

UN/SCEGHS/14/INF.23

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
Fourteenth session,
Geneva, 12-14 December 2007
Item 2 (b) of the provisional agenda

UPDATING OF THE SECOND REVISED EDITION OF THE GLOBALLY HARMONIZED SYSTEM OF CLASSIFICATION AND LABELLING OF CHEMICALS (GHS)

Health hazards

Proposed change to Chapter 3.10 (section 3.10.1)

Transmitted by the International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Association
(IPIECA)

Introduction

1. Chapter 3.10 of Part 3 of the GHS (Rev. 2, 2007) mentions solids in the context of aspiration hazards.
2. Aspiration is defined in paragraph 3.10.1.2 as "... the entry of a liquid or a solid chemical product directly through the oral or nasal cavity, or indirectly from vomiting into the trachea and lower respiratory system."
3. The classification criteria for aspiration hazards are based on the kinematic viscosity of a substance and hence related to a physicochemical property that is defined for liquids.
4. A solid substance that had a small enough particle size could reach the alveoli and cause damage comparable to the severe acute effects described in paragraph 3.10.1., i.e. "... chemical pneumonia or varying degrees of pulmonary injuries ...". However, the GHS does not provide guidance on the physicochemical properties of solids that may be related to aspiration hazards and does therefore not allow classification for this hazard.
5. Therefore, for the avoidance of doubt it should be stated in Chapter 3.10 that the classification of substances for aspiration hazards in accordance with Chapter 3.10 applies exclusively to liquid substances or mixtures.

Proposal

6. IPIECA proposes to add a new paragraph 3.10.1.6 and proposes the following text:

"3.10.1.6 Although the definition of aspiration in 3.10.1.2 includes the entry of solids into the respiratory system, the GHS classification criteria for aspiration hazards is intended to be applied to liquid substances and mixtures only."