



## **PLANNING OF GESAMP ACTIVITIES**

### **Evaluation of the hazards of harmful substances carried by ships**

#### **Report of the Chair of Working Group 1**

##### **Introduction**

1 Since the last annual session of GESAMP, Working Group 1 has met once. The 62nd session (EHS 62) was held at CEDRE in Brest, France, from 12 to 16 May 2025, and was chaired by Mr. Richard Luit. The full report has been published as EHS 62/9 and circulated as IMO circular PPR.1/Circ.15.

##### **Main use of GESAMP/EHS outputs**

2 As outlined in the previous reports to GESAMP, the GESAMP Hazard Profiles (GHP) developed by Working Group 1:

- .1 contain a unique fingerprint for each substance, providing information on fourteen separate human health, environmental and physico-chemical hazards and consist of an alphanumerical notation designed to communicate the hazards;
- .2 are published by IMO annually as the GESAMP Composite List (circulated together with the meeting report as a PPR.1/Circular), which are placed on the IMO website for the use of maritime Administrations, the shipping industry and chemical manufacturers; and
- .3 provide the basis for the pollution categorization of over 900 substances, as MARPOL Annex II and the International Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships Carrying Dangerous Chemicals in Bulk (IBC Code) use these profiles to determine the pollution category, ship type and carriage requirements for each chemical, for the purposes of bulk carriage in ships.

3 The latest version of the Chapter 21 of the International Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships carrying Dangerous Chemicals in Bulk (IBC Code) makes direct reference to GHP ratings for all carriage requirements, including environmental protection, ship safety, and occupational health. The GESAMP Composite List is the only global list of hazard classifications/ratings used for regulating hazardous chemicals on a global scale based on guidance given by the United Nations Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS).

##### **Evaluation of substances**

4 The main work carried out at the last session concerned the evaluation of substances, as per the usual practice. Data on fourteen new substances were evaluated and full GESAMP Hazard Profiles (GHPs) were assigned to all of these substances.

## **Classification issues**

### ***Estimation of acute dermal toxicity***

5 EHS 62 recalled that information on acute dermal toxicity was sometimes lacking in submissions, partly due to the restriction in animal testing of corrosive substances for ethical reasons, and that it had noted that corrosive or irritating properties were not reflected in the acute dermal toxicity rating in column C2. The Group also recalled that EHS 60 had agreed that its preferred approach in the absence of acute dermal toxicity data would be to assign an estimated C2 rating on a case-by-case basis to substances, wherever possible, to enable evaluations by the ESPH Technical Group and that it would continue its practice of noting in its report any relevant information that provided additional context for the estimated C2 rating.

6 In this context, EHS 62 considered the potential development of an extrapolation method for acute dermal toxicity, as had been done previously for acute inhalation toxicity, and agreed to:

- .1 request the Secretariat to provide a list of products in the GESAMP Composite List and data regarding the relationships between the C1, C2 and D1 ratings;
- .2 work intersessionally to discuss the results of the information provided by the Secretariat in conjunction with a literature review addressing relevant data including the relationship between acute oral and dermal toxicity; and
- .3 discuss potential ways forward regarding the development of an extrapolation method for acute dermal toxicity at a future session.

### ***Polymer hazard classification***

7 Having recalled that at recent sessions, it had assessed several polymer products for inclusion in the GESAMP Composite List, and that these evaluations typically resulted in very low acute toxicity ratings, EHS 62 noted that in other regulatory contexts, toxicity testing on polymers was typically not required.

8 EHS 62 also recalled that GHP ratings were sometimes driven by the presence of residual monomers, which presented toxicological hazards, and highlighted the importance of full compositional data, including residual monomers, when assessing polymeric products. Consequently, the Group agreed to request all manufacturers, when submitting polymers for assessment, to include the full composition of the product to be assessed, including residual monomers, solvents and other additives, such as stabilizers.

9 Having noted over several sessions the difficulty in assessing polymers, EHS 62 recalled that at its previous session, EHS 61 had agreed that a remote workshop, organized with experts on polymer hazard identification and toxicology, would be beneficial for the Group to develop guidance and criteria regarding polymer assessments. In this regard, the Group noted progress in identifying contacts and relevant documents that could inform this work and agreed to continue its efforts to organize this workshop intersessionally.

### ***Requests for generic names for products***

10 EHS 62 noted that, at recent sessions, an increasing number of requests for a more generic product name to mask the exact chemical identity of the product had been received, including for reasons of commercial sensitivity.

11 While acknowledging that commercial considerations were outside the scope of its work, the Group recognized the need to avoid creating commercial concerns. In this context, EHS 62 discussed the need to have a name of each product that accurately described the substance and

was not so generic as to represent a wide group of chemicals with potentially varied hazard profiles.

12 EHS 62 also considered a proposal to add a second table to the Composite List, consisting solely of trade-named products, which could only be used by the manufacturer (in a fashion similar to trade-named products in the MEPC.2 Circular), and agreed to discuss this matter further at a future session.

### **Consolidation of existing data files**

13 EHS 62 also recalled that re-evaluations of products were typically performed only upon request and discussed ways of ensuring that products on the Composite List were kept up-to-date in light of the fact that for many products, additional information had likely become available in the years following their evaluations. Recognizing the number of products on the Composite List, EHS 62 agreed to consider potential ways to prioritize such a review (for example, by volume shipped, length of time since assessment, or presence of specific solvents) over the intersessional period.

14 Recalling that there was no fee associated with a re-evaluation, EHS 62 also agreed to invite all stakeholders, including members of the Group, Administrations, and manufacturers, to provide information on products in the Composite List to the Group, to facilitate up-to-date GHPs.

### **Communication and publication**

15 EHS 62 recalled that at its previous session, it had agreed to conduct a review of the form used to submit GESAMP/EHS products for assessment (GESAMP/EHS Product Data Reporting Form), with a view to providing information that could be helpful to submitters while also reducing redundancy, over the intersessional period. Having noted that the Chair, in consultation with the Secretariat, had consolidated the comments and proposed a revised form for consideration and discussion, EHS 62 undertook a section-by-section review of the proposed updated form and noted that all changes were made with one of the following goals:

- .1 clarifying the purpose of and providing brief guidance for the sections and fields of the form;
- .2 providing guidance on the submission of information on mixtures, particularly that the Group's preferred approach was to either assess mixtures as a whole or, in the case of formulated mixtures, to assess each component separately; and/or
- .3 removing redundant fields to simplify data entry.

16 Subsequently, the Group agreed to request the Secretariat to publish the form, as set out in annex 5 of its report (EHS 62/9), on the IMO website for use by submitters at future sessions.

### **Action requested of GESAMP**

17 GESAMP is invited to consider the information provided and take action as appropriate.

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