Government of South Australia
SafeWork SA

BACKGROUND INFORMATION SSAN – Security Sensitive Ammonium Nitrate

This technical note has been prepared to provide background information in respect to SSAN regulation.

BACKGROUND

Security and Accidents

Ammonium nitrate has been widely misused for terrorist purposes because chemically it is an explosive and it is readily available. Ammonium nitrate is also responsible for many accidental large-scale explosions. These explosions tend to be devastating to the surroundings simply due to the very large quantities of material involved and the fact that historically ammonium nitrate has been stored at lesser protection distances to the surrounding population than Class 1 explosives.

Bombings & accidental explosions

- Toulouse, France, 2001.
- Omagh, Northern Ireland, 1998.
- Canary Wharf London, UK, 1996.
- Oklahoma City, USA, 1995.
- Taroom, Queensland, 1972.

Recent (2004) incidents that may also have involved ammonium nitrate include, train explosions in Iran and N Korea, a farm supply depot explosion in France and a truck explosion in Spain.

Because of the changing security environment and the problem of potential misuse, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) has instituted a review of hazardous materials. The Steering Committee for the COAG review of hazardous materials has developed a restricted report on the regulation and control of ammonium nitrate. The SSAN report comprises the first part of this hazardous materials review.

Subsequent to the development of this SSAN report State and Territory explosives regulators met and developed a document titled "Principles for the Regulation of Ammonium Nitrate". This document has been widely circulated and is freely available on the ***SafeWork SA*** website at:

http://www.safework.sa.gov.au

Status of SSAN in South Australia

The COAG principles document has been used to develop the South Australian *Explosives (Security Sensitive Substances) Regulations 2004.*

By Proclamation under the *Explosives Act 1936* Security Sensitive Ammonium Nitrate (SSAN[#]) has been declared an explosive and a security sensitive substance. The regulations under the *Dangerous Substances Act 1979* have been varied to exclude security sensitive substances from the operation of that Act.

The regulations, the relevant Governor's Proclamation and the variation of the Dangerous Substances Regulations are also freely available on the above ***SafeWork SA*** website.

[#] SSAN is defined as:
(a) ammonium nitrate; or (b) ammonium nitrate mixture at greater than 45% mass per mass mixed with any other substance, but not in solution.

Security Management Plan

The regulations detail the requirements for the preparation of a security management plan for a manufacture licence, a storage licence and a transport licence.

Security Clearance

Security clearance is required for each person supervising activities conducted under a licence or permit and for each person with unsupervised access to SSAN.

Transport and Storage

The requirements for transport and storage are set out in the regulations and the Technical Note 57 forming a condition of the licence.