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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 Globally Harmonized  
System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals****Nineteenth session**

Geneva, 30 June – 2 July 2010

Item 4(a) of the provisional agenda

**Implementation of the GHS: Implementation issues****Proposals from the informal working group on GHS  
implementation issues****Transmitted by the expert from Australia on behalf of the informal  
working group<sup>1</sup>****Background**

1. At the eighteenth session of the GHS Sub-Committee in December 2009, the informal working group on implementation issues met to continue discussions on the issue of the merits of an internationally-developed and maintained GHS classification list. This issue was initially mooted by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) at the July 2008 GHS Sub-Committee meeting, and discussed by the implementation informal group at that meeting (<http://www.unece.org/trans/doc/2008/ac10c4/UN-SCEGHS-15-inf32e.pdf>). At the time, it was felt by the GHS Sub-Committee that there was insufficient information available to the Sub-Committee to allow any decision to be made about the costs or benefits of such a list, and it was suggested that the implementation group discuss the issue further to see if it warranted further consideration by the Sub-Committee.

2. During free-ranging discussions at the informal working group in December 2009, it was clear that some countries or stakeholders might support the development of such a list to assist industry, but most countries had not sufficient information to allow any national

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<sup>1</sup> In accordance with the programme of work of the Sub-Committee for 2009-2010 approved by the Committee at its fourth session (refer to ST/SG/AC.10/C.4/32, Annex II and ST/SG/AC.10/36, para.14).

position to be developed on the topic. The informal group agreed that a survey should be developed, to provide a status report on classification lists currently maintained in each country, what the plans are for lists to support implementation of the GHS, how the various sectors in different countries use lists of classification now, and what views there are on the future need for lists. The purpose of the survey was to help inform any further discussion on this topic at the Sub-Committee.

3. Australia subsequently prepared the survey, with the assistance of the Netherlands and South Africa, consistent with the direction provided by the implementation informal working group, and circulated it to Sub-Committee members in our capacity as chair of the informal group.

4. A summary of the responses to the survey submitted so far has been produced as an information document for the nineteenth session.

5. In addition to matter of the classification lists, some minor editorial issues were raised in the working group by the International Paint and Printing Ink Council (IPICC). These will be the subject of future proposals to the Sub-Committee from relevant experts, not the informal implementation working group.

## **Proposal**

6. As chair of the working group, Australia notes that not all member countries have responded to the survey so that there are information gaps in the survey responses regarding the classification lists that currently exist and views on the future need for lists. Australia proposes that this document be an interim report to allow each country further time to respond and that a final report be prepared by the informal working group for the Sub-Committee in December 2010.

7. The Sub-Committee may wish to consider a further survey of the data sources used for classification purposes and on views as to how an agreed data set could be maintained. Australia would be happy to coordinate an additional survey on this aspect.

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