



Leading EU associations express concerns about the illegal trade of refrigerants

Brussels, 30 October 2018: EPEE, representing the refrigeration, air-conditioning and heat pump industry in Europe, and three leading associations in the heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration (HVACR) sector – EFCTC, AREA and ADC3R – have joined forces to call for a better enforcement of the EU F-Gas Regulation.

As growing illegal trade of refrigerants is reported, the associations call on all market players to only buy refrigerants from reputable sources in order to ensure the safe and efficient operation of HVACR equipment. Illegally imported refrigerant can present a major risk for the health and safety of installers and users and for the reliability of equipment. In case of accidents which may result from the use of unknown substances contained in illegally imported containers or cylinders, installers will ultimately be responsible.

“We have supported the F-Gas Regulation and the transition towards lower GWP refrigerants right from the start. We cannot afford such loopholes in the implementation and lack of coordinated enforcement, especially now as the world has agreed on a global phase-down of HFCs under the Kigali Amendment which will enter into force in those countries that have ratified it in less than 3 months”, says Andrea Voigt, Director General of EPEE.

Illegal imports and consequent commercialisation of such refrigerants do not only pose a reliability and safety hazard but also but also put at risk the achievement of the ambitious CO₂-equivalent reduction goals set by the F-Gas Regulation.

“There is no need for illegal imports”, adds Andrea Voigt, *“sustainable and lower GWP refrigerants and technologies are available today to contribute to meeting the requirements under the F-Gas Regulation.”*

“Authorities are ultimately responsible for the proper enforcement of the F-Gas Regulation and we call on all actors - including EU and National competent authorities - to also play their part in enforcing stricter controls at EU borders” added Olivier Janin, Secretary General of AREA, the refrigeration, air conditioning and heat pump contractors’ association.

The European Commission is working on this issue as a priority and the associations intend to work with them over the coming months to help accelerate progress.

The EU F-Gas Regulation entered into force in 2015. Its objective is to reduce emissions from HVACR equipment. One of its main measures is the HFC phase-down which aims at the transition towards refrigerants with a lower Global Warming Potential (GWP) by gradually reducing the quantities of HFCs, expressed in CO₂-equivalents, placed on the EU market.

For any further question, please contact the EPEE Secretariat (secretariat@epeeglobal.org).

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