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**Group of Experts for the revision of the IMO/ILO/UNECE  
Guidelines for Packing of Cargo Transport Units**

**First session**

Geneva, 6–7 October 2011

**Report of the Group of Experts on its first session**

**I. Attendance**

1. The Group of Experts for the revision of the IMO/ILO/UNECE Guidelines for Packing of Cargo Transport Units held its first session in Geneva, Palais des Nations, on 6 and 7 October 2011.
2. Representatives of Canada, Germany, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Sweden, International Labour Office (ILO), International Maritime Organization (IMO), DB Schenker Rail Deutschland AG, ETS Consulting, European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC), European Shippers Council (ESC), FNV Trade Union, Gesamtverband der Deutschen Versicherungswirtschaft E.V. (GDV), Global Shippers' Forum, ICHCA International Ltd., International Association of Ports and Harbors, International Bureau of Containers (B.I.C.), International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations (FIATA), International Longshore & Warehouse Union Canada, International Organisation of Employers (IOE), International Road Transport Union (IRU), International Transport workers Federation (ITF), MariTerm AB and World Shipping Council (WSC) participated in the session.

**II. Introduction**

3. The session was opened by Ms. Eva Molnar, Director of UNECE Transport Division, Ms. Alette van Leur, Director of ILO Sectoral Activities Department and Mr. Joseph Westwood-Booth, Senior Deputy Director of IMO Maritime Safety Division

**III. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)**

4. The group adopted the agenda as drafted in Informal document EG GPC No. 1 (2011) and as amended to include item 4 bis dedicated to presentations.

#### **IV. Election of the Chair (agenda item 2)**

5. The group elected Mr. Christopher Welsh (Global Shippers' Forum) as Chair and Mr. Jens Hügel (International Road Transport Union) and Mr. Frank Leys (International Transport Workers Federation) as Vice-Chairs.

#### **V. Mandates of UNECE, ILO and IMO (agenda item 3)**

6. The group took note of Informal document EG GPC No. 2 (2011) on the mandates of the UNECE, ILO and IMO for the revision of the Guidelines and expressed the wish to have the mandates included in the Terms of Reference (see Chapter VI).

7. The group recognized that, in view of the planned meetings of the IMO Sub-Committee on Dangerous Goods, Solid Cargoes and Containers (DSC), the revision work would not be completed by the end of 2012 and that the group would need to pursue its activities in 2013.

#### **VI. Adoption of the terms of reference of the Group of Experts (agenda item 4)**

8. The UNECE secretariat clarified the phrase "the work of the group will be adopted by consensus" stated in the Terms of Reference. If a term or text could not be adopted by consensus by the group at a particular session, such wording would be left between square brackets for further discussion at the next session.

9. As concerns the functioning of the group of experts, the group was invited to consult the UNECE Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure (document E/ECE/778/Rev.5 available at [www.unece.org/about-unece.html](http://www.unece.org/about-unece.html)) and the Guidelines for the establishment and functioning of teams of specialists within UNECE (ECE/EX/2/Rev.1 available at [www.unece.org/trans/wp24/guidelinespackingctus/documents.html](http://www.unece.org/trans/wp24/guidelinespackingctus/documents.html)).

10. The group adopted its Terms of Reference with the addition of the mandates of the UNECE, ILO and IMO for the revision of the Guidelines, as reproduced in Informal document EG GPC No. 3 (2011) – Revision 1.

#### **VII. Presentations (agenda item 4bis)**

11. The group expressed its appreciation for the presentations made by the representatives of Japan, Global Shippers' Forum and ICHCA International, which led to a constructive debate.

#### **VIII. Proposals for revision of the guidelines: inception report (agenda item 5)**

12. Mr. Bill Brassington, consultant for the ILO, made a detailed presentation of the inception report for the work of the group, which he had prepared and made available to the group before the session (Informal document EG GPC No. 4 (2011)). A report will be prepared by Mr. Brassington on the development of the Code of Practice for Packing Cargo Transport Units (Packing Code) from the general discussion of the inception report presentation (Annex I).

13. The representative of Germany presented a document submitted by his country to IMO DSC 16 on the initiation of the revision process (Informal document EG GPC No. 7 (2011)).
14. In view of the intention to elevate the revised Guidelines to a non-mandatory Code of Practice, the ILO secretariat informed the group about the difference between ILO Guidelines and ILO Codes of Practice (Informal document EG GPC No. 9 (2011)).
15. The group discussed issues raised in the inception report, such as the identification of the target audience of the revised Guidelines, the definition of the term "cargo transport units (CTUs)" and the inclusion of tanks in the scope of the revised Guidelines. It also exchanged ideas on the size, format and language style to be used in the revised Guidelines and on the means that should be used to disseminate information contained therein.
16. Several experts were of the opinion that there should be more governments involved in the revision work. They expressed concern that little participation by governments would impede the implementation of the revised Guidelines into national legislations, if considered appropriate.
17. The IMO secretariat reminded that a Code of Practice was a non-binding instrument and that governments were free to implement it. Moreover, it was recalled that the first priority of the group was the revision of the Guidelines' technical contents, and that issues relating to implementation should be considered hereafter.
18. The group examined each point of the inception report and revised those points it deemed necessary.

## **IX. Other business (agenda item 6)**

19. The IMO secretariat informed the group about the amendments to the part of the Guidelines relating to dangerous goods, that were approved by the IMO Maritime Safety Committee in May 2011 (Informal document EG GPC No. 5 (2011)) and the IMO Editorial & technical (E&T) Group's outcome on matters related to the Guidelines (Informal document EG GPC No. 8 (2011)).

## **X. Date and venue of next meetings (agenda item 7)**

20. The group took note of the proposed dates of its meetings for 2012 as presented in Informal document EG GPC No. 6 (2011). It acknowledged the need to plan a longer working day on the second day of each session and allocate sufficient time to technical discussions. It requested the secretariat to announce the working hours of the sessions well in advance.
21. In view of the activities that would need to be undertaken before the IMO DSC 17 taking place in September 2012, the group decided to forecast 3 meeting days for the third session in July 2012.
22. The group agreed on the following meetings dates:

Second session	19–20 April 2012
Third session	4–6 July 2012
Fourth session	15–16 October 2012
23. The detailed calendar for the revision of the IMO/ILO/UNECE Guidelines for Packing of Cargo Transport Units is presented in Annex II.

## **XI. Decisions and follow-up (agenda item 8)**

23. As regards the continuation of the revision work, the group decided that it would dedicate its second session to discuss technical issues. The format of the revised Guidelines and issues relating to their publication would be further discussed at the third session.

24. It was agreed by the IMO, ILO, UNECE secretariats that UNECE secretariat would not prepare detailed minutes of the meeting but would only reflect the main points of decision.

25. The group agreed that the following activities should be undertaken:

- the UNECE secretariat would draft the report of the first session and distribute it to the group by email, together with the final list of participants;
- the IMO, ILO and UNECE secretariats would reiterate their invitations to their member states to participate in the next sessions of the group;
- the consultant would set up correspondence groups to examine specific subjects covered by the Guidelines;
- the consultant would prepare a revised inception report by December 2011;
- the consultant would prepare a first draft of the revised Guidelines by March 2012;
- the experts would be invited to send their comments of technical nature directly to the consultant.

## Annex I

### Revising the Guidelines –Inception Report Presentation

Following the presentation of the Inception Report the meeting held a general discussion about those subjects and issues that the Group of Experts considered as critical to the development of the Code of Practice for Packing Cargo Transport Units (Packing Code).

This was followed by a more detailed discussion on many of the subjects which are summarised below:

#### 1. Simple

- 1.1. It was pointed out that many of those involved with packing CTUs will not have access to sophisticated hard or soft copies of the Packing Code.
- 1.2. Therefore the Packing Code will need to be written in a style that can be understood by all readers and that the text can be easily translated into other languages without confusion.
- 1.3. Accessing information in the Packing Code must also be simple, where the packer can access as much information as is needed, in a format that is understandable and to the required level of detail.
- 1.4. When discussions continue on the publication of the Packing Code, there was considerable discussion on how it is disseminated and what users will have access to. One option that was considered is to have the Packing Code available on the web, but some users will not have access to this source. Therefore an alternative presentation method must be available and "print on demand" may provide the solution, where packers can request copies from a governmental or NGO representing that packer.
- 1.5. It was requested that a section with detailed definitions for terms and acronyms used in packing CTUs including definitions and differences between mass and weight and cargo and goods.

#### 2. Target Audience

- 2.1. The presentation listed a number of users of the Packing Code:
  - .1 General management
  - .2 Supervisors
  - .3 Packers
  - .4 Booking clerks
  - .5 Freight forwarders.
- 2.2. During the meeting the trade unions were identified as another user.
- 2.3. In addition to identifying the users, the target audience needs to be more closely examined. While the users may remain constant over the world, the audience will vary.
  - 2.3.1. Packers at a major company who packs the same product in CTUs regularly would use the Packing Code in a different manner to a packer involved in consolidating different cargoes and packages or a packer that is packing a particular CTU for the first time.

- 2.3.2. Likewise a packer shipping pallets in a CTU would require a different level of detail to a packer who ships steel coils or marble slabs.

### 3. Chain of Responsibility

- 3.1. The meeting agreed that the packer was the party responsible for ensuring that the CTU was packed correctly and safely. However it also agreed that parties handling and conveying the CTU along the supply chain have their own responsibilities
- 3.2. An example of such a chain of responsibility has been published by the Australian Government and may form the skeleton of a section within the Packing Code.

## 4. Existing Documents

- 4.1. It was agreed that there are a number of excellent documents available in hard or soft copy that provides information for packing CTUs and preparing documentation.
- 4.2. The meeting recognised that incorporating these documents would be symbiotic, where the final document would be greater than the sum of the parts. In order to ensure that the document can be edited and formatted without recourse to the original copyright holders, contributors were asked if they would pass over their copyright to the Group of Experts for the development of the Packing Code.
- 4.3. Once the Packing Code has been developed and published, editorial copyright could be passed onto an editorial committee who could ensure that the Packing Code remains up to date, relevant and accurate.
- 4.4. Once copyright has been transferred to the Group of Experts, then many of the documents can be drafted into the Packing Code's draft text and where there are inconsistencies between the various documents the Group of Experts would debate and conclude the text of the best practice process or procedure.

## 5. Packing Code format

- 5.1. The Group of experts identified that there was a need for an overview that would provide general information about the Packing Code, perhaps 12 to 16 pages long and comprising items 3a to 3g and 3q from the section entitled "Identify parameters and project scope" of the Inception report.
- 5.2. It was generally agreed that the Packing Code should then be cascaded down from the over-view with links from it to more details on particular subjects and onto discrete packing solutions for specific cargoes or packages.
- 5.3. While the meeting spent some time discussing the format and the method of delivery and dissemination, it was agreed that further discussion should be delayed until the third meeting of the Group of Experts when the shape and size of the Packing Code is better known.
- 5.4. It was suggested that each section of the Packing Code should identify who it is addressed to, how they may use it and the benefits for using it.

## 6. Packing Code Scope

- 6.1. The Group of Experts discussed the following issues relating to CTU type and cargo configurations and whether they should be included in the Packing Code.
  - .1 Tanks, road tanks and tank containers
  - .2 Rail wagons
  - .3 Regulatory references

- .4 Cargoes carried across two or more flatrack containers.
- 6.2. There was a proposal that tanks should not form part of the Packing Code for two reasons, firstly that they had not been included in the current packing guidelines and secondly that they are filled with and emptied of their cargo, generally liquids, powders and granules.
- 6.3. It was pointed out that the 1997 edition of the Packing Guidelines did not include tanks as they were not generally available when the original 1982 version was produced. Therefore the omission should have been addressed when the 1997 edition was being prepared.
- 6.4. It was agreed that if the Packing Code was to be truly intermodal then tank CTUs should be included. It was pointed out that there are publications available that could be used as general text to cover the safety and handling issues relating to handling tank CTUs but the filling operation, particularly dangerous goods.
- 6.5. Likewise information about tank CTUs with baffles and compartments should be covered so that information could be made available to those involved in the supply chain, particularly handlers and transporters/conveyors.
- 6.6. Members of the Group of Experts felt that rail wagons are not generally intermodal and therefore need not be included in the Packing Code. However it was agreed that there are instances where rail wagons are transported on special ferries which may be subjected to various forces associated with maritime transport.
- 6.7. Therefore it was agreed that the Packing Code would include basic information on:
  - .1 securing cargoes in rail wagons which are to be transported by ferry/other ship.
  - .2 securing cargoes in CTUs that are to be transported by rail – swap bodies, containers and road vehicles.
  - .3 securing CTUs on rail wagons.
- 6.8. Both tank CTUs and rail wagons are subjected to regulations covering their use as do dangerous goods. The Group of Experts felt that the Packing Code should not include any text relating to these other regulations.
- 6.9. It was suggested that the Packing Code would therefore refer to the regulations where required and only include text that adds value to the document or where clarification and/or comparison is required.
- 6.10. Item 2g of the Inception Report "All project cargo that may be carried across two or more platform type containers" was discussed. It was felt that such cargoes would be covered by the ship's Cargo Securing Manual and therefore covered by the CSS Code. Consequently such cargoes need not be included in the Packing Code.
- 6.11. However it was pointed out that securing cargo onto platform type containers carried on ships could use lashing and securing techniques described in the CSS Code.

## **7. Inception Report**

- 7.1. The Inception Report was discussed in detail and various amendments requested.
- 7.2. The report has been amended and republished (Version 2 – October 2011))

**8. Correspondence Groups**

- 8.1. While discussing methods for inter-sessional communications, various different options were briefly discussed but it was agreed that correspondence groups are set up where subjects can be discussed using email.
- 8.2. It was agreed that all persons shown on the List of Participants would be included in the correspondence mailing list. Other participants are requested to contact the UN ECE Secretariat.
- 8.3. There would be two main groups:
  - 8.3.1. The first will consist of representatives from Nations who attended the Group of Experts meeting or who have indicated that they wish to be kept informed.
  - 8.3.2. The second would consist of all attending Experts.
- 8.4. The second group would be further sub-divided into smaller working groups who would be allocated to particular subjects:
  - .1 Abnormal cargoes
  - .2 CTU checks, opening and entering
  - .3 Dangerous Goods
  - .4 Lashing, bracing and blocking – design and forces
  - .5 Lashing equipment definition and description
  - .6 Packing Certificate
  - .7 Rail Wagons
  - .8 Security
  - .9 Tank Containers
  - .10 Training.
- 8.5. This list is not exhaustive and will be added to as the Packing Code is developed.

## Annex II

### 2011

6–7 October	Group of Experts 1
21 October	Correspondence Group established
28 October	Revised Inception report and report of meeting circulated
10 December	Initial draft submitted

### 2012

19 March	Draft Circulated to Group of Experts
19–20 April	Group of Experts 2
4 June	Draft Circulated to Group of Experts
15 June	Submit progress report to DSC 17
4–6 July	Group of Experts 3
August	Submit draft Code of Practice as an IMF paper to DSC 17
17 September	Draft Circulated to Group of Experts
17–21 September	DSC 17
15–16 October	Group of Experts 4

### 2013

May	Final Draft agreed
June	Final draft submitted to DSC 18
September	DSC 18 –Possible Drafting group to finalise Code of Practice
November	Final document submitted to UN ECE WP 24

### 2014

February	Final Document submitted to UN ECE
March	Final Document submitted to ILO
May	Final Document submitted to MSC

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