

# UN/SCETDG/21/INF.40

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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-first session, 1-10 July 2002,  
agenda item 7)**

## **Transport of Infectious Substances**

### **Transmitted by the American Biological Safety Association (ABSA)**

#### **Communication in support of ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/2002/16**

ABSA is an international organization of professionals dedicated to expanding awareness of biological safety, and preventing adverse occupational and environmental impacts from biological hazards. Located in 28 countries around the world, ABSA members have expertise in anticipating, recognizing and assessing risk, as well as controlling and mitigating the spread of biological hazards.

ABSA deeply appreciates the leadership provided by the expert from Canada in the development of the revisions proposed in ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/2002/16.

The absence of documented reports of the transmission of infection associated with transport mishaps provides evidence that current procedures for the transport of infectious substances are safe. ABSA believes the proposed revisions of Division 6.2 will further improve the safety of all involved in the transport of infectious substances, and endorses them. The proposed revisions are based on the risk infectious substances may pose during transport, instead of the risk infectious substances may pose during laboratory manipulations. The proposed revisions create a consistent system for transport that can be implemented worldwide, and will replace a system that varies from country to country. The proposed revisions provide clearer guidance for the consignor and will increase regulatory compliance.

ABSA can endorse the changes as proposed.

#### **Proposal Numbers 2 and 4**

ABSA would appreciate the Sub-Committee's consideration of one issue discussed during the informal working group meeting in Paris, but not brought to conclusion because one participant requested more time for consideration.

ABSA proposes the addition of a 24-hour contact number and the removal of the technical name from the outside of the package and the accompanying external paperwork of Division 6.2 shipments because:

- Technical names are frequently not known to consignors in certain situations (e.g., the pathogen has not been isolated, the disease is not specific to a particular pathogen).
- Technical names are generally not recognizable to acceptance personnel, and acceptance personnel cannot easily verify their accuracy.
- Technical names are generally not recognizable to emergency response personnel, and emergency response procedures are not based on technical names.
- Technical names interfere with scientific proficiency testing of laboratories by providing the laboratories with the answers in the shipping documentation.

- In the event of an exposure incident, technical names do not provide enough information to the treating physician, however, all relevant information could be conveyed by a person knowledgeable about the contents of the package.

The changes proposed below would eliminate the need for Proposal Numbers 2 and 4 in ST/SY/AC.10/C.3/2002/16.

### **New Proposal**

#### **Special Provisions**

**SP274** Delete from UN2814 and UN2900.

**4.1.8** **Special packing provisions for infectious substances (Division 6.2)**

**4.1.8.3** Delete requirement to have an itemized list of contents between the secondary packaging and the outer packaging for UN2814 and UN2900

or

Replace "an itemized list of contents" with "an accurate description of the contents in layman's terms" so the sentence reads "For UN2814 and 2900, an accurate description of the contents in layman's terms shall be enclosed between the secondary packaging and the outer packaging."

**5.2.1** **Marking**

**5.2.1.1** Add, after the 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence and before "A typical package marking is:"

For goods of Division 6.2, the words "24 hour number" followed by a telephone number at which the consignor, or a person designated by the consignor, can be reached immediately and from whom technical information can be obtained about the infectious substances in transport without breaking the telephone connection made by the caller.

**5.4.1.5.6** **Infectious Substances**

Add "The words "24 hour number" shall be shown on the transport document followed by a telephone number at which the consignor, or a person designated by the consignor, can be reached immediately and from whom technical information can be obtained about the infectious substances in transport without breaking the telephone connection made by the caller."

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