

CHEMICAL SAFETY REPORT

Sections 9 & 10

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Submitted by:	Surface Engineering Association Chromium Trioxide Authorisation Consortium
Substance:	Chromium Trioxide EC: 215-607-8

CAS: 1333-82-0

Use title:

Use of chromium trioxide for the electroplating of various components with technical performance requirements, such as for the brewery industry, construction sector, general engineering, sports equipment, fire protection, architectural hardware, medical devices classic/vintage cars & motorcycles, sanitaryware & plumbing with the purpose of creating a coating to provide specific performance characteristics and to match existing components and those supplied from other sources

Use number:

3

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Abbreviations

BAT	Best Available Techniques
BMGV	Biological Monitoring Guidance Value
CSR	Chemical Safety Report
DF	Dilution Factor
DNEL	Derived No Effect Level
DWF	Dry Weather Flow
ETP	Effluent Treatment Plant
LEV	Local Exhaust Ventilation
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
RMM	Risk Management Measures
TWA	Time-weighted Average
WCS	Worker Contributing Scenario
WEL	Workplace Exposure Limit
WWTW	Wastewater Treatment Works

9. EXPOSURE ASSESSMENT (and related risk characterisation)

9.1 Introduction

This exposure assessment is part of the applications for authorisation for the continued use of chromium trioxide (CAS 1333-82-0, EC: 215-607-8) in specific decorative chromium plating applications where a set of performance requirements must be met. This report has been compiled by the Surface Engineering Association Chromium Trioxide Authorisation Consortium (SEACTAC) on behalf of and in conjunction with the applicants. According to Article 62 (4) (d) of the REACH Regulation, CSR in AfA should cover the risks to human health and / or the environment arising from the intrinsic properties specified in Annex XIV, therefore this CSR focuses on carcinogenicity and mutagenicity endpoints.

In particular, the risk assessment performed by SEACTAC took into account the information and the dose-response relationship provided by the risk assessment committee (RAC) in the document "Application for Authorization: Establishing a reference dose response relationship for carcinogenicity of hexavalent chromium" (RAC / 27/2013/06 Rev. 1 Final¹).

In this document, RAC confirmed that it is not possible to determine a "derived no-effect level" for the carcinogenic properties of chromium trioxide and therefore Chromium Trioxide should be considered as non-threshold substance for the purposes of Article 60 (3) (a) of the REACH Regulation, As a result, according to Article 60 (4) of the REACH Regulation, demonstrating adequate control is not possible and the SEA route is applicable.

This assessment is focused mainly on the Annex XIV properties (Carcinogenic (category 1A) Mutagenic (category 1B)) but an assessment of environmental exposure and consequent assessment of man via the environment has also been carried out to establish any potential exposure levels to the general population.

9.1.1. Overview of uses and Exposure Scenarios

Tonnage information:

The total tonnage used by all the members of this application is between 11 and 14 tonnes per annum. The members are micro, small and medium sized business for the purpose of REACH authorisation applications and full details of company sizes are included with this application for authorisation. All of the members are located in the UK and are members of the Surface Engineering Association

The following table lists all the exposure scenarios (ES) assessed in this CSR.

Table 1 Overview of Contributing Scenarios

Contributing scenario	ERC / PROC	Name of the contributing scenario	Size of the exposed population
ES 1:			
ECS1		Use of chromium trioxide for the electroplating of various components with technical performance requirements, such as for the brewery	All Local

		industry, construction sector, general engineering, sports equipment, fire protection, architectural hardware, medical devices classic/vintage cars & motorcycles, sanitaryware & plumbing with the purpose of creating a coating to provide specific performance characteristics and to match existing components and those supplied from other sources	
WCS 1	PROC 1	Receipt & storage of chromium trioxide	34
WCS 2	PROC 4	Loading / unloading jigs	68
WCS 3	PROC 13	Operating the electroplating line	34
WCS 4	PROC 8b	Sampling the electroplating solution	34
WCS 5	PROC 8b	Making additions of chromium trioxide	34
WCS 6		Maintenance activities	34
WCS 7	PROC 28	Wastewater / effluent treatment	34

Please note that the majority of these tasks will be undertaken by the same workers.

Further details on each activity are as follows:

WCS 1- Receipt, transfer and storage of Chromium Trioxide

The chromium trioxide to be used in the chromium plating tank arrives in the company in hermetically sealed steel drums of 25 kg or 50kg each, and the chromium trioxide has the appearance of dark red flakes. Upon receipt, checks are carried out to ensure the goods are in accordance with the purchase order but the drums are not opened. Upon successful completion of the checks, the drums are moved by a worker to a dedicated area in the raw material storage area. Access to this area is controlled and only approved employees are allowed access.



Typical Raw material store

WCS 2 – Loading/unloading of jigs

Before being transferred to the electroplating process line, the components are loaded onto specially designed jigs or attached by copper wire to specially designed frames. The components then pass through the electroplating process.

On completion of the electroplating process, the jigs / frames are then unloaded and the components are ready for quality control checks.



Plating Jig with component

Plating Jigs

WCS3 – Operation of electroplating process line

If the process plant is manual, the electroplater will follow the entire electroplating process of the components, loading the jigs into the process tanks according to the process schedule and specification.

If the process plant is automatic, there is very little direct involvement of the workers.

Essentially they just check the correct operation of the plant using the control monitor and performing occasional visual checks on the tanks (tank level monitoring, pumps, pipes).

WCS4 – Sampling the electroplating solution

To monitor the quality of the process, periodic checks are carried out in either external laboratories or the companies own laboratory to check that the electroplating solution is within the specified operating parameters.

WCS5 – Making additions of chromium trioxide

When the result of samples analysis shows a need for additions to the electroplating solution, suitably trained and qualified employees will make additions of chromium trioxide to the electroplating solution to ensure that the optimal concentration of chromium trioxide is maintained.

WCS6 – Maintenance

In accordance with the operating procedures of the site periodic maintenance activities are carried out on the electroplating processline and wastewater treatment plant.

WCS7 – Wastewater and effluent treatment

Waste water from the rinsing stages of the chromium electroplating will either be stored for disposal by registered waste handlers or reduced to the trivalent form of chromium in an effluent treatment plant before discharge to a further water treatment plant via the foul sewer. Companies that discharge waste water operate under a consent to discharge from their local water company. The effluent treatment plant will produce a sludge but this will not contain any chromium trioxide as it has been fully reduced during the effluent treatment process.

Waste rinse water containing Chromium Trioxide is typically treated in 2 stages. Stage 1 changes hexavalent chromium (Cr^{+6}) to trivalent chromium (Cr^{+3}). Trivalent chromium

freely bonds to hydroxide in Stage 2 of the treatment process. The final result is a precipitate: chromium hydroxide $\text{Cr}(\text{OH})_3$.

Hexavalent Chromium Reduction (Stage 1)

The most common treatment method for reducing hexavalent chromium to trivalent chromium is by using chemical reducing agents such as sulphur dioxide (SO_2), sodium bisulphite (NaHSO_3) or sodium meta-bisulphite ($\text{Na}_2\text{S}_2\text{O}_5$). This reaction will progress rapidly at a pH of between 2 and 3.

Precipitation of Chromium Hydroxide (Stage Two)

Once the first stage reaction is complete, calcium hydroxide, $\text{Ca}(\text{OH})_2$, (lime), must be added to the wastewater to promote precipitation of chromium hydroxide. The precipitate can be easily separated and disposed of. This precipitation takes place at a pH of 8 and above.

The following table summarise the frequency and duration of each of the contributing scenarios in this particular application for authorisation:

Table 2 – Frequency & duration of tasks

WCS	Frequency / duration of task	8-hour Shift equivalent (232 working days/year) hours
WCS1	1-2 per year/30 minutes	4.31×10^{-3}
WCS2	10-12 per shift/10 minutes	2
WCS3	20-30 per shift/3 minutes	3
WCS4	1-2 per year/2 minutes	2.875×10^{-4}
WCS5	1-2 per year/30 minutes	4.31×10^{-3}
WCS6	As required/ 10 minutes	0.1667
WCS7	1-2 per year/ 20 minutes	2.875×10^{-3}

Total (averaged) hours exposure per 8 hr (TWA) = 5.1785

9.2 Risk Management Measures and Operational Controls

There have been regulations in place in the UK regarding the use of chromium trioxide in chromium electroplating operations since 1931. These were amended in 1973 and then revoked by the issue of the Control of Hazardous Substances regulations in 1988. There has also been joint Health & Safety Executive and Surface Engineering Association guidance on best practice in place for many years and these will be revised following the conclusion of the application for authorisation.

Many educational events have taken place, again over many years, such as the 2005 National Health Awareness Day for the UK Chromium Plating Industry and the Disease Reduction Programme focussing on workplace cancers which began in 2008.

The UK has been at the forefront of the control of the potential risks during chromium electroplating from the use of chromium trioxide. The UK's approach of risk management rather than complete risk removal (leading to processes being carried in countries with less stringent or even no real controls) means that chromium trioxide can be used safely in electroplating processes with exposures similar to background levels.

Here is a list of the risk management measures and operational controls that are in operation at the sites that are covered by this particular application.

- 1 – Workplace & Employee Exposure
- 2 – Training
- 3 – Suitable PPE
- 4 – Mist Suppressants
- 5 – Wastewater treatment

6 – Waste disposal

7 – Regular maintenance

8 – Management Systems

9.1.2. Introduction to the assessment

9.1.2.1. Environment

The quantity of chromium trioxide used is up to 8.2 Tonnes per year (total) across all 13 sites (companies) detailed within this group. There are no releases to atmosphere from any of the sites as there is no LEV in use and there are no releases to watercourses. All chromium trioxide waste is treated on-site by chemical reduction before disposal via sewer to the local WWTW or, disposed for treatment off-site using registered waste contractors. Once the components have been coated, there is no residual chromium trioxide and so, there is no potential for health impacts during use of the finished articles.

Scope and type of assessment:

Where applicable, waste effluent monitoring is carried out by the relevant Water Authority via site sampling of discharge to Foul Sewer transfer to the local WWTW where it is further diluted before onward discharge.

9.1.2.2. Human via environment

There are no quantifiable releases of chromium trioxide to the environment as there are no LEV in use therefore operations involving chromium trioxide make no contribution to this potential route of human exposure.

9.1.2.3. Workers

Scope and type of assessment:

The worker exposure via inhalation for all WCS are assessed using the results of the regular chromic acid mist tests, personal air sampling and (where possible) biological monitoring of the worker. In most cases, the air sampling is carried out by specialist companies and analysed off site.

Air-monitoring Samples

Air-monitoring samples were collected by drawing a measured volume of air through prepared filter media in accordance with the requirement of MDHS 52/4² and using the WEL's detailed in EH 40/2005³.

For the chromic acid mist tests, the Sampling Head is positioned 300mm above the solution surface and for the personal air samples, the sampling head is positioned within the workers breathing zone.

Company (site)	Sample Type	Chromium in Urine ($\mu\text{mol/mol creatinine}$)*
[REDACTED]	Biological Monitoring	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Biological Monitoring	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Biological Monitoring	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Biological Monitoring	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Biological Monitoring	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Biological Monitoring	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	Biological Monitoring	[REDACTED]

Notes:

#Where no data is available, results are assumed to be less than the BMGV ($10\mu\text{mol/mol}$)

*UK Biological Monitoring Guidance Value (BMGV) is $10\mu\text{mol/mol}$ (creatinine) with unexposed level being $2.9\mu\text{mol/mol}$ (creatinine).

**Measurements below the unexposed (general public) level

***measurements below BMGV

Comments on assessment approach related to toxicological hazard:

The assessment approach uses measured data from each of the sites within this group but, as the actual process operational times are very short, the low frequency and low volume of chromium trioxide addition and the relative proximity of the Worker to the plating process tanks during operation; the only viable data to assess exposure is the mist test and personal air sample results.

Some sites also collect biological monitoring data in order to assess exposure via all potential routes i.e., inhalation, ingestion and dermal contact absorption. This measure indicates "total chrome" but cannot distinguish between the valent states and is, therefore, an indicator only of control measure efficacy.

Comments on assessment approach related to physicochemical hazard:

Chromium Trioxide is classified as a Category 1 carcinogen (R45: 'May cause cancer') and, as such, does not have any Derived No Effect Limit (DNEL). Therefore, WEL and BMGV values (where available) are used as benchmarks for controls.

General information on risk management related to toxicological hazard:

The conditions of use detailed within this CSR (sections 9.2.1 to 9.2.7.) specify that all handling of the substance by the Worker should be done while wearing appropriate PPE relative to the task.

General information on risk management related to physicochemical hazard:

The conditions of storage, use & handling of the substance are detailed within this CSR under sections 9.2.1 to 9.2.7 and are utilised as the RMM's.

9.1.2.4. Consumers

There is no exposure to consumers from the use of chromium trioxide in accordance with this application for Authorisation.

There are no releases of chromium trioxide to the environment from any of the group sites therefore the process operations involving chromium trioxide make no contribution to this

potential route of human exposure.

9.2. Exposure scenario 1 for workers

9.2.1. Worker contributing scenario 1

This contributing scenario covers potential exposure during receipt of bulk raw materials and transfer to secure storage area.

9.2.1.1. Conditions of use

	Method
Product (article) characteristics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sealed container containing dry flake/granule form comprising >99.8% Chromium Trioxide. 	
Amount used (or contained in articles), frequency and duration of use/exposure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25Kg container. Average 4x per annum. No exposure as sealed container. 	
Technical and organisational conditions and measures	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep sealed in original container. Transfer to store location. 	
Conditions and measures related to personal protection, hygiene and health evaluation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wear chemically resistant gloves, coverall, eye protection in case of accidental spillage. 	
Other conditions affecting workers exposure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> n/a 	
Additional good practice advice. Obligations according to Article 37(4) of REACH do not apply	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use mechanical aids for movement and lifting where possible. 	

9.2.2. Worker contributing scenario 2

This contributing scenario covers the potential exposure to chromic acid during the loading and unloading of components to/from Jigs or wires in preparation for the plating process/final inspection.

9.2.2.1. Conditions of use

	Method
Product (article) characteristics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Components contaminated with chromic acid (25% chromium trioxide) trapped in features. 	
Amount used (or contained in articles), frequency and duration of use/exposure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very small amount (unquantified) 	
Technical and organisational conditions and measures	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rinsing jigs & components is the final stage in the plating process. 	
Conditions and measures related to personal protection, hygiene and health evaluation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wear chemically resistant gloves, coverall, eye protection in combination with specific employee training. 	
Other conditions affecting workers exposure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final rinse (x2) after plating to remove residue. 	
Additional good practice advice. Obligations according to Article 37(4) of REACH do not apply	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific training when working with chromium trioxide. 	

9.2.3. Worker contributing scenario 3

This contributing scenario covers the potential exposure to chromic acid during the plating operation either via surface contamination or airborne mist. (note; total process time is typically 1.5-2.25 hours including 2-3 minutes for the chrome coating).

9.2.3.1. Conditions of use

	Method
Product (article) characteristics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chromic acid containing approximately 25% chromium trioxide. 	
Amount used (or contained in articles), frequency and duration of use/exposure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automated plating lines restrict worker access to operational tanks resulting in reduced potential airborne mist exposure. 	
Technical and organisational conditions and measures	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suppressant used to reduce surface tension and reduce/prevent mist evolution. Physical barriers on automated lines. Very short (2-3 minutes) plating time 	
Conditions and measures related to personal protection, hygiene and health evaluation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wear chemically resistant gloves, coverall, eye protection in combination with specific employee training. 	
Other conditions affecting workers exposure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> n/a 	
Additional good practice advice. Obligations according to Article 37(4) of REACH do not apply	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific training when working with chromium trioxide. 	

9.2.4. Worker contributing scenario 4

This contributing scenario covers the potential exposure to chromic acid while taking samples for analysis which is normally done by Suppliers' own Service Chemist or Third-party specialist.

9.2.4.1. Conditions of use

	Method
Product (article) characteristics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chromic acid (25% chromium trioxide) 	
Amount used (or contained in articles), frequency and duration of use/exposure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100ml typically once per month. 	
Technical and organisational conditions and measures	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seal sample jar and thoroughly rinse before removing from the plating line. 	
Conditions and measures related to personal protection, hygiene and health evaluation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wear chemically resistant gloves, coverall, eye protection in combination with specific employee training. 	
Other conditions affecting workers exposure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> n/a 	
Additional good practice advice. Obligations according to Article 37(4) of REACH do not apply	

	Method
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> avoid repetitive handling (decanting) to keep exposure to a minimum. Specific training when working with chromium trioxide. 	

9.2.5. Worker contributing scenario 5.

This contributing scenario covers the potential exposure to chromium trioxide during the addition of chromium trioxide flakes to the plating solution.

9.2.5.1. Conditions of use

	Method
Product (article) characteristics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dry flake/granule form containing >99.8% Chromium Trioxide 	
Amount used (or contained in articles), frequency and duration of use/exposure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2Kg per week average Short term exposure (typically once per 4 weeks, 10 minutes total) 	
Technical and organisational conditions and measures	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep sealed in original container, in specified area when not in use 	
Conditions and measures related to personal protection, hygiene and health evaluation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wear chemically resistant gloves, coverall, eye protection and particulate filter mask in combination with specific employee training. 	
Other conditions affecting workers exposure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> n/a 	
Additional good practice advice. Obligations according to Article 37(4) of REACH do not apply	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> avoid repetitive handling (decanting) to keep dust exposure to a minimum. Wash empty container and re-seal prior to disposal according to local regulations. Specific training when working with chromium trioxide. 	

9.3 Worker contributing scenario 6.

This contributing scenario covers the potential exposure to chromic acid (chromium trioxide) during maintenance of equipment on the plating line.

9.2.6.1. Conditions of use

	Method
Product (article) characteristics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chromic acid (25% chromium trioxide) 	
Amount used (or contained in articles), frequency and duration of use/exposure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasional exposure subject to requirements 	
Technical and organisational conditions and measures	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plating process must be stopped before any maintenance commences. All parts/surfaces (including surrounding) to be rinsed with low pressure water. 	
Conditions and measures related to personal protection, hygiene and health evaluation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wear chemically resistant gloves, coverall, eye protection in combination with specific employee training. Appropriate RPE if required. 	

	Method
Other conditions affecting workers exposure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confined spaces 	
Additional good practice advice. Obligations according to Article 37(4) of REACH do not apply	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parts replaced should be cleaned prior to disposal. Specific training when working with chromium trioxide. 	

9.4 Worker contributing scenario 7.

This contributing scenario covers the potential exposure to chromic acid flowing to the Effluent Treatment Plant (ETP) during the treatment of waste water (contaminated) from the rinsing process (tank/spray).

9.2.7.1. Conditions of use

	Method
Product (article) characteristics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chromic acid (up to 25% chromium trioxide). 	
Amount used (or contained in articles), frequency and duration of use/exposure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~6Kg per year, diluted by 6,000,000 litres water. Flows through to ETP. 	
Technical and organisational conditions and measures	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced to trivalent chromium by adding sodium metabisulphite in effluent treatment plant. 	
Conditions and measures related to personal protection, hygiene and health evaluation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wear chemically resistant gloves, coverall, eye protection in combination with specific employee training. 	
Other conditions affecting workers exposure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> n/a 	
Additional good practice advice. Obligations according to Article 37(4) of REACH do not apply	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> avoid repetitive handling (decanting) to keep exposure to a minimum. Specific training when working with chromium trioxide. 	

9.5 Combined exposure for all WCS

It is assumed that there is potential for exposure to chromium trioxide from all 7 worker contributing scenarios.

Chromium trioxide is bio-accumulative and exposure potential is via inhalation, ingestion and/or dermal absorption. Results from the regulated monitoring methods of mist testing and personal air sampling all show that the RMM's are effective in maintaining exposures to levels below the WEL for chromium trioxide from both the process generated and TWA measures.

Where biological monitoring is conducted, these results also demonstrate that the RMM's are effective and that all of the results are significantly below the BMGV of 10µmol/mol (creatinine) and with a number of these being below the "un-exposed" level of 2.9µmol/mol (creatinine).

10. RISK CHARACTERISATION RELATED TO COMBINED EXPOSURE

10.1. Human health (related to combined, shift-long exposure)

10.1.1. Workers

Table 6: Combined exposure and risk characterisation

Contributing scenario	Route of exposure	8h TWA exposure values, corrected for PPE and frequency	WEL (EH40/2005 - 4 th Edition 2020) (8-hr TWA reference period)	Excess risk factor (from CSR)
*WCS 1-7	Inhalation	4.875µg/m ³ **	0.025mg/m ³ (25µg/m ³)	0.0949***

* WCSs that may be performed by the same worker/s within one shift

** Detailed in Table 4

***Due to number of workers potentially exposed at all sites

10.1.2. Consumers

Exposure and risk characterisation

There is no exposure to consumers from the use of chromium trioxide in accordance with this application for Authorisation.

There are no releases of chromium trioxide to the environment from any of the group sites therefore the process operations involving chromium trioxide make no contribution to this potential route of human exposure.

10.2. Environment (combined for all emission sources)

There are no emissions to air as none of the Group Companies use LEV on their chromium trioxide plating tanks.

There are no emissions to ground as all Group Companies facilities are effectively maintained and banded.

There are no emissions to Surface Water.

All waste solutions from the process are reduced to the Trivalent state (CrIII) within the on-site ETP or collected by licensed waste treatment contractors to be reduced to CrIII before disposal to landfill.

Liquid discharged to foul sewer and transmitted to the local WWTW is sampled and analysis results show chromium (total) to be less than 1.0mg/l. This is below the BAT standard of 1.0mg/l chromium (total).

As these discharges are via foul sewer to WWTW, where it is further diluted prior to discharge to surface water from the WWTW, the 'final' concentration of chromium discharged to surface water is further reduced.

e.g., The applicant discharges an average 137m³/day which flows to the local WWTW that has a DWF of 456,000m³/day.

Therefore, the minimum DF is $456,000/137 = 3328:1$ or $1.0/3328 = 3.005 \times 10^{-4}$ mg/l.

This means that if we assume the discharge to sewer is CrVI, rather than chromium (total), then the DF of 3.005×10^{-4} is a factor of 333 times lower than the BAT standard of 0.1mg/l during DWF.

11. REFERENCES

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2. MDHS 52/4 – Hexavalent chromium in chromium plating mists. Published by the Health & Safety Executive 11/2014
3. EH40/2005 – Workplace Exposure Limits (Fourth edition). Published by The Stationery Office ISBN 978 0 7176 6733 8