



Discover the Latest Updates and Features of the Responsible Care Self-Assessment Webtool

9 November 2022

By Gizem OGANALP and Heather KIGGINS

POLICY HORIZONS

Speakers

- **Sami Nikander** – Cefic Responsible Care Issue Team Chairman, Kemianteollisuus
- **Giulia Casasole** – Responsible Care Manager, Cefic
- **William Garcia** – Executive Director HSE, Responsible Care and Supply Chain, Cefic

The discussion, held under the Chatham House Rule, was moderated by William Garcia, Executive Director HSSE, supply chains, and Responsible Care, Cefic, and attended by more than 132 participants.

Introduction of Responsible Care and the self-assessment webtool

- Responsible Care supports and guides companies on their journey towards safe chemicals management and performance excellence in environment, health, safety and security. With more than 30 years, it is the longest-standing initiative providing practical support. Responsible Care is about continuous improvement, a strong commitment from participating companies, and a collaborative spirit to drive success.
- The initiative is implemented across 62 chemical associations and nearly 70 economies around the world, with almost 600 CEOs pledging a shared commitment to global implementation. In Europe alone, Responsible Care is implemented by 30 associations and by more than 4000 chemical companies.
- This commitment is set out through the Responsible Care Global Charter, which unifies participants around six common elements towards continuous improvement of safe chemicals management.
- The initiative takes new strides when it comes to embracing digitalization. The new features of the Responsible-Care webtool give companies dynamic insights into their supply chain operations.
- It also enables benchmarking with peers at the European and country level. It shows how companies operate in relation to the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and International standards. And it offers tailor-made tips for companies continuously improve over time.

Update on the use of the Responsible Care webtool in Europe (for manufacturers) after almost 2 years from its launch

- 635 sites are now using the tool in 26 countries. The number of users increased compared to last year (+160). However, there is still room for improvement as they represent 16% of the European Responsible Care companies.
- The tool is based on a questionnaire with a simple multi-choice format. It is structured along the six elements of the Responsible Care Global Charter. Each question has four possible answers corresponding to four “levels of maturity” (different levels of Responsible Care implementation).
- The outcomes of 2021 reporting at the EU level briefly addressed the areas of strength (i.e., corporate leadership culture and safeguarding people and the environment), and the areas for improvement (i.e., strengthening chemical management systems and contributing to sustainability). Furthermore, Cefic is working together with national associations to tackle the areas for improvement of the European chemical industry by organizing workshops (i.e., biodiversity and water management) and providing guidance (e.g., on product stewardship) to upload in the library of good practices of the Responsible Care webtool.



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Demo on the webtool new features and functionalities of the Responsible Care webtool

- A webtool demo highlighting the new functionalities added to improve the user experience for sites and headquarter was shown.
- There is full data protection in the RC webtool. Only the site that enters the data has access to it. Neither the national association nor Cefic have access to the company's data, but only to aggregates. The aggregates are shown only when at least 5 independent sites per country have made the assessment.
- While the navigation of the tool is only in English, the questionnaire itself (questions/replies/tips) is available in 18 languages.
- The crucial role of a national association of the chemical industry was highlighted. Cefic has a coordination role in the Responsible Care program at the European level. However, the national associations manage it at the country level. Cefic relies on their support to engage companies, especially SMEs, in using the webtool and support them in their journey towards continuous improvement. France Chimie, participating in the webinar, confirmed that the association supports French SMEs to fulfill the self-assessment in the webtool, with consultancy support and a review of a third-party committee.

Questions and Answers

- **Who can see the information written in the "remarks" section?**
 - Headquarter : Inside the assessment, the HQ has the possibility to leave a "remark" at the end of each question, which will be visualized by the daughter site(s).
 - Site: Inside the assessment, below each question, in the field "Leave a remark" the daughter site(s) can visualize "Remarks from the HQ".

A site itself can also write remarks that colleagues can see on the same site who have access to the tool. As a reminder, up to three users can register and have access to the same site account (or HQ account).

- **Is a direct comparison with previous years assessment possible to see the improvement better?**
No, but it could be added in the future as new functionality of the tool if other users find it useful
- **Assessment : I was quite unsure if all my replies were saved during the assessment as the progress number showed 0%. Shouldn't the progress number change based on the number of questions replied?**
Yes, you should have the % indicating the status of the assessment ("In progress") updated based on your replies. If it is not the case, please send an email to the helpdesk (RCWebtool@cefic.be) and we will check whether there is a bug.
- **Is it possible to receive all questions as a pdf document before starting the assessment to prepare?**

You can export the questionnaire (empty or with the selected replies) in Excel on the homepage under "my assessments" by clicking on the icon to share it with your colleagues and get prepared.

- **Within our company, it was discussed to answer the questionnaire with a frequency of two years, would that be acceptable?**

We warmly encourage companies to self-assess annually. It takes just a couple of hours to complete the assessment, especially using pre-fills (based on standards or previous year assessments). The assessment should inform a Responsible Care improvement plan for the site. If, for example, it was a process safety improvement plan (which is a part of Responsible Care), most companies would expect to manage the



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progress of this on an annual basis. Furthermore, we need companies reporting every year to allow benchmarking at the EU level and to be able to use the data for advocacy in the future. The more data in the tool, the stronger we are as a community.

- **How is the company's score calculated if there are sites which are completely different (10 FTEs up to 1500 FTEs), are the results weighed somehow? And in the case the sites are in different countries?**
The score is calculated in the same way without considering the size and the country. The philosophy behind the scoring is to provide a single-figure position that gives each organisation a chance to evaluate where they stand and improve where they feel the need. A company can compare its results with its peers, regardless of size or considering peers' size (and benchmarking against aggregates of all Large, Medium, or Small sites).
- **Is the SME classification according to OSHA ? (i.e. based on number of worked hours)**
The classification is based on the number of employees : Small(< 50 employees) , Medium(50 - 250 employees), Large(> 250 employees).
- **Have questions been changed or added?**
No, the questionnaire has not been changed since the launch of the RC webtool in November 2020. Few questions were recently revised by the team who designed the tool (formed by representative of European companies and national associations) as they were considered unclear by several users during the 2021 reporting. The revised questions will be uploaded in the tool during the course of 2023.
- **When you download the questionnaire to MS Excel - does the download include the « Remarks » as well?**
The download includes the questionnaire empty or with the selected replies. It does not include the "remarks". This suggestion could be added in the next improvement implementation, if companies find it useful.
- **Will this assessment be mandatory for obtaining the RC certificate?**
Responsible Care is managed at national level by national associations. You should consult the national association of the country where your company operates to know more about it.
- **For a specific site willing to benchmark against the aggregate of the sister sites (all linked to the same HQ), is there a minimum number of reporting sites needed, like for the country aggregate?**
No, there is no minimum number of sites needed to benchmark against the aggregate of the sister sites.

The webinar was closed thanking the speakers, and all the participants and reminding **Responsible Care participating companies the deadline to submit by 30 November their self-assessment. Participants were asked to fill in a [Survey on the RC webtool](#) while the [teaser video of the RC webtool was launched.](#)**