

File No PLC/765

May 2008

**NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL CHEMICALS NOTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT SCHEME  
(NICNAS)**

**FULL PUBLIC REPORT**

**Polymer in NeoRez U-335**

This Assessment has been compiled in accordance with the provisions of the *Industrial Chemicals (Notification and Assessment) Act 1989* (Cwlth) (the Act) and Regulations. This legislation is an Act of the Commonwealth of Australia. The National Industrial Chemicals Notification and Assessment Scheme (NICNAS) is administered by the Department of Health and Ageing, and conducts the risk assessment for public health and occupational health and safety. The assessment of environmental risk is conducted by the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts.

For the purposes of subsection 78(1) of the Act, this Full Public Report may be inspected at our NICNAS office by appointment only at 334-336 Illawarra Road, Marrickville NSW 2204.

This Full Public Report is also available for viewing and downloading from the NICNAS website or available on request, free of charge, by contacting NICNAS. For requests and enquiries please contact the NICNAS Administration Coordinator at:

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**Director  
NICNAS**

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**FULL PUBLIC REPORT****Polymer in NeoRez U-335****1. APPLICANT AND NOTIFICATION DETAILS**

## APPLICANT(S)

Reschem Technologies Pty Ltd (ABN: 90 315 656 219)

2 Georgina Ave, Elanora Heights NSW 2101

## NOTIFICATION CATEGORY

Polymer of Low Concern

## EXEMPT INFORMATION (SECTION 75 OF THE ACT)

Data items and details claimed exempt from publication:

Spectral data, Chemical Name, Other Names, Molecular and Structural Formulae, Molecular Weight, Polymer Constituents, Residual Monomers/Impurities, Manufacture/Import Volume

## VARIATION OF DATA REQUIREMENTS (SECTION 24 OF THE ACT)

No variation to the schedule of data requirements is claimed.

## PREVIOUS NOTIFICATION IN AUSTRALIA BY APPLICANT(S)

None

## NOTIFICATION IN OTHER COUNTRIES

None

**2. IDENTITY OF CHEMICAL**

## MARKETING NAME(S)

Polymer in NeoRez U-335 (45% of notified polymer)

## REACTIVE FUNCTIONAL GROUPS

The notified polymer contains only low concern functional groups.

**3. PLC CRITERIA JUSTIFICATION***Criterion**Criterion met*

Molecular Weight Requirements

Yes

Functional Group Equivalent Weight (FGEW) Requirements

Yes

Low Charge Density

Yes

Approved Elements Only

Yes

Stable Under Normal Conditions of Use

Yes

Not Water Absorbing

Yes

Not a Hazard Substance or Dangerous Good

Yes

The notified polymer meets the PLC criteria.

**4. PHYSICAL AND CHEMICAL PROPERTIES**

Appearance at 20°C and 101.3 kPa:	Colourless to slightly hazy yellow, liquid (NeoRez U-335)
Boiling Point Temp	> 100°C (Estimated)
Density	9100 kg/m <sup>3</sup> at 20°C (NeoRez U-335)
Water Solubility	The notified polymer is expected to be insoluble in water based on its chemical structure i.e. predominantly hydrophobic monomers
Reactivity	Stable under normal environmental conditions
Degradation Products	None under normal conditions of use.

The notified polymer contains groups in the backbone/side chains that might hydrolyse under severe conditions, but is expected to be stable under normal environmental conditions (pH 4-9).

## 5. INTRODUCTION AND USE INFORMATION

### MAXIMUM INTRODUCTION VOLUME OF NOTIFIED CHEMICAL (100%) OVER NEXT 5 YEARS

<i>Year</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
Tonnes	30-100	30-100	30-100	30-100	30-100

#### USE

The notified polymer is a film-forming resin component used in flexo- and gravure printing inks and is used on a variety of plastic films.

#### Mode of Introduction and Disposal

The notified polymer will be imported in drums as a 45% component in resin solution (Polymer in NeoRez U-335) and reformulated to produce printing inks (< 40% notified polymer).

Disposal will predominantly be to landfill or by incineration.

## 6. HUMAN HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

### Hazard Characterisation

No toxicological data were submitted. The notified polymer meets the PLC criteria and can therefore be considered to be of low hazard.

### Occupational Health and Safety Risk Assessment

#### Reformulation

*Work description:* Vacuum hose line connecting/disconnecting; polymer mixing and blending with other ingredients (e.g. solvents, biocides, wetting agents); sampling for quality control; filtration of the reformulated mixture and drum and pail filling of the final product.

*Exposure:* Workers may experience dermal, ocular and respiratory exposure to the resin solution (containing 45% notified polymer) due to drips splashes and spills, particularly during the mixing stage where workers add to or empty mixing vessels.

*Controls:* Blending of the polymer generally occurs in a closed and automated system with dedicated transfer lines. Polymer mixing with other ingredients is a semi-automated process and filtration, drum and pail filling are automated with minimal worker intervention. Exhaust ventilation is employed to capture aerosols during mixing/blending and container filling. A regular maintenance regime of the ventilation system is also in place and includes monitoring of airflow at intervals. Workers handling the polymer solution wear gloves, coveralls and goggles.

#### Cleaning equipment and ink transfer

*Work description:* Daily manual washing of residual ink from equipment and transfer of ink from the drum to the ink trough, which involves manual connection and disconnection of transfer lines and measuring ink levels.

*Exposure:* Greatest potential for dermal and ocular exposure to the ink (containing < 40% notified polymer) due to the high exposure duration (up to 8 hrs/day) and frequency of exposure (200 days/yr), as well as the high number of workers involved.

*Controls:* Ink transfer from the ink to the trough is an automated process using a pump. Ventilation is provided to remove airborne particles and workers wear overalls, eye protection and gloves.

Although exposure to the notified polymer could occur during reformulation, equipment cleaning and ink transfer, the risk to workers is considered to be low due to the intrinsic low hazard of the notified polymer, the engineering controls in place and safety measures including the use of appropriate personal equipment by workers.

Therefore, under the conditions of the occupational settings described, the risk is considered to be acceptable.

### Public Health Risk Assessment

The general public may be exposed through handling plastic products (such as labels, packaging, bags) that have been printed with the ink containing the notified polymer; therefore the potential exposure levels are high. However, the ink is dried and bound to the print matrix prior to being made available to the public, and given the predicted low hazard of the notified polymer based on its physical-chemical properties, the objective exposure level is low.

## **7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

### Release of Chemical at Site

Although spills are not expected to be frequent, during formulation it is estimated that up to 1% of the notified polymer may be spilt. These spills will be contained within bunding and disposed of by a licensed waste contractor. Small amounts (< 1%) will be present in washes after equipment cleaning. These washes will undergo a process of flocculation which will remove the notified polymer and disposed to landfill. Less than 1% of the notified polymer may remain as residue in the drums. This will be landfilled or incinerated.

### Fate

The final fate of the notified polymer will be the same as the printed articles, which at the end of their useful lives will be recycled or sent to landfill. During the recycling process the ink and hence the notified polymer will be removed and will become part of the solid/sludge waste that will go to landfill or incinerated. Incineration will produce water, oxides of carbon and nitrogen.

### **Hazard Characterisation**

No ecotoxicological data were submitted. Non ionic polymers of NAMW > 1000 are of low concern to the aquatic environment.

### **Environmental Risk Assessment**

The notified chemical will be used as a component of flexo- and gravure printing inks. Once these inks have been cured the notified chemical is expected to remain within the product matrices. Hence, the majority of the notified chemical will share the fate of the articles into which it is incorporated. It is anticipated that these will be disposed of to landfill or incinerated at the end of their useful lifetime. In landfill it is expected that the notified chemical will remain immobile within the soil. Incineration of the notified chemical will result in the formation of water vapour and oxides of carbon and nitrogen.

Based on the use pattern minimum amount of the notified polymer is expected to be released to water and it is not possible to calculate a reasonable predicted environmental concentration (PEC).

The above considerations indicate minimal risk to the environment when the notified chemical is used in the manner and levels indicated by the notifier.

## **8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Human health risk assessment**

Under the conditions of the occupational settings described, the notified polymer is not considered to pose an unacceptable risk to the health of workers.

When used in the proposed manner, the notified polymer is not considered to pose an unacceptable risk to public health.

### **Environmental risk assessment**

Based on the reported use pattern, the notified polymer is not considered to pose a risk to the environment.

### **Recommendations**

#### **CONTROL MEASURES**

##### **Occupational Health and Safety**

- No specific engineering controls, work practices or personal protective equipment are required for the safe use of the notified polymer itself, however, these should be selected on the basis of all ingredients in the formulation.

- A copy of the MSDS should be easily accessible to employees.
- If products and mixtures containing the notified polymer are classified as hazardous to health in accordance with the *Approved Criteria for Classifying Hazardous Substances* [NOHSC: 1008(2004)], workplace practices and control procedures consistent with provisions of State and Territory hazardous substances legislation must be in operation.

#### Disposal

- The notified polymer should be disposed of to landfill.

#### Storage

- The following precautions should be taken by transport, warehouse and manufacturing workers regarding storage of the notified polymer:
  - Ensure it is stored in sealed containers in a cool, dry, ventilated location.
  - Keep away from extreme heat

#### Emergency procedures

- Spills and/or accidental release of the notified polymer should be handled by absorbing with inert material (e.g. vermiculite) then placed in a suitable container. Dispose according to local, state, and federal regulations.

### Regulatory Obligations

#### *Secondary Notification*

This risk assessment is based on the information available at the time of notification. The Director may call for the reassessment of the chemical under secondary notification provisions based on changes in certain circumstances. Under Section 64 of the *Industrial Chemicals (Notification and Assessment) Act (1989)* the notifier, as well as any other importer or manufacturer of the notified polymer, have post-assessment regulatory obligations to notify NICNAS when any of these circumstances change. These obligations apply even when the notified polymer is listed on the Australian Inventory of Chemical Substances (AICS).

Therefore, the Director of NICNAS must be notified in writing within 28 days by the notifier, other importer or manufacturer:

- (1) Under Section 64(1) of the Act; if
  - the notified polymer is introduced in a chemical form that does not meet the PLC criteriaor
- (2) Under Section 64(2) of the Act; if
  - the function or use of the notified polymer has changed from [a film-forming resin component used in flexo- and gravure printing inks](#), or is likely to change significantly;
  - the amount of notified polymer being introduced has increased from [100 tonnes per annum](#), or is likely to increase, significantly;
  - [if the notified polymer has begun to be manufactured in Australia](#);
  - additional information has become available to the person as to an adverse effect of the chemical on occupational health and safety, public health, or the environment.

The Director will then decide whether a reassessment (i.e. a secondary notification and assessment) is required.

#### *Material Safety Data Sheet*

The MSDS of the [product containing the notified polymer](#) provided by the notifier was reviewed by NICNAS. The accuracy of the information on the MSDS remains the responsibility of the applicant.