

Press Release

Brussels, 4 January 2021

Collaboration agreement on first ever European OCS certification scheme signed

Plastics Value Chain leading the way towards zero pellet loss

Unintentional loss of plastic pellets can occur at all stages along the value chain despite the application of the current standard environmental, safety and quality management controls. The “Operation Clean Sweep®” (OCS) programme was developed to help companies tackle pellet leakage by providing a series of key recommendations.

Today, two major actors of the European plastics value chain signed a collaboration agreement to jointly develop a certification system by 2022 aimed at controlling pellet loss across the plastic supply chain. All signatory companies of the scheme will be audited regularly by accredited third parties to establish their compliance with OCS requirements. It will also support the effective, harmonised and quantifiable implementation of the programme.

“I am proud to be part of this major step forwards by the industry and its ongoing commitment to tackling plastic pollution. Together with the plastics value chain we are developing the first ever European OCS certification scheme, enabling our members and all the value chain of pellet handlers, to transparently and jointly demonstrate their efforts towards zero pellet loss into the environment”, said Virginia Janssens, Managing Director of PlasticsEurope.

Alexandre Dangis, EuPC Managing Director, added: “The global issue of pellet loss will only be solved by taking joint actions. Together with all companies handling pellets, we need implementable concrete measures in order to meet our zero pellet loss goal. Many EuPC members mainly representing SMEs, National Plastics Associations and sectors, have already joined OCS and actively promote the scheme towards their member companies. This project takes the plastics converting, masterbatching and compounding industry to the next level, further supporting the sector across Europe to demonstrate sound environmental management.”

The agreement was signed by EuPC, the association of European Plastics Converters and PlasticsEurope, the trade association representing plastics manufacturers in Europe. This collaboration will also benefit from ‘Safety & Quality Assessment for Sustainability in chemicals transports’ (SQAS) scheme expertise in setting up the OCS Europe Certification scheme. Both PlasticsEurope and EuPC will collaborate with all other actors of the plastics value chain in the development of the scheme.

The plastics value chain’s support for OCS continues to grow boasting close to 1200 signatories amongst which three major European ports, handling plastic pellets – Cartagena, Tarragona (ES) and Felixstowe (UK). Moreover, PlasticsEurope reached an important milestone by extending the OCS membership to 100% of its members to which the pledge is applicable. This is the result of PlasticsEurope’s decision to make OCS compulsory for its entire membership as of 1st January 2020.

Background:

What is OCS?

PlasticsEurope is the European coordinator of the global initiative “Operation Clean Sweep®” – a programme which provides recommendations to companies on how to achieve zero pellet loss. As such, PlasticsEurope encourages the entire plastics value chain, be it member

companies, logistics providers, transporters, converters or recyclers to join the programme and implement it in their daily activities.

The six commitments of OCS in Europe

The OCS programme is based on six pillars: improve worksite set-up to prevent and address spills, create internal procedures to achieve zero plastic material loss, provide employee training and accountability, auditing, legal compliance and awareness raising to value chain partners.

Read the 2019 OCS Annual Progress Report here: www.opcleansweep.eu and www.plasticseurope.org.

Further activities supporting the fight against marine litter can be found on www.marinelittersolutions.org.

About PlasticsEurope:

PlasticsEurope is the pan-European association of plastics manufacturers. For over 100 years, science and innovation has been the DNA that cuts across our industry. With close to 100 members producing over 90% of all polymers across Europe, we are the catalyst for the industry with a responsibility to communicate transparently with other stakeholders and deliver solutions which are safe, circular and sustainable. We are committed to implementing long-lasting positive change.

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About EuPC:

European Plastics Converters (EuPC) is the leading EU-level trade association representing European plastics converting companies. Plastics converters use plastics raw materials and recycled polymers to manufacture new products. The European plastics industry makes a significant contribution to the welfare in Europe by enabling innovation, creating quality of life to citizens and facilitating resource efficiency and climate protection. More than 1.6 million people are working in over 50,000 EU converting companies (mainly SMEs) to create a turnover in excess of € 260 billion per year.

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