



Dangerous Goods Safety information sheet

Overview of Transport Regulations

Introduction

This document is for guidance only and the definitive statutory requirements are contained in the Dangerous Goods Safety (Road and Rail Transport of Non-explosives) Regulations 2007 (the Transport Regulations).

The Transport Regulations cover safety standards for the transport of dangerous goods by road and rail and adopt the *Australian Dangerous Goods Code, 7th Edition* (ADG7) as a code of practice. The regulations provide the basis for the assignment of responsibilities of individuals or organisations for most technical requirements specified in ADG7.

The regulations were written to mirror, as much as possible, the 'Model Legislation – Transport of Dangerous Goods by Road or Rail Regulations 2007' (the Model Subordinate Law), prepared by the National Transport Commission (NTC) as a model for all Australian states and territories. There is some variation owing to the requirements of the *Dangerous Goods Safety Act 2004*, with a major difference being the requirement for prime contractors and rail operators in Western Australia to become, or engage, approved emergency responders when they transport a placard load of dangerous goods.

ADG7

In the interests of international uniformity and to facilitate the import and export of dangerous goods, ADG7 was fundamentally restructured to align with the structure of the model regulations in the 15th edition of *Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods: Model Regulations* (UN 15), published in 2007 by the United Nations. As far as is practicable in the Australian legislative context, the actual text and clause numbering mirror those in UN 15.

However, the *Australian Dangerous Goods Code* has historically incorporated requirements that are not addressed in the Model Regulations. These cover areas such as:

- design, approval and use of road and rail tank vehicles;
- standards and use of freight containers;
- testing of inner packagings;
- placarding with emergency information panels;
- segregation within loads;
- segregation of dangerous goods loads on trains;
- provision of emergency information;
- bulk transfer;
- safety equipment; and
- procedures during transport.

UN 15 incorporates seven parts, which are subdivided into chapters. ADG7 has adopted the UN approach, with the first seven parts corresponding with the same numbered parts in UN 15. ADG7 Parts 8 to 13 inclusive cover subjects not specifically addressed in the UN document. The exception is the provision for transport documentation (previously shipping documentation), which has remained in Part 11, rather than as a chapter within Part 5 that also covers requirements for placarding and labelling.

Key changes in ADG7 include:

- Class and Division (Class only in ADG6);

- dangerous goods list now up to UN 3481;
- classification criteria now specified for Class 9 (Miscellaneous);
- 'limited quantities' for all dangerous goods entries;
- 'packing instructions' and 'special packing provisions' for packagings and intermediate bulk containers (IBCs);
- 'instructions' and 'special provisions' for portable tanks (e.g. isotainers) and bulk containers;
- 'bulk container' term only applies to solids;
- normal use of the term 'bulk' has been dropped in ADG7;
- overpacks (packaging to hold packages; e.g. unit loads);
- Australian Standard AS 2809 still applies for tank vehicles;
- new terms such as 'transport unit' (e.g. vehicle, portable tank, bulk container, freight container) and 'large packaging';
- IBCs treated as big packagings;
- licensing of drivers and vehicles required when transporting any container with a capacity greater than 500 L or kg;
- licensing exemption for up to 3,000 L in IBCs retained in ADG7;
- placard load quantities different only for container > 500 L or kg (previously termed 'bulk'); and
- rail separation now reflects international best practice.

Transport Regulations

The Transport Regulations do not apply to:

- Class 1 (explosives) except Division 1.4S and some track signals;
- Category A of Division 6.2 (infectious substances); and
- Class 7 (radioactive materials) dangerous goods.

Persons with special duties or responsibilities under the regulations include:

- vehicle owners;
- consignors;
- packers;
- loaders;
- prime contractors;
- rail operators;
- drivers;
- manufacturers;
- occupiers;
- transferors; and
- train drivers.

The Transport Regulations require dangerous goods drivers and vehicles to be licensed. Drivers are required to be medically fit, competent and have a good driving record.

The regulations contain mutual recognition clauses for interstate drivers and vehicles.