is important to use entire life cycle thinking to ensure that moving towards recyclable or refillable packaging does not sacrifice net zero ambitions. As an example, if the shelf life of the product is reduced by moving to a refillable package — then this may generate more waste and not less!

## **5. Supply Chain Transparency and Circular Economy Goals:**

Pressure is mounting from both regulators and customers for greater transparency around material sourcing, carbon footprint, and lifecycle impacts. However, many companies in the adhesives value chain lack the tools or data to measure these impacts accurately. Integrating sustainability into procurement, product development, and supply chain management requires significant investment and cross-sector collaboration.

To address these challenges, UK industry stakeholders are investing in R&D for greener chemistries, developing standards for sustainable product design, and collaborating across supply chains. Nonetheless, achieving a fully sustainable adhesives and sealants sector will require systemic shifts, including regulatory support, market incentives, and innovations in both materials science and product lifecycle management.

BASA and FEICA are working together to ensure that regulators and other stakeholders understand the importance that adhesives and sealants hold as 'enablers' to help produce more sustainable products to achieve the numerous global goals in this area.





## I-care Group: Leader in Predictive Maintenance



I-care Group is the global leader in predictive maintenance. Our mission is clear: to transform how maintenance is performed worldwide. The company utilises advanced technologies—including its patented Wi-care™ wireless vibration sensors—to monitor hundreds of thousands of industrial machines globally.

### Innovative Solutions

At the core of I-care's success is I-see™, a cloud-based, AI-powered platform. I-see™ seamlessly integrates with internal I-care solutions and external systems through its open API. By collecting data from various predictive maintenance techniques, we predict equipment failures months in advance, and improve operational efficiency.

### Global Presence

Founded in Belgium in 2004, I-care employs over 1,000 dedicated professionals across 36 offices in 16 countries (Asia-Pacific, EMEA, and the USA). I-care provides expert reliability and predictive maintenance services in more than 55 countries.

### At I-care, the culture is built around three core values:

- **Performance:** We strive for excellence, delivering superior results to maximise asset reliability.
- **Sustainability:** Our solutions positively impact the environment by reducing waste, energy use, and resource consumption.
- **Respect for People:** I-care fosters a supportive culture that encourages collaboration, personal growth, and wellbeing.

### New Acquisition

I-care has acquired SDT International, a Belgian pioneer in ultrasound-based predictive maintenance. This merger unites two complementary areas of expertise to redefine global standards in predictive maintenance.



### Recognition & Milestones

I-care's innovative approach has earned prestigious awards including ADM's 2024 Supplier Award, the Factory Innovation Award at Hannover Messe and the 2025 Solutions Award at The Reliability Conference.





# Success Story: BASF Enhances Machine Reliability with I-care's Wireless Monitoring



**Industry: Chemical | Company Size: 111,000 Employees | Turnover: \$87.3 Billion (2022)**

BASF, a global leader in the chemical industry, balances robust economic performance with a commitment to environmental care and social responsibility. With over 111,000 employees worldwide and annual turnover of \$87.3 billion (£70.713B), maintaining operational efficiency and reliability across its extensive and diverse product lines is essential.

## **The Challenge: Improving Machine Reliability**




With thousands of machines operating globally, maintaining peak performance and preventing downtime are ongoing priorities. BASF sought advanced predictive maintenance solutions to provide greater transparency and reliability across its extensive equipment network.

## **Solution: I-care's Wireless Vibration Monitoring**

After comprehensive market research and rigorous testing, BASF chose I-care's wireless vibration monitoring solution. Having already seen positive results with Wi-care™ and I-see™ at their facilities in France, BASF confidently expanded this collaboration worldwide.

## **Impacts:**

I-care's system shifted BASF from reactive to proactive maintenance:

-  **Increased Productivity:** Prevents machine downtime and unplanned maintenance by monitoring risk profiles and asset conditions, enabling timely interventions that keep operations running smoothly.
-  **Enhanced Sustainability:** Contribute to minimising waste and energy consumption, supporting greener production.
-  **Improved Safety:** Maintain machinery in optimal condition and reduce the risk of malfunctions, enhancing workplace safety.

**Scan the QR code to discover the full case.**



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# BASA AWARDS 2025

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