

Regulation EC 1907/2006 (REACH): Status of Minerals and Coated Minerals

Thank you for your enquiry concerning our substances / preparations for REACH. Rio Tinto Minerals has been following the developments of the REACH legislation for many years and recognises its obligations as a talc and associated minerals producer, working closely in collaboration with IMA-Europe (Industrial Minerals Association) on the subject. As you will no doubt agree, REACH will have significant impacts on all manufacturers, importers and downstream users in the European Union, and requires their joint collaboration across all supply chains to achieve compliance.

Status of minerals

Our mineral products (talcs, chlorite and leucophyllite) are obtained from naturally occurring ores and are not chemically modified. These minerals are simply ground without the addition or contact of any chemicals during the milling process. Therefore, **these minerals are exempted from registration** in accordance with Title I Chapter 1 Article 2 §7b of REACH REGULATION (EC) 1907/2006 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 18 December 2006 (cf. Annex V §7 of this Regulation – page L396/305). As required by the REACH Regulation, Annex V has been reviewed and the exemption for minerals has been maintained and published in the Commission Regulation (EC) 987/2008 on 8 October 2008.

Status of coated minerals

Coating or surface treatment means a reaction of only a minor part (surface) of a macroscopic particle with the surface treating substance, i.e. most of the macroscopic particle is unmodified. Therefore a chemically surface treated substance cannot be regarded as a preparation nor be defined by the criteria of the "Guidance for identification and naming of substances under REACH". Accordingly ECHA have confirmed¹ that chemically surface treated substances should not be registered as such under REACH, but the following requirements should be fulfilled²:

1. Registration of the basis substance (macroscopic particle)
2. Registration of the surface treating substance
3. Description of the use "surface treatment" in the registration dossier of the surface treating substance and in the registration dossier of the basis substance
4. Any specific hazards or risks of the surface treated substance should be appropriately covered by the classification and labelling and by the chemicals safety assessment and resulting exposure scenarios.

Consequently, coated minerals will not require registration. RTM is a downstream user of the surface treating agents and is looking to support our Suppliers in their registration of these substances, as necessary.

In the meantime, if you have particular concerns please contact your Sales Manager who will be happy to assist wherever possible.

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¹ ECHA Frequently Asked Questions on REACH by Industry, Version 2.2 published on 11 June 2008

² Unless exempted from registration under Article 2 of Regulation (EC) 1907/2006