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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport

(Ninety-fifth session, 19-23 June 2000,  
agenda item 5 (d) (v) )

**CUSTOMS CONVENTION ON THE INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT OF GOODS  
UNDER COVER OF TIR CARNETS (TIR CONVENTION 1975)**

**Application of the Convention**

**Validity of curtain-sided vehicles**

**Note by the secretariat**

**A. MANDATE AND BACKGROUND**

1. As decided by the Working Party at its ninety-fourth session, the secretariat has convened an informal expert group on the validity of curtain-sided vehicles under the TIR procedure (TRANS/WP.30/188, para. 57). The meeting, which was held on 30 and 31 March 2000 in Geneva, was attended by experts from Austria, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, the European Commission and the Liaison Committee of Coach Work and Trailer Builders (CLCCR).

2. The group of experts reviewed possible ways and means to prepare concrete amendment proposals providing for the validity of vehicles and containers with sliding sheets on both sides, taking into account various proposals made earlier by the United Kingdom (TRANS/WP.30/R.16); the Czech Republic (TRANS/WP.30/1998/14) and Sweden (TRANS/WP.30/2000/10). A joint German/Swedish proposal based on the above Swedish proposal and on a note prepared by the ECE secretariat (TRANS/WP.30/2000/6) was also considered.

3. Ever since the first constructions of vehicles with load compartments containing sliding sheets appeared on the European transport markets, the Working Party had been of the view that none of these constructions fulfilled fully the provisions of the Convention applicable for Customs secure vehicles.

4. At earlier sessions of the Working Party, several delegations had been of the view that some of these new constructions might be Customs secure. However, no general solution emerged. This caused increasing concern among transport operators which, due to the inherent advantages of curtain-sided vehicles, wished to use them in international transport under Customs seal.

## **B. AMENDMENT PROPOSALS ALLOWING FOR THE APPROVAL OF VEHICLES AND CONTAINERS WITH SLIDING SHEETS**

5. The expert group had an exchange of views on the validity of vehicles and containers under the present provisions of the Convention, in particularly Annexes 2 and 7. It was felt that it would not be possible to solve the present need for clear technical specifications for vehicles or containers with sliding sheets by simply interpreting the existing provisions through an explanatory note or a comment. It seemed to be necessary to provide clear and specific guidelines for the approval of such constructions by amending Annexes 2 and 7 of the Convention.

6. In particular, the experts of CLCCR stressed that provisions needed to be inserted into the Convention which would allow for a general approval of all possible types of curtain-sided constructions without any reference to specific and already existing types of constructions. The transport industry as well as load compartment and container manufacturers needed clear guidelines on the approval of such vehicles and containers that would be acceptable to all Contracting Parties.

7. As a result of its discussions, the group of experts proposes the amendments as described below for consideration and adoption by the Working Party. These amendment proposals provide for a distinction between load compartments and containers without and with sliding sheets.

Annex 2, Article 3, paragraph 11 (a)

After the last sentence of Article 3, paragraph 11 (a) insert a new sentence to read as follows:

“Neither shall a flap be required for vehicles with sliding sheets.”

Annex 2, new Article 4

Insert a new Article 4 to read as follows:

“Article 4

Vehicles with sliding sheets

1. Where applicable, the provisions of Articles 1, 2 and 3 of these Regulations shall apply to vehicles with sliding sheets. In addition, these vehicles shall conform to the provisions of this article.
2. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 3 of this article, the sliding sheets, floor, doors and all other constituent parts of the load compartment shall fulfil either the requirements in Annex 2, Article 3, paragraphs 6, 8, 9 and 11 or the requirements set out in (i) to (vi) below.
  - (i) The sliding sheets, floor, doors and all other constituent parts of the load compartment shall be assembled in such a way that they cannot be opened or closed without leaving obvious traces.
  - ii) The sheet shall overlap the solid parts of the vehicle by at least 50 mm. The horizontal opening between the sheet and the solid parts of the load compartment may not exceed 10 mm measured perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the vehicle at any place when the load compartment is secured and sealed for Customs purposes.
  - (iii) The sliding sheet guidance and other movable parts shall be assembled in such a way that closed and Customs sealed doors and other movable parts cannot be opened or closed from the outside without leaving obvious traces. The sliding sheet guidance and other movable parts shall be assembled in such a way that it is impossible to gain access to the load compartment without leaving obvious traces.

- (iv) The horizontal distance between the rings, used for Customs purposes, on the solid parts of the vehicle shall not exceed 200 mm. The space may, however, be greater but shall not exceed 300 mm between the rings on either side of the upright if the construction of the vehicle and the sheets is such as preventing all access to the load compartment. In any case, the conditions laid down in (ii) above shall be complied with.
- (v) The distance between the tensioning straps shall not exceed 600 mm.
- (vi) The fastenings used to secure the sheets to the solid parts of the vehicle shall fulfil the requirements in Annex 2, Article 3, paragraph 9.

3. If a construction for vehicles with sliding sheets is used which cannot meet all the provisions of paragraph 2 of this article, this construction must produce a structure in which goods can be neither removed from nor introduced into the sealed part of the vehicle, and the structure cannot be modified without leaving obvious traces.”

Annex 7, Article 4, paragraph 11 (a)

After the last sentence of Article 4, paragraph 11 (a) insert a new sentence to read as follows:

“Neither shall a flap be required for vehicles with sliding sheets.”

Annex 7, Article 5

To be deleted.

Annex 7, new Article 5

Insert a new Article 5 to read as follows:

“Article 5

Containers with sliding sheets

1. Where applicable, the provisions of Articles 1, 2, 3 and 4 of these Regulations shall apply to containers with sliding sheets. In addition, these containers shall conform to the provisions of this article.

2. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 3 of this article, the sliding sheets, floor, doors and all other constituent parts of the container shall fulfil either the requirements in Annex 7, Article 4, paragraphs 6, 8, 9 and 11 or the requirements set out in (i) to (vi) below.

- (i) The sliding sheets, floor, doors and all other constituent parts of the container shall be assembled in such a way that they cannot be opened or closed without leaving obvious traces.
- ii) The sheet shall overlap the solid parts of the container by at least 50 mm. The horizontal opening between the sheet and the solid parts of the container may not exceed 10 mm measured perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the container at any place when the container is secured and sealed for Customs purposes.
- (iii) The sliding sheet guidance and other movable parts shall be assembled in such a way that closed and Customs sealed doors and other movable parts cannot be opened or closed from the outside without leaving obvious traces. The sliding sheet guidance and other movable parts shall be assembled in such a way that it is impossible to gain access to the container without leaving obvious traces.
- (iv) The horizontal distance between the rings, used for Customs purposes, on the solid parts of the container shall not exceed 200 mm. The space may, however, be greater but shall not exceed 300 mm between the rings on either side of the upright if the construction of the container and the sheets is such as preventing all access to the container. In any case, the conditions laid down in (ii) above shall be complied with.
- (v) The distance between the tensioning straps shall not exceed 600 mm.
- (vi) The fastenings used to secure the sheets to the solid parts of the container shall fulfil the requirements in Annex 7, Article 4, paragraph 9.

3. If a construction for a container with sliding sheets is used which cannot meet all the provisions of paragraph 2 of this article, this construction must produce a structure in which goods can be neither removed from nor introduced into the sealed part of the container, and the structure cannot be modified without leaving obvious traces.”

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