

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

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Geneva, 24–28 June 2013

Item 5 (a) of the provisional agenda

Transport of gases: ethylene oxide and propylene oxide mixtures

Provisions for the Transport of UN 2983 (Ethylene Oxide and Propylene Oxide Mixtures)

Submitted by the Expert from the United States

Background

1. At a recent Working Group of the Whole Meeting (Montréal, 15 to 19 October 2012), the ICAO Dangerous Goods Panel considered whether Packing Instruction 361 in the ICAO Technical Instructions was mistakenly assigned to UN 2983, Ethylene oxide and propylene oxide mixtures. It was noted that Packing Instruction 361 permits the use of both combination and single packagings (similar to P001 of the UN Model Regulations), whereas the Model Regulations permit only the use of pressure receptacles by assignment of P200.
2. In considering the issue, it was noted by some Panel members that while the UN Model Regulations restricted the transport of UN 2983 to pressure receptacles, other regulatory instruments (for example the U.S. Hazardous Materials Regulations and the ADR/RID), like the Technical Instructions, also provided for a number of packaging authorizations in addition to pressure receptacles.
3. A review of the current provisions of the Model Regulations for similarly classed substances has been conducted with a view to establishing the most appropriate multimodal packaging provisions for the transport of UN 2983 Ethylene oxide and propylene oxide mixtures. Currently, P200 is assigned to UN 2983 in the Model Regulations whereas other regional and modal regulations provide for a wider range of authorized packagings consistent with those provided for similarly classed materials. While P200 is used for certain liquids with unique properties (for example those that are highly reactive to water and other materials etc.), it is suggested that P001 may be a more appropriate packing instruction based on a comparison to other flammable liquids assigned to P001 with similar properties (i.e. flammable liquids with toxic subsidiary risks and similar vapour pressures). It should be noted that the data provided for the mixture assumes the maximum allowable concentration of the more volatile component (i.e. a 30% ethylene oxide concentration in the mixture).
4. The Sub-Committee is invited to consider this matter and provide feedback that could be documented in the report of this session for consideration by the ICAO Dangerous Goods Panel at its upcoming Panel meeting to be held in October. Based on the feedback received at this session, the United States will submit a formal proposal for the December session to align the packaging provisions for UN 2983 with those of other substances with similar properties.

Annex

Material	UN Number	Boiling Point C	Flash Point C	Vapour Pressure kPa 25C	Hazard Class	Subsidiary risk	ICAO Packing Instruction	UN Packing Instruction
Ethylene oxide and propylene oxide mixture (with 30% ethylene oxide)	2983	24	<0	96.5	3	6.1	361	P200
Ethylene Oxide	1040	11	-20	174.0	2.3	None	200	P200
Propylene Oxide	1280	34	-37	71.7	3	None	361	P001
Flammable material.								
Butane	1011	-1	-60	242.8	2.3	None	200	P200
Diethyl ether	1155	35	-45	55.1	3	None	361	P001
Flammable and toxic materials								
Acetaldehyde	1089	20	-39	120.2	3	None	361	P001
Acetonitrile	1093	77	0	11.7	3	6.1	361	P001
Allyl chloride	1100	45	-32	49.1	3	6.1	361	P001
Chloroprene	1991	59	-16	28.9	3	6.1	361	P001

Note: In addition to the above, it should be noted that over 20 n.o.s. entries that meet the criteria of a flammable liquid in PGI and that are also toxic are assigned to P001 and to PI 361 in the ICAO Technical Instructions.