

Explanation to the new IATA and ICAO documents

Dr. Christine Rohde/DSMZ

Professor Hideaki Sugawara has uploaded two new documents of fundamental relevance that are available from the WFCC site. These are ICAO Doc 9284-AN/905 and IATA Addendum II to the 46th Edition of the IATA Dangerous Goods Regulations whereas the latter reflects and implements the requirements set by ICAO, the International Civil Aviation Organization. As all other modes of transport (road, rail, waterways), also ICAO has to set in force all those requirements as given by the United Nations Model Regulations for the Transport of Dangerous Goods, 13th revised Edition.

You might remember that WFCC received observer status to the resp. UN experts committee (UNSCETDG), that we presented official WFCC documents in 2003 and 2004 and that we had the chance to verbally present and defend our proposal during the July 2004 meeting with the aim of having realistic deregulations for shipping microorganisms bearing a relatively low hazard and fitting into the definition of the Risk Group 2. Our WFCC proposal was supported by documents of different large microbiological societies including IUMS, FEMS, ASM and other national societies.

At UNSCETDG in July 2004, our proposal was supported and carried. However, the changes were expected to become reality by January 2007. In the meantime, the ICAO Technical Instructions and shortly after that, IATA have published the Addendum documents and therefore the deregulations are implemented now!

I would like to kindly ask you all who are shipping microorganisms to read these two documents which Hideaki made available through the WFCC site. If there are uncertainties or questions, please don't hesitate to direct your questions to me as I think I could explain the contents and give some hints if necessary.

These are the most relevant changes:

The UN moved away from using the Risk Group definition for shipping purposes. There are two Categories now instead: Category A contains highly dangerous mo's, more or less those of the RG 3 and 4. The RG 2 mo's perfectly fit into Category B definition. ICAO and IATA give an open exemplary list of Cat. A mo's, this list is important to look at.

The definition of the term "culture" has been changed and the exemption of the cultures has been deleted so that they can be packed and shipped like diagnostic specimens.

For this purpose, a new UN number, UN 3373, has been created. Furthermore, from now on a new proper shipping name can be used instead of "Diagnostic specimens" or "Clinical specimens" (this new name is the name we proposed at UNSCETDG and which reflects the contents of our packages much better: it is "Biological substance, Category B"). Until 2007, you can use either one of these proper shipping names.

On packagings, a new diamond shaped label with UN 3373, 6 mm minimum height of the writing, and the proper shipping name is required.

There is a fundamental deregulation concerning accompanying documents: no Shipper's Declaration and no other dg declaration is required, also no transport emergency card, only the (air) way bill.

Courier costs should also hopefully drop.

But please remember:

Still, Category B materials are dangerous goods classified in Class 6.2. Still, the shipper is responsible for proper packaging and shipping and has to be a trained person acc. to IATA DGR.

Packagings have to fulfil the requirements of Packing Instruction PI 650 (I would certainly recommend the stronger PI 620 packagings, they are of course still permitted). The telephone number of a responsible person has to be visible on the address label.

====

Dr. Christine Rohde

DSMZ-Deutsche Sammlung von Mikroorganismen

und Zellkulturen GmbH: <http://www.dsmz.de>

Mascheroder Weg 1b, 38124 Braunschweig, Germany
