



*The Voice of European Air-Conditioning, Refrigeration and Heat Pumps Contractors*

**Letter to national governments in the EU and EFTA**

Brussels, 6<sup>th</sup> November 2009

**RE: Impending ban on HCFCs – potential for Smuggling into EU**

Dear Madam/Sir,

AREA is the European association representing refrigeration, air conditioning and heat pump contractors. AREA promotes to its members the safe handling and containment of Hydrofluorocarbons (HCFCs).

HCFCs are used in a wide variety of applications, including process chilling, food storage and air conditioning. In line with EU Regulation 2037/2000, as of 1st January 2010, the use of HCFCs will be banned in the European Union, with the exception of reclaimed and recovered HCFCs when servicing equipment.

The amount of HCFCs recovered is only a small fraction of the amount of HCFCs currently used for service and maintenance of air conditioning and refrigeration equipment. This may lead to the creation of an illegal market for the importation of HCFCs from outside the EU, as previously happened with the phase-out of CFCs.

Concern has been expressed by AREA members across the EU that the benefit to the environment anticipated by the phase-out of virgin HCFCs will be negated and that competition will be distorted by illegal imports.

AREA therefore calls on the responsible bodies in each European Union Member State to take the necessary steps to ensure that HCFC refrigerants are not imported into the EU and EFTA in contravention to Regulation 2037/2000.

***AREA, the Association of European Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Trade Associations, was founded in 1988 and represents European Contractors and Specialists in air conditioning, refrigeration and heat exchanger technology. AREA's 24 members from 20 countries represent at the current time over 10,000 companies throughout Europe employing 125,000 staff and with annual revenues of € 25 billion.***