

The Global Harmonised Standard (GHS) and Safety Data Sheet (SDS) requirements for South Africa

The UN GHS (Global Harmonised Standard) was developed as a result of the international mandate provided by the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and as reflected in AGENDA 21 paragraph 19.27: "A global harmonised hazard classification and compatible labelling system, including material safety data sheets and easily understandable symbols should be available and feasible by year 2000".

The work was further coordinated and managed by the IOMC (Interorganizational Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals) and the completed and handed over to the GHS Sub Committee which was established in 1999.

The UN GHS sub-committee is responsible for maintaining the GHS. The document (The UN Purple Book) is regularly revised - the first version for global implementation was approved in December 2002 and published in 2003. The Purple book is updated every 2 years and the current version is Version 7 published in 2017.

Refer to www.unece.org for updates and further information

The UN GHS Purple Book provides for the following:

- Defines the layout of a UN GHS Safety Data Sheet (SDS) and content requirements;
- Allows for countries to adopt their own rules/regulations within the UN GHS framework;
- Defines the level and categories for physical, health and environmental hazards;
- Applies agreed criteria to classification and labelling of chemical
- Defines communication tools: Safety Data Sheet (SDS) and Labels

The purpose of the GHS:

- To enhance the protection of human health and the environment;
- To provide an international recognised standard for the classification and labelling of chemicals;
- To provide a recognised framework for countries that do not have a system to implement;
- To reduce the need for testing of chemicals;
- To promote global trade through a uniform classification and labelling standard

South Africa

At what stage is the implementation of the GHS in South Africa?

- The National Road Traffic Act 93 of 1996 (Chapter VIII – Dangerous Goods) and SANS 10232-4:2018 (TEC cards)(Transport Emergency Card) requires the TEC to be compiled from an SDS that is compliant with SANS 10234 (UN GHS) and SANS 11014;
- SANS 10234: 2008: Labelling and Classification of Chemicals requires classification and labelling of chemicals and mixtures/products that classify hazardous as per SANS 10234 up to the point of "intentional intake" i.e. SANS 10234 is not applicable beyond "Intentional intake" for pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, stock remedies, food additives and residue pesticides in food. Besides these products, SANS 10234 is applied to all other hazardous substances and products throughout their life cycle i.e. manufacturing, handling, storage, transport and use (e.g. labelling of consumer products). SANS 10234:2008 is based on the UN GHS Purple Book.
- The Hazardous Substances Bill proposes certain controls of all chemical substances or mixtures that classify as per SANS 10234;
- The OHSACT Act 55 of 1993 (Hazardous Chemical Regulations) Section 9A requires an SDS to be compiled according to SANS 11014 and the GHS (i.e. SANS 10234 in South Africa)
- Draft Regulations for "Hazardous Chemical Agents" – OHSACT Act 55 of 1993 released for comment 14 Sep 2018 providing regulations for implementation of the GHS at the workplace and the requirement to conform to the latest version of GHS Purple Book
- Important to note that the definition of a supplier in terms of SANS 11014 (and referenced in the OHSACT) is defined as: "Party responsible for making a chemical product available to a recipient"
- The OHSACT requires that a "Supplier" must provide an SDS that contains information on all the known hazards or potential hazards associated with the product and the Supplier Information must be made available on the SDS.
- The OHSACT and Regulations require that the employer must ensure that the exposure of

an employee to a hazardous chemical substance (HCS) is either prevented or where not practicable, minimised through adequate control measures and by introducing appropriate work procedures which the employee must follow. This cannot be achieved unless the detailed information of the hazards associated with the product are available through the SDS

- Waste: NEM:Waste Act (Act 59 of 2008) has implemented the GHS for waste through the classification regulations 2013 by including SANS 10234. This means that ALL waste except for Medical Waste that classifies hazardous as per SANS 10234 must carry a representative Safety Data Sheet (SDS) and label as per its classifications – i.e. if a waste is a mixture, the concentration of the components must be determined and used for the classification;

- South Africa as signatory to Global Treaties that serve to protect human health and the environment against the adverse effects of hazardous chemicals - Stockholm and Rotterdam conventions;

- ISO 11014: Any SDS drawn up in accordance with SANS 10234 must meet SANS 11014 requirements;

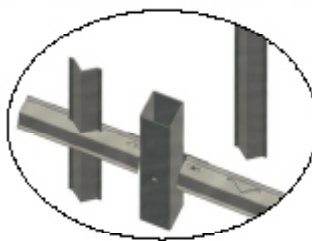
- An SDS of a product must represent the chemical product as a whole i.e. must be relevant to either the substance or the mixture i.e. exact components and % content and the chemical product must be classified as per the GHS classification rules. Once the classification is known, the SDS is compiled according to the classification

- NOTE: Each country or region (e.g. the EU) have their own SDS and GHS classification requirements based on the UN Purple Book GHS requirements – the SDS must be in the format as prescribed by the country – i.e. in South Africa it must comply with SANS 10234 and UN GHS Purple Book. In the EU it must comply with the CLP regulation ((EC) No 1272/2008), in the US the SDS must comply with HAZCOM 2012 Regulations.

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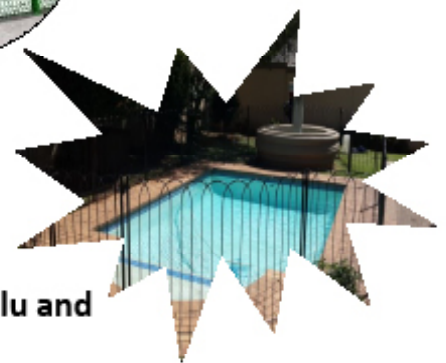


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