
COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON THE TRANSPORT OF DANGEROUS GOODS AND ON THE GLOBALLY HARMONIZED SYSTEM OF CLASSIFICATION AND LABELLING OF CHEMICALS

Sub-Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods

Twenty-eighth session
Geneva, 28 November – 7 December 2005
Item 5 of the provisional agenda

LISTING, CLASSIFICATION AND PACKING

Definition of (cargo) transport unit

Transmitted by the expert from Australia

SCOPE

This proposal aims to recommend that a definition of ‘transport unit’ be incorporated into section 1.2.1.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

UN/SCETDG/23/INF.23 - (Australia) Approval of Intermediate Bulk Containers.
UN/ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/2003/56 - (Australia) Approval of Intermediate Bulk Containers.
UN/SCETDG/26/INF.40 - (Australia) Definition of Transport Units and Closed Transport Units.
UN/ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/2005/3 - (Australia) Definition of Transport Units and Closed Transport Units.
UN/ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/52 – Report of the Sub-Committee of Experts on its 26th Session.
UN/ST/SG/AC.10/32/Add.1 – Report of the Committee of Experts on its 2nd Session.
UN/ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/54 – Report of the Sub-Committee of Experts on its 27th Session.

Introduction

1. During the 27th session the Australian expert presented UN/ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/2005/3 relating to the definitions of ‘transport unit’ and ‘closed transport unit’. As noted in section 66 of the report of the 27th session although several experts suggested the inclusion of definitions for transport units in section 1.2.1, some experts did not support the proposal as drafted. Some experts felt that the term ‘cargo transport unit’ used in the IMDG Code would be more appropriate to avoid confusion with the term ‘transport unit’ used in the ADR with a different meaning. Others expressed concern at the second sentence “Transport units with fabric sides or tops are not closed transport units”, since in the ADR and RID other options are mentioned (‘open’, ‘closed’, ‘sheeted’). In view of this concern the proposal has been divided into two different papers to allow the issue to progress. This paper recommends the inclusion of the definition of ‘transport unit’ to section 1.2.1 and suggests a definition of ‘cargo transport unit’ to avoid confusion with that used in the ADR.

Issue

2. The term ‘transport unit’ is only defined in section 5.3.1.1.1 of the 14th edition of the Model Regulations but is widely used in both volumes of the Model Regulations. Table 1 (copied from paper UN/ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/2005/3) indicates where the term ‘transport unit’ has been used in the 14th edition of the Model Regulations and where the term ‘cargo transport unit’ has been used in lieu of ‘transport unit’. There appears to be no inconsistencies in the employment of the term ‘transport unit’ (or ‘cargo transport unit’) between any of these references.

Table 1: References to Transport Unit

Volume	Reference to Transport Unit
Volume 1	Para 11 and 12 of the introduction Section 2.4.2.3.2.4.(b).(ii), Section 2.5.3.2.5.1.(b) SP172, SP216, SP217, SP218, SP232 (see note 1) and SP297
Volume 2	Section 4.1.1.1 and 4.1.3.8.1.(a) P650, P906 (see note 1) Section 5.2.1.7.3, Section 5.3.1.1.1, Section 5.3.1.1.2, Section 5.3.1.1.3, Section 5.3.1.1.4, Section 5.3.2.1.1, Section 5.3.2.2, Section 5.3.2.3.1, Section 6.7.5.2.1, Section 7.1.1.3, Section 7.1.1.4, Section 7.1.1.5, Section 7.1.1.6, Section 7.1.1.7, Section 7.1.1.9, Note 2 to Section 7.1.1.9 (see note 1), Section 7.1.3.1.3, Section 7.1.4.1, Section 7.1.4.3.2.1, Section 7.1.4.3.2.2, Section 7.1.6.1.1, Section 7.1.6.1.2, Section 7.1.6.2.3, Section 7.2.4.4

Note 1: The term ‘cargo transport unit’ was used in this reference in lieu of ‘transport unit’.

Proposals

5. Noting the comments made by experts during the 27th session in respect of the need to avoid confusion with terms used in the ADR, and noting the advantages of harmonizing with the IMDG Code, it is recommended that the term ‘cargo transport unit’ be adopted in lieu of ‘transport unit’ throughout the text of the Model Regulations.

6. Noting the comments made by experts during the 27th session it is recommended that the definition of ‘transport unit’, modified from the text of section 5.3.1.1.1 of the Model Regulations, be included in section 1.2.1 of the Model Regulations in respect of the term ‘cargo transport unit’:

“Cargo transport unit: means a road transport tank or freight vehicle, a railway transport tank or freight wagon, or a multimodal freight container or portable tank”.

7. Section 5.3.1.1.1 will also need to be amended in a similar manner if this section is to be retained.

“Cargo transport units comprise road transport tank and freight vehicles, railway transport tank and freight wagons, and multimodal freight containers and portable tanks.”