Chapter 6.9

Requirements for the design, construction, equipment, type approval, testing and marking of fibre-reinforced plastics (FRP) tank-containers including tank swap bodies

NOTE: For portable tanks and UN multiple-element gas containers (MEGCs) see Chapter 6.7; for tank-wagons, demountable tanks and tank-containers and tank swap bodies, with shells made of metallic materials, and battery-wagons and multiple element gas containers (MEGCs) other than UN MEGCs see Chapter 6.8; for vacuum-operated waste tanks see Chapter 6.10.

6.9.1 General

6.9.1.1 FRP tank-containers including tank swap bodies shall be designed, manufactured and tested in accordance with a quality assurance programme recognized by the competent authority; in particular, lamination work and welding of thermoplastic liners shall only be carried out by qualified personnel in accordance with a procedure recognized by the competent authority.

6.9.1.2 For the design and testing of FRP tank-containers including tank swap bodies, the provisions of 6.8.2.1.1, 6.8.2.1.7, 6.8.2.1.13, 6.8.2.1.14 (a) and (b), 6.8.2.1.25, 6.8.2.1.27 and 6.8.2.2.3 shall also apply.

6.9.1.3 Heating elements shall not be used for FRP tank-containers including tank swap bodies.

6.9.1.4 (Reserved)

6.9.2 Construction

6.9.2.1 Shells shall be made of suitable materials, which shall be compatible with the substances to be carried in a service temperature range of between –40 °C and +50 °C, unless temperature ranges are specified for specific climatic conditions by the competent authority of the country where the transport operation is performed.

6.9.2.2 Shells shall consist of the following three elements :

– internal liner,

– structural layer,

– external layer.

6.9.2.2.1 The internal liner is the inner shell wall zone designed as the primary barrier to provide for the long-term chemical resistance in relation to the substances to be carried, to prevent any dangerous reaction with the contents or the formation of dangerous compounds and any substantial weakening of the structural layer owing to the diffusion of products through the internal liner.

The internal liner may either be a FRP liner or a thermoplastic liner.

6.9.2.2.2 FRP liners shall consist of:

(a) surface layer ("gel-coat"): adequate resin rich surface layer, reinforced with a veil, compatible with the resin and contents. This layer shall have a fibre mass content of not more than 30% and have a thickness between 0.25 and 0.60 mm;

(b) strengthening layer(s): layer or several layers with a minimum thickness of 2 mm, containing a minimum of 900 g/m² of glass mat or chopped fibres with a mass content in glass of not less than 30% unless equivalent safety is demonstrated for a lower glass content.

6.9.2.2.3 Thermoplastic liners shall consist of thermoplastic sheet material as referred to in 6.9.2.3.4, welded together in the required shape, to which the structural layers are bonded. Durable bonding between liners and the structural layer shall be achieved by the use of an appropriate adhesive.

NOTE: For the carriage of flammable liquids the internal layer may require additional measures in accordance with 6.9.2.14, in order to prevent the accumulation of electrical charges.

6.9.2.2.4 The structural layer of the shell is the zone specially designed according to 6.9.2.4 to 6.9.2.6 to withstand the mechanical stresses. This part normally consists of several fibre reinforced layers in determined orientations.

6.9.2.2.5 The external layer is the part of the shell which is directly exposed to the atmosphere. It shall consist of a resin rich layer with a thickness of at least 0.2 mm. For a thickness larger than 0.5 mm, a mat shall be used. This layer shall have a mass content in glass of less than 30% and shall be capable of withstanding exterior conditions, in particular the occasional contact with the substance to be carried. The resin shall contain fillers or additives to provide protection against deterioration of the structural layer of the shell by ultra-violet radiation.

6.9.2.3 Raw materials

6.9.2.3.1 All materials used for the manufacture of FRP tank-containers including tank swap bodies shall be of known origin and specifications.

6.9.2.3.2 Resins

The processing of the resin mixture shall be carried out in strict compliance with the recommendations of the supplier. This concerns mainly the use of hardeners, initiators and accelerators. These resins can be:

– unsaturated polyester resins;
– vinyl ester resins;
– epoxy resins;
– phenolic resins.

The heat distortion temperature (HDT) of the resin, determined in accordance with ISO 75-1:1993 shall be at least 20 °C higher than the maximum service temperature of the tank-container including tank swap bodies, but shall in any case not be lower than 70 °C.

6.9.2.3.3 Reinforcement fibres

The reinforcement material of the structural layers shall be a suitable grade of fibres such as glass fibres of type E or ECR according to ISO 2078:1993. For the internal surface liner, glass fibres of type C according to ISO 2078:1993 may be used. Thermoplastic veils may only be used for the internal liner when their compatibility with the intended contents has been demonstrated.

6.9.2.3.4 Thermoplastic liner material

Thermoplastic liners, such as unplastified polyvinyl chloride (PVC-U), polypropylene (PP), polyvinylidene fluoride (PVDF), polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE), etc. may be used as lining materials.

6.9.2.3.5 Additives

Additives necessary for the treatment of the resin, such as catalysts, accelerators, hardeners and thixotropic substances as well as materials used to improve the tank, such as fillers, colours, pigments etc. shall not cause weakening of the material, taking into account lifetime and temperature expectancy of the design.

6.9.2.4 Shells, their attachments and their service and structural equipment shall be designed to withstand without loss of contents (other than quantities of gas escaping through any degassing vents) during the design lifetime:

– the static and dynamic loads in normal conditions of carriage;
– the prescribed minimum loads as defined in 6.9.2.5 to 6.9.2.10.

6.9.2.5 At the pressures as indicated in 6.8.2.1.14 (a) and (b), and under the static gravity forces caused by the contents with maximum density specified for the design and at maximum filling degree, the design stress σ in longitudinal and circumferential direction of any layer of the shell shall not exceed the following value:

$$\sigma \leq \frac{R_m}{K}$$

where:

R_m = the value of tensile strength given by taking the mean value of the test results minus twice the standard deviation of the test results. The tests shall be carried out, in accordance with the requirements of EN 61:1977, on not less than six samples representative of the design type and construction method;

$K = S \times K_0 \times K_1 \times K_2 \times K_3$

where

K shall have a minimum value of 4, and

S = the safety coefficient. For the general design, if the tanks are referred to in Column (12) of Table A of Chapter 3.2 by a tank code including the letter "G" in its second part (see 4.3.4.1.1), the value for S shall be equal to or more than 1.5. For tanks intended for the carriage of substances which require an increased safety level, i.e. if the tanks are referred to in Column (12) of Table A of Chapter 3.2 by a tank code including the number "4" in its second part (see 4.3.4.1.1), the value of S shall be multiplied by a factor of two, unless the shell is provided with protection against damage consisting of a complete metal skeleton including longitudinal and transverse structural members;

K_0 = a factor related to the deterioration in the material properties due to creep and ageing and as a result of the chemical action of the substances to be carried. It shall be determined by the formula:

$$K_0 = \frac{1}{\alpha \cdot \beta}$$

where "α" is the creep factor and "β" is the ageing factor determined in accordance with EN 978:1997 after performance of the test according to EN 977:1997. Alternatively, a conservative value of $K_0 = 2$ may be applied. In order to determine α and β the initial deflection shall correspond to 2σ;

K_1 = a factor related to the service temperature and the thermal properties of the resin, determined by the following equation, with a minimum value of 1:

$$K_1 = 1.25 - 0.0125 (HDT - 70)$$

where HDT is the heat distortion temperature of the resin, in °C;

K_2 = a factor related to the fatigue of the material; the value of $K_2 = 1.75$ shall be used unless otherwise agreed with the competent authority. For the dynamic design as outlined in 6.9.2.6 the value of $K_2 = 1.1$ shall be used;

K_3 = a factor related to curing and has the following values:

– 1.1 where curing is carried out in accordance with an approved and documented process;

– 1.5 in other cases.

6.9.2.6 At the dynamic stresses, as indicated in 6.8.2.1.2 the design stress shall not exceed the value specified in 6.9.2.5, divided by the factor α.

6.9.2.7 At any of the stresses as defined in 6.9.2.5 and 6.9.2.6, the resulting elongation in any direction shall not exceed 0.2% or one tenth of the elongation at fracture of the resin, whichever is lower.

6.9.2.8 At the specified test pressure, which shall not be less than the relevant calculation pressure as specified in 6.8.2.1.14 (a) and (b) the maximum strain in the shell shall not be greater than the elongation at fracture of the resin.

6.9.2.9 The shell shall be capable of withstanding the ball drop test according to 6.9.4.3.3 without any visible internal or external defects.

6.9.2.10 The overlay laminates used in the joints, including the end joints, the joints of the surge plates and the partitions with the shell shall be capable of withstanding the static and dynamic stresses mentioned above. In order to avoid concentrations of stresses in the overlay lamination, the applied tapper shall not be steeper than 1:6.

The shear strength between the overlay laminate and the tank components to which it is bonded shall not be less than:

$$\tau = \frac{Q}{l} \leq \frac{\tau_R}{K}$$

where:

τ_R is the bending shear strength according to EN ISO 14125:1998 (three points method) with a minimum of $\tau_R = 10$ N/mm^2, if no measured values are available;

Q is the load per unit width that the joint shall carry under the static and dynamic loads;

K is the factor calculated in accordance with 6.9.2.5 for the static and dynamic stresses;

l is the length of the overlay laminate.

6.9.2.11 Openings in the shell shall be reinforced to provide at least the same safety factors against the static and dynamic stresses as specified in 6.9.2.5 and 6.9.2.6 as that for the shell itself. The number of openings shall be minimized. The axis ratio of oval-shaped openings shall be not more than 2.

6.9.2.12 For the design of flanges and pipework attached to the shell, handling forces and the fastening of bolts shall also be taken into account.

6.9.2.13 The tank-container including tank swap bodies shall be designed to withstand, without significant leakage, the effects of a full engulfment in fire for 30 minutes as specified by the test requirements in 6.9.4.3.4. Testing may be waived with the agreement of the competent authority, where sufficient proof can be provided by tests with comparable tank designs.

6.9.2.14 Special requirements for the carriage of substances with a flash-point of not more than 60 °C

FRP tank-container including tank swap bodies used for the carriage of substances with a flash-point of not more than 60 °C shall be constructed so as to ensure the elimination of static electricity from the various component parts so as to avoid the accumulation of dangerous charges.

6.9.2.14.1 The electrical surface resistance of the inside and outside of the shell as established by measurements shall not be higher than 10^9 ohms. This may be achieved by the use of additives in the resin or interlaminate conducting sheets, such as metal or carbon network.

6.9.2.14.2 The discharge resistance to earth as established by measurements shall not be higher than 10^7 ohms.

6.9.2.14.3 All components of the shell shall be electrically connected to each other and to the metal parts of the service and structural equipment of the tank-container including tank swap bodies. The electrical resistance between components and equipment in contact with each other shall not exceed 10 ohms.

6.9.2.14.4 The electrical surface-resistance and discharge resistance shall be measured initially on each manufactured tank-container including tank swap bodies or a specimen of the shell in accordance with a procedure recognized by the competent authority.

6.9.2.14.5 The discharge resistance to earth of each tank-container including tank swap bodies shall be measured as part of the periodic inspection in accordance with a procedure recognized by the competent authority.

6.9.3 Items of equipment

6.9.3.1 The requirements of 6.8.2.2.1, 6.8.2.2.2 and 6.8.2.2.4 to 6.8.2.2.8 shall apply.

6.9.3.2 In addition, when they are shown under an entry in Column (13) of Table A of Chapter 3.2, the special provisions of 6.8.4 (b) (TE) shall also apply.

6.9.4 Type testing and approval

6.9.4.1 For any design of a FRP tank-container type, including tank swap bodies, its materials and a representative prototype shall be subjected to the design type testing as outlined below.

6.9.4.2 Material testing

6.9.4.2.1 The elongation at fracture according to EN ISO 527-5:1997 and the heat distortion temperature according to ISO 75-1:1993 shall be determined for the resins to be used.

6.9.4.2.2 The following characteristics shall be determined for samples cut out of the shell. Samples manufactured in parallel may only be used, if it is not possible to use cutouts from the shell. Prior to testing, any liner shall be removed.

The tests shall cover:

- Thickness of the laminates of the central shell wall and the ends;
- Mass content and composition of glass, orientation and arrangement of reinforcement layers;
- Tensile strength, elongation at fracture and modulus of elasticity according to EN ISO 527-5:1997 in the direction of stresses. In addition, the elongation at fracture of the resin shall be established by means of ultrasound;
- Bending strength and deflection established by the bending creep test according to EN ISO 14125:1998 for a period of 1000 hours using a sample with a minimum width of 50 mm and a support distance of at least 20 times the wall thickness. In addition, the creep factor α and the ageing factor β shall be determined by this test and according to EN 978:1997.

6.9.4.2.3 The interlaminate shear strength of the joints shall be measured by testing representative samples in the tensile test according to EN ISO 14130:1997.

6.9.4.2.4 The chemical compatibility of the shell with the substances to be carried shall be demonstrated by one of the following methods with the agreement of the competent authority. This demonstration shall account for all aspects of the compatibility of the materials of the shell and its equipment with the substances to be carried, including chemical deterioration of the shell, initiation of critical reactions of the contents and dangerous reactions between both.

- In order to establish any deterioration of the shell, representative samples taken from the shell, including any internal liners with welds, shall be subjected to the chemical compatibility test according to EN 977:1997 for a period of 1 000 hours at 50 °C. Compared with a virgin sample, the loss of strength and elasticity modulus measured by the bending test according to EN 978:1997 shall not exceed 25%. Cracks, bubbles, pitting effects as well as separation of layers and liners and roughness shall not be acceptable.

– Certified and documented data of positive experiences on the compatibility of the filling substances in question with the materials of the shell with which they come into contact at given temperatures, times and any other relevant service conditions.
– Technical data published in relevant literature, standards or other sources, acceptable to the competent authority.

6.9.4.3 Type testing

A representative prototype tank shall be subjected to tests as specified below. For this purpose service equipment may be replaced by other items if necessary.

6.9.4.3.1 The prototype shall be inspected for compliance with the design type specification. This shall include an internal and external visual inspection and measurement of the main dimensions.

6.9.4.3.2 The prototype, equipped with strain gauges at all locations where a comparison with the design calculation is required, shall be subjected to the following loads and the strains shall be recorded:
– Filled with water to the maximum filling degree. The measuring results shall be used to calibrate the design calculation according to 6.9.2.5;
– Filled with water to the maximum filling degree and subjected to accelerations in all three directions by means of driving and braking exercises with the prototype attached to a wagon. For comparison with the design calculation according to 6.9.2.6 the strains recorded shall be extrapolated in relation to the quotient of the accelerations required in 6.8.2.1.2 and measured;
– Filled with water and subjected to the specified test pressure. Under this load, the shell shall exhibit no visual damage or leakage.

6.9.4.3.3 The prototype shall be subjected to the ball drop test according to EN 976-1:1997, No. 6.6. No visible damage inside or outside the tank shall occur.

6.9.4.3.4 The prototype with its service and structural equipment in place and filled to 80% of its maximum capacity with water, shall be exposed to a full engulfment in fire for 30 minutes, caused by an open heating oil pool fire or any other type of fire with the same effect. The dimensions of the pool shall exceed those of the tank by at least 50 cm to each side and the distance between fuel level and tank shall be between 50 cm and 80 cm. The rest of the tank below liquid level, including openings and closures, shall remain leakproof except for drips.

6.9.4.4 Type approval

6.9.4.4.1 The competent authority or a body designated by that authority shall issue in respect of each new type of tank-container including tank swap bodies an approval attesting that the design is suitable for the purpose for which it is intended and meets the construction and equipment requirements of this chapter as well as the special provisions applicable to the substances to be carried.

6.9.4.4.2 The approval shall be based on the calculation and the test report, including all material and prototype test results and its comparison with the design calculation, and shall refer to the design type specification and the quality assurance programme.

6.9.4.4.3 The approval shall include the substances or group of substances for which compatibility with the tank-container including tank swap bodies is provided. Their chemical names or the corresponding collective entry (see 2.1.1.2), and their class and classification code shall be indicated.

6.9.4.4.4 In addition, it shall include design and threshold values (such as life-time, service temperature range, working and test pressures, material data) specified and all precautions to be taken for the manufacture, testing, type approval, marking and use of any tank-container including tank swap bodies, manufactured in accordance with the approved design type.

6.9.5 Inspections

6.9.5.1 For every tank-container including tank swap bodies, manufactured in conformity with the approved design, material tests and inspections shall be performed as specified below.

6.9.5.1.1 The material tests according to 6.9.4.2.2, except for the tensile test and for a reduction of the testing time for the bending creep test to 100 hours shall be performed with samples taken from the shell. Samples manufactured in parallel may only be used, if no cutouts from the shell are possible. The approved design values shall be met.

6.9.5.1.2 Shells and their equipment shall either together or separately undergo an initial inspection before being put into service. This inspection shall include:
– a check of conformity to the approved design;
– a check of the design characteristics;
– an internal and external examination;

– a hydraulic pressure test at the test pressure indicated on the plate prescribed in 6.8.2.5.1;
– a check of operation of the equipment;
– a leakproofness test, if the shell and its equipment have been pressure tested separately.

6.9.5.2 For the periodic inspection of tank-containers including tank swap bodies the requirements of 6.8.2.4.2 to 6.8.2.4.4 shall apply. In addition, the inspection in accordance with 6.8.2.4.3 shall include an examination of the internal condition of the shell.

6.9.5.3 The inspections and tests in accordance with 6.9.5.1 and 6.9.5.2 shall be carried out by the expert approved by the competent authority. Certificates shall be issued showing the results of these operations. These certificates shall refer to the list of the substances permitted for carriage in this tank-container including tank swap bodies in accordance with 6.9.4.4.

6.9.6 Marking

6.9.6.1 The requirements of 6.8.2.5 shall apply to the marking of FRP tank-containers including tank swap bodies, with the following amendments:
– the tank plate may also be laminated to the shell or be made of suitable plastics materials;
– the design temperature range shall always be marked**.**

6.9.6.2 In addition, when they are shown under an entry in Column (13) of Table A of Chapter 3.2, the special provisions of 6.8.4 (e) (TM) shall also apply.