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| **Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals 27 November 2020** |
| **Sub-Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods**  **Fifty-seventh session**  Geneva, 30 November-8 December 2020  Item 15 of the provisional agenda  **Other business** |

Information on South Africa’s response to the Beirut catastrophe caused by explosion of a large quantity of ammonium nitrate stored in a warehouse in the Port

Transmitted by the Responsible Packaging Management Association of Southern Africa (RPMASA)

Introduction and background

1. This paper is for information only to inform Sub-Committee Members of the initiative taken in South Africa to evaluate current regulations, and practices in place so as to prevent a similar type catastrophe happening in South Africa (SA), and to improve safety of dangerous goods in storage and transport.

2. Following the Beirut catastrophe, the Chief Director of the Department of Transport Maritime contacted RPMASA to ask if we thought a similar type of disaster could occur in one of South Africa’s Ports, or anywhere in SA, and how we could prevent such.

3. This resulted in forming a core Task Group of Regulators with RPMASA Industry Experts who identified a need for further consideration of:

* Existing Legislation & gaps
* Inter departmental cooperation
* Controls in place, Inspection Regimes
* Permits & licensing – Major Hazards Installation Risk Assessments & monitoring
* National Standards
* International instruments – UN TDG Model Regulations, IMDG etc

4. South Africa is a Manufacturer, importer and exporter of Ammonium nitrate.

5. A Public-Private Partnership was agreed, together with Terms of Reference for 5 Expert Working Groups to address transport & storage of explosives and oxidizers -

EWG 1. Data Gathering – imports, exports, storage

EWG 2. Legal – what regulations under who’s jurisdictions and possible gaps

EWG 3. Monitoring and Enforcement – who monitors what, penalties and gaps

EWG 4. Risk Assessment, Emergency Preparedness & Response – Regulated & Industry initiative

EWG 5. Training & Awareness Raising – mandatory and voluntary

6. Representative from SA Police Explosives Unit, SA Port Authority, Port Terminals, SA Maritime Safety Authority, DOT Maritime, Roads, Road Traffic Management Corporation, Road Traffic Inspectorate, Rail Regulator, Dept Labour for regulation of MHI storage and National Disaster Management Centre together with Industry experts from each of the companies who manufacture Ammonium nitrate in South Africa.

7. Each EWG has met and initial outcomes include:

(a) finding the value and need for working together across the Regulators,

(b) need for more awareness of all applicable regulations,

(c) importance of identifying gaps to fill,

(d) need to raise awareness of what Dangerous Goods are, and the potential risks along the Supply Chain,

(e) need to raise awareness of mandatory Dangerous Goods Training e.g. IMDG for shoreside personnel and CTU packing,

(f) need to keep regulations and Standards up to date and aligned for seamless transition between modes and regulators jurisdiction,

(g) urgent need for Awareness and Training, and quality of Training for all along the supply chain.

8. The EWG’s will continue to meet monthly to progress evaluated needs including,

(a) capacity building and awareness raising,

(b) strengthening operational practices,

(c) improving access to quality Training and filling the gaps in regulations,

together with other needs identified to keep South Africa safe.

9. We hope that this initiative could be extended to other countries in our region.

10. We would appreciate and invite any assistance with awareness raising, capacity building and Training.