

CHIEF DIRECTORATE: OCCUPATIONAL
HEALTH & SAFETY
DIRECTORATE: OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH &
HYGIENE

*Background to the Regulations for Hazardous
Chemical Agents*

Bulelwa Huna

Senior Specialist: Occupational Health & Hygiene

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employment & labour

Department:
Employment and Labour
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Introduction (1)

- Chemicals are part of our daily lives as they are used in numerous everyday products – from cell phones, water bottles, home furnishings, sports equipment, medical devices, even our clothing.
- As these chemicals are used in the daily products; they have to be tested, classified, labelled or tracked.
- Except for the incidents that get reported, the ILO also estimates that there are more than 600 000 deaths a year that result from exposure to hazardous agents.

Introduction (2)

- Annually across the globe there are some:
 - ✓ 270M occupational accidents and
 - ✓ 160M occupational diseases.
- ILO estimates that 4% of the world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is lost due to accidents and work-related diseases.
- Regulators have never accepted the proposition that injury and disease “go with the job”.

OHS and Sustainable Development

- OHS is a key facet to the achievement of Agenda 2030 as it supports economic sustainability in any country.
- Agenda 2030 embraces three dimensions of sustainability:
 - ✓ Economic,
 - ✓ Social and
 - ✓ Environmental aspect
- The legislation in each country assists in addressing such issues.
 - ✓ The Regulations for Hazardous Chemical Agents were promulgated in terms of section 43 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, act No. 85 of 1993 as amended.

OHS and Sustainable Development

- The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have a human centred approach thus giving the international community a framework for tackling the many challenges confronting humanity, including those in the world of work.
- With the focus on:
 - ✓ SDG 8: to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all
 - ✓ With reference to the chemical industry, the ILO has also estimated that there are approximately 20 million people who are economically active in the global chemical, pharmaceutical, rubber and tyre industries and such people need to be protected.

OHS and Sustainable Development



Major changes to the RHCA

- Incorporation of the 8th Revision of the GHS UN Purple Book from 2019
- Update Occupational Exposure Limits
- Updated Biological Exposure Index values

International adoption of GHS

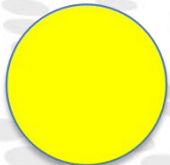
- GHS adopted by 66 countries
- Reviewed every 2 years



- Implemented



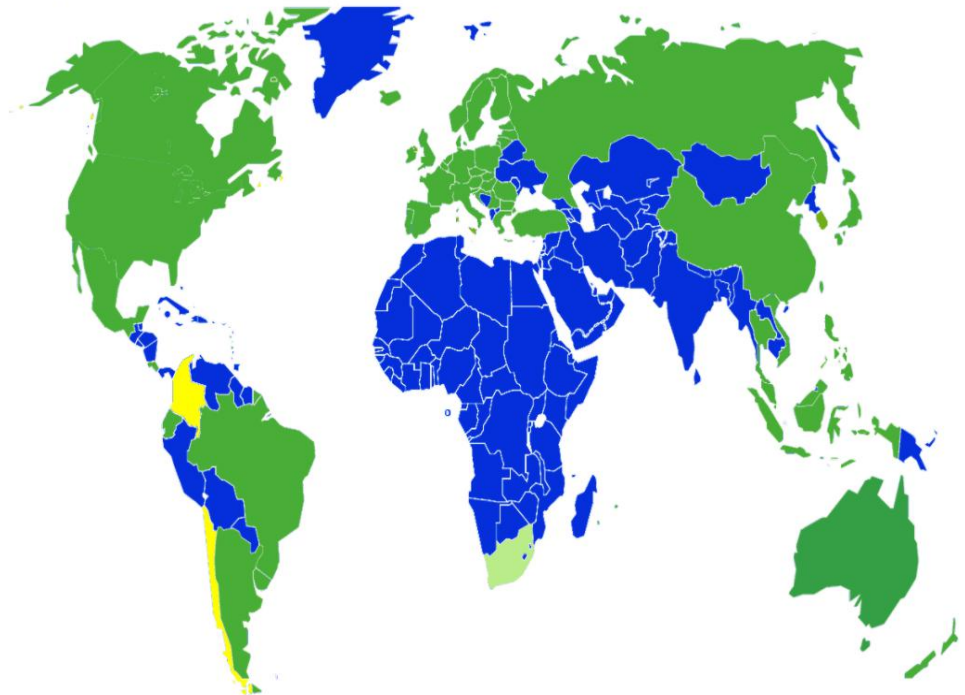
- Voluntary



- Process of implementation



- GHS not adopted



Adoption of GHS

Hazard communication through pictograms:



9 Pictograms

Adoption of GHS

- Safety Data Sheets (SDS):
 - ✓ New requirements
 - ✓ Date of development / review
 - ✓ Updated every 5 years

International utilization of OELs

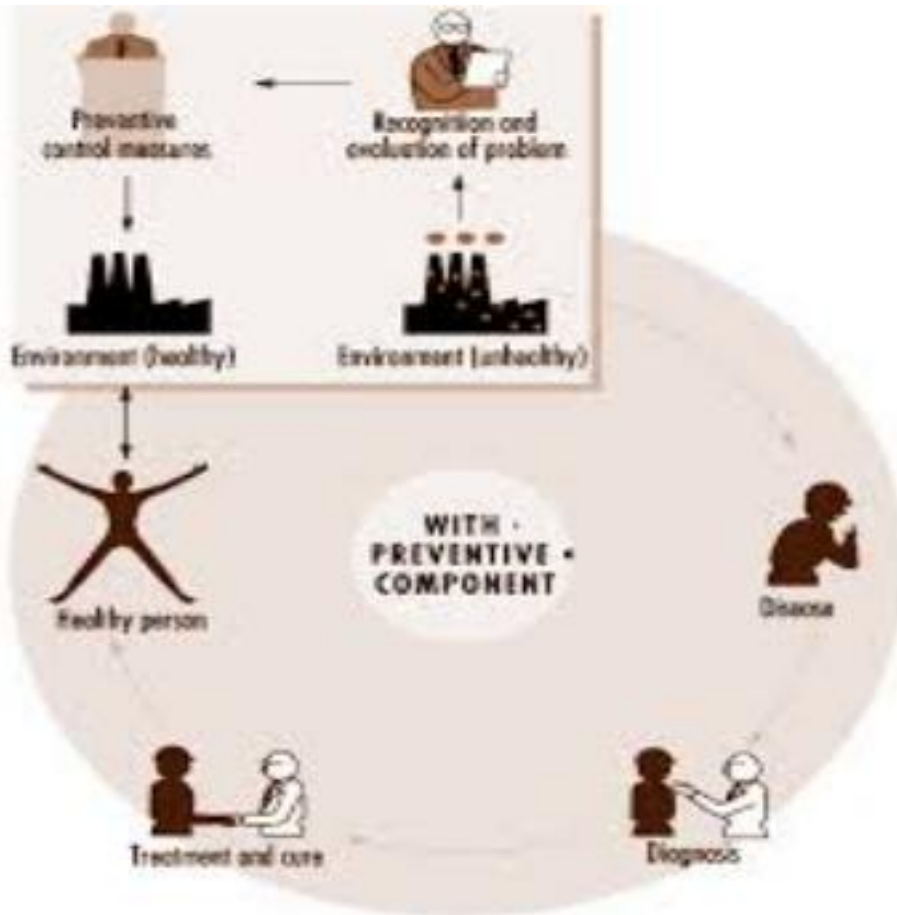
- Various similar systems has been developed and adopted internationally to add in the protection of employees.
- Legislated:
 - ✓ WELs – Work Place exposure limits - UK
 - ✓ PELs – Permissible Exposure Limit - USA
 - ✓ MAK AGW (Maximum Arbeitsplatzgrenzerte) – German
 - ✓ WES – Workplace exposure limits - Australia

Important tool to protect employees from health risks due to hazardous chemicals

International utilization of OELs

- Non- Legislated:
 - ✓ ACGIH – TLV Threshold Limit Values
 - ✓ Health based, guidance only
 - ✓ Utilised as reference point by various countries

Take home message



ECONOMY



GOV



EMPLOYERS



EMPLOYEES



COMMUNITY

REDUCED
ACCIDENTS
REDUCED
INJURIES
REDUCED
OCCUPATIONAL
DISEASES
IMPROVED
QUALITY OF
LIFE
IMPROVED
COMMUNITY
WELL BEING &
RELATIONS



Thank you