

Economic Commission for Europe

Inland Transport Committee

Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods

23 February 2024

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

Bern, 25-28 March 2024

Item 2 of the provisional agenda:

Tanks

Orange band on tank-wagons – Comments from Belgium on informal document INF.5 (UIP)

Transmitted by the Government of Belgium

1. Belgium has consulted¹ the infrastructure manager, the railway undertakings and the emergency services on UIP's question about the usefulness of the orange band on tank-wagons intended for the carriage of liquefied, refrigerated liquefied or dissolved gases.
2. The majority of the respondents, and in particular the emergency services, are convinced of the added value of this orange band for safety. Removing the orange band would be seen as a step backwards in terms of safety.
3. Belgium is therefore opposed to the removal of this orange band.
4. The main arguments put forward are listed in sections A, B and C below.

A. Identification of gas tank-wagons from a greater distance

- In the event of a call from a witness to the emergency services, this visual element stands out very easily. Often during calls, the question about the orange band helps the witness to react positively. The speed in which the products involved are identified will determine the effectiveness of the response.
- The RID consist list available in railway stations does not allow to determine the exact location. The orange band allows to easily and exactly determine where tank-wagons with gases are located.
- Reconnaissance drones used by the infrastructure manager and by the emergency services can also see the orange band.

B. Intervention

- Gases are specific products (rapid atmospheric spread, overpressure effect, ...). Emergency measures that need to be taken in the case of an accident are also very specific (e.g. for preventing BLEVE). Therefore, it is very important for the emergency services to be able to distinguish visually where gas tank-wagons are located in a station. Removing this information means depriving the emergency services of a very important warning.

¹ The national consultation runs until 18 March 2024. If necessary, this informal document, produced for the tank working group, will be amended before the Joint Meeting.

- In the event of a fire, the emergency services can assess the **risk of BLEVE**. This helps in deciding what to cool, what the explosion dangers could be when exposed to fire; which provides a greater safety for intervening crews but also the public.

C. Wagons segregation

- The orange band can help operators in areas where segregation of wagons is required.

D. Conclusion

5. Regarding the difference between RID and ADR, the following differences were identified:

- (a) quantity per tank;
- (b) grouping of tanks in railway transport;
- (c) accessibility for witnesses and emergency services.

Moreover, it has been noted that intermediate temporary storage in stations is more frequent for wagons than for containers.

6. Beside these arguments in favor of the remaining of the orange band, some respondents confirmed the difficulty to deal with the specifications of the orange color in the NOTE of 5.3.2.2.1.
