

**Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods
and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification
and Labelling of Chemicals**

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**Sub-Committee of Experts on the
Transport of Dangerous Goods**

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Item 10 (a) of the provisional agenda

**Issues relating to the Globally Harmonized System
of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals:
review of Chapter 2.1**

**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**

**Status report on the review of GHS Chapter 2.1 – update on
the open issues**

Transmitted by the expert from Sweden

Background

1. Document ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/2020/20–ST/SG/AC.10/C.4/2020/5 describes the work done on the review of GHS Chapter 2.1 over the last couple of years. In Annex I of that document, a revised Chapter 2.1 for the GHS is presented. Associated amendments needed to complete the transition are given in Annex II and III of the document, as well as in document ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/2020/23–ST/SG/AC.10/C.4/2020/8 (allocation of Precautionary statements) and ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/2020/22–ST/SG/AC.10/C.4/2020/7 (in principle amendments to the Manual of Tests and Criteria).

2. In these documents, a few open issues are pointed to, and this status report intends to update delegations on the progress made on these issues within the Informal Correspondence Group (ICG) within which the work on Chapter 2.1 is done. The open issues are:

- (i) Exclusion of articles that contain explosives but which not transported as Class 1, via provision 2.1.1.2.2 (d)
- (ii) Application of new Precautionary statement P236 for placing the division for transport on the GHS label, and the associated Conditions for Use
- (iii) An alternative Hazard statement for Sub-category 2C that is different from that of Sub-category 2B.

Within the ICG, Task Forces were formed to tackle each of these open issues, and the below is the outcome from the discussions in those groupings, as perceived by the expert from Sweden that leads the effort.

Update on the open issues

Exclusion of some articles containing explosives via provision 2.1.1.2.2 (d)

3. As mentioned in paragraph 32 of document ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/2020/20–ST/SG/AC.10/C.4/2020/5, confirmation was needed to ensure

that provision 2.1.1.2.2 (d) of the new Chapter 2.1 functions as intended. The provision seeks to align the GHS hazard class Explosives with the UN Model Regulations by excluding those explosives-containing articles that are not transported as Class 1, under certain conditions. The Task Force on this item concluded that it would not be possible, within reasonable time, to find agreement on the wording of provision 2.1.1.2.2 (d). The core of the problem is that jurisdictions take different views on whether or not the affected articles are to be regarded as explosives, and under what conditions.

4. As a result of the outcome from the Task Force, the expert from Sweden made the suggestion to strike out provision 2.1.1.2.2 (d) completely, meaning that the status quo would prevail. The expert from Sweden also proposed that a Note could be inserted under provision 2.1.1.2.2 that would acknowledge the situation, provisionally worded:

“NOTE: It is recognised that some articles containing explosives are allowed to be transported in other classes than Class 1 according to the UN Model Regulations, often under certain conditions (e.g. special packaging). Competent authorities may exclude such articles also for other sectors [provided those conditions are still met].”

5. Some members of the ICG thought that it was too early yet to give up on trying to find a way to word provision 2.1.1.2.2 (d), and that the ICG should continue to work on the matter. In informal document UN/SCEGHS/39/INF.10-UN/SCEGHS/57/INF.15, the experts from the USA, IME and SAAMI present an alternative approach regarding this provision. That document has, however, not yet been discussed in the ICG.

Application of Precautionary statement P236 and its Conditions for Use

6. As discussed in paragraphs 12-18 of document ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/2020/23-ST/SG/AC.10/C.4/2020/8, there were divided opinions within the ICG regarding the application of a new Precautionary statement P236 (“Division ... in the transport configuration.”). Noting that some still questioned the need to state the division on the GHS label, the Task Force on this issue concluded that P236 should be applied to all classifications within Category 2, i.e. to sub-categories 2A, 2B and 2C. The standard Condition for Use to fill out the three dots are suggested to be used, i.e. “... Manufacturer/supplier or competent authority to specify the division for transport.”

7. Two exemptions from applying P236 have been identified, the precise wordings for these are still to be settled. The first one concerns single packagings where the transport pictogram (warning label) that already displays the division in Class 1 appears, as there is obviously no need to repeat that information. The second one concerns those cases where, at the point of affixing the GHS label to an article or inner packaging, it is not known what outer packaging the explosive will end up in and what division for transport that outer packaging is assigned to.

8. Tentative wordings for these exemptions, which need further polishing and discussion, are:

(i) “May be omitted for single packagings where the transport pictogram displaying the division (within Class 1) appears.”

and

(ii) “May be omitted where the container or packaging may become part of transport configurations assigned to different divisions.”

or alternatively

(ii) “May be omitted for explosives which are packed into different outer packagings resulting in different divisions for transport.”

9. As explained in document ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/2020/23–ST/SG/AC.10/C.4/2020/8, the already existing P234 (“Keep only in original packaging.”) would always apply to explosives in Category 2. Whenever P236 should also be applied, the two are intended to be combined into P234 + P236 (“Keep only in original packaging; Division ... as configured for transport”). Concerns have been raised that P236 in itself is not worded as a precaution, and that using P-statements to convey other types of information would not be in line with their purpose. The expert from Sweden has therefore suggested that P236 could also be worded to include the text of P234, i.e. that P236 would read “Keep only in original packaging; Division ... as configured for transport”. This would make P236 a precaution and also guarantee that the two sets of text always appear together. It is noted though that there are already some P-statements that are not worded as precautions but must be combined with other P-statements, e.g. “In case of fire:” (P370) and “If swallowed:” (P301).

Alternative Hazard statement for Sub-category 2C

10. As mentioned in paragraph 32 of document ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/2020/20–ST/SG/AC.10/C.4/2020/5, there was a wish from some ICG-members to find a hazard statement for Sub-category 2C that would be different from that of Sub-category 2B. The Task Force discussed various options for such an alternative hazard statement, which were all varieties of current hazard statement H204 “Fire or projection hazard” which is to be applied for Sub-category 2B. As views within the Task Force were diverging, the conclusion was drawn that the only viable option would be to stay with using H204 also for Sub-category 2C, i.e. that sub-categories 2B and 2C will have the same hazard statement “Fire or projection hazard”.

11. The above outcome is already the proposal in the Chapter 2.1 presented in Annex I to document ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/2020/20–ST/SG/AC.10/C.4/2020/5 (see its section 2.1.3). It was noted that the proposed hazard communication for sub-categories 2B and 2C will still allow these two classifications to be distinguished via the GHS label by means of the different GHS pictograms (the exploding bomb and the exclamation mark, respectively).