



**WORKING PAPER**

**DANGEROUS GOODS PANEL (DGP)  
WORKING GROUP MEETING (DGP-WG/24)**

**Montreal, 21 to 25 October 2024**

**Agenda Item 4: Managing safety risks posed by the carriage of lithium batteries by air (Ref: Job Card DGP.003.05)**

**SODIUM ION BATTERIES IN THE POST**

(Presented by B. Firkins)

**SUMMARY**

For the 2025-2026 edition of the Technical Instructions, whilst the addition of sodium ion batteries was generally incorporated throughout the text in many areas; there was no amendment to Part 1;2.3 – Transport of Dangerous Goods by Post.

This discussion paper explores matters and options which the DGP may like to consider, especially if sodium ion batteries become as commonplace as lithium batteries.

**Action by the DGP-WG:** Action by the DGP is in paragraph 2.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Following representation from the Universal Postal Union (UPU), the Technical Instructions were amended in 2013 to facilitate the carriage of equipment containing certain lithium cells or batteries in the post.

1.2 Part of the process required review and approval of procedures of designated postal operators (DPOs), for controlling the introduction of dangerous goods in mail into air transport, by the civil aviation authority (CAA), of the State where the mail is accepted.

1.3 Currently there are thirty-eight DPOs listed as having had their procedures reviewed and training approved.

1.4 For the 2025-2026 Edition of the Technical Instructions, whilst the addition of sodium ion batteries was generally incorporated throughout the text in many areas; there was no amendment to Part 1;2.3: Transport of Dangerous Goods by Post. If sodium ion batteries become a prevalent

replacement for lithium ion batteries, then it would be timely to consider amending Part 1;2.3 to facilitate equipment containing sodium ion batteries in the post.

1.5 There would appear to be three basic options:

- a) retain the status quo, pending an approach from the UPU;
- b) amend Part 1;2.3 permitting DPOs to accept equipment containing sodium ion batteries once the CAA has reviewed and approved the procedures of the DPO; or
- c) make an amendment of Part 1;2.3 to include equipment containing sodium ion batteries, without requiring any further review and approval by the CAA.

1.6 As it is not evident that there is a consistent global approach to on-going reviews of the DPOs processes by the CAA, there is a general reluctance to propose a simple broadening of the provisions for equipment containing lithium batteries, to also include equipment containing sodium ion batteries.

1.7 The preferred pathway would be one which generates confidence in the safety of the supply chain. This would be through an active review and approval of the DPOs processes and training.

## 2. ACTION BY THE DGP-WG

2.1 The DGP-WG is invited to provide commentary on the three options listed in paragraph 1.5, and any other matters that ought to be considered on the topic; including whether there ought to be an amendment to Part 1;2.3 which either recommends or requires regular reviews of the DPO.

2.2 Based on feedback, both IATA and the DGP Secretary will continue to engage with the UPU through their respective contact committees, and a proposal may be brought forward to DGP-WG/25.

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