

COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON THE TRANSPORT OF DANGEROUS GOODS AND ON THE GLOBALLY HARMONIZED SYSTEM OF CLASSIFICATION AND LABELLING OF CHEMICALS

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New IAEA review and revision process and decision criteria for the publication of a new version of Transport Regulations

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Introduction

This INF-paper provides a general view on the new policy to review and revise the IAEA Regulations for the Safe Transport of Radioactive Material and introduces the developed, approved and adopted decision criteria to publish new versions of the Transport Regulations.

Background

In 1961 the International Atomic Energy Agency, within the framework of its statutory functions and in accordance with recommendations made by its Preparatory Commission and by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, published safety regulations that could be applied to the national and international transport of radioactive material by all means of transport. These requirements were published as “Regulations for the Safe Transport of Radioactive Material”, Safety Series No. 6, 1961 edition. At the same time, the Director General of the Agency indicated that these regulations would be revised at appropriate intervals in consultation with Member States and the organizations concerned and invited suggestions for their improvement in the light of experience and increased knowledge. This has been an on-going task in the Agency’s budget since that time.

The Secretariat has been encouraged by recent General Conferences to provide a continuous review process for the TS-R-1. It is important to recall that in May 2005 the Board of Governors approved the new policy for reviewing and revising the Agency's Regulations for the Transport of Radioactive Material. According to this policy the Secretariat will continue to review the Transport Regulations at intervals consistent with the schedules of the United Nations Subcommittee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and of the relevant international modal organizations in order to remain in step with the review cycles of the other relevant international bodies. Subsequently, it will submit its findings to TRANSSC for review. If TRANSSC considers that a proposal for change stemming from a review cycle is sufficiently important for safety to necessitate publication as soon as possible, the Secretariat will initiate the revision process for the Transport Regulations and will submit all of the changes endorsed by TRANSSC to the CSS for approval.

Decision Criteria

At its 12th meeting, TRANSSC developed and approved criteria to determine if proposals for changes are sufficiently important to recommend the publication of a new edition of Transport Regulations. Six principles were identified to be used in evaluating proposed changes to the regulations stemming from the review cycle:

- Optimization;
- Efficiency/Practicality/Regulatory Stability;
- Compliance with Dose Limits;
- Socio-Economic Considerations;
- Harmonization with Regulations from Other International Organizations, and
- Clarification.

It is understood that many proposed changes would not directly lend themselves to quantification of safety impact. Therefore, the decision criteria consist of a set of questions which guide the TRANSSC review. The questions help assess the safety significance of a proposed change. The questions are structured to typically provide a “yes” or “no” answer such that a “yes” answer implies the proposed change shall be considered further while a “no” answer implies the proposed change will not be needed to maintain and assure safety and therefore would not necessitate a publication as soon as possible. Examples of changes that may warrant a revision are:

- Consistency with other safety standards (e.g. IAEA Basic Safety Standards and UN Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods);
- New package and/or material type classification;
- Modified test requirements;
- Operational events / controls;
- Changes in scope to any part of TS-R-1 (e.g. definitions, A₁/A₂ values, transport controls);
- New requirements that invalidate designs /certificates.

The final decision to publish a new edition of the transport regulations remains with the Board of Governors. TRANSSC endorses and forwards changes accepted by the Review Panel Meetings and recommends their publication.

Applying these criteria, TRANSSC 12 concluded not to forward to the Board of Governors any recommendation for change. Therefore, the Secretariat will not recommend to any International Organizations the implementation of the changes coming from 2004-2005 review cycle.

Regarding harmonization of UN-IAEA Regulations, the secretariat organized and held – from 13 to 17 Feb. 2006 - a consultant service meeting to discuss changes UN Model Regulations as proposed in the document ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/2005/19, submitted the United Kingdom to the 28th Session of UN SCETDG. According to the conclusions of the meeting report, the resulting changes positively contribute to the harmonization of UN Model Regulations on the Transport of Dangerous and IAEA Regulations for the Safe Transport of Radioactive Material and warrant the initiation of the review process for the IAEA Transport Regulations

TRANSSC 13 (scheduled for September 2006) is to address the outcomes from this consultant meeting. Also, the Document Preparation Profile (DPP) for the review of 2005 Edition of Transport Regulations includes the issue harmonization as important enough to start a review-revision process. Should TRANSSC conclude that the changes are sufficiently important to warrant a new publication, the

review-revision process will be started immediately. If not, the proposal for changes coming from the consultants meeting as well as those coming from the 2004-2005 cycle will be stored and included in the next edition of the Regulations.

Conclusion

A new policy to review and revise the IAEA Transport Regulations was approved by the Board of Governors. Additionally, decision criteria to publish new versions of Transport Regulations was developed, approved and adopted by TRANSSEC. Applying the criteria, TRANSSEC 12 concluded not to forward to the Board of Governors any recommendation for change in the Regulations.

In the Document Preparation Profile (DPP) for the review of 2005 Edition of Transport Regulations the Secretariat addresses the harmonization issue as sufficiently important to warrant a new publication.
