

## 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 Transport of Dangerous Goods

Thirty-third session  
Geneva, 30 June-9 July (a.m) 2008  
Item 12 of the provisional agenda

### OTHER BUSINESS

Developing and Maintaining Experts on the Regulations Applicable to Safe, Secure, and Efficient Transport of Dangerous Goods

Continuing information regarding ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/2006/38 and UN/SCETDG/32/INF.11

Transmitted by the Council on Safe Transportation of Hazardous Articles (COSTHA)

### Introduction

1. At the Twenty-ninth Session of the Sub-Committee conducted July 2006, the expert from the Netherlands introduced ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/2006/38 to consider "**Improved efficiency and keeping expertise**" based on their experience with a decline in experts on the transport regulations not only on the side of government but also on the side of industry. The sub-committee was in substantial agreement with the need to improve efficiency and to stimulate interest to ensure that a new generation of experts would continue to carry on the work of both government and industry in the future.

2. At the Thirty-second session COSTHA introduced UN/SCETDG/32/INF.11 in which we expressed similar concerns and introduced a program entitled "Enhancing the Image of the Hazmat/Dangerous Goods Professional" that we had initiated prior to the submission of the Netherlands paper as a means of assessing the causes and developing solutions to address this worldwide trend. The two submissions complimented each other and called the attention of this subcommittee to the need to put the issue on their program of work. At the Thirty-second session COSTHA conducted a lunchtime informational presentation during which they introduced the "Blueprint for Success" and outlined the critical steps we believed necessary to advance this program. COSTHA invited all interested experts and NGO representatives to participate in this initiative and to partner with us in identifying opportunities to achieve the goal so critical to the future success of this Sub-Committee.

### **Progress Report**

3. COSTHA established a working group which has met several times over the past few years for the purpose of assessing the causal issues and developing a plan of action to reverse the trend we had all witnessed. The product of these planning sessions has been introduced as the "Blueprint for Success". One of the key elements identified in the blueprint is to create an awareness and greater appreciation for the critical importance of the tasks performed by individuals employed as dangerous goods transportation professionals. Unfortunately, the more success these professionals achieve, the less importance may be perceived for the work they do to avoid those incidents that never occur.

4. In July 2006 COSTHA entered into a partnership agreement with the United States Department of Transportation, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) with the intention of starting at the national level and progressing to the international level owing to the global need for developing resources for the future. PHMSA and COSTHA agreed that training and outreach would be needed to stimulate interest in the next generation of hazardous materials professionals. Goals of the partnership include establishing academic opportunities with colleges, universities and other academic institutions to provide matriculation to a degree in the field of transportation of hazardous materials or dangerous goods, certification programs for managers and employers actually performing regulatory compliance functions, awards programs that recognize excellence at all levels, public awareness campaigns to attract qualified candidates, and development and distribution of educational materials to attract young students to prepare for employment in a career path in this profession. Similar goals were discussed during the presentation at the Thirty-second session of this subcommittee. Since introducing this initiative the following activities have been undertaken as part of implementing the "Blueprint for Success".

The COSTHA Steering Committee on the *Enhancing the Image of the Hazardous Materials/Dangerous Goods Professional* initiative are pleased to have introduced ["Blueprint for Success"](#) a quick read brochure that explains the Enhancing the Image program and a comprehensive [website](#) that serves as a reference for articles, presentations, and other tools as they are developed. They report on the solid progress and warm reception that the initiative has received since inception in 2006.

The Committee's most recent accomplishments include:

- Formulated a Strategic Plan to meet the issue directly
- Introduced and invited to participate - Interested Parties Group (informal coalition of over 40 trade associations concerned with the safe and compliant transportation of dangerous goods)
- Presentation to a large audience of hazardous materials/dangerous goods professionals at COSTHA Annual Forum, April 2007, Scottsdale, AZ
- Introduced and invited to participate – Institute of Hazardous Materials Management, April 3, 2007

- Submitted paper and held working group at the United Nations Subcommittee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods, December 2007, Geneva Switzerland
- Briefed attendees on progress of the initiative at the COSTHA 2008 Annual Forum in St. Petersburg FL. This event is one of the largest gatherings of international industry professionals in the US.
- Created collaborative Web Site and distributed the information to thousands of hazardous materials/dangerous goods professionals inviting them to submit ideas and participate. June 2008 - <http://www.costha.com> (click on the Enhancing the Image of the DG Professional)

The next steps in the initiative -

- **Advance the Public Relations Strategy –**

Electronic and hard-copy distribution of the publication “Blueprint for Success” brochure which outlines the initiative and creates an opportunity for other not-for-profit associations involved in the transportation of dangerous goods to support the project. The brochure can be downloaded from the website.

- **Add the Human Resources Component**

We are developing a Request for Proposal (RFP) for distribution to Human Resources Consultants. The goal of this phase of the initiative is to produce templates for job descriptions that work with current HR matrices to align the job functions with correct salary ranges and a list of job titles that emphasize the importance of the function performed by industry professionals. We frequently find that our job descriptions and titles are so specific and technical that they do not communicate the value of the position to upper management, human resources managers and others within our government agencies or corporations.

- **Further the Awards programs with DOT, member companies and other associations**

As reported in the last session, this effort includes not only the development and implementation of new awards programs but also recommendations to government officials to send letters of congratulation to industry award winners and the top levels of management within their companies. COSTHA members are currently involved in developing a list of relevant award winners such as the American Trucking Associations Safe Driver of the Year Award, Dangerous Goods Advisory Council, George Wilson Award, the US Coast Guard Biennial Rear Admiral William M. Benkert Marine Environmental Awards for Excellence.

- **Continue to develop educational component**

Members, working with the US Department of Transportation PHMSA office, have developed a Power Point program for use within school systems. We are also identify pre-existing children's awareness programs within government agencies, museums, and other arenas with the goal of encouraging them to add dangerous goods transportation segments to their curriculum.

For more information or to find out how you might be able to participate visit the COSTHA Enhancing the Image web site - <http://www.costha.com> (Click on the Enhancing the Image of the DG Professional), email us: [mail@costha.com](mailto:mail@costha.com) or phone: 703.451.4031.

COSTHA again invites all interested experts and NGO representatives to participate in this initiative and to partner with us in identifying opportunities to achieve the goal so critical to the future success of this Sub-Committee and to overall transportation safety.

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