

**Transcript of presentation at the REACHforLIFE Launch Event, 10 September 2008**  
**Chris White, Editor of EU Reporter**

I don't have a view really. In fact, I'm completely banjaxed by some of the things I have been hearing here today. I hope there is somebody from the Commission who can explain to me, as an outside observer, what exactly went on in the Court of Justice.

Because, as you can all see, I've done some interviews, this is the first time I have ever heard of deca-BDE and I'd like to make it clear, as everybody else is sailing off into the neutral territory, I don't give a hang about the commercial implications of the ban on deca-BDE. What I care about, as a journalist, is governance of the European Union, and I will tell you now, without any suggestion, the next edition of EU Reporter seems to be one of questioning good governance right across the board, for energy and of course this issue here.

I'm sorry that Greenpeace is not here having a jolly good row with the people that matter because that would have been very interesting but what I do congratulate is Axel Singhofen for being here and for taking up the challenge. I've got nothing at all against the Greens in principle but I would like to ask him to come back into the debate. Who exactly went to court in Luxembourg and got the exemption overturned? I don't know. I understand it was Greenpeace and the Danish Government among others perhaps.

I've not heard in all the interviews I've done, anyone say that deca-BDE is proven to be safe. What they have said is that it's not proven to be unsafe and, as a journalist, we have to be very careful about the words we use. I, of course, couldn't easily see and didn't realise that he [Axel Singhofen] was doing a slide presentation behind me, but what I did see showed some gaps in what he said. In fact, to quote one of the slides, "gaps in the assessment need to be addressed".

Maybe finally because I don't want to witter on - I want to come back in during the debate. It seems to me that we are skating over a very important issue. The assessments that Axel put up show, I don't know whether they are minute or significantly dangerous to polar bears, they're very low and of course the EU procedure for the disposal of electronic equipment is fairly recent. Now I am not an expert but it seems that there is an illogicality with Axel's argument there. If people were chucking computers into the sea at the North Pole, I imagine that quite a lot of people nip up there to get rid of their waste because it's so expensive to go to the tip in Brussels, then I imagine that was going on before we got a grip on disposal of electronic waste. On that point I would just like to leave it and maybe come back later.