

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods

Joint Meeting of the RID Committee of Experts and the
Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods

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Item 5 of the provisional agenda

ORANGE-COLOURED PLATE MARKING 5.3.2

Transmitted by the Government of Sweden

SUMMARY

Executive summary:	<p>Chapter 5.3 regulates that wagons/transport units carrying dangerous goods shall display orange coloured plates. It is also stated where the plates shall be affixed, that the plates shall not become detached from their mount in the event of 15 minutes engulfment in fire and that the hazard identification number and the UN number shall be indelible and shall remain legible after 15 minutes' engulfment in fire.</p> <p>However, it is not regulated that detachable orange coloured plates, or plates with replaceable figures for the UN number and hazard identification number, when placed in their mount or hold, shall be affixed during carriage. This proposal seeks to regulate this.</p>
Action to be taken:	Amend the text in the RID/ADR 5.3.2.2.1 and 5.3.2.2.2
Related documents:	None.

Introduction

During recent years, there have been a number of accidents where orange-coloured plates, or detachable numbers on those plates, have fallen off of the transport unit (see photos in the Annex 1 to this document). This has resulted in unsafe and delayed rescue operations with a greater risk for the emergency services and considerable greater damage than certainly would have been the case had orange-coloured plates and numbers stayed in place.

Rescue operations at accidents like the aforementioned can be extremely dangerous if no information appears on the wagon/transport unit, indicating that it is loaded with dangerous goods, or if the plates are in place but numbers are missing.

The main reason for affixing orange-coloured plates on wagons/transport units carrying dangerous goods is to give emergency services necessary information in case of an accident. For this reason, the RID/ADR regulates that the plate shall not become detached from its mount in the event of 15 minutes engulfment in fire. It also regulates that the hazard identification number and the UN number shall be indelible and shall remain legible after 15 minutes' engulfment in fire. However, it is not clearly stated anywhere that the plate or the replaceable numbers actually must stay in place in case of an accident though this may seem obvious.

For this reason, the expert from Sweden is of the opinion that it should be clearly stated in the RID/ADR that information required on orange-coloured plates shall be affixed in such a manner as to stay in place.

Proposal

Amend the present text in 5.3.2.2.1 (shown in bold printing):

“The orange-coloured plates shall be reflectorized and shall be of 40 cm base and of 30 cm high; they shall have a black border of 15 mm wide. The material used shall be weather-resistant and ensure durable marking. The plate shall not become detached from its mount **in the event of being inverted or** in the event of 15 minutes engulfment in fire. The orange coloured plates may...“ .

Amend the present text in 5.3.2.2.2 (by adding the text shown in bold printing after the existing text):

“Replaceable numbers and letters on plates presenting the hazard identification number and the UN number shall not become detached from their mount in the event of being inverted.”

Add the following transitional period to Chapter 1.6

1.6.1.XX

Plates in accordance with the provisions of 5.3.2.2.1 and 5.3.2.2.2 applicable until 31 December 2008 may be used until 31 December 2009.

Justification	It is necessary to require that information on orange-coloured plates stay in place in case of an accident. When detachable orange-coloured plates or plates with replaceable numbers are used, such plates or numbers do not always stay in place.
Safety:	The safety level will increase for emergency services as well as for carriers, and will contribute to a more rational and safe rescue operation.
Feasibility:	The expert from Sweden assumes this will mean some minor extra costs for some of the carriers. However, these costs are inevitable in order to increase safety. It should already be common practice to affix the orange-coloured plates, and the information required on them. Unfortunately, however, this is not always the case today.

Enforceability: The expert from Sweden foresees no problem in enforcement as a result of this proposal.

Annex 1

