

**COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON THE
TRANSPORT OF DANGEROUS GOODS
(Twenty-first session, 4-12 December 2000
agenda item 2 (c))**

**WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS
ON THE TRANSPORT OF DANGEROUS GOODS**

UN 1350 Sulphur - SP 242

Transmitted by the observer from Austria

Referring to our proposal in document ST/SG/AC.10/2000/35 on UN 1350 Sulphur we would like to add some details regarding the accident with this substance.

The accident occurred on a main road in Austria on 3 March 1997. A truck overturned together with its trailer and it subsequently transpired that the vehicles had contained 23.5 tonnes of wettable sulphur. The load, packed in 25 kg bags, spilled over the road and caught fire. The local fire brigade, arriving shortly after on the scene, made a first attempt to put out the fire and caused the formation of a cloud of highly irritant smoke. Only after receiving the relevant information did they take appropriate measures such as using a spray to put out the fire and wearing adequate breathing apparatus. The work of clearing the road was very difficult because the fire kept flaring up repeatedly. Considerable efforts were also necessary to avoid environmental damage such as pollution of the water table and of neighbouring watercourses. The load saved had to be destroyed as dangerous waste.

The emergency services concerned severely criticized in the case in question the fact that the load had not been marked as a dangerous substance. Not only were safety measures delayed but the emergency services and people living in the accident area were exposed to additional risks. Attention was also drawn to the fact that if the weather had been bad, there would have been severe toxic effects on the environment.
