

## 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

Thirteenth session, 9-11 July 2007

Item 4 of the provisional agenda

### DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDANCE ON THE APPLICATION OF GHS CRITERIA

#### Application of GHS criteria to UVCBs<sup>1</sup>, in specific petroleum substances

Transmitted by the International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Association (IPIECA)

#### **Background**

1. The GHS currently lacks a suitable and consistent methodology for the classification of the hazards of petroleum substances. As GHS is being implemented by UN member states several different approaches have emerged for the classification of petroleum substances, resulting in different hazard classification. Differences may arise due to a) the complex composition of petroleum substances, b) differences in interpretation of the experimental data, and c) divergent application of the GHS criteria. To help resolve this, IPIECA has volunteered to develop guidelines on the application of GHS criteria to petroleum substances (UN/SCEGHS/12/INF.20).

#### **Vision**

2. Provide the greatest level of consistency in the application of GHS criteria to petroleum substances, creating a harmonized approach to their classification, resulting in a reduction of risks arising from the storage and handling of petroleum substances.

#### **Work plan**

3. IPIECA has formed a global taskforce on the application of GHS criteria to petroleum substances, which currently includes subject matter experts of the American Petroleum Institute (API) and its European counterpart (CONCAWE), the Australian Institute of Petroleum (AIP), and the South African Petroleum Industry Association (SAPIA). Invitations have been sent to the Canadian Petroleum Products Institute (CPPI), the Petroleum Association of Japan (PAJ), and the Association of Oil and Gas companies in Latin-America and the Caribbean (ARPEL).

4. IPIECA proposes to compose an overview of anticipated issues that can result in divergent classification of petroleum substances within UN member states.

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<sup>1</sup> *Substances of unknown and variable composition, complex reaction products or biological materials.*

5. Subsequently, a common path forward will be developed, taking into account the complex and variable composition of petroleum substances and their identifiers.

6. Draft guidance on the application of current GHS criteria will be developed and will be discussed with relevant stakeholders, for subsequent provision to the UNSCEGHS for consideration.

**Timeline**

7. IPIECA aims to provide the overview anticipated issues that can result in divergent classification of petroleum substances in Dec 2007, develop draft harmonized guidance by July 2008, and to submit final guidance to the UNSCEGHS in December 2008.

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