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INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods

**Joint Meeting of the RID Safety Committee and the
Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods**
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TRANSPORT CONDITIONS OF USED BATTERIES

Transmitted by the Government of Netherlands

Introduction.

The aim of this paper is to inform the Joint Meeting about the actual situation in the Netherlands concerning the collection of used batteries. This information was already provided in Inf. 21 of the March 2005 meeting.

Collection of household batteries in the Netherlands

For many years household batteries have been collected in the Netherlands in order to prevent that batteries disappear uncontrolled in the environment. Since 1995 a special organization (Stibat) is charged with the collection of batteries in the Netherlands. A substantial part of all batteries are those coming from households. A much smaller part concerns industrial batteries but they are collected separately in an other system.

Household batteries

Household batteries are dry batteries. Most of them are of the zinc carbon/alkaline type but in the last few years also Li-batteries for example those coming from telephones and notebooks appear in the flow of batteries. In practice the flow contains less then 2 % of lithium batteries at this moment.

Due to an increasing amount of application of Li batteries the percentage of Li-batteries in the flow is expected to increase slowly, by tenth of percents per year. This flow of household batteries is up to now not treated as dangerous goods for transport in the Netherlands.

In order to reach the goal of collecting the batteries it is important that the consumer can deliver the batteries without problems. In the Netherlands batteries are collected at almost

11.000 places. In many cases supermarkets and grammar schools. The management of the supermarkets and schools is informed which batteries can be collected and which not and what to do if a “forbidden” battery is offered. There is also an instruction how to deal with the batteries and how they can be handled safe. It is essential that no accidents occur at these places with many people and children. The collection system works on a voluntary basis and therefore it is important to avoid any accident because this could disturb the system.

In practice 2H2 drums of 60 litre are used with special openings in order to prevent that other than “normal” batteries are collected. The content of the drums is collected regularly in special cars in big boxes of 600 litre. The personnel is qualified and special measurements are taken in order to prevent dangerous situation. For example in the car sand is always present to extinguish a starting fire. Furthermore hand- and eye protection are mandatory (safety spectacles and gloves)

In the Netherlands about 2.500.000 kg batteries are collected annually in this way without any problem. It is considered as a safe and effective way of collecting household batteries.

After collection all these batteries are transported to one place and in a special sorting process divided in 10 separate types of batteries for further recycling/disposal. One of those types is the Li battery. After sorting out the batteries are transported to places where recycling or disposal can take place. After sorting the flow is clearly defined.

Collection of Li batteries

In the Netherlands Li batteries and Li ion batteries are also collected in photo shops and computer shops and in those cases the amount of lithium can be much higher. However this flow of batteries can be handled with the new sp 636 in connection with packing instruction P903b).

Conclusion.

In conclusion in our view the problem is concentrated on the high volume flow of household batteries, most of the carbon zinc/alkaline type which contain limited amounts of Li batteries and are transported from collection point to the intermediate facility (sorting point).
