

Economic Commission for Europe

Inland Transport Committee

Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods

29 July 2019

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

Geneva, 17–27 September 2019

Item 8 of the provisional agenda:

Accidents and risk management

Reporting from the Expert Users and Development Group (EUDG) concerning the use of Risk Acceptance Criteria with the Inland TDG Risk Management Framework

Submitted by the European Union Agency for Railways (ERA) on behalf of the Expert Users and Development Group of the Inland TDG Risk Management Framework

Summary

Executive summary: On behalf the EUDG, ERA is reporting the conclusions of the discussions on Risk Acceptance Criteria held at the 2nd, 3rd, 4th EUDG meeting and reviewed at the 5th meeting.

Background

The Expert Users and Development Group (EUDG) of the Inland TDG Risk Management Framework (RMF) is contributing to the maintenance and continuous improvement of the framework as described in section 6 of the Framework guide published at this address: https://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/dangerous_good/risk_management_framework_en.

EUDG members are working under the supervision of DG MOVE and the European Union Agency for Railways (ERA).

ERA is providing assistance for the organisation of the meetings and chairs the meetings.

Current state of play of the Risk Management Framework

The Inland TDG RMF is of voluntary application and is published, as indicated in INF.5, on DG MOVE and ERA websites.

In relation with Risk Acceptance Criteria (RACs), it must be noted that the framework does not impose any RAC but only decision-making principles which should be observed and that were commonly agreed during the development of the framework.

Overview of discussions on RACs at EUDG meetings

At the 2nd EUDG meeting, several members considered that a discussion concerning the use of RACs within the RMF should take place while others were strongly opposed to the setting of harmonised RACs or even to discuss this topic.

As Chair, ERA recalled that the establishment of the Framework started with a feasibility study on the setting of harmonised multimodal RACs for the transport of dangerous goods.

The 2014 DNV study concluded positively that setting RACs was possible if appropriate steps* would be undertaken, and this might include the adoption of a new legal act.

EUDG members agreed that a technical discussion should be possible at the 3rd meeting in order to assess the technical (not political) feasibility to use RACs within the RMF and to clarify what type of RACs may be used.

At the 3rd EUDG meeting, a very controversial discussion continued with pros and cons for the use and/or establishment of harmonised RACs, mixing technical and decision-making positions. It was recalled that the EUDG was a technical group, however the discussion indicated that the question of RACs was highly political. EUDG members felt that it was still possible to continue the technical discussion to list the typical situations in which RACs could be used and to further explain their implementation.

This discussion was held at the 4th EUDG meeting. The conclusions reported in this document and reviewed at the 5th meeting are reported hereinafter.

Conclusions from EUDG members on RACs

After 3 meetings where the question of RACs was discussed, the EUDG members agreed on the following conclusions:

- Currently, the RMF is using a comparative approach to assess the acceptability of risk situations;
 - However, the RMF approach is also fully compatible with the use of risk acceptance criteria (thresholds), when they are defined by the user;
 - The RMF is also fully compatible with the RACs considered in the DNV study, (this was checked by the decision-making group during the development of the RMF);
 - Users of the RMF who would like to use it in combination with their own risk acceptance thresholds should be allowed to do so;
 - EUDG members should not oppose the publication of RMF user case examples containing the use of risk acceptance thresholds;
 - EUDG members are fully aware that currently used risk acceptance thresholds are not harmonised between RMF users;
 - At this time the EUDG does not anticipate developing harmonised thresholds for the RMF. It may do so in future with further experience and if requested by regulators.

This is an information to the Joint Meeting for its consideration. The Joint Meeting delegates are kindly invited to consider the above conclusions and to suggest, if they would wish so, relevant follow-up actions.

*see study at <https://ec.europa.eu/transport/sites/transport/files/modes/rail/studies/doc/2014-03-25-dangerous-goods.pdf>