



DANGEROUS GOODS PANEL (DGP)

TWENTY-FIFTH MEETING

Montréal, 19 to 30 October 2015

Agenda Item 5: Development of a comprehensive strategy to mitigate risks associated with the transport of lithium batteries including development of performance-based packaging standards and efforts to facilitate compliance

REVIEW OF THE MEANING OF “EQUIPMENT” RELATED TO LITHIUM BATTERIES

(Presented by PRBA – The Rechargeable Battery Association)

SUMMARY

This information paper addresses DGP/25-WP/33 and the definition of “equipment.”

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Defining “equipment” as it relates to shipping lithium batteries currently is being addressed by UN Sub-Committee’s Working Group on Lithium Batteries, which has been meeting on a regular basis to discuss issues associated with the UN lithium battery testing requirements and the transport of lithium batteries, equipment, and vehicles. The most recent meeting was held in Washington, DC on August 26 – 28, 2015. Materials and minutes from that meeting are available on PRBA’s website: <http://www.prba.org/laws-regulations/un-wg-meeting-on-lithium-batteries-august-2015/>.

1.2 During the recent WG meeting in Washington, DC, the following definition for “equipment” was developed for consideration by the UN Sub-Committee:

For the purpose of this special provision, equipment are devices intended to be powered by or used in the operation associated with the lithium ion or lithium metal cells or batteries packaged with or installed in the devices. Examples of such equipment include, but are not limited to, notebook computers, tablets, cellular phones, e-readers, medical devices, power tools, flashlights, [battery chargers,] circuit boards and toys.

1.3 The working group agreed to put the term “battery chargers” in square brackets pending further discussions on batteries that are integral to equipment and power packs.

1.4 DGP/25-WP/33 includes the following proposed definition for equipment: “For the purpose of this packing instruction, ‘equipment’ means apparatus for which the lithium cells or batteries will provide electrical power for its operation.”

1.5 We believe this proposed definition in DGP/25-WP/33 would inadvertently eliminate the ability to ship batteries and chargers like those pictured below as “Lithium ion battery packed with equipment.” The chargers in the pictures clearly are “equipment” and can only operate in association with the pictured battery. However, it does not appear the definition of “equipment” in DGP/25-WP/33 would recognize these chargers as equipment because the lithium ion batteries do not “provide electrical power” for the chargers’ operation.



1.6 In light of the ongoing discussions at the UN Sub-Committee on equipment and lithium batteries, PRBA believes it would be in the best interest of modal harmonization if ICAO did not adopt a definition for “equipment” until the UN completes its work on this issue.

— END —