

Suppliers and users of workplace hazardous chemicals – transition to GHS 7

On 1 January 2021, a two-year transition period from the 3rd revised edition of the GHS (GHS 3) to the 7th revised edition of the GHS (GHS 7) will commence.

This information sheet is for suppliers and users of workplace hazardous chemicals.

From **1 January 2021**, Australia will begin the transition to GHS 7 for workplace hazardous chemicals. The transition period is for two years and will end on **31 December 2022**. More information about the transition period, including special arrangements in place from 1 July 2020 onwards can be found in the information sheet on changes to workplace chemical laws in Australia at: <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/changes-workplace-chemical-laws-australia-transition-ghs-7>

What's new in GHS 7?

GHS 7 introduces several changes to classification, labelling and safety data sheet (SDS) requirements for workplace hazardous chemicals. The key changes between GHS 3 and GHS 7 are:

- new hazard categories and classes for:
 - desensitised explosives
 - pyrophoric gases
 - chemically unstable gases
 - non-flammable aerosols
- updated precautionary statements.

In addition to these changes, the definition of 'hazardous chemical' will be clarified to ensure it captures all Category 2 eye irritants. Chemicals can be further sub-categorised as Category 2A and 2B, but this is not mandatory in Australia.

Duties of suppliers

A supplier is anyone who supplies a hazardous chemical that may be used at a workplace. This includes intermediaries in the supply chain such as distributors and wholesalers.

Suppliers of hazardous chemicals must:

- make sure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that chemicals they supply are without risks to health and safety, and
- provide SDS with hazardous chemicals.

In addition, a supplier must not supply hazardous chemicals to workplaces if they know, or ought reasonably to know, that the chemicals are not correctly labelled.

What do suppliers need to do?

From 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2022, manufacturers and importers of hazardous chemicals can classify, label and prepare SDS in accordance with either GHS 3 or GHS 7.

Chemicals manufactured or imported before 1 January 2023 can continue to be supplied indefinitely without needing to be reclassified or relabelled in accordance with GHS 7.

From 1 January 2023, suppliers should only accept stock which is classified and labelled in accordance with GHS 7 and has SDS prepared in accordance with GHS 7.

Users of workplace hazardous chemicals

Users of hazardous chemicals are not required to re-label or dispose of existing stock.

It is okay to keep using, handling and storing hazardous chemicals labelled in accordance with GHS 3 in your workplace if the product was manufactured or imported before 1 January 2023, regardless of when it was supplied to you.

Users should not accept hazardous chemicals manufactured or imported on or after 1 January 2023 unless they are classified and labelled in accordance with GHS 7 and have SDS prepared in accordance with GHS 7.

Further information

See our suite of guidance documents on the transition to GHS 7:
<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/ghs-7-transition>