

Global Regulatory Requirements for Emergency Response Telephone Numbers

GUIDE

The requirements to display emergency telephone numbers on your products' documentation are set by international, regional, and national regulations, bylaws and codes of practice. Keeping track and up to date with those requirements can be difficult, especially for international organizations.

As the world's leading Emergency Response Information Provider (ERI Provider), proudly serving the chemical industry and emergency responder community for over 50 years, CHEMTREC is often contacted by organizations asking whether emergency response numbers are required in various countries. Drawing on its own regulatory expertise and knowledge of the issues encountered by the chemical industry internationally, CHEMTREC is in the unique position to help you, and your organization comply with emergency response number requirements by sharing its knowledge.

CHEMTREC has used its own expertise and its international network of regulatory and industry experts to create this guide, which contains key information on the countries requiring emergency response numbers to be included in your products' documentation.

The regulatory information and interpretation provided by CHEMTREC is believed to be accurate at the time of delivery, but neither CHEMTREC nor the American Chemistry Council warrants or guarantees the accuracy of the information provided in this communication and accepts no liability for any inaccuracies or improper reliance. This document does not constitute legal advice, and each user should retain counsel of its own choosing before relying on any information contained herein.

► **ORIGIN OF EMERGENCY RESPONSE NUMBER REQUIREMENTS**

The requirements for the provision of emergency response numbers stem from two heavily regulated areas of the chemical supply chain:

- Transport of dangerous goods; aims to prevent and mitigate any incidents during the carriage of dangerous goods in commerce, requiring the display of emergency numbers on shipping documents, vehicles placards, etc.
- Supply of chemical products; aims to protect the user of the product, requiring the display of emergency numbers on Safety Data Sheets (SDS) or product labels.

Transport of Dangerous Goods

The overarching international regulation is the United Nations Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods - Model Regulations, commonly referred to as the "UN model regulations."

The [competent authorities](#) for each mode of transport adapt the UN model regulations into international or regional modal regulations, for example:

- Air: The International Civil Aviation Organization Technical Instructions (ICAO TI) and International Air Transport Association Dangerous Goods Regulations (IATA DGR).
- Sea: The International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code
- Land: The agreement concerning the international carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR) and the regulations concerning the international carriage of Dangerous goods by Rail (RID), applicable in over 40 European, Middle Eastern, or African countries.

Each country adapts the UN model regulations, and international or regional modal regulations to create their own national (domestic) transport of dangerous goods regulations, for example:

- Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations (49CFR) in the United States.
- The Carriage of Dangerous Goods and Use of Transportable Pressure Equipment Regulations (CDG) in the United Kingdom.

Generally, the requirements for emergency response numbers appear in the national regulations rather than in the international or regional regulations. However, for air transport, the ICAO/IATA regulations have state variations mandating the use of emergency numbers in certain countries. For more information refer to the “Country and Operator Variations for Dangerous Goods Shipments by Air” at the end of this document.

International, regional or local regulations, by-laws or codes of practice may require a telephone number to be displayed on the documentation or on a mark on the package for specific products; for example, Class 1 Explosives, Class 6.2 Infectious Substances, Class 7 Radioactives, or Lithium Batteries. This document does not consider the requirements for specific types of products, always check the relevant international, regional, or local regulations bylaws or codes of practice which may be relevant to you.

Beyond the regulatory requirements, many carriers/transporters have made it their policy not to accept dangerous goods for transport unless the shipper/consignor provides them with an emergency number, usually to be displayed on the shipping document (Dangerous Goods Declaration, Bill of Lading, etc.).

The exact type of phone number (country, mobile/landline, language(s) available) is usually not specified however, it is common practice to include a regional or local/national emergency contact number relevant to the region where the transportation occurs.

Voluntary schemes based on industry good practice may require the display of emergency numbers, although not legally required, companies wishing the accreditation of such schemes must meet their conditions.

Supply of Chemical Products

The overarching international regulation is the Globally Harmonized System of classification and labelling of chemicals (GHS) from the United Nations.

The competent authorities in each region or country adopt the whole, or parts of, the GHS to create their own Supply regulations. For example:

- The European Regulation on Classification, Labelling and Packaging of substances and mixtures (CLP).
- The Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) in the United States.

Many countries have now adopted the GHS and while some countries have placed additional requirements on emergency numbers, those are listed in our summary table, all countries who have adopted the GHS share the same basic requirement for emergency numbers, requiring an emergency number on the SDS. If the number is not available 24/7 then the hours of operation should be stated. If the advice available does not cover all types of situations, then the type of advice available should also be stated.

As of November 2023, the following list of countries (~84 countries) have implemented GHS or are in the process of doing so. For more details of the specific countries refer to the “[GHS implementation: Implementation by country](#)” page of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) website at unece.org.

International, regional, or local regulations, bylaws or codes of practice, may require a telephone number to be displayed on the label for specific types of products, for example biocides, pesticides, or pharmaceuticals. This document may not consider the requirements for all specific types of products, always check the relevant international, regional or local regulations, bylaws or codes of practice, which may be relevant to you.

European Poison Center Telephone Number Requirements

In the majority of European member states, it is mandatory for companies to register products with the appointed body in that country and are required to include the official advisory body’s (when one has been appointed) telephone number in Section 1.4 of the Safety Data Sheet. Please note that what is usually referred to as the “poison center number” is supposed to be displayed in addition to the emergency number rather than replace it. Further information can be found on the ECHA website (Homepage - ECHA (europa.eu)).

Voluntary schemes based on industry good practice may require the display of emergency numbers, although not legally required, companies wishing the accreditation of such schemes must meet their conditions.

Country and Operator Variations for Dangerous Goods Shipments by Air

When shipping dangerous goods by air several countries require 24-hour emergency telephone numbers to be clearly identified on shipping documentation. These are; *France, Jamaica, Kuwait, Oman, Philippines, UAE, USA, Sri Lanka, Yemen, and South Africa*.

Full details of the state variations can be found on the ICAO website.

Operator variations are conditions that are imposed by airlines, and many of these also include requirements to provide a 24-hour emergency telephone number. Full details of the operator variations can be found in the IATA DGR.

If shipping dangerous goods internationally by air, most consignors will not know exactly which airlines will be used, or which countries their goods may transit through. In many cases, consignors may not even know if part of the journey will take place by air or not. Effectively this means that 24-hour numbers will be required for all shipments that are intended to be transported by air, or where there is the possibility of air transport as one leg of a journey.

▶ SUMMARY TABLE OF EMERGENCY NUMBER REQUIREMENTS

The table below presents summary information for the countries or regions where international, regional, or national regulations, bylaws or codes of practice, indicate the display of emergency numbers, whether for transport or supply. Where relevant, we have added recommendations where the specific requirement is not stated but where an expectation exists, whether from regulators or callers.

Key

- Y** Yes - There is at least one requirement but may relate to only one element of a specific transport or supply regulation.
- N** No
- NSE** Not Specified but there is an inherent expectation - In the regulations, bylaws or codes of practice, the subject of the column is either not mentioned or the information provided is not specific enough for a definite answer. There is however an expectation from regulators or callers.

Country	Transport			Supply		
	Emergency Number Required	Local Number Required	Local Language Response	Emergency Number Required	Local Number Required	Local Language Response
Argentina	Y	NSE	NSE	Y	N	NSE
Australia	Y	Y	NSE	Y	Y	Y
Brazil	Y	NSE	Y	Y	Y	NSE
Canada	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N
Chile	NSE	N	NSE	Y	Y	NSE
China	Y	NSE	NSE	Y	Y	Y
Colombia	Y	N	NSE	Y	Y	NSE
*European Union	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y
India	Y	N	N	Y	N	NSE
Indonesia	NSE	N	N	Y	N	NSE
Japan	Y	NSE	NSE	Y	NSE	NSE
Malaysia	Y	N	NSE	Y	N	NSE
Mexico	Y	Y	NSE	Y	Y	NSE
New Zealand	Y	N	NSE	Y	Y	Y
Peru	Y	Y	NSE	Y	Y	NSE
Philippines	Y	N	N	Y	Y	NSE
Singapore	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	NSE
South Africa	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N
South Korea	NSE	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Taiwan	Y	N	N	Y	N	NSE
Thailand	NSE	N	N	Y	N	NSE
United Kingdom	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y
USA	Y	NSE	NSE	Y	Y	NSE

* European Union / EEA excluding United Kingdom