



# PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAMME

Product  
Research

**Communication**

Workplace  
Monitoring

**CARE**

COMMUNICATION

# ECFIA 'S PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAMME **COMMUNICATION**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This is a document in the ECFIA Product Stewardship Programme (PSP) series. Documents in this series provide detailed information on key PSP elements. The purpose of this document is to provide a brief description of the communication being undertaken by ECFIA and its member companies. A general overview of the PSP is provided in the ECFIA Action document "ECFIA 's Product Stewardship Programme".



## **WHAT IS THE PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAMME?**

In the 1990s ECFIA, the European association of the manufacturers of High Temperature Insulation Wools (HTIW), proactively developed a comprehensive Product Stewardship Programme (PSP). Its purpose is to enable full understanding of the way that HTIW may impact workers and the environment, and to mitigate any such possible impacts. It is designed to give manufacturers, end-users and regulators knowledge about the manufacture, use, levels and health effects of HTIW in industrial settings, and to provide analysis and recommendations on the proper storage, handling, use and disposal of HTIW products.

## BACKGROUND

In 1979 ECFIA's founding members defined the association's main aims and objectives as a basis for the association's future activities. Several of these elements contained a strong communicative element. Therefore communication with stakeholders has been, and remains today, an important part of ECFIA's activities.

Driven by findings on the health effects of fibrous materials, extensive activities have been undertaken to ensure continued safe use of HTIW. Beginning in the 1970s, ECFIA's members build up expert knowledge on proper handling practices, health effects and exposure guidelines and shared data with many different stakeholders.

## COMMUNICATION

### OCCUPATIONAL (INDUSTRIAL) HYGIENISTS

The Occupational hygienists (OHs) are ECFIA's direct connection to the workers who are actively or passively exposed to HTIW in their day-to-day work. The OHs take workplace measurements as part of ECFIA's CARE Programme<sup>1</sup> and provide, based on their experience, recommendations on how to reduce workplace exposure to fibrous dusts. Because of this direct involvement, they are familiar with the actual situation at the workplaces and are able to pick up the latest problems and questions, enabling ECFIA to develop the best means to deal with them.

### SCIENCE

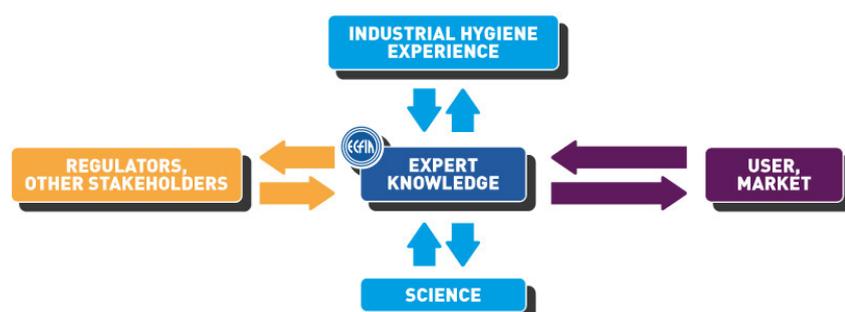
Since its founding, ECFIA has cooperated with universities to gain extensive knowledge on the interactions of HTIW with the human body and the associated mechanisms. This cooperation has been taking place for more than 30 years, resulting in several research contracts and the publication of many peer reviewed articles in scientific journals.

### USER

ECFIA's communication with "users" comprises the interaction with distributors and end-user companies and involves the provision of advice, information and guidance. Enquiries coming from this target audience are often linked to issues around legislation and regulation, general advice on substitution, or the practical consequences of scientific findings.

### REGULATORS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

ECFIA's comprehensive theoretical and practical knowledge on HTIW makes ECFIA a valuable resource for government agencies, regulators, unions and NGOs and it maintains contacts in many European countries.



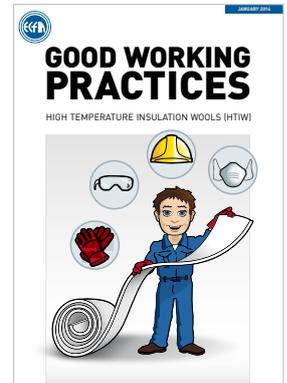
<sup>1</sup> CARE Programme: Controlled And Reduced Exposure Programme  
[http://www.ecfia.eu/has\\_care.htm](http://www.ecfia.eu/has_care.htm)

### IMPORTANT FACT

ECFIA does not provide recommendations regarding the use of a specific product or product group in a specific application. Users have to contact their distributor for answers to such questions.

### LEAFLET ON SAFE HANDLING AND USE

The leaflet is a good example of ECFIA's communication with the worker at the shop floor level. It is designed to inform workers on the safe handling and use of HTIW products. It centres mainly on the practical aspects these people may encounter during their normal day-to-day routine (common brand names, proper work clothes and the use of personal protection equipment) using easy to understand language supported by numerous illustrations. It also contains an easy to use "do your work safely" check list and is available in various languages.

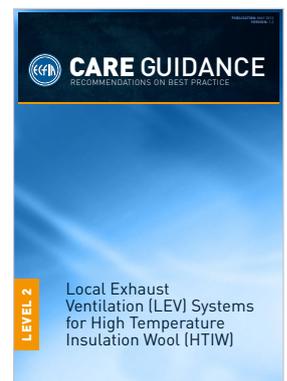


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### CARE GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS

The CARE Guidance documents are written for people with technical or engineering knowledge who are trying to improve their company's workplace safety by adjusting workplace situations. Each one focuses on a specific process or workplace situation, contains helpful before / after pictures, and utilises ECFIA's long-time experience on best practices.

[CLICK HERE FOR DOWNLOAD](#)



### CARE MEASUREMENT REPORTS

CARE measurement reports are the result of an OH's visit to a specific factory. They contain the result of the measurement as well as advice for the improvement of processes or workplace controls, if necessary. They are a support for the company's technical and engineering staff as well as a source of information for the management. They often refer to CARE Guidance documents for further information and advice.

### SCIENTIFIC PAPERS

While many papers have been written on fibre toxicity in general, publications on the specifics of HTIW are rather rare. ECFIA is very interested in furthering the scientific understanding of the health related aspects of its members' products. It promotes the publication and scientific discourse of publications on this matter. The paper on "Regulatory risk assessment approaches for synthetic mineral fibres" published in Regulatory Toxicology and Pharmacology in 2015 is a good example of a scientific publication sponsored by ECFIA.

## EXAMPLES OF ECFIA'S COMMUNICATION WITH DIFFERENT TARGET GROUPS



## SUMMARY

Since its founding in 1979, ECFIA has built up extensive knowledge on all aspects of HTIW. Through the PSP, ECFIA shares these data and information with many different stakeholders including company employees, the scientific community, and government agencies. The communication materials include documents in various languages on best practices for handling HTIW products, training brochures, measurement reports, and scientific presentations and publications in the peer-reviewed literature.

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT

[www.ecfia.eu](http://www.ecfia.eu)

[www.guidance.ecfia.eu](http://www.guidance.ecfia.eu)

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