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*Ministero delle Infrastrutture e dei Trasporti*

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Divisione 5

**Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods**

Joint Meeting of the RID Committee of Experts and the  
UNECE Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods

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**Safety measures for the tank transports by rail: recording of safety checks****Introduction**

1. At last session of the RID Committee of Experts (the 49<sup>th</sup>, Luxembourg, 2 - 4 November 2010) Italy explained the measures taken by the Italian Authority following the accident occurred in Viareggio, on the 29 of June 2009
2. In that context were illustrated the mean actions taken on the transports in tank on Italian railways and the reasons that led to this intervention
3. The Committee asked to the Italian representative to provide the RID Committee of Experts with formal clarification of this provision, and furthermore to submit an amendment proposal to RID
4. In the same meeting has been also highlighted that this topic should have been examined for the road transport too

**Background**

5. The Italian National Safety Authority (ANSF – Agenzia Nazionale per la Sicurezza delle Ferrovie) in its Safety Annual Report for the 2008 observed a further increase of the incidents connected to the transport of dangerous goods, mainly due to defects of the tanks, passing from 26 events recorded in the 2007, to 28 in the 2008; recommending the needs to improve the control system on the processes involving this kind of transport
6. Also in the 2009 was found a further increase of these kind of incidents (spillage of goods and not tight closure system), even if they don't became accidents. In this period the number of events grew up to 52, so the railway undertakings have been pushed to adopt internal procedure, compliant to RID provisions, in order to allow the carriage only for tanks assuring the tightness of the shell and the closure systems, and to be extended to the other subjects operating in the rail transport chain (sender, filler, ...), including the relevant Italian and foreign partners

7. Due to the frequency of the events regarding the transports born abroad, the Italian NSA has informed for some cases the relevant National Safety Authority with the aim to co-operate in advance
8. On the 1<sup>st</sup> of march 2010 the Associations of Italian operators (tank-wagon operators; fillers), the railway undertakings and the infrastructure manager, had a meeting with the Italian Competent Authority in order to define possible measures to be introduced in Italy
9. The result of the work was the traceability of the checks made on the tank, achieved by a specific document with the name of the person who made these inspections, circulated as a "Check-List", based on a standard format but different for each operator (filler/unloader or carrier) and for material hazard (class 2, or classes 3 to 9, except 1 and 7), which recalls only the main obligations assigned to each participants in the part 1.4 of the RID without adding any other check
10. Since April 2010, within Italian border is mandatory for the carrier (railway undertakings) and for the filler to issue, for railway transport, a "Check-List" for each tank (tank wagon, portable tank, and tank vehicle) carried, to be attached to the transport documents; the same is for the foreign traffic for which Italian operators have to make a visual inspection at the border and have to fill up the above "Check-List"
11. All the operators involved, after a start-up period of three months, communicated to the National Competent Authority any observation and/or criticism they had in the application of this provision

### **Current situation**

12. Even if 2010 Safety Annual Report showed a little reduction of leakage events, equivalent to 19% (from 52 incidents in the 2009, to 42 in the 2010), it pointed out a strong change of trend in the distribution between national and foreign traffic
13. While for the 2009 the 36% of defectiveness was referring to the foreign traffic (19 of 52 events) and the 64% to national traffic, for the 2010 the 81% referred to foreign traffic (34 of 42 events) and only the 19% to national one
14. For the same period, operator's feedback pointed out that the most frequently observed defects resulted from the wear and tear of the wagons and the tanks, mainly due to: their age; lack of checks and inspections by operators in the meaning of maintenance/repair/periodic refurbishment. The main consequences were: leakages; missing flanges; unscrewed bolts and caps

### **Conclusions**

15. Although the number of not RID compliant tanks founded is not huge, it should be considered that each leakage is a potential hazard, especially if the train runs through areas densely populated or industrial plants. The greater will be the number of tanks composing the train, the greater will be the possible risk
16. The Italian Authority is aware that these controls, even though in strict compliance with the obligations assigned by the RID, can be seen as an obstacle to the free movement of the goods for two main reasons:
  - the stop of the train at the border, for the requested checks, could slow down the trip

- these controls have to be made on all the tanks carried, and not only on representative part, according to RID 1.4.2.2.1, even if inspections conforming to Fiche UIC 471-3 have already been carried out
17. Anyway the Italian experience shows that through the implementation of required actions there is considerable potential to improve safety, but only if joint action, shared with the other Member States of OTIF, is being taken forward it becomes possible
  18. Similar measure should be extended to road traffic too, especially for the case of multimodal and/or piggy back transports
  19. The Italian Authority wishes that this matter would be discussed in the next meeting of this Committee to find the better solutions concerning the following points:
    - Identification of standard and specific controls to be carries out on the tanks, before filling operations
    - Record of controls and personnel who make the inspection
    - Transmission of confirmation that the tank has been checked and is able to be transported
    - Retention of information and documentation
  20. Of course Italy is willing to provide all data collected