



Secretariat

Distr.
GENERAL

ST/SG/AC.10/C.4/2007/6
19 July 2007

Original: ENGLISH

**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

Fourteenth session,
Geneva, 12-14 December 2007
Item 2 (a) of the provisional agenda

**UPDATING OF THE SECOND REVISED EDITION OF THE GLOBALLY HARMONIZED
SYSTEM OF CLASSIFICATION AND LABELLING OF CHEMICALS (GHS)**

Physical hazards

Substances having explosive properties

Note by the secretariat

A. Background

1. At its thirty-first session, the Sub-Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods (TDG Sub-Committee) requested its Working Group on Explosives to consider document ST/SG/AC.10/C.4/2007/1 submitted by the expert from Germany, on the classification and labelling of substances which have explosive properties.
2. According to the current classification criteria, a substance or mixture can only be considered for classification in the class of explosives if it has successfully passed the procedure for provisional acceptance in this class as described in figure 2.1.2 of Chapter 2.1 of the GHS.
3. The question “is the substance/mixture too insensitive for acceptance into this class?” is answered only on the basis of the results of Tests Series 2, which comprises three types of tests intended to determine the sensitiveness of the substance/mixture to shock and the effect of

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heating and ignition under confinement. This approach is correct as long as the substance/mixture remains in the packaged form (i.e.: transport) but does not give information about the intrinsic properties of the substance or mixture, which are needed to adequately assess and communicate its hazards in other sectors covered by the GHS. Therefore, it may happen that a substance or mixture is considered too insensitive for inclusion in the class of explosives according with Tests Series 2 even though it does have explosive properties.

4. In order to overcome the problem, the TDG Sub-Committee's Working Group on Explosives recommended that Test Series 1 be used for classification purposes to assess possible explosive effects, and therefore several amendments to the text of Chapter 2.1 to introduce the relevant references to Test Series 1 were proposed (see the Annex to the report of the Working Group on explosives UN/SCETDG/31/INF.45). The TDG Sub-Committee endorsed the recommendations made by the Working Group.

5. These recommendations were also considered by the Sub-Committee of Experts on the GHS (see UN/SCEGHS/13/INF.15, Part 1 (a) (i)) but the final decision on the proposed amendments to Chapter 2.1 was deferred to the fourteenth session to allow for the necessary consultations at national level.

6. It was agreed that the Sub-Committee would consider again the proposed changes on the basis of an official document to be prepared by the secretariat (see ST/SG/AC.10/C.4/26, paras. 8 to 10).

B. Proposal

Amendments to Chapter 2.1 as proposed by the TDG Sub-Committee for endorsement by the GHS Sub-Committee:

2.1.2.2 Insert a new paragraph 2.1.2.2 to read as follows:

“2.1.2.2 For some regulatory purposes (e.g. transport) substances/mixtures having explosive properties according to Test Series 1 can be excluded from Division 1.1 to 1.6 when Test Series 2 demonstrates that the substance/mixture is too insensitive. The fact that a substance/mixture has explosive properties is important for other regulatory purposes and for hazard communication. It is therefore important that Test Series 1 is performed in the classification procedure.”

Consequential amendment: Current paragraph 2.1.2.2 becomes new 2.1.2.3.

Table 2.1.1 Amend the criteria for “Explosibility” to read as follows:

“according to UN Test Series 1 and 2 (Sections 11 and 12, respectively, of the UN Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods, Manual of Tests and Criteria). Intentional explosives^b are not subject to UN Test Series 1 and 2.”

Figure 2.1.2 Delete the asterisk from the box “Test series 1” and its related footnote.
