

## 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

22 June 2023

Forty-fourth session

Geneva, 10-12 July 2023

Item 3 (b) of the provisional agenda

Implementation of the GHS:

Reports on the status of implementation

### Report on the implementation of GHS in Canada

Transmitted by the expert from Canada

#### Introduction

1. This paper provides an update on the progress of GHS implementation in Canada.

#### Implementation of the GHS in Canada

2. The Government of Canada originally implemented the GHS for workplace hazardous products in 2015 when the Hazardous Products Regulations (HPR) came into force along with amendments to the Hazardous Products Act (HPA). The amended HPA and the HPR modified the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS), Canada's national hazard communication standard for workplace hazardous products, by incorporating the 5th revised edition of the GHS, except for the Flammable Gases and Aerosols hazard classes which were aligned with the 3rd revised edition of the GHS. This initial implementation of the GHS fulfilled Canada's international commitment, under the Canada-United States Regulatory Cooperation Council (RCC), to align and synchronize, where applicable implementation of common classification and labelling requirements for workplace hazardous chemicals within the mandate of Health Canada and the United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

4. On January 4, 2023, the Government of Canada amended the HPR and Schedule 2 to the HPA to align with the 7th revised edition of the GHS. The initial scope of GHS adoption in Canada has been maintained and the following new categories or subcategories have been adopted from the 7th revised edition of the GHS: Flammable Gases 1A/1B, Chemically Unstable Gases and Aerosols Category 3. Canada's Pyrophoric Gases hazard class has been repealed from the HPR and from Schedule 2 to the HPA as these gases will now be classified as Flammable Gases — Category 1A, Pyrophoric Gas. Additionally, the Chemicals Under Pressure hazard class has been adopted from the 8th revised edition of the GHS.

5. The following building blocks from the 7th revised edition of the GHS have not been adopted in Canada: the Explosives hazard class, the Desensitized Explosives hazard class, all Environmental hazard classes, Acute Toxicity Category 5, Skin Corrosion/Irritation Category 3 and Aspiration Hazard Category 2. The GHS Explosives and Desensitized Explosives hazard classes were not adopted because explosives, within the meaning of the Explosives Act, are excluded from the application of the HPA. The GHS environmental hazard classes were not adopted

because environmental hazards also fall outside the scope of the HPA. Acute Toxicity Category 5, Skin Corrosion/Irritation Category 3 and Aspiration Hazard Category 2 were not adopted because these GHS hazard categories were not covered under the previous regulations for workplace chemicals that were in place prior to the HPR.

6. This work was completed under the workplace chemicals work plan of the **Canada-United States Regulatory Cooperation Council Joint Forward Plan**, wherein Canada and the United States (U.S.) are coordinating amendments to their respective regulations to align with updates of the GHS, to facilitate common approaches and synchronized implementation to the extent possible. Aligning the Canadian and U.S. regulatory amendments reduces potential trade barriers and allows suppliers to continue to use one label and one safety data sheet to market the same product in both countries.

7. Since the amendments of the HPA and HPR in January 2023, Health Canada informed its various stakeholders and interested parties by (a) updating various webpages with new and updated content relative to the regulatory amendments (e.g. see **Amendments to the HPR**); (b) hosting virtual events such as a webinar for stakeholders which presented an overview of the main HPR amendments and a multi-stakeholder workshop; and (c) preparing a written summary document of the questions received during the webinar and their answers. Future outreach will include updating the **Technical Guidance on the Requirements of the Hazardous Products Act and the Hazardous Products Regulations - WHMIS 2015 Supplier Requirements**.

8. To provide suppliers, employers and workers time to adjust to the changes and to help ensure consistency across Canada through coordination and alignment between federal, provincial and territorial jurisdictions, there is a three-year transition period. The transition period began on December 15, 2022 and will end on December 14, 2025.

---