
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 Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

Eleventh session, 12 (p.m)-14 July 2006
Item 4 (b) of the provisional agenda

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GHS

Cooperation with other international organizations

Transmitted by the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD)

Draft Summary Record of the 15th Meeting of the Task Force on Harmonization of Classification and Labelling (Rome, 15-16 March 2006)

This Draft Summary Record will be finally approved at the 16th Meeting of the Task Force. Any amendments made to the record at that meeting will be noted in the Draft Summary Record of the 16th meeting.

Agenda Item 1: Opening of the meeting

1. Dr. Alessandro Di Domenico, Director of the Toxicological Chemistry Unit at the Istituto Superiore di Sanità, welcomed the participants. The Chair of the Task Force, Gregory Moore, invited participants to introduce themselves (See Annex 1 for the Participants List).

Agenda Item 2: Adoption of the Draft Agenda

2. The draft Agenda [ENV/JM/HCL/A(2006)2/REV1] was approved with the agreement that the issue paper on Toxic Gas Mixtures would be presented on the first day to allow a discussion by a small group before the Task Force discussion. The Secretariat noted that no new document was posted on the meeting website in the week preceding the Task Force meeting. The Summary Report of the Washington Transformation/Dissolution (T/D) Protocol VMG meeting on the [ENV/JM/HCL/M(2006)2] was available to the participants in the meeting room as well as a paper including further work/steps for the phase 1 validation (reliability) of the T/D Protocol, which was agreed by the extended VMG meeting that was held on 13-14 March 2006.

Agenda Item 3: Confirmation of the approval of the Draft Summary Record of the 14th Meeting of the Task Force on Harmonization of Classification and Labelling

3. Comments on the Draft Summary Record have been included in document [ENV/JM/HCL/M(2005)3] on 15 April 2005. The Task Force confirmed the approval of the report.

Agenda Item 4: General information by the Secretariat

4. The Secretariat reported on the documents that were adopted by the UN SCEGHS at its July and December sessions: (i) the proposal for Guidance on how to consider important factors in classification of carcinogenicity and (ii) the proposal on sensitization elicitation that was discussed at the 38th Joint Meeting. The UN SCEGHS also took note of the OECD conclusions that the work on Reproductive Toxicity Potency and on Carcinogenicity Potency Estimation Methods should be discontinued for the time being. A formal paper on the conclusion related to Carcinogenicity Potency Estimation Methods was submitted to the Joint Meeting for approval of its declassification. The paper should be submitted at the July 2006 meeting of the UN SCEGHS. In addition a paper on the detailed comparison of classification systems for ozone depleting chemicals will be submitted.

Agenda Item 5: Strong versus weak sensitizers

5. On 2 June and 21 September 2005, the Secretariat circulated two revised versions of the issue paper on strong versus weak sensitizers to the Task Force for comments/approval by written procedure. Due to the comments received from the US after the second Task Force consultation, the Secretariat concluded that the final approval of the issue paper was only possible at the Task Force meeting.

6. The Task Force discussed the comments submitted by the US and agreed on a number of changes that were included in a revised document [ENV/JM/HCL(2006)1/REV1] circulated during the meeting. Additional comments were made on that document and the Task Force finally agreed on document ENV/JM/HCL(2006)1/REV2, which is attached as Annex 2. Changes agreed at the meeting are highlighted. The final version will be sent to the Joint Meeting for agreement on declassification with a view for submission to the UN SCEGHS.

7. With respect to further work on this issue, the Task Force agreed to wait for the results of (i) the IPCS Meeting on sensitization, which will be held in Berlin in September, and (ii) the US CPSC public meeting, which may be held in the summer 2006. On the basis of these results, the Task Force will decide, at the next Task Force meeting, on how to continue the work

Agenda Item 6: Chronic Aquatic Hazards – Scientific Issue Paper

8. The Task Force agreed, without any change, on Document ENV/JM/HCL(2006)6 which had previously been agreed by the expert group on Aquatic Environmental Hazards at a meeting held in Arlington on 31 January -1 February. The document was posted on the protected website before the Task Force meeting. The only change compared to the previous version, sent to the Task Force on 19 August 2005, is the replacement of Paragraph 36 with a new paragraph proposed by the United States.

Agenda Item 7: Chronic Aquatic Hazards – Scheme for Classification

9. José Tarazona (Spain), Chair of the expert group on Aquatic Environment Hazards, introduced the summary record of the expert group meeting that was held in Arlington (United States) on 31 January -1 February 2006 [ENV/JM/M(2006)1]. A small group met in the margin of the meeting to discuss and propose a scheme for the classification of substances. The proposal was then submitted to, and agreed by the Task Force. It will be added as an annex to the Summary Record of the Arlington Meeting; it is attached to the present report as Annex 3.

10. José Tarazona informed the Task Force that two expert sub-groups will work in parallel: one sub-group (Germany, Netherlands and Sweden) will submit a proposal for the revision of the GHS classification of substances on the basis of the agreed scheme by mid-May if possible; the other one (Denmark, France, Spain and United States) will submit a proposal for mixtures before summer if possible. The expert group will be given six weeks to agree on the proposals. Once agreed by the expert group, the proposals will be sent to the Task Force and approval will be requested by written procedure within six weeks. The United Kingdom will join the expert group on Aquatic Environmental Hazards.

Agenda Item 8: Validation of the Transformation/Dissolution Protocol

11. The Secretariat (Kotaro Yoshida) presented a short history of the work since the first meeting in 2003. He then introduced the report of the VMG meeting held in Washington on 2 February 2006 [Document ENV/JM/HCL/M(2006)2], and a proposal for further work for the phase 1 validation (reliability) of the T/D Protocol, which should be achieved within six months. The proposal was developed by at an extended VMG meeting on 13-14 March 2006. The Task Force agreed on, and welcomed the proposal, which is attached as Annex 4.

Agenda Item 9: Toxic Gas Mixtures

12. Amy Rispin (United States), lead of the expert group on Toxic Gas Mixtures, introduced the issue

and the expert group responses to the six questions included in the mandate given by the UN SCEGHS (see the report of the expert group meeting held in Paris in February 2005 [ENV/JM/HCL/M(2005)2]). She explained how Document ENV/JM/HCL(2006)3REV1 was developed after the Paris expert group meeting. She stressed that when the GHS was developed, an impact analysis was carried out for the oral and dermal acute toxicity but not for the inhalation toxicity; consequently at that time a loss of protection via inhalation was not realised. She also noted that the expert group had discussed the problem of reduced protection and had developed approaches to solve the problem; however, the options presented in Par. 19 and 20 are not complete and more work is necessary.

13. A small group discussed the paper in the margin of the Task Force meeting, and then submitted proposals for changes to the document. These changes were agreed and are highlighted in Document ENV/JM/HCL(2006)3REV2, attached as Annex 5. The Secretariat was requested to add an annex detailing the common denomination of the gases mentioned in the document to facilitate understanding. [This annex (i.e. ANNEX 3) was developed in consultation with the expert group meeting that met on 17 March 2006, back to back with the Task Force meeting, and is added in Annex 5]. The small group also proposed points/issues for the expert group to consider on 17 March (see Annex 6).

Agenda Item 10: Implementation of the Chemicals Committee Outreach Strategy

14. The Secretariat explained the general OECD outreach strategy and noted that all UN SCEGHS participants are already invited to attend the Task Force meeting. The Task Force supported a wide participation in its work.

Agenda Item 11: Future Work of the Task Force

15. The Secretariat introduced the three items that were discussed at the February 2006 Joint Meeting and reported the Joint Meeting conclusions. The Joint Meeting agreed that the OECD should not be proactive but should continue to work as the focal point for updating the GHS with respect to human health and environmental criteria, at the request of the UN SCEGHS. It endorsed the proposal for a pilot exercise aiming at applying the GHS criteria to existing chemicals for which a SIDS Initial Assessment Report is prepared as well as the organization of a workshop in mid-2007, acknowledging that the focus will be on gaining experience with the application of criteria. The Joint Meeting also agreed on a proposal to develop a general status report on the GHS implementation in the OECD countries as a contribution to the UNITAR GHS implementation portal. The Task Force welcomed the pilot exercise and requested to be informed of the work progress and invited to attend the workshop in 2007, if possible.

16. The Secretariat then introduced document ENV/JM/HCL(2006)4 and requested comments on the elements that could be included in the questionnaire that will be sent to the Heads of Delegation. Given that the Building Block Approach is under discussion, it was suggested to rather address the question of the coverage. Canada, the European Commission (EC), Sweden and the UN SCEGHS Secretariat agreed to assist the OECD Secretariat in developing this questionnaire. The EC agreed to provide responses for all the EU Member States; this will be mentioned in the letter that will be sent to the Heads of Delegation with the questionnaire. With respect to the Transport Sector, the questions may be limited to the implementation stage of the latest version of the UN model regulations.

12. (Q)SARs Projects

17. The Secretariat provided information on the progress achieved since the last Task Force meeting and also mentioned the work on improving approaches to fulfil information needs in various regulatory framework, which was discussed at the Joint Meeting Focus Session.

13. Other Issues

18. The next Task Force meeting will be hosted by the United States on 15-16 February 2007; however, the Task Force Bureau will have a conference call in September to evaluate the progress of the work. The Chair observed that due to resource constraints, full participation in expert group meetings is important.

Annex 1

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