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INFORMATION PAPER

COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON THE TRANSPORT OF DANGEROUS GOODS

Sub-committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods

(Seventeenth session,
Geneva, 6-17 December 1999)
Agenda item 5 (a)

Listing and Classification

Amendment of Ammonium Nitrate Entries

Transmitted by the Representative from the European Fertilizer Manufacturers Association
(EFMA)

1. In document **ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/1999/59** proposals have been made by the experts from Canada and the United States of America and the representative from EFMA to rationalise and simplify entries relating to Ammonium Nitrate and Ammonium Nitrate Fertilizers. These proposals offer a considerable amount of reduction in UN Numbers and simplification. This has been achieved as a result of good co-operation and understanding. However, agreement could not be reached on one of the types of fertilizers viz mixtures of ammonium nitrate and ammonium sulphate, which are placed in SP [BBB] in the above proposal. The representative from EFMA wishes to give further information about these mixtures and explain the reasons for wanting to include them in Division 5.1.
2. In the current listing, mixtures of ammonium nitrate and ammonium sulphate containing more than 45% but less than 70% ammonium nitrate are covered by UN No 2069, Class 5.1. These mixtures were regarded and, therefore, were classified as Dangerous Goods because of their potential explosion hazard and a degree of oxidizing capability.

Such a mixture was involved in a major explosion accident with considerable loss of life and damage to plant many years ago.

3. The UN 2069, if interpreted strictly as defined, only covers binary mixtures of ammonium nitrate and ammonium sulphate. Thus, there is no scope for incorporating inert diluents. In the modern day fertilizer industry, however, it is common practice to add diluents to meet the required nutrient level. The definition in SP BBB in **ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/1999/59** is intended to provide this flexibility. However, the description given in SP BBB needs to include the following two points:

- (i) applies to straight nitrogen ie nitrogen type fertilizers only.
- (ii) 0.4% limit for total combustible/organic material calculated as carbon.

Hence, the description of BBB should be on the following lines:

Nitrogen type ammonium nitrate based fertilizers containing mixtures of ammonium nitrate and ammonium sulphate with more than 45% but less than 70% ammonium nitrate and not more than 0.4% total combustible/organic material calculated as carbon are subject to these Regulations when the sum of the percentage of compositions of ammonium nitrate and ammonium sulphate exceeds 70%.