

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**

6 December 2013

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Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda

**Implementation of the GHS: Development of a list of chemicals
classified in accordance with the GHS**

Outcome of the meeting of the informal group on the development of a global list of classified chemicals

Transmitted by the expert from the United States of America on behalf of the informal group

1. The informal correspondence group met at 12:45 on 5 December 2013. It began by hearing a report from the representative from the OECD (Joop de Knecht, Senior Policy Analyst), on a classification exercise performed by the Cooperative Chemicals Assessment Meeting (CoCAM). This project, performed at CoCAM4 and CoCAM5, involved performing assessments on chemicals for which there had been conflicting notifications. Several members performed classifications of each selected chemical. Results agreed in many cases, but there were also disagreements. Most disagreements arose in the application of more complex classification criteria, in the application of read across and weight of evidence principles, from the sources of data used, and in the interpretation of data. However CoCAM also found that through further discussion many issues could be resolved. It also learned about number of practical issues that arise in achieving harmonized classifications. Mr. de Knecht indicated that it might be possible that OECD could assist the Sub-Committee in the pilot classification exercise, and that this was an opportune time to consider collaboration, because the Joint Meeting was planning future work in February 2014.

2. The group then discussed how to proceed in the pilot classification exercise. It was suggested that only member countries should perform the exercise, but concern was expressed over the resources needed. There was also concern expressed that stakeholders would have an opportunity to provide input into the classification exercise, as provided by the guiding principles. The group agreed that collaboration with the OECD should be sought, in light of its expertise, previous experience, and its “Clear Space” platform, which will allow participants without the resources to attend a meeting to participate in the exercise virtually.

3. It was suggested that the pilot classification exercise could include several phases: a data collection phase, a preliminary classification phase, and then discussion of the classification to seek agreement.

4. The group also discussed the list comparison exercise, but concerns were raised about whether that approach would produce a result that would satisfy the guiding principles, because the data supporting the classifications in many lists are not often available. On the other hand, it was recognized that the TDG and CLP lists represent classifications used in a significant portion of the world’s trade.

5. As a way forward, the group agreed that the chemicals to be used in the pilot exercise would be identified through the comparison of the TDG and CLP lists prepared by the Secretariat, taking also into account the chemicals that have been nominated. Chemicals with similar classifications in the two lists would be selected, and the pilot exercise would perform classifications using current data. Because of the short period that has been available for nominations, additional nominations would be accepted until the end of January 2014. From these sources, the chair would recommend a few chemicals (less than five) to be used in the pilot exercise.

6. Other considerations for the selection of pilot chemicals were raised. Concern was expressed about selecting chemicals that were too difficult or controversial, but on the other hand it was noted that consideration should be given to selecting chemicals that represent some of the issues involved in classification. It was also noted that there might be other benefits to classifying particular chemicals, such as providing guidance about a chemical commonly used in the developing world.
