

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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Sub-Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods

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Item 11 of the provisional agenda

Other business

Inconsistencies between language versions in 5.4.1.5.1

Transmitted by the expert from Belgium

Introduction

1. Paragraph 5.4.1.5.1 of the Model Regulations contains the provisions on how the total quantity of dangerous goods shall be described in the transport document. There seems to be a discrepancy between the different language versions of the Model Regulations.
2. The first sentence of 5.4.1.5.1 in the English version reads:
“Except for empty uncleaned packagings, the total quantity of dangerous goods covered by the description (by volume or mass as appropriate) of each item of dangerous goods bearing a different proper shipping name, UN number or packing group shall be included.”
3. The first sentence of 5.4.1.5.1 in the French version reads:
« Sauf pour les emballages vides non nettoyés, la quantité totale de marchandises dangereuses à laquelle s'applique la description (volume ou masse, selon le cas) doit être indiquée pour toutes les marchandises dangereuses, chaque marchandise dangereuse ayant son numéro ONU, sa désignation officielle de transport et son groupe d'emballage propres. »
4. This use of the word “or” in English and the word “et” in French is first of all not a correct translation and secondly also has a consequence on how to interpret these sentences. The sentence in the English text can be read as saying that it is either the proper shipping name, UN number or packing group that should be used to describe the dangerous good. In contrast the first sentence of the French text is read as saying that every dangerous good is described when all of the proper shipping name, UN number and packing group are written down.
5. Additionally the traits (UN number, shipping name and packing group) describing the dangerous goods are in a different sequence in the English and the French version.
6. According to our viewpoint the French version is more correct and therefore the English version should be amended. But, additionally, a packing group is not always present and it should be indicated in all language versions that this should only be indicated when present.

7. A similar problem may be present in the other language versions of the Model Regulations too, as such, native speakers of these languages are invited to check whether a change in the other versions is required.

Proposal

8. Amend the first sentence of 5.4.1.5.1 in the English version as follows (new text underlined, deleted text stricken through):

“Except for empty uncleaned packagings, the total quantity of dangerous goods covered by the description (by volume or mass as appropriate) of each item of dangerous goods ~~bearing a different proper shipping name, UN number or packing group described by its UN number, proper shipping name and, when applicable, its packing group~~ shall be included.”

9. Amend the first sentence of 5.4.1.5.1 in the French version as follows (new text underlined, deleted text stricken through):

« Sauf pour les emballages vides non nettoyés, la quantité totale de marchandises dangereuses à laquelle s'applique la description (volume ou masse, selon le cas) doit être indiquée pour toutes les marchandises dangereuses, chaque marchandise dangereuse ayant son numéro ONU, sa désignation officielle de transport et, le cas échéant, son groupe d'emballage propre. »
