Occupational safety and health: risks related to chemical agents (14th particular Directive, Directive 89/391/EEC)

1993/0459(SYN) - 21/12/2004 - Follow-up document

PURPOSE : to present a communication from the Commission on the Guidelines of a non-binding nature for implementing certain provisions of Directive 98/24/EC of the Council on the protection of the health and safety of workers form the risks related to chemical agents at work.

CONTENT : Article 12 (2) of Directive 98/24/EC provides that the Commission shall draw up practical guidelines of a non-binding nature, to assist Member States, in pursuance of the Directive, in drawing up their national policies and to facilitate compliance with their regulations on the protection of the health and safety of workers, in particular as regards the topics referred to in Articles 3, 4, 5 and 6 and Annex II, section 1.

To discharge this duty, the Commission has produced guidelines which covers the following topics:

- Analytical methods for the measurement of the indicative occupational exposure limit values (IOELVs) of the chemical substances included in the Annex of the Commission Directive 2000/39/EC establishing a first list of IOELVs in implementation of Directive 98/24/EC.

- Identification, assessment and control of risks arising from the presence of hazardous chemical agents (HCAs) in the workplace.

- General principles for preventing risks related to HCAs and specific prevention and protection measures for controlling these risks.

- Medical surveillance and biological monitoring of workers exposed to lead and its ionic compounds.

In producing these guidelines the Commission was assisted by the Advisory Committee on Safety, Hygiene and Health Protection at Work, which delivered a favourable opinion on 28 June 2004.

The Advisory Committee considers that the Guidelines deal adequately with the fundamental issues as expressed in the provisions of Directive 98/24/EC mentioned above. It also believes that they will be a useful reference document for Member States to be used as tool for developing their own guidance in particular for small and medium-size enterprises.

The Commission in accordance with Article 12 (2) of Directive 98/24/EC, asks the Member States to take account as far as possible of these guidelines in drawing up their national policies for the protection of the health and safety of workers and to ensure that it is distributed as widely as possible in interested circles.