

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

21 June 2012

Forty-first session

Geneva, 25 June – 4 July 2012

Item 2 (f) of the provisional agenda

Explosives and related matters: miscellaneous

Availability of Primed Cambric for the Time/Pressure Test

Transmitted the European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC)

Introduction

1. At the thirty-ninth session of the Sub-Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods, Canada pointed out several difficulties in performing tests as described in the Manual of Tests and Criteria (see UN/SCETDG/39/INF.25). As main difficulties, the availability of materials and specification issues were identified.
2. The paper found great resonance in the Explosives Working Group of the TDG Sub-Committee, and there was general consensus that the problems outlined by Canada need to be corrected.
3. The Sub-Committee agreed that a review of the tests mentioned in Parts I and II of the Manual should be conducted with a view to:
 - Better defining the specifications of the tests;
 - Better defining the tolerances associated with those specifications; and
 - Removing any unnecessary or over-specifications.
4. This position was endorsed by the Sub-Committee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals.
5. Following extensive discussions, the chairman of the Explosives Working Group of the TDG Sub-Committee presented an approach to solve the issues identified (INF.26 of the current session). However, he concluded that extensive work would be necessary which would take several years.
6. In the meantime, the availability of primed cambric has become urgent. This material is required in the ignition systems for tests 1 (c) (i), 2 (c) (i) and C.1. These tests are essential in the classification procedure of explosives, self-reactive substances and organic peroxides.
7. Many test laboratories in industry as well as competent authorities either have no more primed cambric available or only small stocks left. Numerous attempts to obtain the material from the source specified in the UN Manual of Tests and Criteria have failed.
8. Further, attempts to obtain information about the composition as well as the specifications for an alternative production have not been successful.

Proposal

9. The sub-committee is invited to consider the problem – possibly in the Explosives working group – and to discuss possible solutions.
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