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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-sixth session
Geneva, 29 November-7 December 2004
Item 3 of the agenda

OUTSTANDING ISSUES OR PROPOSALS OF AMENDMENTS TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE TRANSPORT OF DANGEROUS GOODS

Outcome of the ninth session of the Sub-Committee on Dangerous Goods, Solid Cargoes and Containers

Transmitted by International Maritime Organization (IMO)

1. The Sub-Committee on Dangerous Goods, Solid Cargoes and Containers (DSC) held its ninth session from 27 September to 1 October 2004 under the chairmanship of Mrs. Olga P. Lefevre (France). The Vice-Chairman, Mr. Juan P. Heusser (Chile) was also present.
2. Decisions of the IMO DSC Sub-Committee of relevance to the UN Sub-Committee of Experts on the transport of dangerous goods are reflected in the ensuing paragraphs.

Carriage of dangerous goods in limited quantities

3. The Sub-Committee, having considered the developments at the UNSCOE 25 regarding the transport of dangerous goods in limited quantities, excepted quantities and consumer commodities, and noting that improvements at an inter-modal interface level were though desirable, agreed that the existing system, as governed by the relevant provisions of the IMDG Code, was working well and it did not have any shortcomings.
4. With regard to the concept of dangerous goods in excepted quantities, the Sub-Committee did not have a firm position on the matter; however, a significant number of delegations opined that, at this stage, there was no need for the inclusion of such a concept in the IMDG Code. Several delegations supported this concept for inclusion in the IMDG Code.
5. Considering the concept of dangerous goods as consumer quantities, the Sub-Committee decided that this concept already existed in part 3 of the IMDG Code and it would not be prudent, in the context of maritime mode, to permit any further relaxation.
6. The Sub-Committee agreed that in the interest of safety, the requirement for dangerous goods, transported in any quantities, to be documented was extremely important and any relaxation would not be suitable.

7. Regarding the labelling and marking of packagings and cargo transport units, containing dangerous goods in any quantities, the Sub-Committee opined that the existing provisions in the IMDG Code were appropriate with regards to the maritime mode and it would not be prudent to permit any relaxations.
8. The Sub-Committee, noting that issues relating to the carriage of dangerous goods in limited quantities, excepted quantities and consumer commodities would be further considered by the UNSCOE in the next biennium, invited Member Governments and international organizations to submit proposals on the issue for consideration at DSC 10 so that, if necessary, a firmer position of the Sub-Committee could be forwarded to the UNSCOE.

Marine pollutant (Aquatic pollutant)

9. In the context of carriage of marine pollutants, the UNSCOE may wish to note that IMO's Marine Environment Protection Committee at its 51st session (29 March to 2 April 2004) had agreed:
 - .1 that the criteria adopted by the UNCOE should also be adopted under MARPOL Annex III and reflected in the IMDG Code to define substances as hazardous to the marine environment;
 - .2 that until issues associated with making appropriate amendments to the IMDG Code were resolved, it would be inappropriate to make recommendations for the associated amendments to MARPOL Annex III;
 - .3 that there would be no need to identify severe marine pollutants once the criteria adopted by the UNCOE have also been adopted in the relevant IMO instruments;
 - .4 that there was no role for GESAMP/EHS to act as an advisory body when disagreements arose under self-classification system; and
 - .5 to consider consequential amendments to other IMO instruments once the IMDG Code amendments had been finalized.
10. The Sub-Committee noting, in particular, that UNSCOE 25 did not agree to develop a new chapter in the UN Recommendations on the transport of dangerous goods, for substances hazardous to the aquatic environment, agreed to:
 - .1 merge the text of chapter 2.10 of the IMDG Code with that of chapter 2.9; and
 - .2 harmonize the terminology with the UN Recommendations and to use the term "Aquatic pollutant" instead of the term "Marine pollutant", provided that the former is adopted by the UNCOE as an amendment to the UN Recommendations on the transport of dangerous goods.

Miscellaneous

11. The Sub-Committee was of the view that the development of provisions for amendments to the UN Recommendations and to the IMDG Code should be clear, precise and easy to understand.
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