

WRITTEN QUESTION E-5699/08
by Lambert van Nistelrooij (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Flame retardants

Flame retardants used in the manufacture of electrical equipment and other products play an important role in preventing fire deaths and injuries. The use of flame retardants is now under threat following the Commission's failure to follow the correct procedure to allow the use of one such flame retardant, DecaBDE.

As a result of the European Court of Justice decision of 1 April 2008, the use of DecaBDE in electrical equipment is now banned in the EU. On 29 May, the Commission published the results of the risk assessment of DecaBDE carried out under the Regulation on Existing Chemicals (Official Journal 2008/C 131/04). This risk assessment of DecaBDE identified no significant risks for human health and the environment.

- In view of the positive outcome of the risk assessment, will the Commission now put forward a proposal to exclude DecaBDE from the RoHS directive?
- If not, how will it ensure that a substance which makes an important contribution to the fire safety of consumer products and that has been found safe to use can once again be used in the EU?