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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

Bern, 23–27 March 2015

Item 2 of the provisional agenda

Tanks

Tanks: United Kingdom experience with improperly manufactured and wrongly certificated road tank vehicles

Transmitted by the Government of United Kingdom^{1, 2}

1. Informal Paper INF16 Rev.1 submitted to the Joint Meeting at its session in Bern 17-21 March 2014 provided information on the United Kingdom's experience with improperly manufactured and wrongly certificated road tank vehicles. At that session the United Kingdom proposed to keep subsequent sessions of the Joint Meeting apprised of the research it is funding to obtain a fuller understanding of the safety of road tank vehicles. In part, the proposals contained in this paper are aimed at achieving that goal.
2. This paper also reports on the experience of the United Kingdom by implementing changes aimed at avoiding a recurrence of these problems. It makes a proposal for a discussion of the issues so that the Joint Meeting can consider whether it should undertake work to develop an agreed and harmonised approach to tackling them.
3. Since submitting the information paper to the 17-21 March 2014 session, about 100 new replacement tankers have been entering into service in the United Kingdom, reducing the number that are not in full compliance to around 130 tankers. During this time the United Kingdom commissioned a £1.5 million research programme to inform decisions about the future use of these vehicles. Based on the outcome of the research published on 18 December 2014 at

¹ In accordance with the programme of work of the Inland Transport Committee for 2014–2015 (ECE/TRANS/240, para. 100, ECE/TRANS/2014/23, cluster 9, para.9.2).

² Circulated by the Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF) under the symbol OTIF/RID/RC/2015/22.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/petroleum-road-fuel-tankers-technical-assessment>, certain aspects of which may be disputed by the tank manufacturer, it is decided to extend for national transport only the date by which tankers built after the middle of 2010 are to be withdrawn (about 70 tankers) subject to the outcome of further work to establish acceptance criteria that may allow an individual tanker to continue in use for up to 12 years after entering into service. Those tankers still in service that were built before the middle of 2010 are to be withdrawn by 30 June 2015.

4. Over the same period new tankers from the manufacturer have been certified as ADR compliant by a tank inspection body for supply to the United Kingdom. In the meantime, the United Kingdom has an ongoing dialogue with industry over plans to resolve this issue using a process that maintains fuel supplies while upholding safety.
5. This situation has caused the United Kingdom to review its procedures for appointing and monitoring the performance of the authorised inspection bodies. In doing so it has paid particular attention to the extra-territorial activities of such bodies. Its latest version of arrangements for the appointment of bodies for the inspection of tanks for the carriage of dangerous goods is published at <http://www.dft.gov.uk/vca/additional/files/dangerous-goods/conformity-assessment-bodies/uk-arangements.pdf>. Adherence with it, together with more rigorous monitoring and performance and greater control over the issue of GB certificates of approval through a centrally operated database should prevent a recurrence.
6. The United Kingdom believes that a discussion of these procedures, with contributions from others might establish that there are shared goals that could be more readily achieved by working towards a harmonised and more consistent approach.
7. During the course of its investigations into improperly manufactured and wrongly certificated road tank vehicles, the United Kingdom has become aware of some divergence between custom and practice among tank inspection bodies and the requirements laid down in Chapter 6.8 of ADR. The United Kingdom is facilitating a national working group to ensure compliance. However, it predicts that a review of Chapter 6.8 and the referenced standards will be needed to complete that exercise. By way of example only, a world class tank repairer with an impressive historic record of making good repairs is unable to meet the current inspection requirements in full.
8. The United Kingdom would be willing to lead any inter sessional working group established under the auspices of the Joint Meeting to conduct such a review of Chapter 6.8 of ADR.

Proposal

9. The United Kingdom proposes to make a 60 minute presentation on the outcome of a £1.5 million research programme into the safety of certain petroleum road fuel tanks found to not be fully compliant with chapter 6.8 of the ADR. This presentation would follow the Tuesday afternoon session of the Tanks Working Group at 17:45 on 24 March 2015. The presentation will be an opportunity for the United Kingdom experts to explain the rationale for the decision (see paragraph 3) and to answer questions from interested delegates.
10. The United Kingdom also proposes that the Tanks Working Group devote the morning of 25 March 2015 to a discussion of issues faced by Contracting Parties

regarding the inspection and certification of tanks. It could report to the Joint Meeting any suggestions for developing an agreed and harmonised approach to tackling them. The specific topics for discussion could derive from informal papers that are submitted or raised by delegates during the discussion.
