

Economic Commission for Europe**Inland Transport Committee****Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods****7 July 2010****Joint Meeting of Experts on the Regulations annexed to the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways (ADN) (ADN Safety Committee)****Seventeenth session**

Geneva, 23–27 August 2010

Item 7 of the provisional agenda

Clarifications to the technical rules of the classification societies**Submitted by Switzerland****Background**

1. Last year the Federal Office of Transport commissioned a study entitled “Comparison of safety-relevant construction regulations for inland navigation vessels of the classification societies in terms of their activities on the river Rhine”, in order to acquire better knowledge of the wide-ranging technical regulations of the approved classification societies on the Rhine, and possible further classification societies intending to be active in European inland navigation.
2. Approved classification societies take on important tasks in the construction and supervision of ships, and are decisive in setting safety standards. It should therefore be ensured that the classification societies regulations guarantee equivalence of standards, and that the legal requirements are observed in full. To ensure safe and environmentally friendly inland navigation, the present study should clarify whether the quality levels of the individual classification societies need to be adapted to one another.
3. We propose to discuss the results of the study and further issues concerning certification and supervisory activities in the ADN Safety Committee.

Summary of the results of the study

4. Classification companies take over important safety-relevant duties for the admission of cargo and passenger ships for inland navigation. Classification societies wishing to operate on European waterways within the framework of multilateral regulations must be recognised by the relevant countries or the European Commission (EC). Within the framework of a Europe-wide harmonisation of regulations for inland navigation and the opening of markets, the circle of classification societies wishing to operate in the area of inland navigation will increase. In addition to the three recognised societies already operating on the Rhine, Bureau Veritas (BV), Lloyd’s Register of Shipping (LR) and Germanischer Lloyd (GL), the Russian Maritime Register (RS), the Polish Register of Shipping (PRS) and RINA also want to become more active in the area of international inland navigation.

5. In order to obtain a better foundation to assess the technical regulation standards of the individual classification societies in inland navigation, the regulations of the classification societies were closely examined and calculations carried out. The main focus was on regulations concerning ships transporting dangerous goods. In addition, stability regulations and certain guidelines for the design and construction of passenger as well as cargo vessels were examined. One important question during the investigations was the manner in which the relationship of the regulations of the classification societies was managed in relation to ADN regulations and European Directive 2006/87/EC.
6. Based on the investigations with regard to the technical regulations of the six classification societies, it became apparent that there are deviations in the legal provisions which could lead to differences in the ships safety standards.
7. All classification societies have regulations for ships carrying dangerous goods. Both ADN and Directive 2006/87/EC do not always comply with the recognition criteria "Obligation to adapt the regulations of the classification societies to the current and future international provisions". This problem can be avoided with clear regulations relating to the relationship of the classification societies regulations with the legal provisions. There are classification companies which expressly grant the legal provisions priority over their own. It is therefore recommended to include a corresponding priority clause in the recognition criteria. This would create more clarity and any deviating standards could be avoided.
8. Initial strength calculations carried out on a standard ship show that the classification societies apply different assumptions and requirements when building inland waterway vessels. This could result in differing safety standards for ships. The direct calculation method should be required for the design and building of certain ship sizes and specific ship types.
9. The criteria of proving comprehensive experience in the assessment of the draft and in execution of the building of inland waterway vessels, as well as for the transportation of dangerous goods, can lead to difficulties in the recognition of new classification societies which have so far not classified ships according to ADN.
10. Increased collaboration of the classification societies in the further development of legal construction regulations for inland waterway vessels would be constructive. Collaboration between the classification societies would have to increase in order to guarantee an equivalence of the regulations. Today, this criteria is hardly being met. Collaboration could take place within IACS, as is the case for example in maritime shipping. Here, IACS members and other interested circles jointly develop standardised basic regulations for the building of seagoing ships (Common Structural Rules CSR).
11. More detailed examination in the area of technical regulations should take place in the recognition process for classification societies. The recognition criteria could, for example, be supplemented by a demand to present calculations for standard ships. This would be required so as to determine whether construction regulations and calculations guarantee a safe construction of the ship that corresponds to international regulations and standards.
12. Recognised classification companies could be inspected by ratings and periodic audits to establish whether they still comply with the recognition criteria.
13. The criteria for the recognition of classification companies according to ADN and Directive 2006/87/EC should be revised and further harmonised.