

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

3 July 2012

Forty-first session

Geneva, 25 June – 4 July 2012

Item 10 (b) of the provisional agenda

**Issues relating to the Globally Harmonized System of
Classification and Labelling of Chemicals:
Criteria for water-reactivity**

Classification of Water-Reactive Substances

Report of the Working Group – 3 July, 2012

Submitted by the Chairman of the Working Group in Relation to Agenda Item 10(b)

Summary

1. The group met to consider progress on the development of criteria and relevant test methods for the classification of materials that in contact with water evolve toxic and /or flammable gases. It was recalled that this work was agreed to in principle both by the GHS and TDG Sub-Committees, and that the TDG Sub-Committee was recognized as the focal point given the issue relates to physical hazard criteria.
2. Representatives from France, the United States, The Netherlands, Germany, CGA, and ICCA participated in the discussions. France, based on testing performed by INERIS, provided an update on the results of testing to validate/evaluate the current N.5 test method, highlighting a number of perceived problems with the current test method as identified in TDG paper 2012/46 (GHS paper 2012/2) and INF.4. The presentation will be made available if possible on the UN website as an annex to this report or may be obtained by contacting the representative from France.
3. The representative from the United States noted that a contract managed by the U.S. Transportation Research Board to conduct further research and evaluation was in the final stages of being awarded. A summary of the scope of work for this effort is available at: <http://apps.trb.org/cmsfeed/TRBNetProjectDisplay.asp?ProjectID=3138>

Next Steps

Continued Sharing of Data and Experience

4. It was agreed that interested competent authorities would continue to share data and experience relevant to this effort. The representative from the United States indicated that upon awarding of the TRB contract, the contractor would be in immediate contact with BAM, INERIS, and other pertinent organizations engaged in research and analysis. In

addition to the reports provided as annexes to this report the group noted the availability of several additional resources including a published report on the development of protective action distances for emergency response purposes – see http://www.phmsa.dot.gov/staticfiles/PHMSA/DownloadableFiles/Files/Argonne_Report.pdf

Work Towards Consensus on Improvements to Current Test Method

5. Two separate issues were identified:
 - (a) Identifying improvements to the current N.5 test method as it applies to evolution of flammable gases and;
 - (b) Establishing relevant criteria and test methods for the evolution of toxic gases.

Outreach/Engaging of Affected Industry

6. It was agreed that competent authorities should be encouraged to conduct outreach to affected industry including producers of water-reactive materials and test laboratories engaged in classification testing of Division 4.3 materials. As a part of this work, the group agreed that identifying materials known to have water-reactive properties though not so classed under the current UN classification criteria.

Timelines

7. The group agreed to continue collaboration inter-sessionally and report back on progress at the December TDG session with a view towards bringing substantive proposals if possible during the upcoming 2013-2014 biennium
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