DGP-WG/05-Flimsy No. 10
21/4/05

DANGEROUS GOODS PANEL (DGP)

MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP OF THE WHOLE

Montreal, 18 to 22 April 2005

Agenda Item 5: Discussion of miscellaneous dangerous goods issues

LIMITED QUANTITY AND CONSUMER COMMODITY WORKING GROUP (RELATED TO WORKING PAPER 45)

INTRODUCTION

The Working Group was chaired by Mr Leach, with Mr Castle acting as Secretary.

Mr Richard introduced Working Paper 45 explaining that the Panel needed to reaffirm to the UN Sub-Committee the position, previously discussed, that the air mode wished to retain its limited quantity, consumer commodity and excepted quantity provisions. He went on to say that he believed that the UN Sub-Committee should provide a UN number to replace the current ICAO ID 8000 number and should also adopt Excepted Quantity provisions. He also felt that Limited Quantities in the air mode should be renamed to reflect their true nature, which is somewhat different from provisions with the same name in the UN Model Regulations and the other modes.

Consumer Commodities

It was noted that Consumer Commodities were different from any other provisions in the other modal regulations. The Panel should consider explaining clearly to the UN Sub-Committee the need for retaining the concept in air transport. UN Sub-Committee members present were doubtful that UN would provide a new UN number for Consumer Commodities whilst the current Limited Quantities debate continued. The discussion identified the problems with Consumer Commodities that occur at the intermodal interface. Although ADR permits road transport to and from airports with packages marked and labelled in accordance with ICAO provisions, as part of a multimodal international journey, problems arise with subsequent distribution from the first place of storage. ADR then requires full compliance with its own provisions. The air transport Class 9 label is not acceptable for goods of several Classes in the same package and thus re-labelling will be necessary. Following further debate it was suggested that perhaps a solution would be to develop a unique mark or label for Consumer Commodities and remove the requirement for a Class 9 label, that in itself did not aid hazard communication for these goods. If this could be done then a request to UN for a UN number with a Special Provision stating that this was for air mode use only might be acceptable. Mr Richard undertook to give this consideration for presentation to the Panel Meeting with a view to reporting to the UN Sub-Committee in December 2005.

Excepted Quantities

It was noted that the United Kingdom had submitted a paper (2005/17) to the July session of the UN Sub-Committee proposing the adoption of multi-modal Excepted Quantity provisions. Mr Hart explained that these were based on the current air mode provisions but that the table of permitted goods had been simplified and that the permitted quantities in certain Classes had been rationalised. A new identifier mark was proposed, but it was recognised that this may not suitable in its current form. The packaging provisions were again based on the current ICAO text but without the specific additional air transport requirements. It was considered that initial discussion would lead to a revised proposal being table for the December 2005 session. The Working Group welcomed this initiative but wished to consider the detail further in relation to the current ICAO text.

Limited Quantities

In the air mode, Limited Quantity provisions only exempt shippers from the requirement for UN design type tested packaging. All other provisions apply. It was felt that perhaps the name Limited Quantities in this context was misleading. Again, problems existed at intermodal (sea, road and rail) interfaces. Packages fully marked and labelled with UN number, Proper Shipping Name, appropriate labels etc are arriving by air for later redistribution by land without a UN package marking (e.g. UN 4G etc). This causes confusion for enforcers and others in the transport chain as fully marked packaging is required. Consideration was given by the Working Group to the possibility of adopting a new name for such goods and a new distinct mark to resolve this difficulty. The Working Group thought that perhaps the current UN Limited Quantity mark (a UN number within a diamond) could be used with new text in the UN Model Regulations explaining that where such a mark was used in conjunction with the appropriate Class label (and all other existing provisions) this indicated an air transport 'limited quantity' package and that this could be permitted to be transported as such by other modes of transport without additional requirements.

A discussion ensued on whether a new term for Limited Quantity could be adopted to clearly indicate that this was not the same concept as UN Limited Quantities. 'Small Quantities'and 'Y Pack' were mentioned .but these and other ideas were felt to possibly create difficulties in other parts of the ICAO TIs. It was agreed to consider this issue further, although the need may become redundant if a new marking system could be accepted both by the Panel and the UN Sub-Committee.

Mrs Hume-Sastre, speaking as Vice-Chairman of the UN Sub-Committee of Experts, thanked the Working Group for its positive and constructive discussion. She believed that the results of this work could help move forward discussions in the UN during the current biennium.

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