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Inland Transport Committee

Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods

Joint Meeting of the RID Committee of Experts and the Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods

Geneva, 17–27 September 2019

Item 5(a) of the provisional agenda

Proposals for amendments to RID/ADR/ADN: pending issues

Marking of wagons and containers loaded with limited quantities

Transmitted by the Governments of Sweden and Switzerland*, **

Summary

- Executive summary:** Wagons and containers loaded with limited quantities together with fully regulated dangerous goods do not have to bear the mark for limited quantities. This might result in that the marking on the wagon or container does not reflect the actual hazard which could lead to serious safety issues in case of an accident.
- Action to be taken:** Amend sub-section 3.4.13 (b) in ADR and sub-sections 3.4.13 (a) and (b) in RID.
- Related documents:** OTIF/RID/CE/GTP/2017/9 (Sweden)
OTIF/RID/CE/GTP/2017-A
TRANS/WP.15/AC.1/2018/14
ECE/TRANS/WP.15/AC.1/150
ECE/TRANS/WP.15/2019/7
Informal document INF.7 Comments on 2019/7

* In accordance with the programme of work of the Inland Transport Committee for 2018-2019, (ECE/TRANS/2018/21/Add.1, Cluster 9, (9.2)).

** Circulated by the Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF) under the symbol OTIF/RID/RC/2019/38.

Background

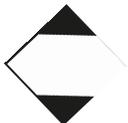
1. At the 8th session of the RID standing working group, Sweden submitted a document (2017/9) concerning marking of wagons containing limited quantities. However, the working group was of the view that also containers should be considered and that, therefore, the question should be dealt with by the Joint Meeting in March 2018. At the Joint meeting the opinions differed. Sweden agreed to consider the comments further and come back to a future session.
2. Due to a proposal from Switzerland (2019/7), followed by an informal document from Sweden (INF.7), the matter was also discussed by the Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods (WP.15) in May 2019. The proposal in INF.7 gained some support but was once again transferred to the Joint meeting to consider both rail and road.

Introduction

3. According to the report from the Joint meeting in March last year, most of the delegations who took the floor pointed out that dangerous goods allowed to be carried in limited quantities were those posing a low hazard during carriage. They therefore considered that affixing the LQ mark would not increase safety, as the mark did not give any indication of the nature of the hazard of the goods carried.
4. Sweden and Switzerland do not agree that the LQ mark would not increase safety, based on the fact that above 8 tonnes the LQ-mark is required. According to our understanding, the justification for requiring the LQ-mark above 8 tonnes is that the permitted amount of load is considered so big that it actually *is* relevant to inform the rescue services about its existence. It is true that it does not give any indication of the nature of the hazard, but it informs the rescue services that there is a hazard which might vary – information that is quite relevant during e.g. firefighting. The same kind of information is given by an orange-coloured plate.
5. However, orange-coloured plates may never be dispensed with in the way that the LQ-mark may be dispensed with according to 3.4.13. This means that in case a wagon or container loaded with LQ also contains dangerous goods requiring a placard, the LQ-mark may be removed. This results in the loss of information on the type of goods carried and a risk that the placard is understood as representing the whole load. Based on safety concerns, we find this very unfortunate.
6. In the report from the Joint meeting the following is also stated:

“Others considered that the same argument (*concerning that the nature of hazard is not informed*) could be used to question the utility of the orange-coloured plate. It was noted however, that when the orange-coloured plate was required, the information about the nature of the goods carried had to be included in the transport document, while this was not the case for dangerous goods carried in limited quantities.”
7. In our view, this proves it even more important to display the LQ-mark since this is the only indication given that the transport unit contains dangerous goods that might pose different kind of hazards.

Scenarios:

Container or wagon		
	Content	Required placarding/markings
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 000 litres UN 1170 Ethanol, 3, III in 5600 plastic jerricans á 5 litres (LQ) 	LQ 

2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28000 litres UN 1170 Ethanol, 3, III in 5600 plastic jerricans á 5 litres (LQ) <i>and</i> • 60 kg UN 3077 Environmentally hazardous substance, solid, n.o.s., 9, III in a drum 	No 9 
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8. As shown in the examples above, it is the provisions for the fully regulated goods that take precedence and determines what kind of information that should be displayed on the container (case 2), and not necessarily the actual and more relevant hazard. This poses a problem. The risk for people and the environment of e.g. a drum containing 60 kg of an environmentally hazardous substance of class 9 (carried as fully regulated dg and not LQ), should not be so crucial that it takes precedence in terms of how to display the hazard on a wagon/container also containing more than 8 tonnes of e.g. ethanol packed in limited quantities.

9. However, for transport units containing dangerous goods packed in limited quantities, the situation is slightly different. In this case the LQ marks may be dispensed with when the transport unit also contains dangerous goods for which the marking with orange-coloured plates in accordance with 5.3.2 is required. However, since the orange-coloured plates present the same information about the hazards of the dangerous goods (i.e. that the hazards could vary since the load might consist of different types of dangerous goods), the need to also affix the LQ marks would be redundant in our view.

10. For the above mentioned reasons we propose to amend the provisions for the marking of limited quantities in order to always require the LQ mark for carriage above 8 tonnes.

Proposals

11. ADR

Amend 3.4.13 (b) in ADR as follows (changes underlined or ~~stricken through~~):

“Containers carrying dangerous goods packed in limited quantities, on transport units with a maximum mass exceeding 12 tonnes, shall be marked in accordance with 3.4.15 on all four sides, ~~except w~~When the container contains other dangerous goods for which placarding in accordance with 5.3.1 is required. ~~In this latter case,~~ the container ~~may~~ shall display the required placards ~~only, or both the placards~~ in accordance with 5.3.1 and the marks in accordance with 3.4.15.

The carrying transport unit need not be marked, except when the marks affixed to the containers are not visible from outside this carrying transport unit. In this latter case, the same marks shall be affixed at the front and at the rear of the transport unit.”

12. RID

Amend 3.4.13 (a) in RID as follows (changes underlined or ~~stricken through~~):

“Wagons carrying dangerous goods packed in limited quantities shall be marked in accordance with 3.4.15 on both sides, ~~except w~~When the wagon contains other dangerous goods for which placarding in accordance with 5.3.1 is required. ~~In this latter case,~~ the wagon ~~may~~ shall display the required placards ~~only, or both the placards~~ in accordance with 5.3.1 and the marks in accordance with 3.4.15.”

Amend 3.4.13 (b) in RID as follows (changes underlined or ~~stricken through~~):

“Large containers carrying dangerous goods packed in limited quantities shall be marked in accordance with 3.4.15 on all four sides, ~~except w~~When the large container contains other dangerous goods for which placarding in accordance with 5.3.1 is required. ~~In this latter case,~~ the large container ~~may~~ shall display the required placards ~~only, or both the placards~~ in accordance with 5.3.1 and the marks in accordance with 3.4.15.

If the marks affixed to the large containers are not visible from outside the carrying wagon, the same marks shall also be affixed to both sides of the wagon.”

Justification

13. The emergency services would benefit from a more comprehensive display of the goods carried.
