

## PPWR: SEFA's suggestions for clarification of terms related to re-use obligations

### Who we are

[SEFA](https://sefa.be/) is the leading organization representing Europe's steel drum industry. Its members specialize in manufacturing steel **drums** and a range of other **industrial sales packaging** for various sectors, including lubricants, chemicals, agrochemicals, and food.

### Introduction

The Commission recently indicated that it is preparing guidelines and frequently asked questions on the PPWR. SEFA would like to support this work by presenting our understanding of those re-use obligations that – in our view – require clarification.

- **“Sales packaging used for transporting products”**

As there is no common definition - neither in the PPWR itself nor in other official sources – the term “sales packaging used for transporting products” (art.29,1) causes confusion and cannot be considered useful.

For the sake of clarity, we advise maintaining a clear distinction between sales packaging and transport packaging in the upcoming guidelines as well as clarifying that Art. 29, 1-3, is applicable to transport packaging only. The guidelines should also state that a characteristic feature of “sales packaging” is that it is in direct contact with the filling goods. “In direct contact with the goods” is commonly used as a deciding element for distinguishing “sales packaging” from transport and grouped packaging, for instance in EN 14182.

- **“same purpose” and “intended function”**

According to Article 11 PPWR ‘reusable packaging’ shall be:

- *conceived, designed and placed on the market with the aim of being reused several times (1(a))*
- *capable of being reconditioned in accordance with Part B of Annex VI, while maintaining its ability to perform its intended function (1(f))*

‘Re-use’ is defined in Article 3 (27) as *any operation by which reusable packaging is used again multiple times for the same purpose for which it was conceived*.

In this context, we believe that both specifications should relate to the packaging function and should be explained in the guidelines as follows

- *“the same purpose for which it was conceived” = packaging*
- *“its intended function” = packaging*

This ensures that the packaging formats concerned can be re-used efficiently without being limited to a specific application.

- **Calculation of reuse**

From the specifications given in Art. 29, 1, and Art. 30,1, we understand that the re-use rate shall be calculated across all formats used by the economic operator as listed in Art 29,1 in a calendar year. We also understand that the calculation will be based on the number of items (packaging units). A confirmation of this interpretation in the upcoming guidelines will be crucial for economic operators and member states alike.

- **Incentives for re-use**

In the context of Art. 51, 1-2, we would generally caution against the provision that *Member States shall take measures to encourage the establishment of re-use systems for packaging with sufficient incentives*. Any incentives should be on a European basis and not defined by member states in order to avoid further fragmentation of the single market. Furthermore, the Commission should seize the opportunity to clarify that the incentives referred to in Art. 51,1-2, shall only apply to re-use systems for consumer packaging. Especially with regards to fully operational and efficient re-use systems for commercial and industrial packaging, introducing incentives would merely impose an unnecessary financial and bureaucratic burden to the economic operators engaged in these systems.

- **Reconditioning, part B of annex VI**

Annex VI part B (2) gives an overview of the operations covered by “reconditioning”. Regarding aspect (b) *removal of damaged or non-reusable components of the packaging*, we would like to give a few examples to illustrate common activities within our industry and ask that the Commission include these in their clarification of the aspect “*removal of damaged or non-reusable components of the packaging*”:

- remove and replace gaskets, seals or closures
- remove the upper part of a tight head drum and convert it to an open head drum
- rebottling of drums or IBCs

**SEFA would be delighted to support the preparation of clarifications further and to contribute our expertise to the implementation of PPWR. Against this background we would like to thank the Commission for including our SEFA representative Nicolas Depersin into the Expert Group on Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (EU) 2025/40.**