What is the Responsible Care Global Charter, and why was it developed?

*Answer:* The Responsible Care Global Charter is an agreement achieved among leading chemical companies and federations that form the International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA) to create a common global vision for Responsible Care and to improve the environmental, health and safety performance of chemical producers in the more than 60 nations that currently implement the initiative. The Charter addresses ongoing stakeholder expectations, responds to evolving challenges and enables the industry to speak with a common voice on the global commitments it has made.

What are the specific objectives of the Charter?

*Answer:* The Charter articulates a set of six commitments for signatory companies. They include: Corporate Leadership Culture; Safeguarding People and the Environment; Strengthening Chemicals Management Systems; Influencing Business Partners; Engaging Stakeholders; and Contributing to Sustainability. By fulfilling these commitments worldwide, chemical companies demonstrate their leadership of the Responsible Care ethic and its goals of continuous performance improvement and responsiveness to the public.

What is the difference between the original (2006) version of the Charter and this new (2014) version?

The 2006 version of the Responsible Care Global Charter was intended to address both trade association and individual company roles in supporting Responsible Care. By blurring the lines between trade association responsibilities and those of individual companies, stakeholders, both internal and external, found it difficult to determine accountabilities and assess progress for certain aspects of the original Charter. ICCA has revised the Charter and it specifically focuses on the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of global chemical companies in support of Responsible Care. Additionally, the revised Charter specifically focuses on key aspects of company operations including process safety and security. These companies are expected to implement Responsible Care in their own organizations and lead implementation efforts worldwide consistent with the Charter elements.
**What is expected of a signatory company?**

**Answer:** Signing the Charter is a demonstration of CEO-level commitment to Responsible Care. A CEO’s signature represents support for Responsible Care principles and practices worldwide across all significant business activities of the chemical company.

**How will the Charter change my existing Responsible Care® commitments if I am a global chemical company?**

**Answer:** There are no immediate changes to existing Responsible Care commitments. The Charter and its six elements are an ongoing pledge and are consistent with current ICCA policies and Responsible Care program elements found in the ICCA Responsible Care Fundamental Features. Charter signatories commit to conducting internal assessments of their practices worldwide and to implement Responsible Care as it is practiced in the countries where they participate in the program.

**What will be the process for addressing the chemicals management aspects of the Charter?**

**Answer:** The Charter commits signatories to manage products consistent with ICCA’s Global Product Strategy (GPS) which was also adopted by ICCA in 2006. Under GPS, companies implement risk-based chemicals management systems and policies and commit to sharing information on the safety of products with their commercial partners and the general public. Each ICCA federation has developed a GPS implementation plan for its member companies which include signatories to the Global Charter.

**What specific actions will be taken to integrate Responsible Care with value chain activities?**

**Answer:** Individual companies are expected to undertake specific actions to extend Responsible Care principles and practices including safe management of chemicals through the value chain. These activities will be developed in the context of each company’s value chain and will recognize the appropriate and distinctive needs of companies to improve performance and safe management of chemicals across the value chain. Implementation of improvement opportunities should be consistent with ICCA’s Global Product Strategy and national Responsible Care program requirements.
How does the Global Charter address process safety management issues? How does the Charter address security management issues?

Answer: The Charter commits signatories to “Safeguard People and the Environment” by continuously improving environment, health and safety performance. This commitment to performance improvement extends to workplace operations, both occupational and process safety, and the security of company facilities and products in the value chain.

How is sustainable development or sustainability addressed in the Global Charter? What are the next steps that will be taken to demonstrate the industry’s contribution to sustainable development?

Answer: Sustainable development consists of a set of principles, policies and practices aimed at achieving economic, environmental and societal progress that benefits future generations without compromising the needs of the present generation. The ICCA has actively participated in a dialogue on this topic for many years and achieved acceptance from the United Nations and other stakeholders that Responsible Care is a means through which the chemical industry will contribute to sustainable development. The Charter advances this commitment through the continuation of practical steps that improve performance in the areas of greenhouse gas emissions and the efficient use of resources including energy, raw materials and water; expanding economic opportunities; and developing solutions to societal challenges. For additional information on sustainable development, see ICCA’s publication “Responsible Care’s Contribution to Sustainable Development,” dated June 2010.

When will the revised Charter become a public document?

Answer: ICCA will announce the revised Charter in June 2015 to coincide with the United Nations Environment Programme’s (UNEP) ICCM-4 event. It will be available on ICCA’s website (www.icca-chem.org) as well as those of its member federations.

Who is expected to sign the Charter, and what are the legal and Responsible Care® implications for the signatories?

Answer: CEOs of global chemical companies (those operating in more than one country) that belong to ICCA and/or ICCA-affiliated trade associations will be asked to sign the Charter at its headquarters location. Only one signed copy of the Charter will be requested from each global company. The global CEO will sign on behalf of the worldwide chemical business operations and submit its declaration letter to the trade association in the country where the company is headquartered. The associations will manage this process and seek CEO signatures. The names of CEOs signing the Charter will be made public as part of ICCA’s plan to publicly release the Charter. The Charter establishes no new legal or Responsible Care requirements for the company.
**How can I stay informed about ongoing Charter-related activities?**

*Answer:* ICCA’s Responsible Care Leadership Group, and national associations, will periodically update their membership and all Responsible Care professionals on Charter activities. In addition, the ICCA’s Responsible Care web site will provide ongoing updates of activities related to Charter implementation. The website already provides associations and companies a wealth of information on the countries that participate in Responsible Care, the core elements of their programs and contact information.

*Are there major differences in Responsible Care implementation requirements in various countries? Does the Charter eliminate the ability for Responsible Care programs around the world to be tailored to regional needs?*

*Answer:* Responsible Care has evolved as a global initiative over nearly three decades. There are differing requirements for Responsible Care participation and performance within national associations, but each association must conform to a set of eight Fundamental Features established by ICCA. The Charter reinforces commitments to these Fundamental Features by encouraging participation in national Responsible Care programs wherever companies have significant business activities. The Charter does not alter the Fundamental Features nor diminish local flexibility in developing a Responsible Care program in order to account for the distinctive aspects of national laws and cultures and differing business needs.