An update from the ESA *May 2026*

The past few months have been a busy period for the European Sealing Association. The PFAS restriction process has remained a major focus, but it has been far from the only one.

Following the publication of the SEAC draft opinion on the proposed PFAS restriction in March, the ESA coordinated its response to the public consultation, focusing on the need to secure exemptions for fluoropolymers used in critical sealing applications. The topic remained high on the agenda throughout the spring and was also discussed during the ESA Annual General Meeting in Seville.

The AGM, held from 14 to 16 April, brought more than 100 members to Seville, where the Association held its annual meeting for the first time. It also marked changes to the Executive Team, with Alberto Rocca of Klinger and Francesca Torriani of General Packing joining the group. Alongside the general and divisional meetings, members discussed closer cooperation with Münster University of Applied Sciences on sealing technology, as well as the role of young engineers in the future of the industry. The meeting also gave ESA the opportunity to recognise members who had contributed technical articles and publications throughout 2025, acknowledging the depth of knowledge and practical expertise across the Association.

Technical work has continued across ESA's divisions, including hydrogen-related testing, standards development, training resources and research into sealing-material performance. The Digital Product Passport is also moving up the agenda, with members beginning to assess its practical implications for the sealing industry. A volunteer group agreed at the AGM to take this work forward.

The ESA has also maintained a presence at external industry events. At Materials Week Europe in Amsterdam and the Industrial Valve Summit in Bergamo, ESA's ESG Director Sandy Van den Broeck presented updates on the PFAS restriction and its implications for sealing applications. The ESA was also represented in Bergamo by Technical Director Ralf Vogel, who serves on the conference's Scientific Committee.

ESA's work on the Drinking Water Directive is also continuing through its involvement in the European Drinking Water initiative. As an associate member of EDW, ESA has been following implementation of the Drinking Water Directive and related discussions on conformity assessment, harmonisation and testing. The next key date is 17 June 2026, when the 5th Symposium on Materials and Products in Contact with Drinking Water will take place in Brussels, hosted by EDW, EurEau and European Metals.

Another important milestone came in May, with the launch of ESA's new website. This has taken considerable work behind the scenes and is intended to make information easier to access for members and the wider industry. Readers are very welcome to visit the site and explore the latest updates, technical resources and news.

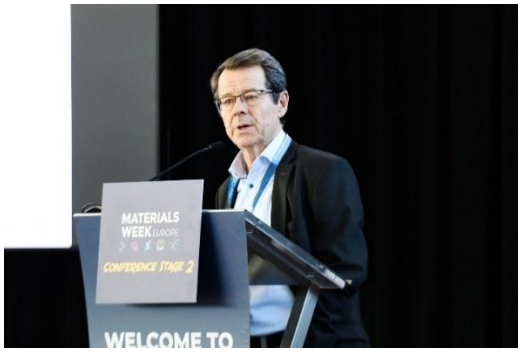
Looking ahead, the ESA will continue to follow regulatory developments, advance technical work across the divisions, and support collaboration between members on issues affecting the sealing industry.



From left: new ESA Executive Team members Alberto Rocca and Francesca Torriani; ESA Chair Ozan Devlen; and outgoing Executive Team members Chiara Sozzi and Mike Eason at the ESA AGM in Seville.



ESA members recognised for their technical articles and publications during the ESA AGM in Seville.



ESA's ESG Director Sandy Van den Broeck presenting an update on PFAS and its implications for sealing applications at Materials Week Europe 2026 in Amsterdam.