

Paper by the UPU

1 Following the debate at the Dangerous Goods Panel (DGP) meeting on 11 and 12 October 2011 to permit the carriage of equipment containing small quantities of lithium batteries in postal items, the UPU noted the concerns expressed by DGP members regarding the adoption of proposed text to amend the Technical Instructions for the Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air, Part 1 (General), Chapter 2 (Limitation of dangerous goods on aircraft), 2.3 (Transport of dangerous goods by post).

2 The proposed text was presented with the aim of aligning the newly adopted UPU Acts (articles 15 and 16 of the Convention, article 130bis of the Letter Post Regulations and article 120bis of the Parcel Post Regulations) with the relevant ICAO legal instruments so as to avoid any conflict between them.

3 The UPU understands from the debate that, in order to accept the proposed text, the DGP needs a clear commitment and guarantee from the designated postal operators* of UPU member countries regarding the non-acceptance of dangerous goods into the mail stream. More specifically, designated postal operators must have an appropriate training programme for their staff, particularly for staff working at mail acceptance points.

4 The UPU therefore proposes that sub-paragraph d) be added to the exceptions permitted under sub-paragraphs a), b) and c) of paragraph 2.3.2 of the aforesaid Technical Instructions as follows:

- d) lithium iron and lithium metal cells and batteries contained in equipment meeting the provisions of Section II of Packing Instructions 967 and 970. No more than four cells or two batteries may be mailed in any single package. (This exception shall be applied individually by each member country once the national civil aviation authority of the country concerned has confirmed that the relevant staff of the designated postal operator for that country has received appropriate training.)

5 Further, in order to enact this new article, we propose that ICAO and the UPU issue a joint letter to their respective member countries confirming the following two points:

6 To ensure that the training requirements mentioned in sub-paragraph d) above are met, the designated postal operator of each country should present its national civil aviation authority with the training programme for its staff working at mail acceptance points. This training aims to ensure that only equipment containing lithium batteries within the limits specified in sub-paragraph d) is accepted for transport as a mail item. Such training may be based on standardized material sent by the UPU International Bureau or on other appropriate materials. The designated postal operator must communicate completion of this training programme to its national civil aviation authority, which must then accept the provisions of sub-paragraph d) in accordance with its national legislation.

7 In each country considered an exception under sub-paragraph d), the date of entry into force of this exception will be enacted so as to be applicable only after 1 March 2012 or once the national civil aviation authority of the country concerned has confirmed completion of the training imparted by the designated postal operator for that country, whichever is later.

Note:

* Designated postal operator means any governmental or non-governmental entity officially designated by the member country to operate postal services and to fulfil the related obligations arising from the Acts of the UPU on its territory.

8 The UPU takes this opportunity to confirm that trust is a key component of the worldwide postal network. It also confirms that meeting evolving security requirements is a key priority, both for the organization and for its members. It may be added that the UPU is working closely with the relevant international, regional and national organizations – including ICAO – to develop global security standards applicable to the designated postal operators of all UPU member countries. The UPU will, in compliance with evolving security requirements, make every possible effort to ensure that vigorous and effective security measures are introduced within the postal sector.

9 The UPU manages its own electronic network to facilitate electronic data exchange between designated postal operators and to enable them to track and trace postal items throughout the supply chain. This network is also being used to exchange electronic data with airlines and customs authorities.

10 The UPU also plans to undertake support actions to assist designated postal operators of member countries. Such actions include human resource development through regional approach programmes covering all regions of the world, as well as specific security-focussed workshops and e-training programmes.

11 To ensure effective dissemination of the above-mentioned training, the UPU will further offer collective and individual assistance to the designated postal operators of its member countries. It has already made a start in this regard by sending the first instalment of training material on 5 October 2011 to all UPU member countries and their designated postal operators. This material will serve as a training aid and will raise awareness of the need to put into place, at mail acceptance points, strict checking mechanisms to prevent acceptance of prohibited articles defined in UPU and ICAO legal instruments.

12 It may be useful to note that the UPU's e-training system, which has been operational since 2006, covers 42 topics relating to postal operations, including postal security. These courses are available in four languages (Arabic, English, French and Spanish). In 2010, xxx postal staff from yyy countries benefited from this training system. Revised security training modules are being incorporated into the existing training modules developed by the Postal Security Group of the UPU Postal Operations Council.

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