

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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Item 2 (b) of the provisional agenda

**Classification criteria and related hazard communication:
review of Chapter 2.1**

Outcome of discussions on hazard communication in the meeting of the Informal Correspondence Group on the review of GHS Chapter 2.1

Transmitted by the expert from Sweden

1. The Informal Correspondence Group (ICG) on the review of GHS Chapter 2.1 met in the afternoon of the 8 July to discuss primarily the hazard communication elements for the various classifications of the new GHS classification system as presented in the Annex of document ST/SG/AC.10/C.4/2019/5 - ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/2019/32. These discussions were based on documents UN/SCETDG/55/INF.20 - UN/SCEGHS/37/INF.9 and UN/SCETDG/55/INF.50 - UN/SCEGHS/37/INF.18, where various options are presented. The meeting was chaired by the expert from Sweden who leads the work on the review of Chapter 2.1.
2. The meeting started with the chairman summarizing the outcome of the combined meeting of the ICG and the Working Group on Explosives (EWG) that took place in parallel to the 55:th session of the SCETDG, as reported in UN/SCEGHS/37/INF.24¹ and UN/SCETDG/55/56 - UN/SCEGHS/37/INF.21. Examples of explosives entering the classifications 2A, 2B and 2C were shown for illustration, as were examples of primary packaging and various attenuating features in explosives packaging.²
3. There were some comments as regards the exclusion for “energetic samples” and the general exclusion of substances and mixtures that have not been assigned to Class 1 for transport.³ It was also commented that a clarification of the criteria for Category 1 could better be placed amongst the criteria themselves. The meeting then focused on assigning appropriate hazard communication elements to the classifications.
4. The first subject was the hazard communication for Sub-category 2B, where it was concluded that the symbol “exploding bomb” and the signal word “Warning” would be appropriate. There were no objections to the hazard statement “Fire or projection hazard”,

¹ Reproduction of the report of the EWG, UN/SCETDG/55/INF.55.

² For further examples, see UN/SCEGHS/36/INF.18 - UN/SCETDG/54/INF.24. Note that the criteria were slightly changed in the ICG/EWG-meeting on 2-4 July 2019, in particular that explosives that detonate and disintegrate will always be classified in Sub-category 2A.

³ See UN/SCETDG/55/56 - UN/SCEGHS/37/INF.21. “Energetic samples” is shorthand for the substances/mixtures in research and development under point c) (v). The general exclusion of explosives in Class 1 is under point d) (it is noted that the exclusion as worded needs amending to prevent explosives that are too dangerous for transport to escape the GHS hazard class of Explosives.

although it was noted that it could perhaps need review to check that it communicates the hazard associated with the classification appropriately.

5. The next topic was the hazard communication for Sub-category 2C. There was some discussion on whether the symbol “exploding bomb” would be appropriate or not. Most experts were of the opinion that this classification should not have the symbol, and it was pointed out that the explosives contained in this sub-category would not be hazardous enough for the symbol and that “overlabelling” generally should be avoided. There were ideas that precautionary statements could be a way to overcome the possibility that substances and mixtures provided in small portions would be poured together and present a higher hazard than that reflected by sub-category 2C. While there was no firm consensus, it appeared that not having the symbol would be acceptable. The signal word “Warning” was deemed appropriate for this sub-category. Regarding the hazard statement “Fire or projection hazard” there were no objections, but it was pointed out that it might be preferable to have at least slightly differing hazard statements for sub-categories 2B and 2C, to avoid confusion on which sub-category the explosive actually is assigned to.

6. Next the group turned its attention to the hazard communication for Sub-category 2A. There was general support to assign the symbol “exploding bomb”, the signal word “Danger” and the hazard statement “Explosive” to this classification. Regarding the issue on communication of the division (as configured for transport), there were various options presented. While there was no firm consensus on the best way to achieve the desired outcome, most experts preferred to provide this information in terms of a precautionary statement. However, it was pointed out that the precise wording for this precautionary statement would need to be revisited.

7. The final item for discussion was the hazard communication for Category 1. While there was support for the symbol “exploding bomb” and the signal word “Danger”, it was pointed out that this would exaggerate the hazard for some explosives in this very broad category. Regarding the hazard statement and the appropriate means to communicate “extreme sensitivity” to stimuli (e.g. those of Test series 3 or 4), there was no consensus within the time constraints of the meeting and further discussions will need to follow.

8. The expert from Sweden is thankful to the experts that participated actively in the discussions and notes with satisfaction that the outcome of the meeting constitutes a major step forward in achieving the goal of presenting a new Chapter 2.1 for the GHS within the current biennium.
