

Recommendation 19

CODE FOR MODES OF TRANSPORT

The Working Party on Facilitation of International Trade Procedures, a subsidiary body of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, agreed in 1974 to study the need to specify various modes of transport and the data required for them with a view to the creation of coded representations.

Based on proposals presented by the secretariat, extensive national and international consultations took place during the following years; interested subsidiary bodies of the Inland Transport Committee of the Economic Commission for Europe were consulted as well as the international and regional organizations represented at sessions of the Working Party and its Groups of Experts.

The draft recommendation on a code for modes of transport was presented at the thirteenth session of the Working Party in March 1981 and was adopted at that session.

RECOMMENDATION

The Working Party on Facilitation of International Trade Procedures:

Recommends that the code structure described hereafter should be applied whenever there is a need for a coded representation for indicating mode of transport for purposes of international trade.

At the thirteenth session of the Working Party, representatives attended from: Austria; Belgium; Bulgaria; Canada; Czechoslovakia; Denmark; Finland; France; German Democratic Republic; Germany, Federal Republic of; Hungary; Italy; Netherlands; Norway; Poland; Romania; Sweden; Switzerland; Turkey; Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and United States of America. Representatives from Bangladesh, Japan, and Kenya participated under Article 11 of the Commission's terms of reference.

The following specialized agencies and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations were also represented: Inter-governmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO); General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT); European Economic Community

(EEC); Customs Co-operation Council (CCC); Central Office for International Railway Transport (OCTI); International Chamber of Commerce (ICC); International Air Transport Association (IATA); International Union of Railways (UIC); International Organization for Standardization (ISO); International Chamber of Shipping (ICS); International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations (FIATA); International Railway Transport Committee (CIT).

I. BACKGROUND

1. Information on the mode of transport used for the movement of goods is required in many documents used in connection with international trade. This information may be needed for contractual reasons, e.g. the sales contract may stipulate a particular mode, or for operational reasons, e.g. as instructions for the carriage of goods or as advice to the consignee to indicate the mode by which his goods will arrive, etc. In many countries, information on mode of transport is required also for transport and Customs statistics.

2. Means of transport, particularly road vehicles and railway wagons, are often identified by a registration number. Such registration numbers do not contain any element indicating to which category the means of transport belong (although in some cases the format of the number might infer the category). For this purpose, the number needs to be qualified by an indication of the category, which is generally identical with the mode in which the means is employed, e.g. truck – road. In documents this problem has traditionally been solved either by a pre-printed heading or by a plain-language entry; in other methods of interchange, a code might be required for the purpose. Ideally, the same code should be used to represent mode of transport and to designate category of means of transport.

3. The need to express these particulars in coded form has been confirmed by several Governments and international bodies, including the United Nations Statistical Office, the ECE Groups of Experts on Combined Transport and on Transport Statistics, respectively, the Customs Co-operation Council, the International Union of Railways, and the Statistical Office of the European Communities. There already exists a large number of codes of varying sophistication and complexity, depending upon the environment in which they are used.

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4. Based on a study of such codes, and taking into account views put forward by the bodies referred to above, it appears that a simple code structure specifying major modes of transport would be sufficient as a basic code.

5. Provision would have to be made, however, for a certain degree of flexibility of application and for the possibility of sub-dividing the basic code by the addition of a second digit. It was suggested that this would be required, in particular, to overcome problems related to the requirement in certain countries to specify transport by inland waterways separately from other waterborne transport. Representatives from these countries requested that two different digits within the 0 to 9 code structure be allocated, i.e. one digit for sea transport and another for inland waterways transport, to be used in accordance with criteria prescribed by national or regional rules.

6. On the other hand, representatives of countries where no such distinction is made stated that they would be unable to accept two different codes for waterborne transport; in addition, it was argued that the issuer of a document in which mode of transport had to be stated might not know about or might be unable to apply the criteria laid down by such national or regional rules. Moreover, a future logical and hierarchical development of the basic code would be more difficult if one of the four main transport mode – water-rail-road-air – was presented in a different way from the others. It would, from this point of view, be more logical to provide for a subdivision at a second digit level, which would probably be required for other modes as well. (There has been no indication that more than one additional digit would be required for such purposes.)

7. A compromise had to be found to accommodate these differing views for the purpose of a general recommendation, and it was felt that this could best be achieved within the framework of a basic one-digit code with certain possibilities for extension. Many existing one-digit codes were considered as a possible basis, but none of them was found to have achieved international acceptance or to offer advantages which would justify its recognition as an ECE recommended standard.

8. In consequence, and recognizing the need for an internationally-agreed code to represent mode of transport as well as category of means of transport for the purpose of data collection, transmission and processing in connection with international trade, the Working Party on Facilitation of International Trade Procedures has prepared the present Recommendation as part of its work in establishing codes for data elements used in international trade. A numerical code has been preferred since there would be no particular mnemonic or other advantage in the use of an alphabetical code.

II. SCOPE

9. This Recommendation establishes a one-digit numerical code to represent mode of transport and to specify

categories of means of transport according to the mode for which they are intended. It also provides for the possibility of adding a second digit for any sub-division which might be required nationally or in other particular applications.

III. FIELD OF APPLICATION

10. This Recommendation applies in all cases where mode of transport is represented in coded form in documents used in international trade and where a basic and simple code structure suffices. The code can also be used as a prefix to designations of means of transport and can be sub-divided by the addition of a second, optional digit.

IV. TERMINOLOGY

11. For the purpose of this Recommendation, the following definitions apply:

Mode of transport: Method of transport used for the carriage of goods.

Means of transport: Particular vehicle, vessel or other device used for transport of goods or persons.

VI. EXPLANATORY NOTES

1. Criteria for application

It has not been possible so far to recommend international criteria for certain applications, e.g. the code to use when waterborne transport takes place partly on inland waterways and partly on the sea, when road vehicles and railway wagons are carried on ferries, etc., although in some cases the code for the “active” means is used, e.g. a road vehicle carried on a train is reported as rail transport. For instance, it may be that for statistical purposes the application of the active mode at the time of crossing the frontier is appropriate. In the absence of agreed international criteria, it would devolve on the national and other authorities concerned to issue appropriate instructions and, when relevant, to make such instructions known to other bodies concerned, so as to ensure comparability of statistics, etc.

2. Flexibility of application

The code structure in this Recommendation has been designed to offer the greatest possible flexibility regarding national application, without compromising its suitability for international use. The recommended one-digit code would thus serve as the basis for international statistical reporting, etc., whereas a second digit is intended for national (or regional) purposes.

Code 8 has been reserved for reporting inland water transport separately within a one digit code structure. If inland water transport does not exist or is not recorded separately, or if any of the other specific codes are not

V. DESCRIPTION

Code	Mode of Transport	Explanations
0	—	In principle, this code should not be used since the digit “0” may be employed to indicate absence of entry, etc. If this is not the case, the code can be used when indication of a mode of transport would be irrelevant, e.g. statistical reporting should not take place (for samples, gifts, personal effect, etc.).
1	Maritime transport	Provision is made for separate reporting of inland water transport under code 8, assuming that appropriate definitions and rules of application will be given, particularly when transport covers sea as well as inland waterways.
2	Rail transport	—
3	Road transport	—
4	Air transport	—
5	Mail	(Active mode of transport unknown) – This code is provided for practical reasons, despite the fact that mail is not a genuine mode of transport. In many countries, the value of merchandise exported and imported by mail is considerable, but the exporter or importer concerned would be unable to state by which mode postal items had passed the national border.
6	Multimodal transport	(Active mode of transport unknown) – This code is provided for practical reasons, despite the fact that multimodal transport is not a genuine mode of transport. It can be used when goods are carried by at least two different modes from a place at which the goods are taken in charge by a transport operator to a place designated for delivery, on the basis of one transport contract. (Operations of pick-up and delivery of goods carried out in the performance of a unimodal transport, as defined in such a contract, shall not be considered as multimodal transport.)
7	Fixed transport installations	This code applies to installations for continuous transport such as pipelines, ropeways and electric power lines.
8	Inland water transport	This code is used only in such cases where the application of waterborne transport is reported separately within the framework of a one-digit code.
9	Mode unknown	This code can be used when the mode is not known or when information on it is not available at the time of issuing the document concerned.

applicable (e.g. if mail or multimodal transport is not recognized as a mode of transport for statistical purposes, or no international railway link exists), then these codes need not appear in the list of elements specified for the purpose of collecting statistics.

3. Provision for a second digit

It is recognized that in many cases a sub-division of the basic codes is required, and it is envisaged that a second digit might be needed for that purpose. Examples of such sub-division are:

for maritime transport: sea transport
inland waterways transport
coastwise traffic
floating

for rail transport: goods trains
passenger trains

for road transport: goods on powered vehicles
goods on trailers

for mail: letter post
parcel post

for fixed installations: oil pipelines
gas pipelines
electric power lines
ropeways

There are examples of breakdowns in all modes to indicate whether means of transport are of foreign or national registration, whether or not goods are transported in containers, etc. In such cases, however, other solutions

might be considered - in the first case, by introducing a separate data element "Nationality of means of transport"; in the second, by reporting the use of containers as one type of packaging methods.

4. Use of the code to specify category of means of transport

The code can be used as a specifier to precede identification particulars for individual means of transport in the following way:

Code 1 (Maritime transport): for vessels, as a prefix to ships' names or codes (e.g. 1-AMOUR, 1-ULCZ)

Code 2 (Rail transport): for railway wagons, as a prefix to railway wagon numbers (e.g. 2-01-85-1370315-9)

Code 3 (Road transport): for road vehicles, as a prefix to road vehicle registration numbers (e.g. 3-GE 21201)

Code 4 (Air transport): for aircraft, as a prefix to flight numbers (e.g. 4-SR101)

Code 6 (Multimodal transport): as a prefix to container numbers, when containers are referred to as transport units in a capacity comparable with that of means of transport (e.g. 6-EACU1234567)

Annex

CODE ELEMENTS FOR STATISTICAL RECORDING OF MODE OF TRANSPORT

ECE/FAL Recommendation No. 19 "Code for Modes of Transport" establishes a coding system to specify modes of transport for general purposes (including operational, administrative, commercial and Customs control needs); the Recommendation does not specifically provide for statistical needs. When applying the Recommendation for statistical reporting of transport, certain specific rules of application are required. In consequence, the terms and the Rules of application set out below have been agreed as a complement to Recommendation 19 and should be used when appropriate.

1. TERMINOLOGY

It is recalled that the terms Mode of Transport and Means of Transport in ECE/FAL Recommendation No. 19 are defined as follows:

Mode of transport: Method of transport used for the carriage of goods.

Means of transport: Particular vessel, vehicle or other device used for transport of goods or persons.

In addition, for the purposes of the rules of application set out below, the following definitions apply:

Combined transport: Combination of means of transport where one (passive) transport means is carried on another (active) means which provides traction and consumes energy.

Frontier crossing point: That point where a railway, a road, an inland waterway or a fixed transport installation

crosses a frontier; the imaginary point where vessels or aircraft cross the boundaries of national territorial waters and airspace.

2. RULES OF APPLICATION

Rule 1

The mode of transport is normally indicated by the type of means of transport onto which the goods are loaded, or the infrastructure used for their movement. Sea transport normally applies when goods are loaded onto a ship, rail transport when a railway wagon is used, road transport in the case of a lorry or articulated vehicle, air transport when stating a flight number, fixed installations when a pipeline, ropeway or electric power line is involved and inland waterways when a craft involved is designed for, or actually used on such waterways.

Rule 2

Where more than one mode of transport is used in succession between the place of consignment and the place of delivery, the mode of transport by which the goods will presumably pass, or are known to have passed, the frontier crossing point is recorded.

Rule 3

Where at the frontier crossing point the two means of transport are used simultaneously (combined transport) and if there is a need for statistical purposes to report such transport separately, both are to be recorded. A one-digit code element as set out in Recommendation No. 19 is used

to indicate the means of transport that remains passive during the combined transport (road vehicle, barge) and another one-digit code to indicate the active means of transport moving over the frontier (Ro-Ro ferry, piggyback train, barge-carrying ship). For this purpose one of the following code elements should be used to report the active means of transport:

1 = sea	4 = air
2 = rail	8 = inland waterway
3 = road	

Rule 4

Transport on inland waterways is to be recorded separately as an independent mode of transport if the transport operation concerned is performed in its entirety on such waterways and vessels are used which are designed for transport on inland waterways and registered as such. When waterborne transport takes place partly on inland waterways and partly on the sea, the frontier crossing criterion will apply, i.e. a vessel having departed on a voyage from overseas (and reported as sea mode) will be reported as inland waterways when it enters or leaves such a waterway. Examples:

- 1) A ship, leaving Chicago and sailing on the Great Lakes, passes the Canadian frontier crossing point and continues on the St. Lawrence seaway through Canada reported as inland waterways; when it leaves Canada it passes the Canadian frontier crossing point

with the Atlantic Ocean and is then regarded as sea mode, by which it arrives at Göteborg, Sweden, and continues to Karlstad on Lake Vanern as inland waterways;

- 2) A river barge leaving Basel on the Rhine is recorded as inland waterways until it passes the frontier crossing at the river mouth; if it then continues in coastal traffic at Le Havre, this will be recorded as sea mode.

If there is no recording at the frontier crossing, the relative distance passed on inland waterways and sea, respectively, will determine the code to be used.

Rule 5

When a consignor hands over his consignment to a post office, and when he does not know what particular genuine mode will be used by the postal service for the subsequent transport, the code for mail may be used, rather than causing such trade to be unreported. Similarly, when goods are handed over to a multimodal transport operator who, under a multimodal transport contract (involving at least two different modes of transport), undertakes to deliver the goods at a place designated for delivery, or when goods are handed in to a terminal, without knowledge of what genuine mode will be used by the terminal operator, the code for multimodal transport can be used. For statistical purposes these codes may be ignored, particularly if there are arrangements which enable proper recording at a later stage before the frontier crossing.