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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

Thirty-eighth session
Geneva, 29 November–7 December 2010
Item 4 of the provisional agenda
Listing, classification and packing

Chapter 3.3, amendment to special provision 296 for UN 2990 and UN 3072 (life-saving appliances, self-inflating and not self-inflating)

Transmitted by the expert from the United Kingdom and by the European Industrial Gases Association (EIGA)[1]

Introduction

1. At the September 2008 session of the Joint Meeting of the RID Committee of Experts and the Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods, EIGA submitted document ECE/TRANS/WP.15/AC.1/2008/14 proposing to introduce a new special provision for certain goods of UN 2990 life-saving appliances, self-inflating. The proposal related to small quantities of UN 1013, carbon dioxide which may be used in life-saving appliances such as personal life vests. The document by EIGA pointed out that life-saving appliances containing no dangerous goods other than UN 1013 are not subject to the provisions of the IMDG code, subject to certain conditions (see special provision 956 of the IMDG Code, reproduced below):

"956 Consignments of Life Saving Appliances, containing no dangerous goods other than carbon dioxide cylinders with a capacity not exceeding 100 cm^3, providing that they are overpacked in wooden or fibreboard boxes with a maximum gross mass of 40kg are not subject to the provision of this code."

[1] In accordance with the programme of work of the Sub-Committee for 2009-2010 approved by the Committee at its fourth session (refer to ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/68, para. 118 (b) and ST/SG/AC.10/36, para. 14).

2. The RID/ADR/ADN Joint Meeting concluded that it would be preferable to discuss this issue at the level of the UN Sub-Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods to ensure consistency of regulations at worldwide level (see ECE/TRANS/WP.15/AC.1/112). The meeting also believed that gases other than UN 1013 could be used for life-saving appliances such as UN 1066, nitrogen. The EIGA representative indicated that he would do more research and submit a proposal to the UN Sub-Committee as deemed appropriate.

3. After further consultation with industry, the United Kingdom and EIGA are proposing to introduce wording similar to the IMDG Code special provision 956 into the Model Regulations in order to extend this exemption to cover all modes, as discussed at the September 2008 RID/ADR/ADN Joint Meeting. It is the view of the United Kingdom that the IMDG Code special provision 956 should subsequently be amended to reflect the wording of the proposal presented in this paper.

Background

4. The transport of UN 1013 carbon dioxide is permitted for transport under the Model Regulations in limited quantities with a maximum limit for the inner packaging or article set at 120 ml (this is also true for other Division 2.2 gases without subsidiary risk). Therefore it can be transported without certain requirements of the Model Regulations applying. Life-saving appliances such as lifejackets are generally fitted with carbon dioxide cylinders with a capacity of 100 ml or less. Yet, as a Class 9 article as UN 2990 and UN 3072, these life-saving appliances are not permitted for transport in limited quantities even though the only dangerous good they contain is UN 1013 in cylinders with a volume which is less than those permitted under limited quantity provisions.

5. The United Kingdom believes that this is an anomaly which could be addressed by way of amending existing special provision 296 for UN 2990 and UN 3072. This amendment would permit their transport without application of the regulations if the type and quantity of dangerous goods contained within the article is a Division 2.2 compressed or liquefied gas without subsidiary risk in quantities less than 120 ml and contain no other dangerous goods.

6. The amendment of this special provision will reflect the intent of the current measures contained within the IMDG code for the transport of these articles (Special Provision 956).

Proposal

7. Amend special provision 296 of Chapter 3.3 by adding a new final paragraph for UN 2990 and UN 3072 as follows:

“Life-saving appliances packed in strong rigid outer packagings with a total maximum gross mass of 30 kg, containing no dangerous goods other than Division 2.2 compressed or liquefied gases with no subsidiary risk in receptacles with a capacity not exceeding 120 ml, installed solely for the purpose of the activation of the appliance, are not subject to these Regulations.”.

Justification

8. This proposal does not follow the IMDG code special provision 956 exactly as we believe that the packaging need not be limited to wooden and fibreboard boxes. Specifying

"rigid" would allow a wider range of packaging to be used without compromising safety. The capacity requirement of 120 ml aligns with the limited quantity provisions for gases of Division 2.2 (which includes UN 1013 and UN 1066) as specified in the Dangerous Goods List and the 30 kg total maximum gross mass limited quantity provisions contained in 3.4.2.

9. The proposal which specifies that both compressed and liquefied gases of Division 2.2 are to be included in this special provision arises because UN 1013 carbon dioxide is a liquefied gas. To ensure that liquefied gases are included in this special provision, it was felt necessary to specify both liquid and compressed gases in the text.

10. By amending the existing special provision rather than introducing a new special provision it makes it easier for the user to find the exemptions in one place rather than having to look up several special provisions.

11. Introducing text which limits the gas for activation purposes means that there is no prospect of small receptacles being inserted for any other purpose.

12. Currently all Division 2.2 gases with no subsidiary risk are permitted in surface transport under limited quantity provisions (limited to 120 ml). This is in line with the Guiding Principles for the Model Regulations.

13. With the approval of the operator, life jackets containing carbon dioxide cylinders or other suitable gases of Division 2.2 may be carried by air passengers in either checked (hold) or carry on baggage; they are also permitted in cargo on both passenger and cargo aircraft.

14. Adapting this special provision will encourage multimodal harmonization for the transport of dangerous goods assigned to these UN numbers and facilitate their transport between the modes.