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Working Party on the Transport of
Perishable Foodstuffs

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agenda item 9)

ATP HANDBOOK

MARITIME CONTAINERS

Transmitted by Spain

At the last session of the Working Party, the representative of Spain informed WP.11 that Spain was in the process of making a complete study of the carriage of perishable foodstuffs by sea. Following consultation with the private sector, the Spanish delegation is submitting a proposal concerning containers classified as thermal maritime in article 5 of the Agreement on the International Carriage of Perishable Foodstuffs and on the Special Equipment to be Used (ATP). It makes the following observations:

1. Maritime containers for the carriage of perishable foodstuffs classified as thermal maritime are containers built in accordance with standard ISO-14916-2;
2. This standard gives the basic specifications and the tests required for containers for perishable foodstuffs carried by road, by rail, by sea and by combined transport;

3. Several (vessel and container) maritime classification societies perform initial certifications for containers classified as thermal maritime (e.g. refrigerated containers, containers with thermal insulation, etc.) but they participate neither in the inspection of these containers nor in their repair; these activities are carried out by the owners or operators. In certain cases, the initial inspections are made only by container constructors.

Proposal:

It is proposed that the comment on article 5 in the ATP Handbook should be amended as follows:

“Comment: Land transport by a container classified as a thermal maritime ISO-1496-2 container, preceded or followed by one or more sea crossings, other than those referred to in article 3, paragraph 2, should not be subject to the provisions of the Agreement.”

Reason:

The advantage of this proposal is that it more clearly identifies the scope of article 5 by referring only to maritime containers proper - ISO-1496-2 containers - which are the only containers suited in terms of their structure, their tests and their thermal characteristics to being stacked, placed and handled on container-carriers without special restrictions.

Consequential amendment:

Amend the introduction to the ATP Handbook as follows:

“Comments contained in the ATP Handbook are not legally binding for Contracting Parties of the ATP, with the exception of the specifications and clarifications of the definition of a technical term appearing in the articles of the ATP. They are, however, important for the interpretation, harmonization and application of the Agreement as they reflect the opinion of the Working Party on the Transport of Perishable Foodstuffs of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).”
