



**Economic and Social  
Council**

Distr.  
GENERAL

ECE/TRANS/WP.15/AC.1/2009/48  
26 June 2009

Original: ENGLISH

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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

**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

Bern, 8-11 September 2009 and  
Geneva, 14-18 September 2009  
Item 6 of the provisional agenda

**HARMONIZATION WITH THE UN MODEL REGULATIONS ON THE TRANSPORT OF  
DANGEROUS GOODS**

Carriage in bulk and in bulk containers

Transmitted by the Government of the United Kingdom<sup>1,2</sup>

**SUMMARY**

**Executive summary:** There are currently two parallel systems for dealing with carriage in bulk in RID/ADR. The Government of the United Kingdom proposes that, in the future, there should only be one based on the multimodal system from the UN Model Regulations using bulk containers of codes BK1 and BK2. In a separate informal document linked to this base document, the United Kingdom has drafted some initial proposals on how to take this subject forward towards a single system.

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<sup>1</sup> In accordance with the programme of work of the Inland Transport Committee for 2006-2010 (ECE/TRANS/166/Add.1, programme activity 02.7 (c)).

<sup>2</sup> Circulated by the Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF) under the symbol OTIF/RID/RC/2009/48.

<b>Action to be taken:</b>	Consider initial proposals on how to develop a single system of bulk container codes
<b>Related documents:</b>	Informal document INF.16 (United Kingdom) presented to March 2009 Joint Meeting (but not discussed)

### Background to the current double system

1. Currently within RID/ADR, there are two parallel systems for dealing with carriage in bulk. The general provisions for both are dealt with in 7.3.1:

- (a) The traditional RID/ADR system of allocating VW/VV provisions (1 to 17) given in 7.3.3 and allocated in column (17) of Table A in Chapter 3.2 against a fairly wide range of UN entries for solids in Classes 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 5.1, 6.1, 8 and 9 in packing groups II and III
- (b) The multimodal system from the United Nations, and also present in the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code, based on allocation of codes BK1 (sheeted bulk containers) or BK2 (closed bulk containers) shown in column (10) of Table A of Chapter 3.2. The requirements for the design, construction, inspection and testing of bulk containers are given in Chapter 6.11 and the additional provisions linked to the class of dangerous goods carried are given in 7.3.2. The number of entries allocated a code BK1 and/or BK2 is quite limited, based on those permitted to be carried in bulk containers under the IMDG Code.

2. When the new provisions for bulk containers from the UN Model Regulations were being proposed for inclusion in RID/ADR, these were based on text prepared by the United Nations secretariat and discussed at the ad hoc Working Group on Harmonization of RID/ADR/ADN with the UN Recommendations that met on 26–28 May 2003. The record of these discussions is given in paragraphs 39–46 of the report of this Working Group (TRANS/WP.15/AC.1/2003/56). The United Kingdom felt that rather than have two systems for carriage in bulk, one system based on the detailed multimodal provisions just agreed at United Nations level should form the basis of the new bulk provisions in RID/ADR (as reflected in paragraph 43).

3. The United Kingdom duly submitted informal documents INF.6 and INF.6/Add.1 to the September 2003 Joint Meeting which prompted Belgium to table INF.13. The UK proposed that the current list of substances that could be carried in bulk in RID/ADR should remain unchanged but in general that substances should be allocated the bulk container Codes BK1/BK2 rather than the VW/VV Codes. The United Kingdom proposal was not adopted and the record of these discussions on this topic is given in paragraphs 40–44 of the report of this Joint Meeting (TRANS/WP.15/AC.1/94).

## Developments

4. Since then there have been formal and informal discussions in the context of RID/ADR about the inadequacy and lack of consistency of many of the VW/VV provisions leading others to think that, as a minimum, there should be a fundamental review of these provisions and to consider a move to a more comprehensive system based on BK Codes. For example, Sweden tabled informal document INF.8 at the RID Committee of Experts meeting in Zagreb, November 2007. On a question of interpretation, Sweden was asking whether a tank without an RID approval and IBCs could be treated as carriage in bulk under the VW provisions. The discussions are reflected in paragraphs 67-72 of the report of the meeting (OTIF/RID/CE/2007-A).

5. Since the introduction of the BK1 and BK2 codes, practical experience has also been gained of this system, particularly in national transport operations.

6. ECE/TRANS/WP.15/AC.1/2009/9 from the secretariat on worldwide multimodal harmonization reflects the wishes of many industries to fully harmonize with the UN Model Regulations.

## Proposals

7. The United Kingdom firmly believes that it is now appropriate to have a fundamental review of the two parallel systems for carriage in bulk with a view to integrating them into one system based on the multimodal BK1 and BK2 system.

8. The traditional RID/ADR system of VW/VV provisions should be reviewed to assess:

- (a) which ones it is probably appropriate to retain, e.g. VW/VV 12 and 13 which deal with carriage in bulk in special wagons/vehicles and containers for elevated temperature liquids and solids, UN 3257 and UN 3258 respectively, reflecting part of UN special provision 232.
- (b) which ones contain specific aspects which may be appropriate to integrate into the new single system - either as RID/ADR special provisions if they are deemed appropriate for rail and road transport only, or to consider proposing amendments to the multimodal system if they are judged appropriate also for sea transport.
- (c) which ones should be simply subsumed into the BK1 and BK2 system.

9. As before, the United Kingdom proposes that the current list of substances that can be carried in bulk in RID/ADR should remain unchanged and that, in general, substances should be allocated the bulk container codes BK1 and BK2 rather than the VW/VV Codes.

10. The United Kingdom also proposes that there should be transitional measures of appropriate length to allow adequate time to change over to the new system and to permit continued use of existing vehicles/wagons that may not fully meet the requirements of Chapter 6.11.

11. The United Kingdom intends to draft initial proposals in an informal document on a change towards a new single system to aid discussion. These can then be adapted to take into account views expressed in the debate and written comments received.

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