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**COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON THE TRANSPORT OF
DANGEROUS GOODS AND ON THE GLOBALLY
HARMONIZED SYSTEM OF CLASSIFICATION
AND LABELLING OF CHEMICALS**

Sub-Committee of Experts on the
Transport of Dangerous Goods

Twenty-fifth session, 5-14 July 2004
Item 7 of the provisional agenda

MISCELLANEOUS PROPOSALS OF AMENDMENTS TO THE MODEL REGULATIONS

Infectious substances

Proposal by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE)

Note by the secretariat

At the twenty-fourth session, the representative of the World Health Organization (WHO) informed the Sub-Committee that the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) wished to amend the list of infectious substances which are prohibited from being shipped as UN 3373 (ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/48, para. 84), and recommended consultation of this organization. Since there was no objection from the Sub-Committee, the secretariat reproduces below the proposal transmitted by OIE pending completion of the procedure of rule 79 of the Rules of procedure. Information about OIE may be found on its website www.oie.int.

Background

The Office International des Epizooties (OIE), the World Organization for Animal Health has reviewed the 13th revision to the United Nations Model Regulations guiding the transport of infectious substances and has developed a proposed change to the list of infectious substances that are prohibited from being shipped as UN 3373 [Section 2.6.3.2.2.1(a)].

The Biologicals Standards Commission of the OIE evaluated the risk of animal disease agents being transmitted to the environment during shipping and concluded that the risk of infecting animals with any of these agents is extremely low. The method of transmission of these agents is usually by contact or insect vectors, and transmission through contaminated environment is very rare. It usually only occurs when there is contamination of an animal holding facility and this is very unlikely during shipping.

It appears that an incorrect assumption was made that all OIE List A diseases should be assigned to UN 2814 or 2900. Many of the diseases are on OIE List A because of their impact on trade and not because of their transmissibility. The Commission would like to clarify the risk associated with the agents listed below and to propose changes to the list of infectious substances that must be included in Category A of the 13th revision of the UN Model Regulations guiding the transport of infectious agents. The Commission has attempted to develop a proposal that would give comparable treatment for agents of similar risk.

Rabies, Venezuelan equine encephalitis, and Rift Valley fever: The Commission discussed the risk of these agents being transmitted by tissues that are submitted for diagnostic testing. It concluded that the agents do not pose a significant risk to humans or animals, and recommended that tissues be shipped as 'Diagnostic Specimens' (UN 3373); however, the Commission recommended that cultures of these agents be assigned to UN 2814. This recommendation accords with the other 'culture only' agents on the list. The requirement for shipping diagnostic tissues as UN 2814 agents could have a significant effect on critical disease control and surveillance programmes.

Bluetongue and African horse sickness: These agents are transmitted by insects of the *Culicoides* spp., and there is no contact transmission. As they are not contagious diseases, they should be in Category B. The Commission thus recommends they be removed from the list of 'infectious substances affecting animals only' (UN 2900).

Tissues for the diagnosis of animal agents: As stated previously, the Commission believes that the risk of transmission of animal disease agents to the environment during shipping is minimal. It considers that tissues being submitted for the diagnosis of those animal diseases assigned to UN 2900 pose an insignificant risk and could be sent as 'Diagnostic Specimens' (UN 3373). Consequently, the Commission recommends that all the agents on the list of 'infectious substances affecting animals' be classified as 'culture only'.

'Avian paramyxovirus 1–Newcastle disease': The Commission recommended that this agent should be identified as 'velogenic Newcastle disease'. There are a number of non-pathogenic strains of avian paramyxovirus 1–Newcastle disease that circulate in poultry populations. These strains are ubiquitous throughout most of the world and pose no significant risk. The OIE has a definition of Newcastle disease that addresses this issue and identifies the pathogenic strains, but it would be difficult to include it in this document. The term velogenic Newcastle disease is therefore recommended as it is commonly used to identify pathogenic strains.

This change is extremely important to OIE and National disease surveillance and control programmes. The increased cost and restrictions on shipping posed by UN 2900 and UN 2814 for tissues submitted for diagnosis will significantly curtail control programmes for animal diseases. This restriction will have a much greater impact on developing countries, where many of these diseases are endemic, and could affect their food production capability.

Proposal

2.6.3.2.2.1 Amend as follows:

INDICATIVE EXAMPLES OF INFECTIOUS SUBSTANCES INCLUDED IN CATEGORY A IN ANY FORM UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED (2.6.3.2.2.1 (a))	
UN Number and Proper Shipping Name	Micro-organism
UN 2814 Infectious substances affecting humans	<i>Bacillus anthracis</i> (cultures only)
	<i>Brucella abortus</i> (cultures only)
	<i>Brucella melitensis</i> (cultures only)
	<i>Brucella suis</i> (cultures only)
	<i>Burkholderia mallei</i> – <i>Pseudomonas mallei</i> – Glanders (cultures only)
	<i>Burkholderia pseudomallei</i> – <i>Pseudomonas pseudomallei</i> (cultures only)
	<i>Chlamydia psittaci</i> – avian strains (cultures only)
	<i>Clostridium botulinum</i> (cultures only)
	<i>Coccidioides immitis</i> (cultures only)
	<i>Coxiella burnetii</i> (cultures only)
	Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever virus
	Dengue virus (cultures only)
	Eastern equine encephalitis virus (cultures only)
	<i>Escherichia coli</i> , verotoxigenic (cultures only)
	Ebola virus
	Flexal virus
	<i>Francisella tularensis</i> (cultures only)
	Guanarito virus
	Hantaan virus
	Hantaviruses causing hantavirus pulmonary syndrome
	Hendra virus
	Hepatitis B virus (cultures only)
	Herpes B virus (cultures only)
	Human immunodeficiency virus (cultures only)
	Highly pathogenic avian influenza virus (cultures only)
	Japanese Encephalitis virus (cultures only)
	Junin virus
	Kyasanur Forest disease virus
	Lassa virus
	Machupo virus
	Marburg virus
	Monkeypox virus
	<i>Mycobacterium tuberculosis</i> (cultures only)
Nipah virus	
Omsk hemorrhagic fever virus	
Poliovirus (cultures only)	
Rabies virus (cultures only)	
<i>Rickettsia prowazekii</i> (cultures only)	
<i>Rickettsia rickettsii</i> (cultures only)	

INDICATIVE EXAMPLES OF INFECTIOUS SUBSTANCES INCLUDED IN CATEGORY A IN ANY FORM UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED (2.6.3.2.2.1 (a))	
UN Number and Proper Shipping Name	Micro-organism
UN 2814 Infectious substances affecting humans (<i>cont'd</i>)	Rift Valley fever virus (cultures only)
	Russian spring-summer encephalitis virus (cultures only)
	Sabia virus
	<i>Shigella dysenteriae type 1</i> (cultures only)
	Tick-borne encephalitis virus (cultures only)
	Variola virus
	Venezuelan equine encephalitis virus (cultures only)
	West Nile virus (cultures only)
	Yellow fever virus (cultures only)
	<i>Yersinia pestis</i> (cultures only)
UN 2900 Infectious substances affecting animals only	African horse sickness virus
	African swine fever virus (cultures only)
	Avian paramyxovirus Type 1 – Velogenic Newcastle disease virus (cultures only)
	Bluetongue virus
	Classical swine fever virus (cultures only)
	Foot and mouth disease virus (cultures only)
	Lumpy skin disease virus (cultures only)
	<i>Mycoplasma mycoides</i> - Contagious bovine pleuropneumonia (cultures only)
	Peste des petits ruminants virus (cultures only)
	Rinderpest virus (cultures only)
	Sheep-pox virus (cultures only)
	Goatpox virus (cultures only)
	Swine vesicular disease virus (cultures only)
Vesicular stomatitis virus (cultures only)	