

Why does the U.S. Participate

in the United Nations Transport of Dangerous Goods Sub-Committee and other international meetings?

The Federal hazardous materials transportation law (Federal hazmat law; 49 U.S.C. 5101 et seq.) requires that the HMR be harmonized to the greatest extent practicable with international standards, in order to improve safety and compliance, and to facilitate commerce. However, the Federal hazmat law provides discretion to deviate from international standards when deemed necessary for the purpose of public safety.

How is the HMR amended based on international standards?

Any proposed changes to the HMR, including those proposed on the basis of alignment with international standards, undergo a public review and comment period. The proposed changes first appear as a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) in the Federal Register. At that time comments from all interested parties are solicited. A final rule is published only after these comments have been collected and considered. In effect, changes to the HMR based on international standards are proposed and adopted in the same fashion as all other changes to the HMR.

How can I be involved in the harmonization process and stay abreast of the work of the UN Committee?

The Director of the Office of International Standards hosts public meetings before and after each UN Committee and Subcommittee meeting. The public is invited to attend these meetings and to comment on the proposals submitted to the UN regarding changes to the Model Regulations. These proposals are available via the UN website at <http://www.unece.org/trans/danger/danger.htm>. Details regarding upcoming public meetings are available at http://hazmat.dot.gov/regs/intl/intnl_pubmeet.htm.



If I have additional Questions,
where can I find more information?

You may visit our website at
<http://hazmat.dot.gov/regs/intl/intstandards.htm>

For information about other Hazmat Publications
Visit our website:

<http://hazmat.dot.gov>

Or write:

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What do you
NEED
to know
or do

When you

TRANSPORT
hazardous
materials
internationally

U.S. Department of Transportation
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials
Safety Administration

PHMSA's Office of Hazardous Materials Safety, through the Office of International Standards, works to ensure that U.S. Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMR) are harmonized to the greatest extent possible with international regulations.

Harmonization enhances safety, compliance, and free trade while minimizing the regulatory burden on the public. This brochure is designed to familiarize the reader with the international regulations referenced in the HMR and with the provisions governing their use.

What International Regulations

are referenced in the U.S. Hazardous Material Regulations?

The two major international regulations referenced in the HMR are the International Civil Aviation Organization Technical Instructions for the Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air (ICAO TI), and the International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code (IMDG Code). There are certain limitations governing their use within the United States.

The ICAO Technical Instructions for the Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air (ICAO TI)

Virtually all shipments of hazardous materials transported internationally by air, as well as most domestic U.S. shipments, are transported in accordance with the ICAO TI. The U.S. Hazardous Materials Regulations authorize transport in accordance with the ICAO TI provided all of the conditions of 49 CFR 171.11 are met. A good understanding of 171.11 is essential to ensure that compliance with these conditions is achieved. For example, shipments made in accordance with the ICAO TI remain subject to Part 175 of the HMR and the emergency response information provisions of subpart G of Part 172.

The International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code (IMDG Code)

The IMDG Code contains regulations applicable to the transport of dangerous goods by sea. If all or part of a shipment of hazardous materials is made by vessel to, from, or within the United States, the HMR allow the shipment to be made in accordance with the IMDG Code, provided certain additional provisions are satisfied. These additional provisions are found in 49 CFR 171.12. Just as one must consult 171.11 when using the ICAO TI, one must also consult 171.12 to ensure that a shipment made in accordance with the IMDG Code is acceptable for transportation within the United States.



Are reciprocity provisions provided for shipments made to or from Canada?

Yes, in addition to the use of the ICAO TI and the IMDG Code, the HMR also address shipments prepared in accordance with Canada's Transport of Dangerous Goods Regulations (TDG). As with the use of the ICAO TI and IMDG Code, certain conditions and limitations apply. These conditions and limitations are found in 49 CFR 171.12a.

Are similar reciprocity provisions provided for shipments made to or from Mexico?

Currently the HMR do not provide for reciprocity with Mexico's Hazardous Materials Standards (Normas Oficiales Mexicanas or NOMs). However, the Mexican NOMs are consistent to a great degree with the HMR, and also allow for the use of the ICAO TI and IMDG Code. A list of known differences between the HMR and the Mexican NOMs, as well as English translations of many relevant NOMs, is available at <http://hazmat.dot.gov/regs/intl/mexico/nomslst.htm>.

What role does the United Nations play in harmonization of hazardous materials transportation regulations?

The United Nations Committee and Subcommittee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods (UN COE and SCOE) is composed of representatives from many countries around the world. The UN SCOE meets twice a year to discuss and ratify changes to the UN Model Regulations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods. The UN Model Regulations were developed as a tool to promote consistency in international hazardous materials regulations worldwide. While they are not legally binding, they are used as a basis for the international regulations, and the national regulations of many countries including the United States. More information regarding the UN Model Regulations may be found at <http://hazmat.dot.gov/regs/intl/unt dg.htm>.