

INF. 2
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MORITZ LEUENBERGER
FEDERAL COUNSELLOR

Organisation for International
Carriage by Rail (OTIF)
Central Office (OCTI)
Mr. Hans Rudolf Isliker (Director General)
Gryphenhübeliweg 30
3006 Bern

Bern, 24 June 2004

Dear Director General

At its meeting on 26 May 2004, the Swiss Federal Council decided that it would not raise any objections to the 1 January 2005 amendments to RID in accordance with the provisions of COTIF.

From Switzerland's point of view, it is satisfying that these amendments will mean another step will have been taken in the direction of increased safety in the transport of dangerous goods by rail. Of particular note are the more stringent requirements for tank wagons for the carriage of especially dangerous substances, such as chlorine.

Owing to its geographical position, its population settlement structure and mixed traffic, Switzerland considers that it is particularly affected by the risks inherent in the transport of dangerous goods. We pay attention primarily to rail transport operations with a particularly high risk potential. The Federal Department of Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications (DETEC) has in fact also concluded an agreement, of which you are aware, with the industry and with Swiss Railways (SBB) concerning the transport of dangerous goods in Switzerland, in order specifically to counteract these risks. It is a matter of great concern to Switzerland that in future, more far-reaching safety measures for tank wagons should also be applied. In the RID Committee of Experts, the Swiss delegation will therefore continue to promote the introduction of additional technical safety requirements, together with the delegations of other States concerned.

Yours faithfully

Signed

Moritz Leuenberger

Director of the Federal Department of Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications
- DETEC