

Lower emission rates in vehicle interiors

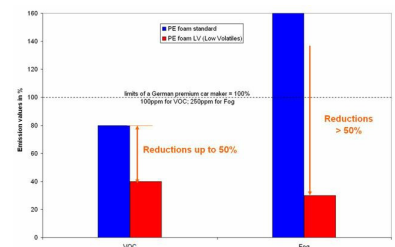
Sekisui Alveo optimizes polyolefin foams to comply with tightened requirements

Lucerne, January 18, 2010 – In vehicle interiors, not only the visible and tactile quality of the materials used plays a major role, but also their emission rates. This is because evaporations from upholstery, plastic panels or adhesives might accumulate as fogging on the windscreen and thus impair the driver's sight. Moreover, the typical “new car smell” is perceived as annoying by many passengers and might cause headache. Hence, Sekisui Alveo, manufacturer of polyolefin foams, has again optimized their products to comply with the tightened requirements of the automotive industry: Owing to further developments of the formulation and the production process the company was able to reduce the emission rates of VOC and fog, partly by more than 50 per cent. This result is confirmed by tests carried out according to test procedure VDA 278. The polyolefin foams of the series Alveolit and Alveolen with the name affix “LV” – low volatile – thus comply with the delivery specifications of a Southern German premium car maker, who has recently tightened its requirements concerning emission rates for all interior components.

Sekisui Alveo's development engineers have succeeded in significantly under-running the lately tightened maximum emission rates of 250 ppm (parts per million) for fog and of 100 ppm for VOC. Emissions result from the volatile components contained in plastics and foams. Experts differentiate between fog and VOC. Fog is known as a film condensing on window panes. VOCs are volatile organic compounds which cause, for instance, the typical



Whether upholstery, plastic panels or adhesive: any material used in vehicle interiors contributes to emissions. The substances particularly migrate when exposed to high temperatures.



Owing to intensive development work, Sekisui Alveo was able to reduce emission rates of present standard foams (PE), partly by more than 50 per cent. Hence, the emission rates significantly fall below the limit values . (Please refer to the graphic on page 3.)

“new car smell”. They have an impact on the quality of the compartment air in a vehicle's interior.

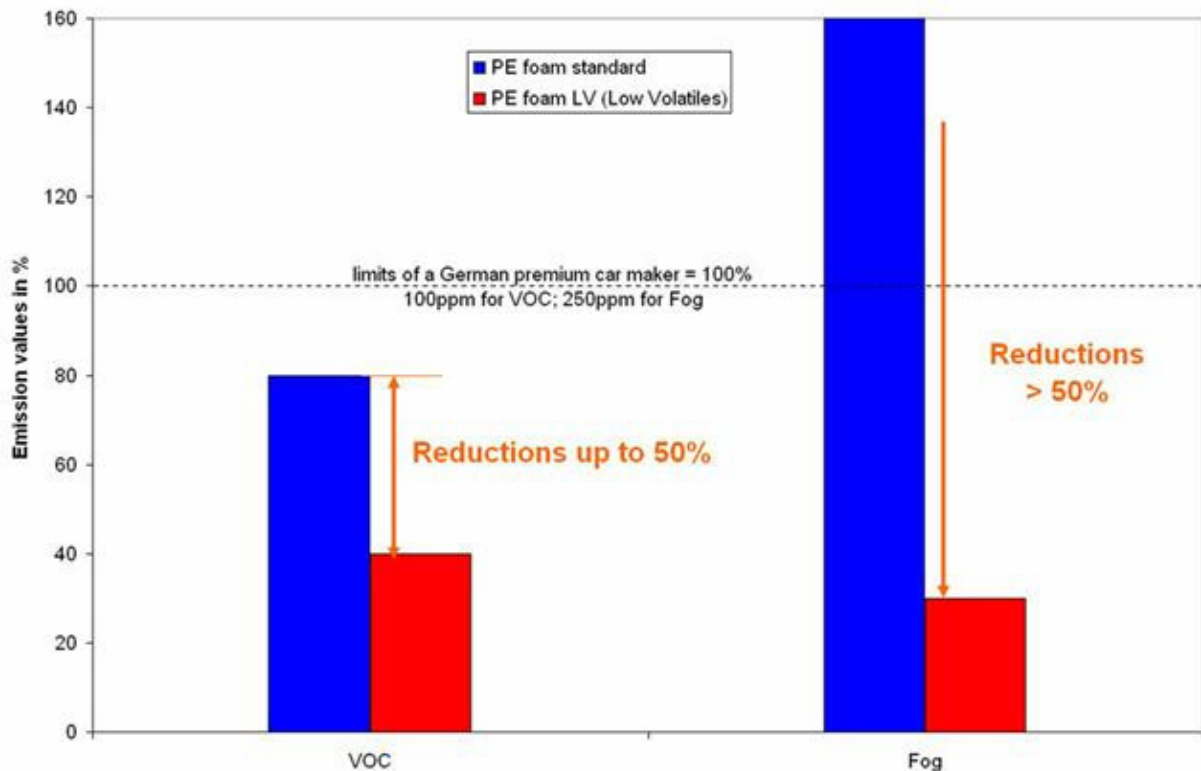
Maximum rates significantly under-run

“Our physically cross-linked polyolefin foams generally possess low emission rates,” explains Thomas Ross, Market Manager Automotive at Sekisui Alveo. “Owing to intensive development work, we have been able to improve the values once again.” The emission rates of a typical Alveolit foam with the affix “LV”, for example, are at 30 per cent (fog) and at 40 per cent (VOC) compared to the required maximum rates. In product designations, “LV” stands for “low volatile” and means that the foam contains fewer volatile components. Such values are tested according to test procedure VDA 278 issued by the German Association of the Automotive Industry – VDA. To perform such tests, the material samples are heated, and the dissolved substances are detected by means of a gas-phase chromatograph and a mass spectrometer.

“With this considerable reduction of our polyolefin foams' emission rates, we are well-positioned in the long term, particularly with view to the increasing requirements of car makers,” Thomas Ross explains confidently.

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Sekisui Alveo AG – Company portrait

Sekisui Alveo AG with head office in Lucerne, Switzerland, develops and produces cross-linked polyolefin foams, which are used in: Adhesive Coating, Automotive, Construction incl. Artificial Turf as well as Industrial and Consumer Goods. The solutions are developed in close cooperation with processing companies and manufacturers, and tested and approved in the company’s Application Services Laboratory. Sekisui Alveo is owned by Sekisui Chemical Co. Ltd., which, with its globally active subsidiaries, serves approximately 50% of the global market with cross-linked polyolefin foams.

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