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Item 8 of the provisional agenda

Any other business

Methodology and systems used for the assignment of tunnel codes for Class 7 goods and for the assignment of code “(-)”

Note by the secretariat*

Summary

- Executive summary:** This document recalls the history of the allocation of tunnel restriction codes for class 7 goods and summarizes the principles adopted for the allocation of code “(-)”.
- Action to be taken:** The Working Party may wish to note this information and use it for further discussions on the assignment of tunnel codes.
- Reference documents:** Seventy-third session of the Working Party (November 2012): report TRANS/WP.15/172 and document TRANS/WP.15/2002/21;
- Seventy-fourth session of the Working Party (May 2003): report TRANS/WP.15/174 and informal document INF.15;
- Seventy-sixth session of the Working Party (October 2004): report TRANS/WP.15/179 and Add.1, informal document INF.9;
- Eightieth session of the Working Party (May 2006): report ECE/TRANS/WP.15/188 and informal document INF.7;
- Ninety-eighth session of the Working Party (May 2015): report ECE/TRANS/WP.15/228 and documents ECE/TRANS/WP.15/2015/2 and ECE/TRANS/WP.15/2015/5.
- 108th session of the Working Party (November 2020): report ECE/TRANS/WP.15/251.

* A/75/6 (Sect.20), para 20.51.

Introduction

1. At its 108th session, the Working Party requested the secretariat to seek information on the methodology and systems used for the assignment of tunnel codes to Class 7 goods and to goods for which code “(-)” has been assigned. See ECE/TRANS/WP.15/251, § 31.
2. In this respect, the secretariat gathered the following information from reports and secretariat notes on previous sessions of the Working Party.

Tunnel restriction codes for Class 7 goods

3. At the beginning of its work on safety in road tunnels, the Working Party agreed to use as a basis the work of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Permanent International Association of Road Congresses (PIARC) concerning the carriage of dangerous goods in tunnels. This study defined groups of cargoes of dangerous goods for the purpose of restricting traffic in road tunnels based on three principal hazards (explosion, leaks of toxic gases and fire). In this study, it was proposed to allow in Grouping C “All dangerous goods except those with very large explosion, large release of toxic gas or liquid or risk of cold BLEVE hazard.” and in grouping D “All dangerous goods except those with very large explosion, large release of toxic gas or liquid or risk of cold BLEVE and large fire hazard.”.
4. For Class 7, the study indicated that all goods of Class 7, except UN 2977 and 2978, could be permitted in road tunnels.
5. At the seventy-third session (see TRANS/WP.15/172) an informal working group was initiated under the hospices of Austria. One of the mandate was to define in greater depth the substances and types of loads to be included in each group taking into account the criteria for the definition of groups of cargoes of dangerous goods for the purpose of restricting traffic in road tunnels based on three principal hazards (explosion, leaks of toxic gases and fire) presented in the OECD and PIARC study. OECD/PIARC groupings can be found in TRANS/WP.15/2002/21.
6. In the report of the informal working group (informal document INF.15 of the seventy-fourth session), the grouping proposed for Class 7 follows the recommendations in the OECD/PIARC study i.e.:
 - Restrictions in tunnel Category C for UN 2977 and 2978 only;
 - Restriction in tunnels Category D for loadings of UN 2977 and 2978;
 - All other Class 7 goods placed in Category E by default since group E included dangerous goods other than those classified in A-D.
7. In informal document INF.9 of the seventy-sixth session, the secretariat proposed to extend the list of Class 7 goods in grouping C to take into account the hazards of large irradiation and contamination. This approach was not adopted. See TRANS/WP.15/179 and Add.1.

Allocation of code “(-)”

Entries for which code “(-)” was assigned

8. When the tunnel provisions came into force, it was already decided that infectious waste of UN No. 3291 and biological substances of UN No. 3373 should not be subject to any tunnel restriction and not assigned to any grouping and that this should be reflected by “(-)” in Table A. Code “(-)” was also affected to fumigated units (UN No. 3359) at the eightieth session (ECE/TRANS/WP.15/188) on the basis that they were only subject to the provisions of 5.5.2. When ADR 2009 entered into force, “(-)” was only assigned to these three entries.

9. In ADR 2017, “(-)” was allocated to environmentally hazardous substances of UN 3077 and 3082 considering that both entries do not pose a significant risk to the environment in road tunnels. The same approach was adopted for UN Nos. 2814 and 2900. See proposals ECE/TRANS/WP.15/2015/2 and ECE/TRANS/WP.15/2015/5 and report ECE/TRANS/WP.15/228.

Entries for which the allocation of code “(-)” was previously discussed and not adopted at that time

10. At the 80th session, following a proposal from the secretariat, the Working Party already discussed whether it would be appropriate to replace “E” by “(-)” for 1.4S goods, articles with UN Nos. 1331, 1944, 1945, 2254 and 2623, radioactive material in excepted packages and airbags (UN No. 3268). See informal document INF.7 of that session.

11. This proposal was rejected: “The Working group noted that 1.4S goods, articles with UN numbers 1331, 1944, 1945, 2254 and 2623, radioactive material in excepted packages and airbags (UN number 3268), belong to transport category 4 and are thus covered by the exemptions in sub-section 1.1.3.6, regardless of quantity. Accordingly, when carried in conformity with sub-section 1.1.3.6, they will not be subject to tunnel restrictions. Nevertheless, the Working Group would still like to see these dangerous goods assigned to tunnel code E to cover the eventuality that transport operators would prefer to apply the provisions of ADR as a whole rather than making use of the exemptions.”. (ECE/TRANS/WP.15/188, § 51).
