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## Time to move RoHS to the next level

The European Union Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS) Directive has had great impact on the electronics industry worldwide since it entered into force on 1 July 2006. Today the directive restricts the use of six hazardous substances — lead, cadmium, mercury, hexavalent chromium, and the flame retardants PBB and PBDE in electrical and electronic equipment and it plays an important role in promoting industry-wide transition to eliminate potentially hazardous substances. RoHS was a good first step towards eliminating those substances but the legislation is still far behind eco-labels like TCO Certified. The directive is now being revised and TCO Certified strongly supports this development.

TCO Certified has since 1995 had restrictions on hazardous substances. These requirements are still year 2009 stricter than the restrictions in RoHS. Something our customers – which includes the majority of the computer displays industry - has achieved.

To minimize the amount of hazardous substances in electronic products is more important than ever. Large quantities of the discarded electric and electronic equipment waste end up in “backyard recycling”, i.e. gets burned over open fires. When burned under uncontrolled conditions materials containing halogens give rise to hazardous substances like dioxins and furans.

Our customers - almost a hundred different brand owners all over the world - are producing products where no plastic part weighing over 25 grams contains either brominated or chlorinated flame retardants or plasticizers or PVC – an achievement which shows that this indeed is possible today.

The EU legislators now have the opportunity to follow and close the gap between legislation and what is already being done by the majority of the industry. As always there are strong lobbying organizations in action, trying to hold legislation back. We at TCO Certified support a strong RoHS and hope that EU legislators have the courage to drive the development towards a more sustainable electronics industry.

### **About TCO Certified**

For over 20 years, TCO Development has been at the forefront of environmental and user-centered design for computer equipment. About 50% of the world's computer display models carry a TCO label. This has led to the prevention of approx 50 000 metric tonnes of hazardous flame retardant materials entering the wastestream, which would otherwise pose a risk to the natural environment and human health. Annual energy savings amount to 25 terawatt hours – the equivalent of the yearly production of four nuclear power generators. TCO requirements have also led to improved picture quality in displays, reducing risk of eyestrain and other user comfort concerns. Today TCO certifies computers, displays, headsets and projectors.