

2013 Consumer and Commercial Products Survey: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

This document serves as an overview of the most frequently asked questions regarding the 2013 Consumer and Commercial Products Survey (2013 Survey). The questions are based on comments from stakeholder meetings, conference calls, letters received in response to the public workshop conducted May 21, 2014, the July 22, 2014 webinar, and comments from the Consumer Products Reporting Tool (CPRT) beta test. An additional frequently asked questions document that focuses on specific product categories and ingredient reporting is available here:

<http://www.arb.ca.gov/consprod/regact/2013surv/summary%20questions%20and%20st%20aff%20responses.pdf>. If you have questions not addressed, please send an email with your questions to csmrprod@arb.ca.gov.

General Questions

1. **Question:** Who must complete the survey?

Answer: *Each company, firm, or establishment (responsible party) listed on the label of a consumer or commercial product that was sold or supplied for use in California during Calendar Year 2013 and falls into a category listed on the 2013 Survey Category List must complete this survey. For more information on how to determine if your company is a responsible party, please see:*

<http://www.arb.ca.gov/consprod/regact/2013surv/2013pre/survey.htm>

2. **Question:** Why are consumer products relevant to air quality?

Answer: *Consumer products such as hair spray, cleaning products, insecticides and spray paint are some examples of consumer products that contain compounds that emit volatile organic compounds (VOC) into the atmosphere. Through a series of atmospheric reactions, the VOCs combine with other compounds in the air to form ozone, commonly known as smog, or secondary organic aerosols. By regulating the amount of VOCs in consumer products, ARB reduces the amount of smog or aerosol-forming chemicals in the environment. For more information, please see:*

<http://www.arb.ca.gov/consprod/geninfo/cpsmog.htm>.

3. **Question:** Has the California Air Resources Board (ARB) conducted surveys like this in the past?

Answer: *Yes. For over 20 years, ARB has conducted surveys on consumer product categories to understand their VOC composition for use in regulatory updates and inventory tracking. Previous surveys were conducted in 1994/1995, 1997, 2001, 2003, and 2006. More recently, targeted surveys for a select group of product categories were conducted for regulatory purposes. For more information regarding past surveys, please see:*

<http://www.arb.ca.gov/consprod/survey/survey.htm>.

4. **Question:** Is this survey mandatory? What authority does ARB have to request detailed consumer product information?

Answer: *Yes, the survey is mandatory. Title 17, California Code of Regulations, sections 94500-94528 collectively known as the Consumer Products Regulations, provides ARB the authority to require the reporting of this type of information as part of fulfilling ARB's mandate to meet State and federal air quality standards. Specifically, language in section 94504(b) of the Regulation for Reducing Volatile Organic Compound Emissions from Antiperspirants and Deodorants, section 94513(a) of the Regulation for Reducing Emissions from Consumer Products, and section 94524(c) of the Regulation for Reducing Ozone Formed from Aerosol Coating Product Emissions provides for reporting detailed consumer product information.*

5. **Question:** What is the timeframe for responsible parties to comply with the 2013 Survey? When is the survey due?

Answer: *Under the Consumer Products Regulations responsible parties must be given at least 90 days to complete the survey. In past surveys, the time has normally been extended to 120 days given the breadth of some of the survey requests. After working extensively with stakeholders for the past few months, ARB staff is providing six months to complete the 2013 Survey. The extra time is provided so responsible parties have time to complete the survey given the survey's breadth and the use of the new electronic Consumer Products Reporting Tool (CPRT). The survey will begin on September 1, 2014, and is due on March 1, 2014.*

6. **Question:** The 2013 Survey is a very comprehensive data gathering effort by ARB; the number of surveyed product categories is larger than past surveys. Why is such a broad scope needed for the upcoming survey?

Answer: *By 2016, new State Implementation Plans (SIP) must be developed for federal air quality standards set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for ozone and particulate matter. The new air quality standards are more health protective than the standards targeted in California's currently approved SIPs. Air quality modeling shows that additional reductions of oxides of nitrogen (NOx) and VOCs will be necessary to meet very stringent federal standards. In order to ensure the State's plans and regulatory programs are based on the best and most up-to-date scientific and technical information, ARB is undergoing a comprehensive effort to update the State's emission inventories for all NOx and VOC emission sources. ARB staff is engaged in similar efforts for numerous other sectors, such as passenger vehicles, diesel trucks, locomotives, ships, personal watercraft and recreational vehicles.*

7. **Question:** What are the next steps in the survey process?

Answer: *The next steps and timeline are:*

- September 2, 2014: Official survey release date
- October 15, 2014: ARB staff will conduct a webinar to go over any additional survey or CPRT related questions. Registration for the webinar is available here: <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/131592120>
- December 15, 2014: ARB staff will conduct a webinar to go over the CPRT data upload. Registration for the webinar is available here <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/111660040>
- January 1, 2015: Secure data upload ready for accepting CPRT data from responsible parties
- February 4, 2015: ARB staff will conduct a webinar to go over any additional survey or CPRT related questions. Registration for the webinar is available here <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/119958100>
- March 2, 2015: Completed surveys are due to ARB

Please note that the original date for the start of the 2013 Survey was September 1, 2014 and the end date was March 2, 2015. However, September 1 falls on a holiday and March 1 is on a weekend. In cases such as these, according to state rules, the next business day is the actual start of the time period.

8. **Question:** What types of products must be reported?

Answer: *This survey is intended to collect information about chemically formulated consumer and commercial products used by households and institutions (such as commercial, service, and governmental establishments), and also products used by industrial entities for the maintenance or operation of their facilities. Reportable under this survey are products sold or supplied for use in California during calendar year 2013. For a list of reportable product categories, see Appendix A of the survey Instructions. The list contains product categories that are regulated in the current Consumer Products Regulations, but also product categories that are not regulated.*

9. **Question:** Should consumer products that do not contain VOCs be reported and why?

Answer: *Yes. As in past surveys, consumer products that do not contain VOCs must be reported. In this survey, ARB is seeking data on the use of low vapor pressure – volatile organic compounds (LVP-VOCs). It is important to collect information on the low vapor pressure VOC aspect of products to support current research on the reactivity of LVP-VOCs in selected consumer products. Additionally, these products provide insight into possible reformulation options for categories that are being considered for a reduced VOC standard.*

10. **Question:** What is the basis for the three consecutive years' data submittal requirement?

Answer: *Data submittal is required for three years in order to develop an emission inventory baseline and to support the establishment of future emission trendlines for inventory and modeling purposes. This will allow ARB staff to make more informed regulatory decisions as they will be able to evaluate the specific product category VOC emissions over a multi-year time period.*

11. **Question:** Will each product category be defined in the survey instructions?

Answer: *All currently regulated product categories are already defined in the Consumer Product Regulations. For category products not defined in the Consumer Product Regulations, the category names in the survey should be sufficient for respondents to choose the appropriate code.*

12. **Question:** Could the numerous "other" (99) product categories be eliminated?

Answer: *The 2013 Survey is a comprehensive survey meant to collect information on a wide variety of products. While each "market sector" includes an additional "other" product category (product category codes ending in the numbers "99"), staff believes that the vast majority of products will be reportable using one of the listed categories.*

13. **Question:** Is the definition of "ingredient" consistent with that used in the Consumer Specialty Products Association or Personal Care Products Council ingredients dictionary?

Answer: *The definition of "ingredient" is consistent with that used by ARB in previous Consumer and Commercial Product Surveys.*

Outreach and Technical Assistance

14. **Question:** Has ARB staff worked with stakeholders in developing this survey?

Answer: *Yes. ARB staff has extensively worked with individual companies that are responsible parties and trade organizations that represent responsible parties and formulators. Initially, company calls were conducted to gain an understanding about their technical capabilities for an electronic submittal tool. On May 21, 2014, ARB staff held a workshop to solicit feedback on the 2013 Survey. In addition, ARB staff posted a draft set of instructions and a draft reporting tool on July 10, 2014, for feedback due by August 8, 2014. ARB staff received feedback from interested parties and, based on the comments, were able to reshape the survey reporting requirements to maximize the relevant information needed while minimizing the resources needed to complete the survey.*

15. **Question:** What further outreach is ARB staff planning during this survey process?

Answer: *During the 2013 Survey reporting period, ARB staff plans to have two additional webinars to answer questions about the CPRT and the survey*

reporting requirements. The registration links for the webinars can be found in question 7. ARB staff has also developed instructional video modules and posted them to ARB's Youtube page:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLSOs1pufasEYO_PaIOAifxbqc7IIbJ-Be.

16. **Question:** Is ARB staff providing written guidance on how to fill out the survey?

Answer: Yes. In addition to this document, ARB staff has posted survey instructions that are applicable to all users. Included in the instructions are step-by-step instructions for each field in the CPRT. Also included in the instructions are examples of the product and ingredient grouping provisions as well as appendices with lists of the product categories and chemical ingredients.

17. **Question:** Will ARB staff be available to answer questions about filling out the survey?

Answer: Yes. ARB staff is committed to ensuring that the reporting requirements are clear and the process of submitting electronic data to ARB is secure and maintains confidentiality. If questions do arise, please send them to csmrprod@arb.ca.gov. ARB staff will be constantly monitoring this inbox and is prepared to answer any questions regarding the survey within a timely manner.

Reporting Requirements

18. **Question:** Will grouping of ingredients be allowed?

Answer: Yes, all inorganic compounds are allowed to be aggregated and reported as a total except for several specific inorganic compounds such as water, nitrogen, ammonia, and others that are specifically listed in the survey instructions. Additionally, all organic compounds that are not considered a VOC, exempt VOC, or specifically listed LVP-VOC (see Appendix D, are allowed to be aggregated and reported as a total. When reporting the ingredients for a series of grouped products, the most representative formula (highest sales) must be reported. Lastly, products can be grouped by fragrance as long as the content between products is less than 0.5 percent by weight. Examples are provided in the survey instructions.

19. **Question:** Will grouping of products be allowed?

Answer: Yes, however, only limited grouping of products is allowed. Products that differ by less than or equal to 0.5 percent by weight VOC ingredients, or differ by less than or equal to 1 percent by weight non-VOC ingredients may be grouped. While all products must be reported per their universal product code (UPC), grouping is allowed for products of different sizes but the same formula so that the formula will be reported only once. Examples are provided in the survey instructions.

20. **Question:** Are examples for how to group reported data provided?

Answer: Yes. The survey instructions provide examples for how to appropriately group reported data. This also includes examples for reporting multi-packs and kits.

21. **Question:** What are the reporting requirements for fragrance compounds? Do they need to be specified?

Answer: The specification of fragrance ingredients will not be required. Because formulators of end use products often do not possess the specific chemical composition of the fragrance, the responsible party will only be required to submit the total content of fragrance expressed in percent by weight, the name of the fragrance, fragrance supplier sales number assigned to the fragrance, and provide contact information of the fragrance supplier.

22. **Question:** What are the requirements for the label submission?

Answer: For purposes of reporting, a single representative product label for each product will need to be submitted. If products are allowed to be grouped as described in Questions 18 and 19, only one representative product label for each product will need to be submitted. The entire label must be submitted. ARB recommends submitting all labels in PostScript (filename extension is *.ps) files. For example, for a responsible party that has 50 UPCs that vary only in the type of fragrance used in the final product, only one of the 50 labels must be submitted. The one label is considered representative for the 50 grouped products. Additional details are listed in the survey instructions.

23. **Question:** What are the reporting requirements for second and third year reporting?

Answer: For reporting calendar year 2014 and 2015 data all sales information will need to be reported by product UPC. Updated ingredients information only will need to be provided for formulas where a modification in the content of a specific VOC is greater than 0.5 percent by weight.

24. **Question:** What are the reporting requirements for Aerosol Coating and Adhesive Products?

Answer: Reporting requirements for aerosol coating products and aerosol adhesive products are different because of the recently conducted 2010 Survey Update. All sales information will need to be reported by product UPC only for the calendar year 2013. Once the reformulations of aerosol coatings and adhesives are done by 2017, ARB plans to conduct a comprehensive survey for these product categories in 2018.

Data Submission and Consumer Products Reporting Tool

25. **Question:** How is the electronic submission expected to work?

Answer: The CPRT was developed to facilitate the submittal of product information electronically. The process will consist of three basic steps: data collection and entry; data processing and checking, and data submittal. All requested information will need to be interactively entered into the CPRT or imported into the CPRT from company databases. Automated data checks will simplify the reported data quality assurance/quality control process. Then, the comma separated values (CSV) files will be transmitted to the ARB electronically and securely. Detailed instructions for the CPRT can be found in the survey instructions.

26. **Question:** How does ARB plan to ensure data confidentiality?

Answer: ARB staff understands the concerns associated with submitting confidential business information to a third party. The data will be submitted through a secure https web portal for which each company will have a unique username and password. The web portal will be utilized exclusively to collect the data; viewing the uploaded data through the web portal will not be possible. Once the data is received by ARB, the files will be encrypted as the data is entered into the database. Any ARB staff member that needs to view or manipulate the data will be required to fill out a confidentiality agreement.

27. **Question:** How do formulators submit their ingredient information to ARB?

Answer: In addition to the CPRT, ARB staff has developed the Consumer Products Reporting Tool for Formulators (CPRT-F). When the responsible party has completed entering their data into the CPRT, they will have the ability to export csv files to send to their formulators. Each csv file will contain the formulator-specific products they make plus the formula name corresponding to each product. The responsible party will email the csv file to the formulator and then the formulator will be able to upload the file into the CPRT-F to fill out the required information and upload the files directly to ARB. For more information on the details of this process, please see the survey instructions.

28. **Question:** How does ARB plan to collect the 2014 and 2015 data?

Answer: ARB staff is currently developing tools for reporting 2014 and 2015 consumer product data. It is envisioned for 2014 reporting that responsible parties will be able to import their product information from 2013 into a CPRT-2014 version. Then, only the sales information will need to be updated along with any formulas, as needed (see Question 23 for more information). Similar uploading capabilities will be available for reporting 2015 data. The timing for 2014 and 2015, in addition to their respective can be found here:

http://www.arb.ca.gov/consprod/regact/2013surv/cprt/2013_survey_letter.pdf.