



Brussels, 16.11.2018
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COMMISSION DELEGATED DIRECTIVE (EU) .../...

of 16.11.2018

**amending, for the purposes of adapting to scientific and technical progress, Annex III to
Directive 2011/65/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards an
exemption for cadmium and its compounds in electrical contacts**

(Text with EEA relevance)

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

1. CONTEXT OF THE DELEGATED ACT

This Commission Delegated Directive amends, for the purpose of adapting to technical progress, Annex III of Directive 2011/65/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on the restriction of the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment (recast)¹ (RoHS 2) as regards an exemption for specific applications containing cadmium.

RoHS 2 restricts the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment, as provided for in its Article 4. It entered into force on 21 July 2011.

The restricted substances are listed in Annex II to RoHS 2. While the restrictions of lead, mercury, cadmium, hexavalent chromium, polybrominated biphenyls, and polybrominated diphenyl ethers are in force to date, the restrictions of bis(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate (DEHP), butyl benzyl phthalate (BBP), dibutyl phthalate (DBP), diisobutyl phthalate (DIBP) shall apply from 22 July 2019 or later. Annexes III and IV to RoHS 2 list the materials and components of electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) for specific applications exempted from the substance restriction of RoHS 2 Article 4(1).

Article 5 makes provision for the adaptation to scientific and technical progress (inclusion, renewal, amendments and revoking of exemptions) of Annexes III and IV. Pursuant to Article 5(1)(a), exemptions are to be included in Annexes III and IV only if such inclusion does not weaken the environmental and health protection afforded by Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006² and where any of the following conditions is fulfilled: their elimination or substitution via design changes or materials and components which do not require any of the materials or substances listed in Annex II is scientifically or technically impracticable; the reliability of substitutes is not ensured; or the total negative environmental, health and consumer safety impacts caused by substitution are likely to outweigh the total environmental, health and consumer safety benefits thereof.

Furthermore, Article 5(1) provides that the European Commission (the Commission) shall include materials and components of EEE for specific applications in the lists in Annexes III and IV by means of individual delegated acts in accordance with Article 20. Article 5(3) and Annex V establish the procedure for submitting applications for granting, renewing, or revoking an exemption.

2. CONSULTATIONS PRIOR TO THE ADOPTION OF THE ACT

Since the publication of RoHS 2, the Commission has received numerous³ requests from economic operators, according to the provisions in Article 5(3) and Annex V, for both granting new and renewing existing exemptions.

The current Annex III exemption 8(b) permits the use of cadmium and its compounds in electrical contacts. The Commission received two applications for renewal of this exemption in January 2015. While exemption 8(b) had 21 July 2016 as expiration date for categories 1 to 7 and 10⁴, in line with the requirements of the RoHS Directive (Article 5(5), second

¹ OJ L 174, 1.7.2011, p. 88.

² OJ L 396, 30.12.2006, p. 1.

³ The list is given at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/rohs_eee/adaptation_en.htm

⁴ These categories are namely: 1. Large household appliances; 2. Small household appliances; 3. IT and telecommunications equipment; 4. Consumer equipment; 5. Lighting equipment; 6. Electrical and

subparagraph), it continues to apply until a decision on the renewal application is taken by the Commission.

With a view to evaluating the application for exemption, the Commission launched a study to carry out the required technical and scientific assessment, including an eight-week online open-ended stakeholder consultation⁵ on the application. Three contributions were made to the stakeholder consultation.

The final report containing the assessment of the application was published⁶; stakeholders were notified.

Subsequently, the Commission consulted the Member States expert group for delegated acts under RoHS 2 in written form as agreed during a previous meeting⁷. The experts agreed with the draft presented by the Commission, with a large majority of silent members. In accordance with the Better Regulation Guidelines, the draft Delegated Directive was published on the Better Regulation Portal for a four-week public feedback period. Three comments were received, all supporting the act and one proposing a prolongation of the transition period to 18 months. All necessary steps relating to exemptions from the substance restriction pursuant to Articles 5(3) to 5(7) have been performed⁸. The Council and the European Parliament were notified of all activities.

The final report highlighted in particular the following technical information and assessment:

- Electrical contact materials containing cadmium are used in many electromechanical devices as components which can carry current intermittently through contact surfaces. Devices concerned are in particular power switching of electric motors; relays and contactors; switches for power tools and appliance switches; circuit breakers for switching equipment; and power packs, occupancy/time delay sensors, and lighting control panels.
- Cadmium in electrical contacts provides essential properties such as superior performance, arc-quenching, higher conductivity, less contact erosion and relatively easy manufacture compared to alternatives.
- Currently, substitution or elimination of cadmium is still scientifically and technically impracticable in several types of devices with electrical contacts, or more time is required to ensure the reliability of the substitutes.

The evaluation results for categories 1 to 7 and 10 show that at least one of the relevant criteria specified in Article 5(1)(a) is met by the exemption request relating to entry 8(b) in Annex III. Since reliable alternatives are still not available for certain applications or more time is needed to ensure their reliability, the exemption is renewed until 21 July 2021 with amended wording which reflects the current status of alternative technologies, adding subentry 8(b)-I to point 8(b). Where reliable alternatives are already available, only negligible socioeconomic impacts of substitution are to be anticipated for this period as gradual

electronic tools; 7. Toys, leisure and sports equipment; 10. Automatic dispensers. EEE categories are listed in Annex I to the RoHS Directive.

⁵ [Consultation period](#): from 21.08.2015 to 16.10.2015.

⁶ <https://bookshop.europa.eu/en/assistance-to-the-commission-on-technological-socio-economic-and-cost-benefit-assessment-related-to-exemptions-from-the-substance-restrictions-in-electrical-and-electronic-equipment-pbKH0416554/>.

⁷ The consultations were carried out in written form from 27 April until 18 May 2017.

⁸ A list of the required administrative steps is available on the [Commission website](#). Current stage of the procedure can be viewed for each draft delegated act in the Interinstitutional Registry of Delegated Acts at <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/regdel/#/home>.

substitution with cadmium free alternatives is already underway. The granted validity period is also not expected to have adverse impacts on innovation. For categories other than categories 1 to 7 and 10, the existing exemption remains as per the validity periods set out in Article 5(2). The specific exemption does not weaken the environmental and health protection afforded by Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 (REACH), in accordance with Article 5 of Directive 2011/65/EU.

3. LEGAL ELEMENTS OF THE DELEGATED ACT

The Delegated Directive grants an exemption from the restrictions in Article 4(1), to be listed in Annex III of Directive 2011/65/EU, for the use of cadmium in specific applications.

The instrument is a Delegated Directive, as provided for by Directive 2011/65/EU, and in particular meeting the relevant requirements of Article 5(1)(a) thereof.

The objective of the Delegated Directive is to contribute to the protection of human health and the environment and approximate the provisions for the functioning of the internal market in the field of electrical and electronic equipment, by allowing the use of otherwise banned substances for specific applications, in line with the provisions and under the conditions of RoHS 2 and the therein established procedure for the adaptation of the Annexes III and IV to scientific and technical progress.

In accordance with the principle of proportionality, the measure does not go beyond what is necessary to achieve its objective.

The proposal has no implications for the EU budget.

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(Text with EEA relevance)

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Directive 2011/65/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 8 June 2011 on the restriction of the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment¹ and in particular Article 5(1)(a) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Directive 2011/65/EU requires Member States to ensure that electrical and electronic equipment placed on the market does not contain certain hazardous substances listed in Annex II to that Directive. That requirement does not apply to the applications listed in Annex III to Directive 2011/65/EU.
- (2) The different categories of electrical and electronic equipment for which Directive 2011/65/EU applies (categories 1 to 11) are listed in Annex I to that Directive.
- (3) Cadmium is a restricted substance listed in Annex II to Directive 2011/65/EU. The use of cadmium and its compounds in electrical contacts was, however, exempted from the restriction and is currently listed in entry 8(b) of Annex III to that Directive. The expiry date of that exemption was, for categories 1 to 7 and 10, 21 July 2016.
- (4) The Commission received an application for renewal of that exemption before 21 January 2015, in accordance with Article 5(5) of Directive 2011/65/EU. The exemption remains valid until a decision on that application has been adopted.
- (5) Electrical contact materials containing cadmium are used in many electromechanical devices as components which can carry current intermittently through contact surfaces. Devices concerned are in particular power switching of electric motors, relays and contactors, switches for power tools, appliance switches, circuit breakers for switching equipment, power packs, occupancy/time delay sensors, and lighting control panels.
- (6) Cadmium in electrical contacts provides essential properties such as superior performance, arc-quenching, higher conductivity, less contact erosion and relatively easy manufacture compared to the alternatives.
- (7) For certain applications covered by the current exemption, a substitution or elimination of cadmium is still scientifically and technically impracticable due to the lack of reliable substitutes or requires more time to ensure the reliability of the

¹ OJ L 174, 1.7.2011, p. 88.

available substitutes. The exemption does not weaken the environmental and health protection afforded by Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council². It should therefore be renewed for those particular applications.

- (8) For all other applications currently covered by the exemption, the conditions for renewal are not fulfilled. The exemption for those applications should continue to apply for 12 months after the date of entry into force of this Delegated Directive in accordance with Article 5(6) of Directive 2011/65/EU.
- (9) Since, for the applications concerned by that renewal, no reliable alternatives are available on the market or more time is needed to ensure the reliability of such alternatives, the exemption for those applications should be renewed for categories 1 to 7 and 10 for the maximum duration validity period of five years until 21 July 2021. In view of the results of the ongoing efforts to find a reliable substitution, the duration of the exemption is unlikely to have adverse impacts on innovation.
- (10) For categories other than 1 to 7 and 10, the existing exemption remains valid as per the validity periods set out in the second subparagraph of Article 5(2) of Directive 2011/65/EU. For reasons of clarity, the dates of expiry should be added in Annex III to that Directive.
- (11) Directive 2011/65/EU should therefore be amended accordingly,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DIRECTIVE:

Article 1

Annex III to Directive 2011/65/EU is amended as set out in the Annex to this Directive.

Article 2

1. Member States shall adopt and publish, by [the last day of the 12th month after the date of entry into force of this Directive] at the latest, the laws, regulations and administrative provisions necessary to comply with this Directive. They shall forthwith communicate to the Commission the text of those provisions.

They shall apply those provisions from [the last day of the 12th month after the date of entry into force of this Directive + 1 day].

When Member States adopt those provisions, they shall contain a reference to this Directive or be accompanied by such a reference on the occasion of their official publication. Member States shall determine how such reference is to be made.

2. Member States shall communicate to the Commission the text of the main provisions of national law which they adopt in the field covered by this Directive.

Article 3

This Directive shall enter into force on the twentieth day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

² Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) and establishing a European Chemicals Agency (OJ L 396, 30.12.2006, p. 1).

Article 4

This Directive is addressed to the Member States.

Done at Brussels, 16.11.2018

For the Commission
The President
Jean-Claude JUNCKER