2.3 Identify the hazard categories and the implications

For a further division, each hazard class contains at least one **hazard category**. These categories compare hazard severity within a hazard class and should not be taken as a comparison of hazard categories more generally. The hazard categories are either assigned a number (e.g. 1, 2, etc.) or called "types" which are assigned an alphabetical letter (e.g. A, B, etc.). In a few cases, subcategories are assigned and designated with a number and a letter (e.g. 1A and 1B). Some hazard classes only have one category, others may have two or more, depending if there is a range of hazard severity within the hazardous products classes where different key precautions may apply.

A hazard category specifies the severity of the hazard.

When the hazard category is assigned numbers:

- Category 1 is always the greatest level of hazard.
    - If further divided into subcategories then letters are added after the numbers (e.g. 1A, 1B, etc.)
        - Subcategory 1A is more hazardous than 1B in the same hazardous class.
        - Subcategory 1B is more hazardous than 1C in the same hazardous class.
- Category 2 is more hazardous than category 3 etc.

Examples:

- Aerosols hazard class
    - Category 1 – Danger; Extremely flammable aerosol
    - Category 2 – Warning; Flammable aerosol

- Serious Eye Damage/Eye Irritation hazard class
    - Category 1 – Danger; Causes serious eye damage
    - Category 2/2A – Warning; Causes serious eye irritation
    - Category 2B – Warning; Causes eye irritation

When the hazard category is called a "type", stand-alone letters are assigned to the categories:

- Type A is the greatest level of hazard.
- Type B is more hazardous than type C but less hazardous then type A.

Example:

- Self-Reactive Substances and Mixtures hazard class
    - Type A: Danger; Heating may cause an explosion
    - Type B: Danger; Heating may cause a fire or explosion
    - Type E: Warning: Heating may cause a fire
    -

Note: Hazard categories are only comparable to other categories within the same class.

There are a few exceptions to category classification:

- For the **Gases Under Pressure** hazard class, the hazard categories are “Compressed gas”, “Liquefied gas”, “Refrigerated liquefied gas” and “Dissolved gas”. These classes refer to the physical state of the gas and not the severity of hazard.

- **Reproductively Toxicity** hazard class has a separate category called “Effects on or via lactation”. This category is not assigned a specific numbered category like the other categories for this hazard class. It is a different but related hazard within this class.

- **Flammable Gases** hazard class has both numbers and types for categories. Hazard severity can be judged within the numbers or the types separately, but not between the numbers and types together.