

**Committee of Experts on the
Transport of Dangerous Goods
(Twentieth session, 7-16 December 1998)**

PROGRAMME OF WORK

Transmitted by the World Health Organization (WHO)

WHO would like to recommend that several issues related to wastes from health-care be considered for revision in the next biennium period of the work programme of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods.

WHO has a comprehensive programme on health-care waste management, including the preparation of guideline material. WHO has provided recommendations on waste characterization, handling, transportation and packaging of health-care waste, which are largely based on the *UN Recommendations on the transport of Dangerous Goods - Model Regulations*. WHO is also closely working together with professional associations and national authorities concerned with this subject.

WHO would recommend the revision of the classification of infectious waste substances (paragraph 2.6.3.1.5 of the 10th revised edition of the above-mentioned document) and the packaging requirements (paragraph 4.1.6.5, 620 and 621), for the following reasons:

1) The classification of wastes transported under UN 3291, paragraph 2.6.3.1.5, and the description 'relatively low probability that infectious substances are present' may give rise to misinterpretation. The probability of the presence of infectious substances may not always be known to the waste producer.

2) Many wastes from health-care activities (e.g. swabs, dressings, needles from syringes) are 'relatively likely' to contain infectious substances. The packaging requirements of such wastes (paragraph 4.1.6.5, 620) may not be necessary for large parts of such wastes and should be reconsidered.

As a further step, WHO proposes preparing a first draft, in consultation with its partners and contacts, which will be submitted in May 1999 for consideration at the meeting of the Sub-Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods in July 1999.
