

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

30 November 2016

Thirty-second session

Geneva, 7–9 December 2016

Item 2 (f) of the provisional agenda

Classification criteria and related hazard communication:

Nanomaterials

Review of the applicability of GHS to nanomaterials

Transmitted by the expert from France on behalf of the correspondence group

1. This document reports back to the GHS Sub-Committee on the status of work of the informal correspondence group on the review of the applicability of GHS to nanomaterials. The correspondence group also makes a proposal to continue the work.
2. The current scope of work reads as follows (ST/SG/AC.10/C.4/52 Annex II, as carried forward for this biennium at ST/SG/AC.10/C.4/56 paras 36-37):
 - (a) To establish whether there is a need to amend the GHS to make clear that nano forms of a substance are within scope of the GHS;
 - (b) To review the classification and labelling criteria in the GHS to establish whether they are appropriate for nano, as well as bulk-forms of a substance;
 - (c) To review the content of safety data sheets set out in the GHS in terms of their applicability to nano-forms of a substance;
 - (d) To report back to the Sub-Committee on the outcomes of (a) to (c) and to propose further work, as appropriate.

Status of work

3. As reported during the 27th session, the informal group agreed to work on the question “Can we make classification of nanomaterials by applying the existing criteria in the GHS?” by collecting data from some examples of nanomaterial substances and performing a classification exercise.
4. Environmental classification exercise was performed on carbon nanotubes and nanoforms of titanium dioxide using data available from open literature and from the OECD Working party on Manufactured Nanomaterials (WPMN) sponsorship programme (<http://www.oecd.org/chemicalsafety/nanosafety/testing-programme-manufactured-nanomaterials.htm>).
5. The correspondence group also considered a classification for carcinogenicity of titanium dioxide.
6. In addition, difficulties in applying certain tests for physical hazards in the Manual of Tests and Criteria were presented.

Proposal

7. The Sub-Committee is invited to take note and comment on the status of the work.
8. The correspondence group proposes to continue the work on reviewing the applicability of the GHS classification criteria to nanomaterials during the biennium 2017-2018
9. The correspondence group proposes the following scope of work for the upcoming biennium:
 - (a) monitoring work concerning classification related issues regarding nanoform materials by other bodies, including the OECD Working party on Manufactured Nanomaterials and other relevant research projects on nanomaterials (worldwide);
 - (b) discuss which findings are relevant from the viewpoint of classification;
 - (c) develop a plan how to continue this work after the coming biennium.
10. Any experts with an interest in contributing to the development or review of this work item are invited to contact the expert from France (matthieu.lassus@travail.gouv.fr).
