

# Recommendation to restrict substances in tattoo and permanent make-up inks

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is recommending the restriction of hazardous substances in ink used for tattooing and permanent make-up (PMU) in Great Britain.

The proposed new restriction would target substances classified for carcinogenicity, mutagenicity, reproductive toxicity, skin sensitisation, skin corrosion, and serious eye damage. It aims to protect people from any potential harmful effects which may be caused by tattoo and PMU ink.

This is the first time HSE has recommended a restriction of a substance in its role as the agency for UK REACH, the chemicals regime established in Great Britain after the UK left the European Union.

The Secretary of State for Defra, in consultation with Welsh and Scottish ministers, will now decide if the restriction should be brought into law.

Dr Richard Daniels, director of HSE's chemicals regulation division, said: "Currently there is no legislation to control what substances are present in tattoo and PMU ink. We've considered the health risks carefully and looked at the social and economic impact of recommending this restriction."

Dr Daniels concluded: "If Defra, Scotland and Wales accept our recommendation, the next step is for them to draft new legislation. We are recommending a transition period of two years so there will be time for manufacturers and suppliers to adapt to any new legal requirements and to fully test the safety of reformulated inks before they start to use them, there will be a further year for artists to use up old stock and switch to new inks."

This recommendation has been reviewed by a Challenge Panel made up of independent experts from the [REACH Independent Scientific Expert Pool \(RISEP\)](#).

## **Notes to editors:**

1. [The Health and Safety Executive](#) (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. We prevent work-related death, injury and ill health through regulatory actions that range from influencing behaviours across whole industry sectors through to targeted interventions on individual businesses. These activities are supported by globally recognised scientific expertise.
2. HSE is the Agency for UK REACH and therefore has responsibility for the majority of the regulatory functions under UK REACH. In the delivery of these functions, HSE is supported by and/or reportable to a number of other government organisations.

3. HSE proposes concentration limits of substances in tattoo ink and PMU are based on those established in the GB Classification, Labelling and Packaging (CLP) Regulation; a concentration limit of 0.1% for substances which are prohibited for use in cosmetics because they are listed in Annex II or Annex VI of the Cosmetic Products Regulation (CPR). A derogation is proposed for 19 pigments (including Pigment Blue 15:3 and Pigment Green 7) that are prohibited for use in hair dyes but permitted for use in other types of cosmetics (such as lipsticks). HSE's review of the available hazard information for these 19 pigments did not identify evidence indicating they are unsafe if used in tattoo or permanent makeup ink.
4. The recommendation follows this year's [publication of the final risk assessment opinion and the 60-day public consultation on the draft socio-economic \(SE\) opinion](#),
5. This opinion has been reviewed by a Challenge Panel made up of independent experts from the [REACH Independent Scientific Expert Pool \(RISEP\)](#).
6. Throughout the dossier-preparation and opinion-forming stages, the registry of restriction intentions (see [Restrictions – HSE](#)) was updated with information on public consultations, Challenge Panel meetings notes, the status of the projects and the opinion adoption.
7. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) is available.