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

Sub-Committee of Experts on the
Transport of Dangerous Goods

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Item 6 of the provisional agenda

ELECTRONIC DATA INTERCHANGE (EDI) FOR DOCUMENTATION PURPOSES

**Proposals to revise Chapter 5.4 to facilitate the use of Electronic Data Interchange (EDI)
in lieu of paper documentation**

Transmitted by the International Air Transport Association (IATA)¹

Introduction

1. At the thirty-third session of the Sub-Committee in July 2008, the expert from France in his capacity as Vice-Chairman chaired a lunchtime working group meeting to discuss the information documents submitted on the subject of EDI (UN/SCETDG/33/INF.39 and UN/SCETDG/33/INF.46).
2. The lunchtime working group discussed the requirements for the information contained in the dangerous goods transport document and opportunities that may become available through the use of electronic data interchange (EDI).

¹ In accordance with the programme of work of the Sub-Committee for 2007-2008 approved by the Committee at its third session (refer to ST/SG/AC.10/C.3/60, para. 100 and ST/SG/AC.10/34, para. 14).

3. The purpose of this document is to propose revisions to Chapter 5.4 to enable the use of EDI in lieu of paper documentation. In developing the proposed amendments, it has been recognized that while some consignors, carriers and States may have the capability, infrastructure and regulatory framework to utilize EDI, many will not. Therefore, the proposed amendments at all times identify that information submitted by a consignor as EDI may have to be reproduced as a paper document at any point in the transport process. Equally, the ability of the consignor to submit the information required by Chapter 5.4 as EDI is contingent upon the capability of the carrier to accept such data, and, therefore, a caveat is proposed that would make the provision of EDI by the consignor subject to the agreement of the carrier.

4. During the review of the current provisions for documentation to develop the proposals contained in this paper, consideration was also given to the transport process for the documentation from the point of origin (consignor) to destination (consignee). In this respect there appear to be some gaps in the provisions of the Model Regulations.

5. For example, while 5.4.1.1 requires the consignor to describe the dangerous goods on a transport document, there is nothing that actually states that consignor must provide the document to the carrier. In addition, there is nothing that:

- (a) Requires the consignor to retain a copy of the dangerous goods transport document for any period of time after placing the dangerous goods in transport;
- (b) Requires the carrier to have a copy of the dangerous goods transport with the consignment during transport;
- (c) Requires the carrier to retain a copy of the dangerous goods transport document for any period of time.

Proposal 1

6. Revise Chapter 5.4 to read as follows:

“DOCUMENTATION

Introductory note

Note: These Regulations do not preclude the use of electronic data processing (EDP) and electronic data interchange (EDI) transmission techniques as an alternative to paper documentation. All references to “dangerous goods transport document” in this chapter also include provision of the required information by use of EDP and EDI transmission techniques.

5.4.1 Dangerous goods transport information

5.4.1.1 *General*

5.4.1.1.1 Except as otherwise provided, the consignor who offers dangerous goods for transport shall give to the carrier the information applicable to those dangerous goods, including any additional information and documentation as specified in these Regulations. This information may be provided on a dangerous goods transport document or, with the agreement of the carrier, by EDP or EDI techniques.

5.4.1.1.2 When a paper document is used, the consignor shall give the carrier a copy of the dangerous goods transport document, completed and signed as required in this Chapter.

5.4.1.1.3 When the dangerous goods transport information is given to the carrier by EDP or EDI techniques, the consignor shall be able to produce the information immediately as a paper document, with the information in the sequence required by this Chapter.

...

5.4.1.6.2 If the dangerous goods documentation is presented to the carrier by means of ~~electronic data processing~~ EDP or ~~electronic data interchange~~ EDI transmission techniques, the signature(s) may be replaced by the name(s) (in capitals) of the person authorized to sign.

5.4.1.6.3 When the dangerous goods transport information is given to a carrier by EDP or EDI techniques and subsequently the dangerous goods are transferred to a carrier that requires a paper dangerous goods transport document, the carrier shall ensure that the paper document indicates “Original received electronically” and the name of the signatory shall be shown in capital letters.”

Proposal 2

7. To address consignor retention of the dangerous goods transport document, or the information provided, it is proposed that a new section 5.4.4 be added as follows:

5.4.4 Retention of dangerous goods transport information

5.4.4.1 The consignor shall retain a copy of the dangerous goods transport document and additional information and documentation as specified in these Regulations, for a period specified by the competent authority.

5.4.4.2 When the documents are kept electronically or in a computer system, the consignor shall be able to reproduce them in a printed form.

Proposal 3

8. Add a new sub-section 7.1.1.3 into Chapter 7.1 as follows:

“7.1.1.3 *Acceptance of dangerous goods by carriers*

7.1.1.3.1 A carrier shall not accept dangerous goods for transport unless:

- (a) They are accompanied by a copy of the dangerous goods transport document; or
- (b) The information applicable to the dangerous goods is provided in electronic form.

7.1.1.3.2 When the carrier is given a paper document, a copy of the dangerous goods transport document shall accompany the dangerous goods to final destination and a copy of the document shall be given to the consignee when the dangerous goods are delivered.

7.1.1.3.3 When the information applicable to the dangerous goods is given to the carrier in electronic form, the information shall be available to the carrier at all times during transport to final destination. The information shall be able to be produced immediately as a paper document. When a paper document is produced, the information shall be presented as required by Chapter 5.4.”

Proposal 4

9. Add a new sub-section 7.1.10 requiring that the carrier retain a copy of the dangerous goods transport document for a period of time, as follows:

“7.1.10 Retention of dangerous goods transport information

7.1.10.1 The carrier shall retain a copy of the dangerous goods transport document and additional information and documentation as specified in these Regulations, for a period specified by the competent authority.

7.1.10.2 When the documents are kept electronically or in a computer system, the carrier shall be capable of reproducing them in a printed form.”
