



HARMONIZED SYSTEM
REVIEW SUB-COMMITTEE

NR0415E1

-
28th Session
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O. Eng.

Brussels, 14 July 2003.

POSSIBLE AMENDMENT OF THE NOMENCLATURE AND

EXPLANATORY NOTE TO HEADING 61.15

(PROPOSAL BY THE EC)

(Item III.A.16 on Agenda)

Reference documents :

NR0379F1 (SCR/27)

NC0730F2, annexe F/1 (CSH/31 – rapport)

NR0400F3, annexes D/10 et F/18 (SCR/27 – rapport)

I. BACKGROUND

1. At the 27th Session the Review Sub-Committee examined a proposal by the EC regarding the possible amendment of the text of heading 61.15 and the Explanatory Note thereto.
2. The Delegate of Canada supported the proposal but indicated that, for compression hosiery, his administration uses 20mm Hg compression at the ankle rather than the 15mmHg proposed by the EC, and that new item (4) proposed for the Explanatory Note to the heading would therefore need to be adapted.
3. The US Delegate stressed that the US national tariff has a similar subheading but that the scope is defined by reference to the standard referred to by Canada and also by additional criteria.
4. Several other delegates were, in principle, in favour of the EC proposal but wished to contact the industry before taking a final decision.

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5. Following this discussion, the Sub-Committee decided to place the **EC** proposal in square brackets and to return to the question at its next session, on the basis of comments made at the meeting and any additional information supplied by interested administrations.

II. SECRETARIAT COMMENTS

6. At the time of drafting the document, the Secretariat had not received any additional information on a minimum figure to be used for 'compression at the ankle' measurement for compression hosiery. The **EC** proposal, referred to in paragraphs 7 and 8 of Doc. NR0379E1 is therefore the only proposal presented to the Sub-Committee at this time.

7. The Secretariat has carried out research on the Internet (www.orthopedieortheses.com/GuideDuPrescripteur/JambeGenouCheville.html and www.supportplus.com/productT_images/compbottom.html) which indicates that stockings for varicose veins exert peripheral pressure which has deep impact and therefore reduces the size of the diseased veins and improves the efficiency of the vascular system and circulation. The compression level depends on the type of application prescribed and appropriate fitting by the orthopaedist-orthotist, of the different sizes and types of stocking according to the patient's requirements.

8. The Secretariat also confirmed the existence on the market of stockings for varicose veins with varying levels of compression as follows :

8-15mm Hg Compression*

(Mild Compression)

For men or women with tired achy legs and mild varicose veins.

Recommended for first time users. This compression level is still more than twice the support of ordinary department store support stockings.

15-20mm Hg Compression*

(Moderate compression)

For all day wear when tired achy legs hold you back from your active life style. Good for minor ankle, leg and foot swelling and spider or varicose veins. This compression level is great for travel socks – for long flights or automobile drives.

20-30mm Hg Compression*

(Firm compression)

Good for moderate to severe varicose veins, post surgical usage, moderate oedema and foot or leg swelling.

30-40mm Hg Compression*

(Extra firm Compression)

For more severe cases of varicose veins or swelling where lower compression support stockings do not provide the required relief.

* Average compression in millimetres mercury pressure measured at the ankle.

9. The above information indicates that compression hosiery with levels of compression at the ankle of between 8mm Hg and 40mm Hg exist on the market. Taking the above-mentioned information into account, the Secretariat questions whether it is necessary to fix a

minimum compression limit for insertion in the draft amendment to the Explanatory Notes to heading 61.15.

III. CONCLUSION

10. The Sub-Committee is invited to examine the draft amendments to the legal texts and the Explanatory Notes in the Annex to the document, taking into account the Secretariat's comments above.

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