

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

Thirty-third session
Geneva, 30 June-9 July (a.m) 2008
Item 6 of the provisional agenda

ELECTRONIC DATA INTERCHANGE (EDI) FOR DOCUMENTATION PURPOSES

Progress on the Development of Multi-modal Standards for Electronic Dangerous Goods Transport Document

Transmitted by IATA and VOHMA

Introduction

The purpose of this INF paper is to keep the Subcommittee apprised of the work undertaken with respect to the development of standards for electronic data transmission of the information presently required on the dangerous goods transport document.

Discussion

Air Transport

From an air transport perspective there are two aspects to the development of electronic standards as an alternative to paper documents.

1. Based on proposals submitted to the 21st meeting of the ICAO Dangerous Goods Panel (DGP/21), the ICAO DGP agreed to revisions to Part 5, Chapter 4 – Documentation and to Part 7, Chapter 1 – Acceptance Provisions of the 2009-2010 edition of the ICAO Technical Instructions. These revisions, see Appendix A for revised text, will permit the shipper (consignor) to transmit electronically to the operator (airline) the information required on the dangerous goods transport document in lieu of a paper document.
2. In November 2007 IATA formally launched the e-freight project with a pilot project in 6 locations; Canada, Hong Kong, Netherlands, Singapore, Sweden and UK. The pilot project involves the Customs authority, home airline and major freight forwarders in each location and is very much a proof-of-concept to demonstrate that e-freight will work. At this time the e-freight pilot involves only general cargo and just point-to-point shipments and the shipper (consignor) is not part of the process. Results of the consignments moved to date identifies that e-freight does work and that electronic transmission of the air waybill in lieu of a paper document is feasible.

Work is now underway to expand e-freight into an additional 8 locations with Australia, France, Germany, South Africa and the United States on the list of potential locations. Spain has already been confirmed as an additional location that will be added during 2008. The scope of the shipments will be expanded to include transit and transshipment. In addition, large-scale shippers will be engaged to ensure that the standards developed are compatible with industry requirements.

With respect to the development of data standards, the IATA e-freight team is engaged in discussions with the World Customs Organization (WCO) and UN CEFAC to develop standards and address the issues associated with the replacement of 13 key trade documents, such as the Certificate of Origin, Invoice, Export Goods Declaration, etc., with electronic data. The objective is that by September 2008 the next group of locations have been identified and will be participating in e-freight and that work will be underway in the detailed assessment of an additional 50 locations to be implemented by the end of 2010.

Review of Data Elements

Under the stewardship of the Vessel Operators Hazardous Materials Association (VOHMA) a group was convened to identify the data elements that are currently required on the dangerous goods transport document for road/rail (United States), as well as international maritime and air. This group has held four meetings over the past several months and has prepared a draft spreadsheet which identifies specific data elements for each mode. Additional work is being undertaken to organize the data elements into a logical sequence that can then be used as a framework for an electronically compatible transfer of information based on governmental and modal requirements as well as preferred operational information to enhance multimodal efficiency.

The next steps include gathering the data elements that may be unique to other regulatory codes such as ADR, RID, ADN in Europe, as well as those of Australia, Asia, Africa, South America and all others and designing a suitable platform for enabling electronic transmission of comprehensive information to meet the needs of shippers, transporters, and emergency responders. It is anticipated that this subcommittee may be the most reliable source of compiling those various data elements from throughout the world and all are invited to participate.

United States Transportation Research Board of the National Academies– Cooperative Research Project on Evaluation of the Use of Electronic Shipping Papers for Hazardous Materials Shipments

In April 2008 a group comprising representatives from all modes of transport met in Washington DC to develop a request for proposal (RFP) to evaluate the potential benefits of electronic shipping papers for hazardous materials/dangerous goods shipments. The objective of the RFP is for the successful organization to develop a roadmap for the electronic transfer of safety, operational, regulatory compliance, and emergency response data and documentation, for and amongst all transport modes, as an alternative to the current paper-based hazardous materials communication system.

The Project Panel will select the successful contractor in early August 2008 based on the proposals submitted and it is anticipated that the project will be completed before January 1, 2010.

Appendix A

Changes to 2009-2010 edition of ICAO Technical Instructions

PART 5

SHIPPER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Chapter 4

DOCUMENTATION

Note.— These Instructions do not preclude the use of electronic data processing (EDP) or electronic data interchange (EDI) techniques as an ~~and~~ alternative to paper documentation, unless otherwise indicated.

4.1 DANGEROUS GOODS TRANSPORT DOCUMENTATION INFORMATION

4.1.1 General

4.1.1.1 The person who offers dangerous goods for transport by air must provide to the operator the information applicable to the consignment as set out in this paragraph. The information may be provided on a paper document or, where an agreement exists with the operator, by EDP or EDI techniques.

4.1.1.2 Where a paper document is used, the person who offers the dangerous goods for transport by air must provide to the operator two copies of the dangerous goods transport document, completed and signed as required by this paragraph.

4.1.1.3 Where the dangerous goods transport information is provided by EDP or EDI techniques the data must be able to be produced as a paper document without delay, with the data in the sequence required in this chapter.

Note.— All references to “dangerous goods transport document” in this chapter also include provision of the required information by use of electronic data processing (EDP) or electronic data interchange (EDI) techniques.

...

4.1.6.2 If the dangerous goods documentation is presented to the operator 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. Where the original consignment details are provided to an operator, by EDP or EDI techniques and subsequently the consignment is transhipped to an operator that requires a paper dangerous goods transport document, the paper document must indicate “Original Received Electronically” and the name of the signatory must be shown in capital letters.

...

PART 7

OPERATOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Chapter 1 Acceptance Procedures

1.2 ACCEPTANCE OF DANGEROUS GOODS BY OPERATORS

1.2.1 An operator must not accept a package or overpack containing dangerous goods or a unit load device or other type of pallet containing dangerous goods as described in 1.4 nor a freight container containing radioactive material for transport aboard an aircraft unless:

- (a) it is accompanied by two copies of the dangerous goods transport document; or
- (b) the information applicable to the consignment is provided in electronic form; or
- (c) where permitted, by ~~the~~ alternative documentation.

1.2.2 Where a document is provided, one copy of the document must accompany the consignment to final destination and one copy must be retained by the operator at a location on the ground where it will be possible to obtain access to it within a reasonable period; the document must be retained at this point until the goods have arrived at final destination, after which time it may be stored elsewhere.

1.2.3 When the information applicable to the consignment is provided in electronic form, the information must be available to the operator at all times during transport to final destination. The data must be able to be produced as a paper document without delay. When a paper document is produced, the data must be presented as required by 5.4.
