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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

Sub-Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods

Forty-fifth session

Geneva, 23 June–2 July 2014

Draft report

3. Neutron radiation detectors

Document: ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/2014/21 (DGAC)

27. DGAC proposed replacing the word “absorbed” with “adsorbed” in special provision 373, as in its opinion the boron trifluoride contained in radiation detectors was adsorbed, not absorbed. Some experts were not in favour, as absorption was a safer means of scrubbing than adsorption. Others proposed providing for both cases.

28. The question was put to the vote. It was decided to retain the current text, unchanged.

4. Celluloid table tennis balls

Document: ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/2014/33 (DGAC)

29. Several experts did not agree that table tennis balls should be exempted, as they were flammable. Others considered that they did not quite correspond with the description of UN No. 2000, CELLULOID, and should be transported under UN No. 1325 instead. Others felt that in certain packagings they could be exempted.

30. The DGAC representative withdrew the proposal and said that he would submit a new one in the light of the discussions so as to clarify the situation for consignors.

5. UN No. 3170 Aluminium smelting by-products or aluminium remelting by-products

Document: ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/2014/10 (Norway and Spain)

Informal document: INF.54 (Norway and Spain)

31. The Sub-Committee adopted the proposal contained in informal document INF.54, which authorized the use of sheeted bulk containers for the inland transport of such by-products and required inter alia appropriate ventilation and protection against ingress of water for all transport units in the event of bulk carriage (see annex ...).

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32. It was noted that ADR, RID and ADN required marking also on the doors of the transport units and that it was for each modal organization to set out the specific conditions for a given transport mode.

6. Subsidiary risks for uranium hexafluoride

Document: ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/2014/60 (Austria)

Informal documents: INF.15 and INF.15/Refs. 1-15 (WNTI)

33. Some experts would have liked to have more time to consider the data submitted by WNTI and possibly to obtain more recent data to conclude that UF₆ was toxic. However, it was recalled that the question had been under consideration for several years, that all the data indicated that UF₆ was toxic owing to the formation of hydrogen fluoride and that it was unlikely that new information would be produced.

34. The Sub-Committee thus agreed that a decision had to be taken, and the Austrian proposal was adopted by consensus. In accordance with the principles behind special provisions 172 and 290, a Class 6.1 subsidiary risk was thus assigned to UN Nos. 2977 and 2978, in addition to the primary risk of radioactivity and the subsidiary risk of corrosivity, and the subsidiary risk should be indicated by a label. Uranium hexafluoride in excepted packages of less than 0.1 kg per package was assigned to Class 6.1 with a subsidiary risk of corrosivity (see annex ...).

35. The operational complications that could result from the decision should be handled by the competent modal organizations.

7. Classification and hazard communication provisions for crude oil

Document: ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/2014/49 (Canada and United States)

Informal documents: INF.17 and INF.26 (IPIECA)

36. The expert from Canada said that, following a series of accidents involving the rail transport of crude oil in tank cars in North America, she and the expert from the United States had carefully considered the safety implications of such transport and the possible environmental impact of the significant and exponential increase in the inland transport of crude oil. Specifically, they asked the Sub-Committee to consider whether the entries for crude oil were adequate in the light of the significant variations in its composition, in particular the flammable gas content, and whether factors other than the flashpoint or the boiling point should be taken into account for classification, such as the vapour pressure. They also proposed examining the relevance of other classification provisions, such as sampling quality management procedures and systems and classification tests for the substances to be transported.

37. The representative of IPIECA said that the studies done by his association on the crude oil under discussion did not indicate any apparent problems with the classification criteria currently in use. If the Sub-Committee wanted to change them it should also take into consideration similar substances with complex compositions and should work with the GHS Sub-Committee. The American Petroleum Institute (API) was working on a new standard for crude oil classification sampling procedures. He would provide a version of the draft to the Sub-Committee.

38. The expert from China said that his country had become a major importer of crude oil and that difficulties had been encountered with rail transport there too. He endorsed the idea that work should be done on that issue.

39. On the whole, the Sub-Committee was in favour of exchanging experience on the subject and possibly of carrying out work on crude oil classification and testing methods,

but several experts considered that the data provided was for the time being insufficient to immediately justify work. The accident investigation results were still not available in detail; the causes might have been operational or related to North American standards that did not fall under the mandate of the Committee. It was thus inappropriate for the time being to call into question the classification criteria or provisions relating to transport in portable tanks in the Model Regulations.

40. In conclusion, the experts from Canada and the United States were invited, along with IPIECA and other interested delegations, to provide additional information on the accidents in question and to present more specific proposals on the paths that the Sub-Committee might consider at its December 2014 session, when defining its programme of work for 2015–2016.
