



Sealants by sea

Leading players in the adhesives industry spoke at the FEICA Conference held in Noordwijk, The Netherlands. Sue Tyler reports

At Noordwijk aan Zee in The Netherlands industry professionals attended FEICA's European Adhesives Conference 2006 from September 13 - 15. Over 230 delegates took part in this annual event, networking and listening to informative presentations on the latest developments in the adhesives market.

The FEICA Forum chaired by FEICA president, Rafael Castellvi, provided a full report on FEICA's activities over the past year, followed by a statement on the market, trends and vision.

With the 'old' FEICA closing and the new FEICA being set up by the end of December, a vote of hands showed the agreement of such a move. The new Association will now include sealants manufacturers as well as the adhesives manufacturers as direct members. The new FEICA (the name is remaining unchanged as it has become a brandname to the industry) was founded on August 28, 2006 in Brussels under Belgian law.

Rafael Castellvi gave an overview of the old and new FEICA, while the secretary general presented his report on the financial accounts. He said the global adhesives and sealants market totalled €37bn, with an annual growth of 3%. The business climate has been the best for five years and the global joining and fastening market totalled US\$51bn.

IMPLEMENTING REACH

After the coffee break, Mrs Judith Hackitt, director of Implementation Chemicals for Europe, CEFIC gave her presentation on REACH and Chemistry for Europe - Adopting to meet the changing needs of industry. She couldn't stress enough the need to implement REACH and she had no doubt that it would not be the end of the story once REACH was in place. She said that 2006 was a year of change for everyone. Since the first

reading of REACH in November 2005 and the second reading in the European Parliament this autumn, the first quarter of 2007 will be when the council decides on the adoption or conciliation in the spring of 2007. She said: 'We are nearing the end of implementing REACH but we must not be complacent and think we can sit back and it will happen. You have to spend the time to ensure implementation.'

CEFIC has been working closely with SMEs, supply chains etc and culminated in the launch of Brussels based ReachCentrum five years ago. As well as the priority activities mentioned, an improved understanding of downstream issues is necessary and the supporting role of trade bodies becomes crucial.

She continued her presentation on Chemistry in Europe, stating the industry must be proactive not reactive. REACH has the potential to be good for business and for regaining stakeholder confidence in the industry but Mrs Hackitt said, 'only if we get workable legislation and industry commits to the right approach'. REACH will be a regulatory focus and major workload for industry over the next 15 years.

ReachCentrum has been established as an independent service body, which will be part of a

consistent service network provided by CEFIC, national associations and member state authorities.

CEFIC will provide advice to member companies and affiliates on implementation and compliance. REACH is a once in a lifetime opportunity to show that industry does care and acts responsibly. Industry needs REACH to work well and needs to be seen to be making it work.

In conclusion Mrs Hackitt said that the sustainability of the whole industry in the 21st Century was in industry's hands.

To round off the first day, a welcome cocktail party was held on Noordwijk beach, enabling delegates and speakers to meet in convivial surroundings make new acquaintances and renew existing ones.

TECHNICAL TRACK

Thomas Brewer of Dewitt & Company opened the next day's presentations with his talk on 'Navigating the Chemical Raw Materials Supply Chain'. He began with industry fundamentals and



Rafael Castellvi, FEICA president

The FEICA European Adhesives Conference 2007 will be held from September 12-14 in Brussels, Belgium. Location will be announced later.

Delegates swelled the conference room at Noordwijk



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