

The Necessity of Global Harmonisation

Classification of and regulatory systems for chemicals have been in place in many countries for years. In some cases, several systems are simultaneously implemented even within the same country, requiring different classifications, labels, and safety data sheets (SDS) for the same product. This leads to:

- Higher governmental expenses in order to regulate and enforce systems;
- Greater compliance expenditures for companies, and;
- Confusion for workers who must comprehend the hazards of a chemical for their own safety, thus leading to inconsistent protection against exposure

The goal of the GHS is to provide readily available information on the hazardous properties of chemicals as well as recommended control measures. With the GHS in place, the safe production, transport, use, and disposal of said chemicals become more manageable, resulting in the protection of humans and the environment.

With the help of the GHS, chemical hazards are more easily identified by and communicated to those who are potentially exposed, such as workers, transport workers, emergency responders, and consumers.

ADG Code vs GHS

The Australian Dangerous Goods (ADG) Code is only applicable to the transport of dangerous goods via road and rail. For instance, the ADG Codes require specific signages on trucks or trains bearing the dangerous goods, as well as at the entrance to the storage facility. It provides information that pertains to managing immediate hazards during transport, such as emergency situations.

On the other hand, the WHS Regulations for GHS labelling provide information regarding the use, handling, and storage of hazardous chemicals at the workplace.

Consistent and Coherent

The implementation of the GHS not only improves the quality of the information regarding hazards in the workplace, but also ensures that this information is consistent; therefore, workers can more easily identify hazardous chemicals and understand how to appropriately handle, store, use, and dispose of these.

