

Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

Sub-Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods

17 June 2015

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Item 4 (d) of the provisional agenda

Electric storage systems: miscellaneous

Review of the meaning of “equipment” for the purposes of Special Provision 188 and Packing Instruction P903

Transmitted by the International Air Transport Association (IATA)

Introduction

1. There continues to be discussion around what constitutes “equipment” for the purposes of determining whether an article should be considered as a “battery” and therefore assigned to UN 3090 or UN 3480, or if it is equipment and assigned to UN 3091 or UN 3481. There is also an issue around whether an article can be deemed to be “equipment” such that lithium batteries can be packed with the article and then assigned to UN 3091 or UN 3481.
2. On this last item there have been a number of approaches by consignors to ship lithium ion batteries with the battery charger for the lithium ion batteries as UN 3481, LITHIUM ION BATTERIES PACKED WITH EQUIPMENT.
3. Notwithstanding that the lithium ion batteries connect to the battery charger, it is believed that for the purposes of the provisions of Special Provision 188 and packing instruction P903 that the battery charger is not “equipment” in the sense that the lithium ion batteries do not power the charger.
4. Here it is believed that the wording set out in packing instruction P903 is not sufficiently clear to prevent misunderstanding or misapplication on just what can be considered equipment. The wording in P903 currently reads as follows: “For the purpose of this packing instruction, “equipment” means apparatus requiring the lithium metal or lithium ion cells or batteries with which it is packed for its operation”.
5. Logically the battery charger does not “require” the lithium ion battery to operate; however, it could be considered that the charger only operates when the lithium battery is in place in the charger.
6. On that basis it is suggested that the wording in P903 could be improved to make it clear that to be considered “equipment” and therefore assigned to UN 3481 that the article must be powered by the lithium batteries with which they are being packed.
7. It is also suggested that for consistency that the wording to define what constitutes equipment also be included into Special Provision 188.

Proposal

8. The Subcommittee is invited to consider amending Special Provision 188 as follows:

188 Cells and batteries offered for transport are not subject to other provisions of these Regulations if they meet the following:

...

- (i) Except when batteries are installed in or packed with equipment, packages shall not exceed 30 kg gross mass.

As used above and elsewhere in these Regulations, “lithium content” means the mass of lithium in the anode of a lithium metal or lithium alloy cell. As used in this special provision “equipment” means apparatus for which the lithium cells or batteries will provide electrical power for its operation.

Separate entries exist for lithium metal batteries and lithium ion batteries to facilitate the transport of these batteries for specific modes of transport and to enable the application of different emergency response actions.

9. The Subcommittee is invited to consider amending packing instruction P903 as follows:

P903	PACKING INSTRUCTION	P903
This instruction applies to UN Nos. 3090, 3091, 3480 and 3481.		
<p>...</p> <p>(3) For cells or batteries packed with equipment:</p> <p>Packagings conforming to the requirements in paragraph (1) of this packing instruction, then placed with the equipment in an outer packaging; or</p> <p>Packagings that completely enclose the cells or batteries, then placed with equipment in a packaging conforming to the requirements in paragraph (1) of this packing instruction.</p> <p>The equipment shall be secured against movement within the outer packaging.</p> <p>For the purpose of this packing instruction, “equipment” means apparatus requiring the lithium metal or lithium ion cells or batteries with which it is packed for its operation <u>for which the lithium cells or batteries will provide electrical power for its operation.</u></p> <p>...</p>		