

Economic Commission for Europe

Inland Transport Committee

Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods

100th session

Geneva, 9–13 May 2016

Item 8 of the provisional agenda

Any other business

12 April 2016

Creation of an informal working group to deal with textual changes to the regulations

Transmitted by the Government of the United Kingdom

1. At the November 2015 WP.15 meeting, the United Kingdom introduced the idea of creating a new informal working group, to be entrusted with the consideration of language-related editorial matters; not matters of substance. This was positively received, but because these are often common to ADR, RID and ADN, and presented and discussed at the Joint Meeting first, it was thought that this could be of interest to the Joint Meeting. The UK submitted an Informal Paper to the March 2016 Joint Meeting, but this was not discussed due to time constraints.

2. The United Kingdom agrees that these editorial changes are both necessary and important to improve clarity and consistency within the regulations and should be allocated the time and space to be considered and discussed accordingly. The United Kingdom believes that discussing these editorial changes in full at plenary not only harms efforts on these, but can also crowd out potentially substantive proposals on improvement and enhancement to the regime. It is arguable that such a group could be given a larger remit, to lead the way in doing a full sweep of the regulations and identifying errors, duplications and other editorial mistakes. As opposed to the piecemeal approach that is currently taken.

3. The United Kingdom acknowledges that sometimes the lines between editorial changes and those of substance are not clear cut, but this should not stop us from looking at this constructively. The categories of issues dealt with in papers, that could potentially be within the remit of this group can be errors that exist between the different language versions of the text, drafting mistakes, repetition, forgotten consequential amendments and the update of references to the latest versions.

4. The following are examples of what may be considered to be editorial matters:

“Chapter 8.3.3 of ADR states “A driver or driver’s assistant...”. Should this not read as “Members of the vehicle crew...”, because the term “crew” is defined in Chapter 1.2 of ADR but the term “driver’s assistant” is not.”

In the French version of ADR, in P200, Table 3: SUBSTANCES NOT IN CLASS 2, add an X in the column entitled “Pressure drums” for UN Nos. 1745, 1746 and 2495.

5. Utilising the previously identified categories within paragraph 3 of this paper as a base line; the United Kingdom has carried out a simple analysis of the papers that have been submitted to the UN TDG Sub Committee, the Joint Meeting and WP.15 from 2010-2015. In order to gain an insight into the number of papers that could fall within the remit of this working group. The results of this analysis are as follows:

UN TDG Sub Committee

Year	Total papers	Papers dealing with editorial issues	Percentage of papers dealing with editorial issues
2015	58	9	16%
2014	109	20	18%
2013	70	6	9%
2012	102	12	12%
2011	47	4	9%
2010	89	6	7%

Joint Meeting

Year	Total papers	Papers dealing with editorial issues	Percentage of papers dealing with editorial issues
2015	54	20	36%
2014	53	15	28%
2013	61	10	16%
2012	29	6	21%
2011	51	8	16%
2010	57	7	12%

WP.15

Year	Total papers	Papers dealing with editorial issues	Percentage of papers dealing with editorial issues
2015	19	7	37%
2014	18	5	28%
2013	20	9	45%
2012	19	2	11%
2011	14	4	29%
2010	19	3	16%

6. This data indicates that it would be appropriate for such a group to reside within the auspices of the Joint Meeting or WP.15, or perhaps both; because they have the largest percentage of papers that deal with these issues, as opposed to the UN Sub-Committee which deals with significantly less of these issues. Thus, we are proposing the creation of a working group to deal with these issues, a group which we are not seeking to chair but to participate in.

7. In the United Kingdom's view, this editorial group could provide a number of benefits:

- It would provide the necessary time and space to discuss proposed changes in full;

- It may identify the need for consequential amendments which might be missed, if discussed during plenary;
- It may find over time that there is a strong case for a wholesale editorial review of a chapter or a subject; and
- It may encourage further editorial changes, which Contracting Parties may currently think are too minor to raise in plenary.

Furthermore, by removing these proposals from plenary it may mean that plenary meetings could eventually be shorter, with potentially substantive savings for both the UN as well as contracting parties.

8. In order to proceed with this, and before returning to the Joint Meeting in September, we welcome your thoughts on this idea and have provided the following questions to help with discussions:

- Which of the forums/levels that dangerous goods regulations are discussed at, do you think would be most appropriate to host this working group?
 - What are your thoughts on the running of such a group? Should it be supported by the Secretariat or a Contracting Party?
 - Do you agree that the list of types of paper that the group could deal with, set out in paragraph 3 are the right ones? If not what do you think the right list looks like?
 - Do you think the remit of this group should be extended to lead the way in doing a full sweep of the regulations to identifying errors, duplications and other editorial mistakes?
 - Who would be interested in taking part in this group?
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