



Extension of the RID multilateral special agreements necessitated by the coronavirus crisis

The Regulation concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Rail (RID) allows RID Contracting States to authorise certain transport operations on their territories under temporary derogations from the provisions of RID, provided that this does not compromise safety. At the beginning of the coronavirus crisis, various multilateral special agreements were initiated in order to resolve problems that had arisen as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

One special agreement concerned the training and examination of dangerous goods safety advisers, which is required so that the training certificate can be renewed every five years. Another special agreement regulated the continued use of tank-wagons and tank-containers that were due for an intermediate inspection or a periodic inspection during 2020. Another special agreement was required in order to enable the transport of gas cylinders for medical gases to continue after the deadline for the periodic inspection has passed.

While the inspections required for tank-wagons and tank-containers can now be carried out on time again, the problems with the training of dangerous goods safety advisers and the carriage of gas cylinders persist. As the situation in hospitals has still not eased, there is still high demand for liquid oxygen, for example, which is required for the treatment of COVID patients. The corresponding multilateral special agreements therefore had to be extended for the second time and are now valid until 1 October 2021 (dangerous goods safety advisers) and 30 June 2021 (gas cylinders). The high number of countries that have signed these multilateral special agreements shows the importance of these derogations from the regulations for the duration of the pandemic.

