

## **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**

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Geneva, 4 (p.m) – 6 July 2012

Item 7 of the provisional agenda

### **Other business**

## **American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) registries programs Safety Data Sheets (SDS) and label authoring registry**

**Transmitted by the expert from the United States of America**

### **Purpose**

1. The purpose of this paper is to inform the sub-committee of a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) and Label Authoring Registry started in the United States of America by the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) and the Society for Chemical Hazard Communication (SCHC). Interested persons who successfully pass a competency assessment will be added to the registry of experts.
2. The goal of this registry program is to improve the overall quality of SDSs and labels by encouraging individuals to develop the knowledge and skills needed to gain this credential and recognizing those that have. The SDS and Label Authoring Registry is a publicly available listing and a community where competent persons can share experiences and best practices. Registration will be open to candidates from any country.
3. The competency assessment includes both a test on the essential knowledge a competent SDS and label author should possess and a practical skills assessment. This skills assessment involves classifying substances and mixtures and authoring an SDS following guidance in the GHS.
4. A complete explanation of the initiative developed by AIHA and SCHC, including contact information is provided in Annex I.

## Annex I

### AIHA Registries Programs SDS and Label Authoring Registry

In 2011 the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA), the Society for Chemical Hazard Communication (SCHC), and AIHA Registry Programs, LLC began a joint project to develop a registry for safety data sheet (SDS) and label authors under the AIHA Registry Programs, LLC. Throughout the year, a team of volunteer subject matter experts from the two membership organizations, AIHA and SCHC, worked to develop a framework for this registry. The three main elements are the qualifications requirements, the Body of Knowledge and a competency assessment. This Registry Program is founded on a comprehensive, current Body of Knowledge for this specialty area of practice developed by competent, subject matter experts. Similarly, subject matter experts developed and validated the competency assessment for this specialty area of practice. In April 2012 the first competency assessment was offered.

Since the revised OSHA Hazard Communication Standard adapting to revision 3 of the Global Harmonization System (GHS) was imminent and many other countries and regions were in transition to the GHS, the team decided to base the body of knowledge and competency assessment on a mastery of the GHS. To be able to offer the registry to the widest number of people, it was also decided to base the competency assessment on the most recent version of the *GHS Purple Book* and not a country-specific adoption. Therefore the competency assessment includes both a test on the essential knowledge a competent SDS and label author should possess and a practical skills assessment. This skills assessment involves classifying substances and mixtures and authoring an SDS following guidance in the GHS.

The goal of this registry program is to improve the overall quality of SDSs and labels globally by encouraging individuals to develop the knowledge and skills needed to gain this credential and recognizing those that have. The SDS and Label Authoring Registry is open to candidates from any country.

#### What is a Registry?

A registry is a publicly available listing of competent persons and a community where competent persons can share experiences and best practices. A registry provides...

- Connections – clients, customers, and employers can find or hire the right kind of professional
- Consistency -- standardization of processes and methods across state lines and country borders
- Continuous improvement – a venue for collaboration and sharing of best practices

With a registry program, the emphasis is on the demonstration of competency which recurs with every cycle. Through an application process and competency assessment, the registry program verifies an individual's knowledge and ability. Those persons who successfully demonstrate their competency are listed in the registry. The registry -- the list of current registrants -- is posted on the AIHA Registry Programs website and is available for review by employers, legislators, regulators and other stakeholders. The purpose is to assure a level of competency among professionals practicing in that area.

AIHA, SCHC, and AIHA Registry Programs developed this registry to fill an existing gap in credentials for SDS and Label authors. AIHA and SCHC believe their members and other professionals in the field deserve to be recognized for their competency. They also believe that registration can raise the practice of hazard communication by encouraging more training, education and professionalism.

This registry does not compete with existing comprehensive certifications but fills the credential gap in this specialized area of practice for professionals. SDS and Label Authoring professionals have developed specific expertise in this interdisciplinary area of practice. Participation in this Registry Program is one way professionals can demonstrate to employers, customers, and regulators that they have knowledge and skills in this specialized area of practice.

### **Registration process**

Potential registrants must demonstrate minimum education, training and experience to qualify to sit for the competency assessment. To qualify to sit for the competency assessment, candidates must document a minimum number of points for education, training and work experience. Points can be earned for higher education in applicable areas of study, continuing education coursework, applicable certifications and work experience in the field. A minimum one year of experience in SDS and labeling authoring or related work is required.

Once qualified, the applicant will take a 4-hour, two-part, competency assessment. The first part consists of a 75-question multiple choice exam that covers areas in the SDS and Label Authoring Body of Knowledge. The Body of Knowledge rubrics include:

- Math and Chemistry
- GHS and Hazard Communication
- Physical Hazards
- Health Hazards
- Environmental Hazards
- Industrial Hygiene and Safety
- Risk Analysis
- Associated Regulations and Consensus Standards

The second part of the competency assessment is a practical skills assessment, which is open book (GHS Purple Book) and requires the applicant to classify one substance and one mixture based on a data set provided by AIHA Registry Programs and complete a SDS for a classified substance using an SDS template.

The Registered Specialist: SDS and Label Author credential is valid for five (5) years. In order to maintain registration status, the application information must be updated and competency must be demonstrated every 5 years.

The list of current registered SDS and label authors is available on the AIHA Registry Programs website: [www.aiharegistries.org](http://www.aiharegistries.org). Additionally, from the website, you can access and download the current Body of Knowledge, a study guide, the application forms, a schedule of upcoming competency assessments, and our informative Safe and Sound podcast. Please contact the AIHA Registry Programs at +1 703-846-0755 or [info.RegistryLLC@aiha.org](mailto:info.RegistryLLC@aiha.org) for additional information regarding the SDS and Label Authoring Registry Program.