

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

Eighteenth session
Geneva, 9 - 11 December 2009
Item 4 (b) of the provisional agenda

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GHS

Status of implementation of the GHS in Serbia

Transmitted by the expert from Serbia

Introduction

1. The Serbian government has been working actively on the implementation of the GHS in the Republic of Serbia since 2003. As part of the implementation process, the government has been involved in a significant number of GHS related activities, such as translation of the GHS text into Serbian language, elaboration of GHS informational material and preparation of legislation related to GHS, organization and participation in workshops, training courses, awareness raising seminars, dissemination of information regarding the GHS, etc.

Legislation

2. Main strategic objective of the Republic of Serbia is full reintegration into the international community and accession to the European Union. As a step toward to modernisation and harmonisation of national legislation in field of chemicals management with the EU legislation, the Law on Chemicals is adopted in May 2009. This law gives the legal basis for GHS implementation.

3. The development and adoption of subsidiary legislation regarding classification, labelling and packaging of chemicals will provide full implementation of the GHS in Serbia. This subsidiary legislation (e.g. Draft by-law on classification, packaging, labelling and advertising of chemicals and certain articles in accordance with GHS) is in final phase of preparation and its adoption can be expected in first half of 2010.

4. The proposed by-law will align the Serbian system of classification, labelling and packaging of chemicals with the United Nations Globally Harmonized System (GHS) and will be in compliance with corresponding EU legislation e.g. Regulation 1272/2008. It will follow phase-in introduction of GHS system, parallel with EU, including a transitional period with proposed deadline for re-classification and re-labelling by 1 December 2010 for substances and by 1 June 2015 for mixtures.

Institutional and administrative capacity building

5. In order to establish the system for effective implementation/enforcement of new legislation in the chemicals area, the government has decided to work on institutional and administrative capacity building. One of very important steps in this regard was specific agreement between Government of Sweden and Government of Republic of Serbia on support to chemicals risk management in Serbia by the Project "Chemicals Risk Management in Serbia" 2007-2010. The main instrument of this project is an intensive institutional cooperation between competent authorities (Swedish Chemicals Agency and Serbian Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning), with financial support of Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), through sharing experience on legislation, institution building and enforcement.

6. This project provided assistance in establishment of Serbian Chemical Agency as competent authority for chemicals management in Serbia by using the model of such agencies in European countries, especially in Sweden. As the result of this effort the Serbian Chemical Agency was established in November this year.

7. Among other issues, this project provided assistance in preparation of adequate legislation and capacity building for implementation of GHS. Two workshops were organised principally for core administration - one with the aim to raise basic knowledge in the field of classification, labeling and packaging of chemicals and the other with the aim to assure advance knowledge regarding classification and labeling on basis of health and environmental hazards according to GHS. The workshop which will provide advance knowledge on classification and labeling on basis of physical hazards according to GHS is planned for March 2010.

8. Furthermore, another twinning IPA project titled "Assistance in Implementation of Chemical Management System in Serbia" will start in second quarter of 2010. The main activities under this project are on development of sustainable strategy for trainings and education regarding chemicals management including classification and labeling according to GHS and gaining experience in a practical "learning by doing" approach. The project will extend training policy, so it will not be aimed principally for core administration, but for all stakeholders involved and implementation of GHS and other issues related to chemicals management.
