

Economic Commission for Europe

Inland Transport Committee

Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods

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Item 5(b) of the provisional agenda

Proposals for amendments to annexes A and B of ADR:

Comments in relation to ECE/TRANS/WP.15/ 2010/19 - sub-section 8.1.4.1: fire extinguishers

Transmitted by the Government of Sweden

1. The Government of Sweden appreciates the proposal from Switzerland in document 2010/19 to clarify the provisions concerning fire extinguishers. We also agree with Switzerland concerning the interpretation that the current provisions in ADR require two extinguishers. However, the Government of Sweden would like to suggest a comprehensive review to simplify the provisions in sub-section 8.1.4.1.

2. In November 2009, the Government of Poland raised a question concerning interpretation of the fire-fighting equipment (INF.26). At that meeting, the Working Party confirmed that, under 8.1.4.1 (c), the minimum total capacity of the extinguishers required under 8.1.4.1 (b) applied, regardless of the number of extinguishers per transport unit, and included the capacity of the extinguisher required under 8.1.4.1 (a). The Working Party also acknowledged that the current wording of 8.1.4.1 could lead to problems of interpretation and that the wording should be revised in the future, on the basis of a proposed amendment.

3. The Government of Sweden participated in the German working group that developed the provisions in section 8.1.4. Today, we have discovered that the provisions stated in sub-section 8.1.4.1 seem to confuse drivers as well as enforcement bodies. To avoid misunderstandings, we believe that the provisions in sub-section 8.1.4.1 should be clarified.

4. One of the most frequent questions concerning the fire-fighting equipment in Sweden concerns the provision in 8.1.4.1 (c), which seems to add to the confusion about what capacity and what number of extinguishers that is actually required. Normally, the provisions in ADR state the minimum requirements to be applied. When exemptions are allowed, these are generally related to certain conditions. However, the exemption stated in sub-section 8.1.4.1(c) does not state any specific condition but allows for a *general* deduction of the minimum total capacity required under (b).

5. The provisions in sub-section 8.1.4.1 (a) state that the extinguishing agent shall be suitable for fighting a fire in the engine or cab. No such similar requirement is stated for the extinguishers required under (b), e.g. that the extinguishing agent shall be suitable for tackling a fire in tyres. However, irrespective of where the fire occurs, the Government of Sweden is of the opinion that a fire only shall be tackled when appropriate and safe to do so. This is also specifically stated in the seventh indent in the instructions in writing in sub-section 5.4.3.4. Furthermore, since the fire extinguishers shall cover the inflammability classes A, B and C the agent is suitable for all kinds of fires (engine, cab, tyres etc). Additionally, information about how to proceed in case of an accident is covered by the

drivers training in 8.2.2.3.2(d) and (e). Therefore, Sweden is of the opinion that these details, that the agent shall be suitable for a fire in the engine or cab, can be removed from the provisions in 8.1.4.1(a).

6. Moreover, the provision stating that the fire extinguishers shall cover the inflammability classes A, B and C is currently stated 4 times in sub-section 8.1.4.1. The Government of Sweden believes this could be simplified as to only be stated once.

7. In addition, we believe that the text in sub-section 8.1.4.2 concerning transport in accordance with sub-section 1.1.3.6 should be amended to allow for transport units to be equipped with more than one portable fire extinguisher. Sub-section 8.1.4.2 is also proposed to be amended to cover the current special provision concerning fire extinguishers for substances of class 6.2 in Chapter 8.5, S3. A consequential amendment in S3 would then be needed.

8. For the aforementioned reasons, the Government of Sweden would like to suggest simplifying the provisions in sub-section 8.1.4.1 to only state the minimum capacity of extinguishing agent to be carried on a transport unit. The Government of Sweden suggests that the Working Party discuss the following three issues separately;

- a) If the layout of the text proposed below would be feasible.
- b) The number of extinguishers that should be required.
- c) The minimum total capacity that should be required.

Proposal

9. Amend the text in sub-section 8.1.4.1 to read as follows:

“8.1.4.1 Transport units carrying dangerous goods, other than those referred to in 8.1.4.2, shall be equipped with at least [two] portable fire extinguisher for the inflammability classes¹ A, B and C. The minimum total capacity required below refers to dry powder (or an equivalent capacity for any other suitable extinguishing agent).

For transport units with a maximum permissible mass of:

- (a) More than 7.5 tonnes: [12] kg, where at least one extinguisher shall have a minimum capacity of 6 kg;
- (b) More than 3.5 tonnes up to and including 7.5 tonnes: [8] kg, where at least one extinguisher shall have a minimum capacity of 6 kg;
- (c) Up to and including 3.5 tonnes: [4] kg.

None of the extinguishers shall have a capacity that falls below 2 kg.”

10. Amend the text in sub-section 8.1.4.2 to read as follows (change underlined):

“8.1.4.2 Transport units carrying dangerous goods in accordance with 1.1.3.6 or S3 in Chapter 8.5 shall be equipped with at least one portable fire extinguisher...”

¹ For the definition of the inflammability classes, see Standard EN 2:1992 Classification of fires.

Consequential amendment

11. Amend the text in Chapter 8.5, special provision S3 to read as follows (change stricken out):

“S3: Special provisions concerning the carriage of infectious substances

For transport units carrying dangerous substances of Class 6.2, the requirements of 8.1.4.1 (~~b~~) and 8.3.4 shall not apply.”.

Justification

12. Since the current provisions allow for the capacity of the extinguisher required under (a) to be deducted from the extinguishers required under the (b), the capacity proposed within square brackets does not fall below the minimum total capacity that is required today. The proposal only aims at simplifying the provisions concerning fire extinguishers and what total capacity that is required.

13. We are aware of that the text in sub-section 8.1.4.3 states that in case the vehicle is equipped with a fixed fire extinguisher, automatic or easily brought into action for fighting a fire in the engine, the portable extinguisher need not be suitable for fighting a fire in the engine. However, we do not believe that the proposed changes in 8.1.4.1 and 8.1.4.2 will have any effect on the text in that sub-section.
