

Paris, September 9, 2011

Exemption 8(i) of Annex II to Directive 2000/53/EC Lead-free soldering of automotive glazing

European Commission is permanently working on efforts to make vehicle dismantling and recycling more environmentally friendly, and has in this context the clear target that future vehicle shall not contain lead anymore. This affects automotive glazing, because today it is state of the art to use lead-containing solders when electrical connectors are soldered to an automotive glazing e.g. for antenna or heating function.

Saint-Gobain Sekurit fully supports the EC initiative to find lead-free substitutes, since caring for the environment is an essential element in our company's principles of action. Hence we have invested in the last 3 years very significant resources into the development of lead-free glass component solutions, and first solutions have now been found that meet car manufacturer specifications. Based on the development project conducted in the last years, Saint-Gobain Sekurit has today a good understanding of the roadmap towards making glazing with lead-free connectors and solders available in mass production end 2012 for a first connector geometry, and end 2013 for further connector geometries.

Saint-Gobain Sekurit believes that Indium-based solders will never be able to fulfill tough car manufacturer requirements. Consequently the lead-free solutions that are under development within Saint-Gobain are using solders not comprising Indium, which means that the doubts formulated by various car manufacturers France regarding the high temperature robustness on In-based solders do not apply to our products. In fact, our solutions are designed to pass the very demanding specifications for connectors in automotive glazing.

The situation today is that the solution developed for a first connector geometry is proven to pass the requirements explained in the annex, and we have now started the industrialization phase. Further connector geometries will follow with approximately one year delay.

Regarding the final question whether and how long the exemption should be extended, two time scales are in our view important: component development and industrialization on the glass manufacturers' side, and component validation on the complete vehicle on the car manufacturers' side. Regarding the component aspects, we hope that the information in the annex provides sufficient information to underline that for Saint-Gobain as a glass manufacturer a first SOP for the component end 2012 is possible. Regarding the car manufacturers' validation process, we can already contribute with prototypes comprising flexible connector now, and we shall make available prototypes with other connector geometry mid 2012.

Finally we would like to underline that Saint-Gobain Sekurit is fully determined to replace lead-containing solders on automotive glazing as quickly as possible, and that we shall provide any support and information to car manufacturers needed to make it happen.

Contact partner for questions or requests for further details is Volkmar Offermann (volkmar.offer mann@saint-gobain.com).



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