



Bulletin

OTIF

Organisation intergouvernementale pour les transports internationaux ferroviaires
Zwischenstaatliche Organisation für den internationalen Eisenbahnverkehr
Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail

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EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

It is a privilege to address you in this first Bulletin of 2025, which also marks my first edition as Secretary General. At OTIF, we are determined to be a modern Secretariat for an increasingly dynamic organisation. While we continually look to the future, we stand on a strong legacy built by our predecessors in both the Secretariat and the Member States. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to my predecessor, Mr Wolfgang Küpper, and to our former Senior Legal Advisor, Ms Iris Gries, who both left OTIF in 2024 but left behind them a firm foundation upon which we can now continue to build.

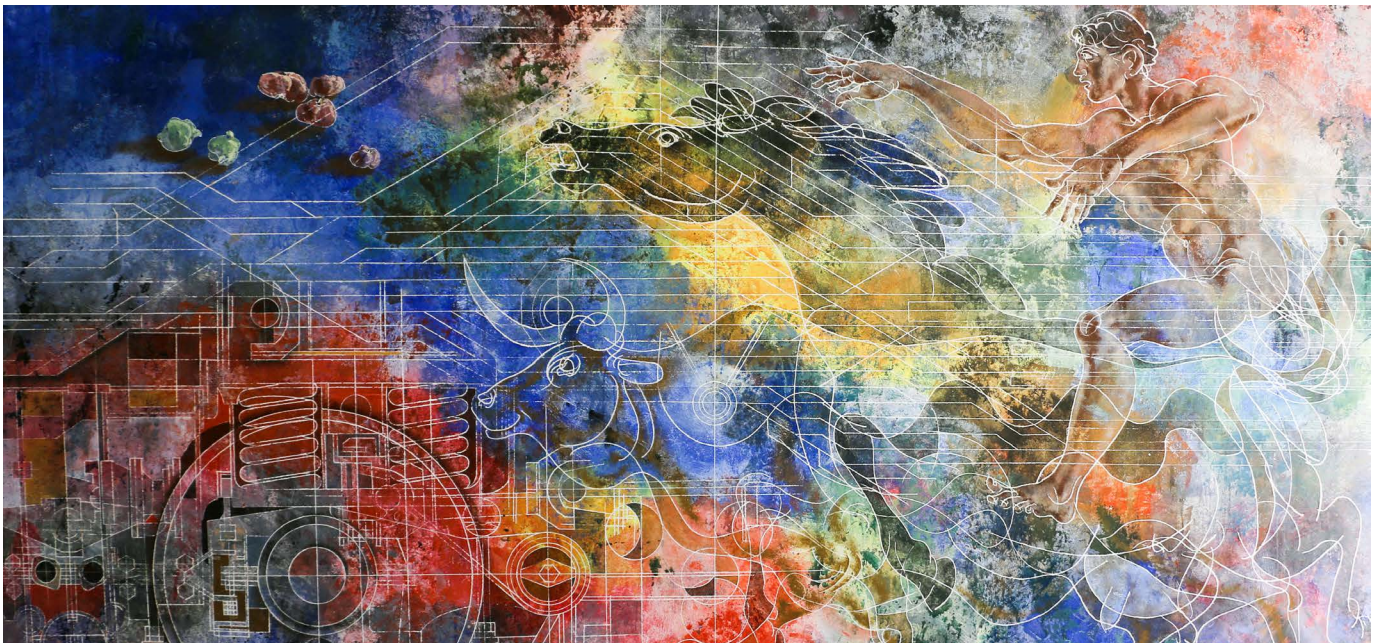
OTIF's mission remains unchanged: to promote, improve, and facilitate international rail traffic in all its aspects. Cooperation with partner organisations and the broad inclusion of stakeholders are central to our continued success. As highlighted in this Bulletin, the Organisation is actively advancing its work in three strategic areas: railway contract law, technical interoperability, and the safe transport of dangerous goods.

I look forward to this exciting new phase of development at OTIF. By continuing to work closely with all our partners, we will strengthen a robust legal framework for international railway transport, reinforcing the role of rail transport as a sustainable and forward-looking mode - for people, businesses, and trade – both now and in the future – thereby ensuring social and economic development.

Thank you for your ongoing trust in and commitment to these aims.

Aleksandr Kuzmenko

Secretary General



Hans Erni, mural, approximately 20m2, 1965, entrance to the Secretariat

COURTESY VISIT

On 7 January 2025, the Secretary General of OTIF, Mr Aleksandr Kuzmenko, paid a courtesy visit to the Ukrainian Embassy in Berne.

H. E. the Ambassador of Ukraine, Ms Iryna Venediktova, invited Mr Kuzmenko, who took up his duties as Secretary General of OTIF on 1 January 2025. After introducing themselves, Ms Venediktova and Mr Kuzmenko discussed rail transport, the Convention concerning International Carriage by Rail (COTIF), its development and application by Ukraine, and the respective roles of OTIF and Ukraine.

The Secretary General welcomed this visit and thanks H.E. the

Ambassador of Ukraine for her invitation.



ITF ANNUAL CONSULTATION AND HIGH-LEVEL TALKS

On Tuesday, 28 January 2025, the Secretary General of OTIF, Mr Aleksandr Kuzmenko, took part in the Annual Consultation of international organisations organised by the International Transport Forum (ITF).

The aim of this Annual Consultation is to define the programme for the ITF's 2025 Summit and to set out the main themes for the 2026 Summit.

The 2025 Summit, entitled Transport Resilience to Global Shocks, will be hosted by Chile. It will explore how governments ensure the continuity of transport systems, particularly in the event of upheavals and shocks such as natural disasters, pandemics, cyber-attacks and geopolitical crises.

At the end of this day of listening and exchanging views,

Mr Kuzmenko met the Secretary General of the ITF, Mr Young Tae Kim. Their shared enthusiasm for working together to advance international rail transport will strengthen the existing cooperation between the two organisations.

The Secretary General of OTIF welcomes this consultation and thanks the Secretary General of ITF for his invitation.



UNECE INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

The Secretary General, Mr Aleksandr Kuzmenko, and the Legal Department of the OTIF Secretariat took part in the 87th session of the Inland Transport Committee of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), which was held from 11 to 14 February 2025.

Mr Kuzmenko was invited to speak at the high-level debate, which was divided into two parts. Mr Kuzmenko spoke during the first panel of Ministerial Round Table 1, organised by Turkey, on “Promoting sustainable regional and interregional inland transport connectivity”.

In his speech, Mr Kuzmenko reaffirmed the role of OTIF and the importance of applying the Convention concerning International Carriage by Rail (COTIF) to facilitate international rail transport. He also emphasised that focusing only on corridors risks inefficiencies. To

boost trade and connectivity, he said it was essential to strengthen entire transport networks. The COTIF framework already ensures a harmonised legal foundation for international rail transport. He invited the meeting to leverage what works for a more resilient, efficient,

and interconnected global transport system.

The Secretary General warmly thanks the Executive Secretary of the UNECE, Ms Tatiana Molcean, for her invitation.



HIGH-LEVEL MEETING

On 12 February 2025, the Secretary General of OTIF, Mr Aleksandr Kuzmenko, met the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), Ms Tatiana Molcean.

As participants in the 87th session of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee in Geneva, they took the opportunity to meet.

They were able to share their views on the importance of international rail transport, its legal framework and the importance of cooperating to promote and facilitate rail transport.

The complementary nature of OTIF and the UNECE and their role in the sector were at the heart of this exchange.

The Secretary General welcomed this meeting.



DEPOSITARY NOTIFICATIONS

Since December 2024 ([Bulletin 4/2024](#))

NOT-24071	19.12.2024	Correction of the modifications to RID (Annex to Appendix C of the Convention) adopted by the 58 th session of the RID Committee of Experts
NOT-25003	9.1.2025	Sweden Ratification of the modifications to COTIF and to Appendices E and G adopted by the 13 th General Assembly

RATIFICATION OF THE MODIFICATIONS TO COTIF

<p>On 7 January 2025, Sweden deposited its instrument of ratification of the modifications to COTIF and Appendices E (CUI) and G (ATMF), signed by Ms Maria Malmer Stenergard, Minister for Foreign Affairs.</p> <p>These modifications were adopted by OTIF's 13th General Assembly in September 2018 and concern</p>	<p>in particular the adoption of a new appendix: Appendix H – Uniform Rules concerning the Safe Operation of Trains in International Traffic (EST).</p> <p>The Swedish government ratified the modifications to COTIF, including the adoption of Appendix H (EST), and the modifications to Appendices E (CUI) and G (ATMF)</p>	<p>on 21 November 2024, after completing the procedures under its internal law. This instrument was not accompanied by any declarations.</p> <p>Sweden is now the thirteenth Member State of OTIF to have ratified these modifications and the Secretariat welcomes this.</p>
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RID 2025: WHAT'S NEW?

<p>The new provisions of the Regulation concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Rail (RID) came into force on 1 January 2025.</p> <p>RID is revised every two years to take account of technical and scientific progress. This biennial revision contributes to improving safety and enhances the attractiveness of rail transport.</p> <p>The main new features in 2025 are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The possibility of using recycled plastics for the production of hazardous goods packaging	<p>has been extended and the use of recycled materials obtained from plastics from household collections has been authorised.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Waste containing asbestos that is contaminated with free asbestos may now also be carried in bulk subject to very strict provisions. This results in significant simplification compared to the previous practice, which only permitted carriage in packages.- Further relaxations have been introduced for the carriage of waste containing dangerous goods, such as the use of inner	<p>packagings of different sizes for combination packagings that were not previously tested with the outer packaging.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- In addition, numerous UN numbers for dangerous goods have been included in RID, together with the applicable transport provisions, including two UN numbers for sodium ion batteries, three UN numbers for vehicles powered by lithium batteries or sodium ion batteries and two UN numbers for new types of fire extinguishing systems, so-called fire suppression dispersing devices.
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RID applies to the international transport of dangerous goods by rail between the 45 existing RID Contracting Parties in Europe, Asia and North Africa. In the Member States of the European Union, RID applies to both national and international

transport.

RID is harmonised with the United Nations Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods, which form the basis for all the modal regulations on dangerous goods. There is

also close coordination with the dangerous goods regulations for road transport (ADR) and inland waterway transport (ADN). This approach ensures the direct transport of dangerous goods by all modes of transport.

UNCITRAL WORKING GROUP ON NEGOTIABLE MULTIMODAL TRANSPORT DOCUMENTS: A SOLID EXAMPLE OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

From 8 December 2024 to 13 December 2024, the 45th session of Working Group IV “Negotiable Cargo Documents” of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) took place in Vienna, Austria.

Mr Steve Davey, Senior Legal Advisor in the OTIF Secretariat's Legal Department, took an active part in the meeting.

In 2019, following a proposal from one of its Member States, UNCITRAL began work on the possible development of a negotiable transport document (Negotiable Cargo Document (NCD)) aimed at facilitating the transport of goods, particularly by rail, in the Eurasian area.

Given the wide range and

complexity of the issues involved, the UNCITRAL Secretariat began by researching the legal issues surrounding the use of consignment notes, particularly for rail transport. At the same time, the UNCITRAL Secretariat has coordinated its work with other relevant organisations, such as the Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF).

The challenge for the Secretariat is to ensure, for the benefit of the rail sector, that a new legal instrument for negotiable multimodal transport documents fits with the provisions of the Uniform Rules concerning the Contract of International Carriage of Goods by Rail (CIM UR).

At this 45th session of Working Group IV, “Multimodal Transport Documents”, participants examined

the proposed international instrument and, provision by provision, discussed the creation and operation of the NCD.

Mr Davey intervened several times, raising points that were difficult to reconcile with the CIM UR for rail transport. Representatives of maritime transport also raised concerns about the uncertainty that would be created by having a new regime applying to the carriage of goods by sea: it is currently possible to issue negotiable bills of lading recognised as documents of title for goods carried by sea, so there is no need for any further provisions.

The UNCITRAL Secretariat is continuing to work on its proposal and discussions will continue at the 46th session in March 2025.

16th TECHNICAL COMMITTEE OF THE TRANSPORT COMMUNITY IN BELGRADE

The Transport Community's “Technical Committee on Transport of Dangerous Goods” met in Riga

from 10 to 12 December 2024. This was more than just a meeting, as part of it took the form of a

workshop for participants.

Mr Jochen Conrad, Head of the

Dangerous Goods Department at the OTIF Secretariat, was invited to give delegations a presentation on the Regulation concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Rail (RID) and the latest developments in the 2025 version. He also presented the new features for 2025 concerning the Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR).

During the workshop, he answered participants' specific questions about the implementation of RID for domestic traffic.

The Secretariat welcomes this intervention.

The Transport Community is an international organisation in the field of mobility and transport, composed of 36 participants: the EU Member States represented by the European Commission, the six Western Balkan regional partners (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia) and the three observer participants (Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine). The

stated objective of the Transport Community is to integrate the Western Balkan transport markets into the EU. The organisation was founded by the Treaty establishing the Transport Community signed on 9 October 2017. The Treaty establishes a Transport Community in the field of road, rail, inland waterway and maritime transport and develops the transport network between the European Union and the six parts of the Western Balkans.

MS IRIS GRIES RETIRES

2025 is a year of transition for OTIF, particularly as it is the first year without Ms Iris Gries as the Secretariat's Senior Legal Advisor.

After almost three decades of solid, loyal service, Ms Gries retired in autumn 2024, marking the end of an era for the Legal Department and for the Organisation as a whole. In this first 2025 edition of the Bulletin, the Secretariat and former colleagues wish to express their appreciation of Ms Gries for her invaluable contributions and the lasting influence of her work.

Ms Gries began working for OTIF in 1996 in the legal service of the Central Office for International Carriage by Rail, which later became the OTIF Secretariat.

For many years she was in sole charge of the secretariat of the Administrative Committee, from organising the meetings to drafting the minutes. She was responsible for editing, coordinating and publishing the Bulletin of International Carriage by Rail. She was also responsible for drafting the minutes of the General Assembly. She represented the OTIF Secretariat on numerous

international bodies and in working groups at the UNECE, CIT, WCO and UPU, among others.

Ms Gries is bilingual in French and German, a specialist in the CIM and CUV Uniform Rules and, more broadly, an expert in Community (EU) law, international law and rail transport law. Throughout her career, she produced a wealth of advice and recommendations on multidisciplinary legal issues, COTIF and its appendices.

She also played a major role in the major revision of COTIF and the drafting of the Vilnius Protocol in the 1990s.

In reality, it is impossible to draw up an exhaustive list of the tasks, roles and services Ms Gries carried out for the Organisation.

Ms Gries is a source of information and has been witness to the major changes in COTIF and is the institution's memory bank. She has always been available to her colleagues and was always keen to pass on the knowledge she acquired over the years. Precise, organised, nuanced, generous and trustworthy are some of the qualities highlighted by her former colleagues and managers:



When I started working in the department for cross-border rail transport in the Austrian Ministry of Transport in March 1976, I quickly realised the importance of the legal service of the then OCTI, the predecessor of OTIF, and when I started working there myself in February 2007, I was aware that the demands on this service had steadily increased due to the considerable expansion of its tasks, particularly in the course of the creation and revision of COTIF, the influence of the EC/EU and currently the involvement in the completely new legal area of today's Luxembourg Protocol.

The fact that the legal service was able to meet the highest demands despite the enormous challenges was due to the skills and experience of the people working there, namely Ms Eva Hammerschmiedová, who worked in the legal service since April 1991, and Ms Iris Gries, who joined in August 1996.

Together, we formed a team of three people who were under very high performance and work pressure. The fact that there was no internal friction despite this circumstance and the instability that is generally attributed to three-person relationships in science was solely thanks to the team members. Sparks did indeed fly at our frequent trilateral meetings, but they were the sparks of ideas that emerged from the meeting of arguments. Iris Gries was the one who was never satisfied with quick solutions that she did not think through to the end, so that the meetings often lasted quite a long time, but also produced high-quality results. Iris Gries also brought to our team her profound training in the French legal system and professional experience in the activities that brought her into contact with the EC, UIC and CIT, as well as her foundation in the French-speaking world on the one hand and the special relations between her home region of Lorraine and the German-speaking world on the other.

Fortunately, the new Secretary General of OTIF is fully aware of the importance of the legal service, so there is good reason to hope that the work there will continue with the quality and integrity that Iris Gries demonstrated, even after she has gone into well-deserved retirement.

Gustav Kafka

Looking back a few years on my work with Iris Gries at OTIF in editing the Bulletin, attending meetings of the various OTIF organs, developing legal texts, etc., I can say that I have fond memories of those days. I particularly remember the beginning of this collaboration during the exciting time of the major revision of COTIF in the 1990s. In various difficult situations, you appreciate a colleague who - like Iris - is well organised, who not only structures things clearly, but also thinks things through to the last detail. In her case, these professional qualities are combined with admirable human qualities, namely kindness, helpfulness, reliability, open-mindedness and tolerance, the ability to see the good in everyone and everything. All of this was conveyed in our daily cooperation. These are all qualities and skills that are desirable in any working environment and are particularly important in an international working environment. An important part of her personality is also the fact that she is a person who cares for others (both people and cats) in her private life.

As a valued colleague who was involved in the fundamental changes to COTIF from the European railway reform in the 1990s until recently, Iris can look back on her time at OTIF with satisfaction and gratification as she retires.

Eva Hammerschmiedová

First of all, I would like to thank OTIF for remembering me and allowing me to write these few words on the occasion of Ms Iris Gries's retirement.

I have known Iris Gries for over thirty years, long before I had the chance to work with her during my time at OTIF (2013-2016).

Ever since I met Ms Gries, who is a great connoisseur of railway law, I have always been able to confide in her with my legal queries about my railway and the company I worked for. It was a luxury to be able to rely on her during my time at OTIF. I found her to be an excellent colleague and was able to see first-hand her great professional ability and, above all, her understanding of the Legal Department's requirements.

I learned a lot from Ms Gries and it was a great pleasure and privilege to work with her in OTIF's legal team.

I am very grateful to Ms Gries for all the help she gave me during the three years I had the pleasure of working with her, and especially in the last few weeks fighting against arbitrary decisions. I would like to take this opportunity to apologise to her for the difficult time she had as a result of this battle, as I know that it was not pleasant at all, either for her or for the legal team.

Dear Ms Gries, dear Iris,

Let us change the subject and get back to the good times, present and future. A new life is about to begin for you, Iris. We are all very happy for you, and I am sure you will be too. Retirement has a thousand positive things to offer, because you still have so much to discover and do.

I would not like to end this letter without telling you that in the course of my professional life I have met a lot of people, some of whom I cannot remember, but thanks to your help and everything you taught me, I have and will always have great memories of you, and I assure you of my very sincere friendship.

Dear Iris, I wish you a lovely and happy retirement. Enjoy it!

Carlos del Olmo Morand

I first met Ms Iris Gries in 2008 when, as a young railway lawyer, I went to Berne for a CIT meeting on passenger transport. During a dinner, I was introduced to her. Later, our paths crossed again at OTIF and UNECE meetings.

Since 2016, I have had the pleasure of working directly with Ms Gries, a senior lawyer in the Legal Department. When I refer to her as a senior lawyer, I am not only emphasising her title, but her expertise and skills as well. To interpret the law, one must also understand its context and the preparatory work. Ms Gries has always been a living encyclopaedia of the legal context and the preparatory work of COTIF. There are different kinds of great lawyers, but Ms Gries belongs to that rare category of professionals who are extremely attentive to detail and ensure that every conclusion is polished to perfection.

Both Ms Gries personally, as well as her work, have both been appreciated and recognised not only within the OTIF Secretariat, but also by OTIF's Member States and other international organisations and associations.

I would like to thank her for her integrity, professionalism and team spirit. I wish her a fulfilling retirement, knowing that her work has been recognised and will remain not only in our memories, but also in a variety of legal texts, including COTIF.

Aleksandr Kuzmenko

DEVELOPMENT OF RAILWAY LAW | OTIF-COTIF

CONSULTATION ON COTIF AND ITS CONTRACTUAL APPENDICES

The Secretariat held a consultation on potential revisions to COTIF itself and its appendices on railway contract law (CIV UR, CIM UR, CUV UR and CUI UR), which closed on 17 January.

Almost 40 responses were received from a range of stakeholders,

including OTIF Member States, a regional economic integration organisation, associations, sector operators and academia. The responses represent the views of the sector and provide the Secretariat with a wide range of opinions on potential revisions to COTIF and its contractual

appendices to be considered in more depth.

Each response received will be carefully reviewed and analysed with a view to making proposals to the ad hoc Committee on Legal Affairs and International Cooperation on the priority topics

and themes to be included in the ad hoc Committee's work programme for 2025-2027. It is likely the ad hoc Committee will tackle a

range of topics across all contractual appendices.

The Secretariat would like to take

this opportunity to thank all those who took the time to respond to the consultation.

ENTRY INTO FORCE OF REVISED UTP WAG, UTP NOISE, UTP TCRC AND REVISED APPENDIX I TO THE UTP TAF

On 1 January 2025, modifications to four UTPs entered into force. The Committee of Technical Experts (CTE) adopted these modifications at its 16th session on 11 and 12 June 2024 in Bern. The following is an overview of the changes in each UTP.

UTP WAG concerning freight wagons

The revised UTP is clearer and more precise with regard to its application. It notes that freight wagons are subject to this UTP as well as to UTP Noise, UTP Marking and UTP TCRC. Furthermore, the UTP makes a distinction in the definitions and specifications between "vehicles suitable for free circulation" and "interchangeable vehicles".

"Suitable for free circulation" means that the initial admission of a vehicle is valid for an area of use covering multiple Contracting States without the necessity of separate admission by each of these Contracting States. Wagons meeting these criteria may be marked "TEN".

"Interchangeable vehicle" means a vehicle which meets the requirements for free circulation and which, in addition, is equipped with standardised inter-vehicle interfaces enabling the vehicle to be integrated into a train composition alongside other interchangeable vehicles. Wagons meeting these criteria

may be marked "GE" or "CW" in addition to the "TEN" marking.

The UTP includes new requirements concerning derailment detection and prevention functions and combined transport. For the latter, Appendix H sets out requirements for the codification of units intended to be used in combined transport.

The implementing rules of the UTP have been simplified to increase legal certainty for the production of freight wagons. Implementing rules define the projects to which the latest version of the UTP must be applied and to which projects a previous version of the UTP may continue to be applied. Under the former rules, UTP-compliant vehicle types could be produced for 10 years, irrespective of whether the UTP was revised during this period. After this 10-year period, the vehicle type had to be assessed again for conformity with the latest version of the UTP. The new rules do not impose a time period. Instead, only specific elements of a vehicle (type) must comply with the latest UTP by a certain deadline. These elements and deadlines are defined in Appendix A to the UTP.

Specific cases for the United Kingdom and Norway have also been added.

The revised UTP WAG replaces the UTP WAG of 1 January 2022. The former version is repealed.

UTP Noise concerning vehicle noise

The revised UTP includes new requirements and assessment methods concerning friction elements for wheel tread brakes, i.e. brake blocks. The acoustic properties of brake blocks have a major impact on the pass-by noise of freight wagons. Assessment of the acoustic performance of a brake block is described in detail in Appendix F to the UTP. Read more on the subject of brake blocks in the article on *Railway noise: wagons in international traffic to be equipped with composite brake blocks* in this edition of the Bulletin.

The implementing rules have been revised and aligned with those of the UTP WAG. Specific cases have been added for starting noise and pass-by noise limits of locomotives operated in Norway, and for pass-

by noise limits of wagons operated in the Channel Tunnel.

The revised UTP Noise replaces the UTP Noise of 1 April 2021. The former version is repealed.

UTP TCRC on train composition and route compatibility checks

The revised UTP includes new requirements for checking the route compatibility of combined transport trains with the loading gauge and codification of the line. In this context, definitions of “combined transport train”, “train composition” and “combined transport profiles (CTP)” have been added.

The obligations for infrastructure managers and railway undertakings to exchange information have been clarified. This concerns information regarding line characteristics and operations that may affect route compatibility and train braking.

The Annex to the UTP, which sets out the list of parameters that need to be checked at both vehicle and train level, has been

updated to include the following: specific checks for combined transport, verification depending on the train detection system, checks of voltages and frequencies and, where applicable, checks of compatibility with routes that are equipped with the European Train Control System (ETCS) and radio systems such as GSM-R.

The revised UTP TCRC replaces the UTP TCRC of 1 January 2022. The former version is repealed.

Revision of the list of technical documents set out in Appendix I to the UTP TAF concerning telematics applications for freight services

Appendix I to the UTP TAF contains references to technical documents issued by the EU Agency for Railways (ERA). The technical documents include software coding and data message models necessary for the electronic exchange of information and the harmonised implementation of the TAF provisions. As a result of feedback from the railway sector,

and based on its experience, the technical documents are regularly updated to correct errors, add new elements or make changes to the TAF data message and data model. Appendix I to the UTP TAF is regularly updated to reflect these changes.

The latest changes concern the inclusion of RID provisions in the dangerous goods description in the TAF XLM schema; addition of information in the train composition message concerning containers, regenerative brake, weight of dangerous goods; modifications in the consignment order message concerning wagon, contact details for customers and new actors such as “carrier”, “loader”, “filler” and “unloader”.

All other texts in the version of the UTP TAF that entered into force on 1 January 2023 remain valid.

All UTPs are listed below and are available on OTIF's website: https://otif.org/en/?page_id=178.

Technical Interoperability Department

List of UTPs

UTP abbreviation	Instrument	Date
UTP GEN-A	Essential requirements	1.12.2017
UTP GEN-B	Subsystems	1.6.2019
UTP GEN-C	Technical file	1.12.2017
UTP GEN-D	Assessment procedures (modules)	1.10.2012
UTP GEN-E	Assessing entity - qualifications and independence	1.1.2024
UTP GEN-G	Common safety method on risk evaluation and assessment (CSM RA)	1.1.2024
UTP WAG	Freight wagons	1.1.2025
UTP Noise	Rolling stock noise	1.1.2025
UTP LOC&PAS	Locomotives and passenger rolling stock	1.1.2022
UTP Marking	External vehicle marking	1.4.2021
UTP PRM	Accessibility for persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility	1.1.2022
UTP TAF	Telematics applications for freight services	1.1.2023
	Appendix I to the UTP TAF	1.1.2025
UTP INF	Infrastructure	1.1.2022
UTP TCRC	Train composition and route compatibility checks	1.1.2025

RAILWAY NOISE: WAGONS IN INTERNATIONAL TRAFFIC TO BE EQUIPPED WITH COMPOSITE BRAKE BLOCKS

Since 8 December 2024, freight wagons used on many major international routes must be equipped with composite friction elements for wheel tread brakes (brake blocks) instead of cast-iron brake blocks. This article explains the rationale of this requirement and the legal provisions on which it is based.

In many Contracting States, railway noise, in particular noise caused by night-time freight trains, is considered a public health issue. For international freight traffic in all Contracting States, uniform limits for wagon noise were developed, initially in the EU and later in OTIF. On 1 December 2012, the first version of the UTP Noise entered into force. The latest version dates from 1 January 2025. The UTP Noise regulates the noise that may be emitted by new rolling stock, including the pass-by noise of freight wagons.

Over time, all old wagons which are at the end of their economic life will be replaced by new wagons. These new wagons must comply with the noise rules, so that the fleet will gradually become “silent”. One of the issues is that if only one or two wagons in a train are noisy and the rest are “silent”, overall the train is still noisy. Several Contracting States were of the view that the gradual replacement of wagons on economic grounds only would take too long to achieve the required noise limits. Therefore, the noise emitted by the existing, pre-UTP freight wagon fleet needed to be addressed as well.

Background

Most pre-UTP freight wagons are traditionally equipped with cast iron brake blocks that are pushed onto the wheel thread by the brake system to generate a braking force. When braking, the cast iron brake

blocks micro-roughen the steel running surfaces of the wheels. These rough wheel surfaces result in excessive pass-by noise when the wagons are running at speed. Research in the early 2000s revealed that when cast-iron brake blocks are exchanged for composite brake blocks, the wheel surfaces are no longer roughened but are instead smoothed. The pass-by noise emitted by wagons with smooth wheels is much lower.

The majority of Contracting States agreed that the cast-iron brake blocks on the existing fleet had to be replaced with composite brake blocks (retrofitting) before a certain deadline. At the same time, it was agreed that there should be no strict obligation to retrofit all wagons. Only wagons that actually caused excessive noise nuisance as a result of their being used on specific parts of the network during the night should be dealt with.

Several types of composite brake blocks were developed that could be used directly to replace cast-iron brake blocks, without the need to modify the brake system further. Retrofitting the entire fleet of freight wagons was considered the most economically efficient way to address railway noise.

Quieter routes

For this purpose, the UTP Noise of 1 April 2021 introduced the concept of “quieter routes”. The UTP Noise permits Contracting

States to define certain lines (or even the entire network) as quieter routes. These could for example be routes along which many people live and which have night-time freight traffic. The UTP does not define specific criteria for quieter routes. Only wagons that have a low level pass-by noise, i.e. those that have composite brake blocks or have disk brakes, may be used on quieter routes. From 8 December 2024, wagons that still have cast iron brake blocks may no longer be used on quieter routes. However, these wagons may continue to be used on lines that are not part of the quieter routes.

The European Union agreed on harmonised criteria that EU Member States must apply to define quieter routes. Information concerning quieter routes in the EU is available on ERA's website https://www.era.europa.eu/domains/technical-specifications-interoperability/noise-tsi_en. Non-EU OTIF Member States may apply their own criteria for defining quieter routes. These may range from not designating any quieter routes at all, to designating the entire network as quieter routes. Switzerland has designated its entire network as quieter routes (see 7.4.1 of the UTP Noise). Other OTIF Member States have not so far designated any quieter routes.

Considering the density of quieter routes in the EU and Switzerland, from 8 December 2024, wagons equipped with cast-iron brake blocks may no longer be used on

most international routes situated in EU Member States or Switzerland.

Approval of composite brake blocks

Composite brake blocks have to comply with the UTP WAG with regard to their general functioning and with the UTP Noise with regard to their acoustic performance.

Appendix O to the UTP WAG defines the assessment method for brake blocks. It focusses on their dynamic and static friction coefficients, as well as their mechanical and thermo-mechanical characteristics. Appendix F to the UTP Noise defines the assessment method to demonstrate the acoustic performance of a composite brake block.

All new types of brake blocks that comply with these requirements may be certified. Certificates may be issued by qualified bodies only, i.e. by assessing entities duly notified to OTIF's Secretary General, or by EU Notified Bodies.

Appendix G to UTP WAG refers to a list of fully approved composite brake blocks for international transport. It lists brake blocks that were already on the market

before a common method for the assessment of new brake blocks was included in the UTPs and TSIs. The list is therefore an interim measure during the transitional period. The approval periods of all brake blocks on this list have either expired or will soon expire, i.e. by 5 May 2025 at the latest. After their approval has expired, newly produced brake blocks of the types listed must be certified according to the UTPs or TSIs. Once the validity of all listed brake blocks has expired, the list will be removed. From that date, all newly produced brake blocks must be certified according to the UTPs or TSIs. Brake blocks produced when their approval period was still valid may continue to be used.

Appendix G to the UTP Noise lists composite brake blocks that are exempted from (acoustic) certification until 28 September 2033.

Fitting wagons with composite brake blocks

Wagons in international traffic may only be fitted with brake blocks that comply with the applicable legal requirements. If the cast-iron brake blocks on a pre-UTP wagon are replaced with composite brake

blocks that comply with the UTPs and no other noise sources are added, the wagon is deemed to comply with the pass-by noise requirements without further testing. It may then be used on quieter routes.

The transition to composite brake blocks for freight wagons is a significant step forward in addressing railway noise. The measures balance the need for public health improvements with economic feasibility by targeting wagons operating on quieter routes, which are often populated areas with night-time freight traffic. The legal framework, established through the UTP Noise and aligned with EU rules, permits Contracting States to limit rail noise nuisance significantly. By phasing out cast-iron brake blocks and replacing them with approved composite alternatives, the railway sector transitions towards quieter, more sustainable operations. The transitional period for retrofitting wagons has now ended, so that from 8 December 2024, only wagons with composite brake blocks should be used on quieter routes.

Bas Leermakers

17th SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE OF TECHNICAL EXPERTS

The Committee of Technical Experts will hold its 17th session on 17 and 18 June 2025 in Bern. Remote participation will be possible. The Committee of Technical Experts is one of the organs of OTIF and it deals with subjects in the scope of the APTU UR (Appendix F to COTIF) and ATMF UR (Appendix G to COTIF), most notably the rules and procedures related to the admission of vehicles in international traffic. Once the EST UR (Appendix H to COTIF) enter into force, the Committee of Technical Experts will also be competent to adopt Annexes to these new UR.

The invitation letter and agenda for the meeting were published on OTIF's website on 27 January 2025. The meeting will be held in Bern and delegates will be able to attend in person or remotely. All the documents concerning proposals for binding provisions under agenda item 4 were published on OTIF's website on 24 February 2025 and the remaining working documents will be published on 22 April 2025.

The invitation letter and all working documents are published on [OTIF's website](#) once they become available. See [Home » Activities » Technical Interoperability » Committee of Technical Experts » Working Documents](#).

The Committee of Technical Experts (CTE) will deal with a wide range of topics in the scope of the APTU and ATMF UR. These topics include the following proposals to adopt binding rules in the scope of the APTU UR:

- A proposal to revise the UTP LOC&PAS concerning locomotives and passenger rolling stock. The proposed changes include clarifications concerning the scope and application of the UTP, new rules concerning the interface between the rolling stock subsystem and on-board part of the control, command and signalling subsystem, modified provisions concerning water

release from sanitary facilities and pantograph current limits at standstill. The revision will introduce new requirements for derailment detection and prevention functions, train recording devices and rolling stock documentation. In addition, rules for interchangeable passenger vehicles will be added. Furthermore, specific cases and specific implementing rules for non-EU Contracting States will be updated. Validity deadlines (phases A and B) for vehicles and types of vehicles that comply with previous versions of the UTP will be removed. References to EU legislation and to standards will also be updated together with editorial modifications to align the UTP with the latest practice.

- A proposal to revise the UTP PRM concerning accessibility of the rail system for persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility. The proposed changes include clarifications concerning the scope and application of the UTP and modification of provisions concerning audible signals related to passenger door opening and closing and dynamic route information in and on trains. References to EU legislation and implementation rules will also be updated in a similar way to those of the UTP LOC&PAS. Furthermore,

editorial modifications to align the UTP with the latest practice will also be included.

- A proposal to revise the UTP Marking, where the proposed changes include updated references to the EU provisions and clarification of the meaning of digits 5 to 8 of the European Vehicle Number (EVN) and their link to the tables on ERA's website.
- A proposal to revise the UTP INF concerning infrastructure. The proposed changes include clarifications concerning the scope and the optional application of the UTP, modification of provisions concerning the voluntary application of the UTP to existing infrastructure, new provisions related to combined transport and maximum pressure variations in tunnels with operational speeds of 200 km/h or above. Updates will also address provisions concerning the categories of lines, specific cases and particular implementing rules for non-EU Contracting States and references to EU legislation and standards, together with editorial modifications to align the UTP with the latest practice.
- A proposal to update the list of technical documents referred to in **Appendix I to the UTP TAF** concerning telematics applications for

freight services. These technical documents contain detailed IT specifications, such as interface and process descriptions, definitions of databases for master data and code lists, and are regularly updated to reflect technological progress.

CTE will also discuss a number of other subjects. It will review an explanatory document concerning external vehicle marking, the application guides for the UTPs concerning wagons and noise to ensure that the UTPs are clear and updates of the handbook for the implementation and application of the APTU and ATMF Uniform Rules.

CTE will also consider a draft proposal for **Annex D to the future EST UR** to be applied by the Supervision Authorities when supervising railway undertakings in accordance with Article 6 of the EST UR. The formal adoption of Annex D can only take place after the EST UR have entered into force. The 17th session of CTE will consider the draft text, so that it can be adopted without delay once the EST UR enter into force.

At its 16th session, the General Assembly adopted OTIF's long-term strategy. The first strategic objective aims to ensure the effective and uniform application of COTIF. In this context, CTE will discuss steps towards full and correct application of the APTU and ATMF UR by Contracting States. The discussion will emphasise the implementation and practical application of the ATMF UR, as well as the possible future revision of the ATMF UR.

Lastly, it will review a progress report on the migration of wagon-related requirements from RID to the UTP WAG and discuss the possible integration of additional railway systems in the UTPs, with a view to the possible accession of GCC Member States to COTIF and the CTE's 2025/2026 work programme.

All Member States, associate members and regional organisations that have acceded to COTIF are invited, as well as the stakeholders as decided by CTE at its 15th session (see [Home » Activities » Technical Interoperability » Committee of Technical Experts » Decisions](#)).

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Opening of the session
Election of the Chair

1. Approval of the agenda
2. Presence and quorum
3. Items for information:
 - 3.1 General information from the OTIF Secretariat
 - 3.2 Report from the Committee of Technical Experts' working group Tech
4. Items concerning the adoption of binding provisions:
 - 4.1 Revision of the UTP LOC&PAS
 - 4.2 Revision of the UTP PRM
 - 4.3 Revision of the UTP Marking
 - 4.4 Revision of the UTP INF
 - 4.5 Modification of Appendix I to the UTP TAF
5. Items concerning approval of non-binding guidance and recommendations:
 - 5.1 Approval of an explanatory document concerning external vehicle marking

- 5.2 Revision of the application guide for the UTP WAG
- 5.3 Revision of the application guide for the UTP Noise
- 5.4 Update of the handbook for the implementation and application of the APTU and ATMF Uniform Rules
6. Further items for consideration:
 - 6.1 Progress report on development of the EST UR (Appendix H to COTIF): draft Annex D to the EST UR concerning a Common Safety Method for Supervision
 - 6.2 Progress report on migration of wagon-related requirements from RID to the UTP WAG
 - 6.3 OTIF's long-term strategy
 - 6.4 Monitoring and assessing implementation: steps towards full and correct application of the ATMF UR by Contracting States
 - 6.5 Possible future revision of the ATMF Uniform Rules
 - 6.6 Discussing the possible integration of additional railway systems in the UTPs: preparing for the possible accession of GCC Member States to COTIF
7. Work programme of the Committee
8. Any other business
9. Next session

The Committee session will be followed on 19 June 2025 by the 55th session of the standing working group Technology (WG Tech), which will also be held in Bern.

Dragan Nešić

18th SESSION OF THE RID COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS' STANDING WORKING GROUP

Madrid, 20 and 21 November 2024

At the invitation of Spain, the 18th session of the RID Committee of Experts' standing working group was held in Madrid on 20 and 21 November 2024. 18 RID Contracting States, the European Union, represented by the European Commission and the European Union Agency for Railways (ERA) and three international associations took part in the work.

After the 17th session of the standing working group (Berne, 22 May 2024) had focused on completing work on the 2025 amendments to RID, this working group dealt, among other things, with various questions of interpretation, pending issues in connection with the special provisions for the equipment of wagons already provisionally adopted for entry into force on 1 January 2027, and issues that are currently being dealt with in other international dangerous goods bodies and might have repercussions for RID. In addition, the working group approved some more necessary corrections to the 2025 amendments to RID and discussed the results of the 20th session of the working group on tank and vehicle technology, which met in Madrid on 19 November 2024 prior to the meeting of the standing working group.

RID Committee of Experts' standing working group

Interpretation of RID

Application issues with the SV mark in 6.8.3.2.9.6

The standing working group confirmed the interpretation

proposed by the RID/ADR/ADN Joint Meeting that affixing the SV mark only applies to tanks for the carriage of compressed, liquefied and dissolved gases fitted with safety valves. The safety valve mark must not be affixed to tanks for the carriage of refrigerated liquefied gases or to battery-wagons and multi-element gas containers (MEGC) whose elements are pressure receptacles.

Until the planned restructuring of RID 6.8.3.2, this interpretation will be published on OTIF's website under Legal Texts > COTIF > Dangerous Goods - RID > List of RID Interpretations.

Inspection of tanks for which the specified date for the intermediate inspection has passed

The standing working group also confirmed the interpretation proposed by the RID/ADR/ADN Joint Meeting that if the specified date of the intermediate inspection and the three-month tolerance period have passed, only an intermediate inspection shall be performed in accordance with 6.8.2.4.3. This interpretation has also now been published on OTIF's website. This interpretation can be removed from the website when the amendment to 6.8.2.4.3 adopted by the Joint Meeting in March 2024 comes into force on 1 January 2027.

Proposals to amend RID

Wagon equipment mark

At its 16th session, the standing working group had decided to

transfer the technical requirements for wagons for the carriage of dangerous goods from RID to the Technical Specifications for Interoperability (TSI) of the European Union rail system or to the OTIF Uniform Technical Prescriptions (UTP) for railway material intended to be used in international traffic, in order to facilitate assessment of the existing RID requirements by the assessing entities under the UTP or by the notified bodies under the TSI and to minimise duplication of inspections or inconsistencies in the assessment process. In the 2027 edition of RID, only high-level safety objectives are set out in a new 7.1.2 and reference is made to the UTP with regard to the technical design.

The high-level safety objectives and the references to the UTP will in future be included in special provisions for the equipment of wagons assigned to the substances and articles of RID for the carriage of which special technical vehicle equipment is prescribed in column (14) of Table A in Chapter 3.2 of RID. In column (14), alphanumeric codes beginning with the letters "WE" appear for these substances.

Two WE codes concern the voluntary fitting of wagons with systems that limit the consequences of a derailment or prevent the derailment of a wagon. As these are systems that can also be used for non-dangerous goods wagons, the meeting wished to use the same WE codes for non-dangerous goods wagons.

The representative of the European Union Agency for Railways (ERA) confirmed that marking non-dangerous goods wagons with

WE marks had now been taken into account in a revised version of the recommendation sent to the European Commission concerning the transfer of provisions from RID to the TSI WAG.

The standing working group also agreed on improved wording in 7.1.2 to clarify that the wagon only needs to bear the WE codes if it actually has the equipment described in the WE special provisions.

Orange band

According to RID 5.3.5, tank-wagons for the carriage of liquefied, refrigerated liquefied or dissolved gases must be marked with an unbroken, orange, non-reflectorized band 30 cm wide, encircling the shell at mid-height. The Joint Meeting's working group on tanks only recently confirmed the need for this specific marking in rail transport.

The standing working group agreed to a proposal from the International Union of Wagon Keepers (UIP) no longer to refer to the provisions on the design of orange-coloured plates with regard to the colour of this orange band, but to specify the colour "RAL 2003 pastel orange", as in standard EN 15877-1 (Railway applications - Marking on railway vehicles. Part 1: Freight wagons). It also adopted a supplement according to which visual changes in colour due to weather conditions are permitted.

The standing working group also agreed that this orange-coloured band should also be prescribed for extra-large tank-containers. The Secretariat agreed to inform the RID/ADR/ADN Joint Meeting of this decision so that a corresponding requirement could also be included in ADR. In this context, it was recalled that the extra-large tank-containers already in operation for the carriage of liquefied,

refrigerated liquefied and dissolved gases display orange bands on a voluntary basis.

Use of the term "vehicle" in RID

The term "vehicle" is used in various places in RID with different meanings. In 1.1.2.3 and 1.1.3.8, which govern the carriage of dangerous goods in or on board vehicles carried in passenger trains, only motor vehicles or trailers carried on the occasion of the carriage of passengers are meant in accordance with the Uniform Rules concerning the Contract of International Carriage of Passengers by Rail (CIV - Appendix A to COTIF). However, the term "vehicle" is also a component of some proper shipping names (in particular UN numbers 3166, 3556, 3557 and 3558) and is also used in European Union legal texts referred to in RID in the sense of the term "railway vehicle" as defined in RID. The terms "motor vehicle", "road vehicle" or "road tank-vehicle" are also used in RID, although only the term "road vehicle" is defined in RID.

The standing working group endorsed the Secretariat's proposal that, as a first step, the definition of "vehicle" from the Uniform Rules concerning the Contract of International Carriage of Passengers by Rail should be carried over into footnotes to 1.1.2.3 and 1.1.3.8. As a second step, the Secretariat will draw up a list of references to the term "vehicle" in RID, on the basis of which it should be discussed how clarification could be provided in individual cases, in a special working group if necessary.

Safety measures for the transport of ammonia

The Netherlands drew attention to a rail accident involving ammonia

that occurred in Serbia on 25 December 2022, which resulted in a derailment and the release of large quantities of ammonia. The Netherlands drew attention to important safety measures, such as crash buffers (special provision TE 22), protection against overriding (special provision TE 25), manhole covers that protrude beyond the screw bolts or recessed manhole covers, which might be suitable to improve safety. It was also suggested that the transitional periods for implementing special provisions TE 22 and TE 25 be reduced.

It was pointed out in the discussion that tank-wagons for the carriage of UN 1005 ammonia, anhydrous must already be equipped with crash elements that have an increased minimum energy absorption. In addition, devices to protect against the overriding of buffers are not necessary for tank-wagons for the carriage of ammonia because the tank ends have a wall thickness of more than 12 mm. Owing to the planned introduction of digital automatic couplings, which prevent climbing due to their design, retrofitting devices to protect against the overriding of buffers should no longer be considered.

The Netherlands will return to this issue on the basis of an official document at a future session of the standing working group.

Correction of the 2025 modifications to RID

The standing working group approved a list of corrections to the 2025 modifications to RID drawn up by the Secretariat, which had been identified when the 2025 edition of RID was being consolidated. In the meantime, the Member States had already been informed of this list of corrections by means of a depositary notification and the list had been published on

OTIF's website:

https://otif.org/fileadmin/docs/LegalTexts/DepositoryNotifications/NOT-RID-24071-e-corrections_to_amendments_2025_RID.pdf.

Change to NHM codes

The alphabetical list of dangerous goods in Table B of RID contains the so-called NHM codes of the International Union of Railways (UIC). The abbreviation is derived from the French term “nomenclature harmonisée marchandises” and refers to the Harmonized Goods List. These NHM codes are based on the Harmonized System (HS) standard published by the World Customs Organization (WCO) for the description and coding of commodities in international trade. NHM codes are an important basis for the handling of international freight transport and must be indicated in the CIM consignment note. As the assignment criteria for NHM codes differ from the assignment criteria for dangerous goods in RID, it was decided in the past to indicate the NHM codes in RID in order to make it easier for users.

For certain dangerous goods, new WCO HS codes will apply from 2025, which will also entail adjustment of the NHM codes. These changes particularly concern fuels.

As the NHM codes are a non-official part of RID and no official decision of the RID Committee of Experts is therefore required for amendments, the standing working group agreed to the procedure proposed by the Secretariat to amend the NHM codes for UN Nos. 1202, 1203, 1223, 1288, 1300, 3334 and 3475 directly in the online editions of RID on OTIF's website. The amended NHM codes are also listed in the above-mentioned corrigendum for the 2025 modifications to RID.

National translations of RID

The Secretariat reminded the meeting that the 2025 edition of RID had been placed on OTIF's website on 1 November 2024 in German, English and French. The Secretariat had also produced a synopsis of the amendments to RID and ADR in English to facilitate translation work by the Member States.

The Secretariat asked the RID Contracting States to send it a link to their national translations of RID 2025 so that they could be published on OTIF's website (www.otif.org > Legal Texts > COTIF > Dangerous Goods - RID > Publication of RID in the official language of the RID Contracting States). Sweden had already responded to this request.

Working group on tank and vehicle technology

The working group on tank and vehicle technology, which met prior to the standing working group, dealt with provisions for the carriage of extra-large tank-containers in single wagon traffic and for the use of humps in marshalling yards, as well as with the provisions for explosion protection for dangerous goods wagons with digital automatic coupling. The working group was also informed of the progress of the research project on the effects of surge movements in rail transport.

Extra-large tank-containers

The working group dealt with the question of the carriage of extra-large tank-containers in single wagon traffic and the use of humps in marshalling yards, which was pending from previous meetings of the working group.

Tank-containers are currently carried on container carrying

wagons of wagon class F2 in accordance with the strength standard EN 12663 (Railway applications – Structural requirements of railway vehicle bodies). Lower longitudinal compressive forces and a maximum impact speed of 7 km/h are expected for this class of wagons. This corresponds to the acceleration value of 2g specified for tank-containers in RID 6.8.2.1.2. In contrast, conventional freight wagons and tank-wagons are designed according to class F1 in accordance with standard EN 12663, for which impact speeds of up to 12 km/h and acceleration values of 5g would be assumed.

Standard EN 12663 is currently being revised. Wagons of class F2 are now defined in the standard as “wagons with shunting restrictions”. Consequently, braked humps may also be used for these wagons if the marshalling yard operator ensures that the wagons are not subjected to excessive loads and that speeds do not exceed 7 km/h. This would also enable the use of braked humps for tank-containers that comply with the design in accordance with RID 6.8.2.1.2.

According to BASF's report on its experiences, acceleration values of 3g have been measured during the carriage of extra-large tank-containers. For this reason, and in order to ensure the same level of safety for tank-wagons and extra-large tank-containers, some national representatives have called for an acceleration value of 3g to be prescribed in the right-hand column of RID 6.8.2.1.2 for extra-large tank-containers.

The working group came to the conclusion that there are basically two possible solutions. In the first solution, the previous requirement for 2g for the design of tank-containers in RID could remain unchanged. In this case, it would just have to be indicated that the hump shunting

of tank-containers designed for 2g, including extra-large tank-containers, is only possible with the restrictions set out in standard EN 12663. However, if the industry or national representatives insist that unrestricted shunting should be possible for extra-large tank-containers, as for tank-wagons, a design value of 3g would have to be specified in RID for extra-large tank-containers. In addition, the container carrying wagon would also have to comply with wagon class F1 in accordance with standard EN 12663 and be designed for 5g. The fastenings would also have to be designed for 5g.

The working group will decide at its next meeting which solution is more expedient.

Digital automatic coupling

The working group also discussed how to ensure explosion protection for dangerous goods wagons equipped with a digital automatic coupling that enter potentially explosive areas in which the ATEX Directive 2014/34/EU applies.

The working group agreed that a cost-effective solution, such as a main switch along the lines of ADR, is preferable to an expensive ATEX approval for the wagon.

ERA agreed to organise an expert working group in 2025 to formulate the necessary requirements for the explosion protection of wagons equipped with a digital automatic coupling.

Effects of surge movements in rail transport

A representative of DB Systemtechnik GmbH informed the working group of the progress of the research project on the effects of surge movements in rail transport. DB Systemtechnik GmbH is the company chosen to carry out this research project awarded by the German Centre for Rail Traffic Research at the Federal Office for Railways (DZSF). The aim of the project is to gain a fundamental understanding of surge behaviour in rail traffic. Various conditions, such as the geometry of the route, speed, tank design, viscosity of the substance and the interaction of transverse and longitudinal surge are to be considered.

In four work packages, existing regulations, standards and modelling approaches are being researched, a new simulation model is being developed, the new model is being validated in various tests and a parameter study is being carried out using simplified methods. This study will identify parameter ranges that can lead to critical driving conditions. The project should be completed in summer 2025.

The need for this research project came about in connection with the discussions on extra-large tank-containers and the need for the 20/80 rule. The 20/80 rule in RID/ADR 4.3.2.2.4 requires that tank-containers which are not divided by partitions or surge plates into sections of no more than

7 500 litres capacity must be filled to no more than 20% or no less than 80% of their capacity. As tank-containers are used intermodally, the 20/80 rule had in the past been carried over from road transport, where it is necessary for safety reasons, to rail transport. However, the industry concerned called for this rule to be lifted for all tank-containers used exclusively in rail transport.

If the results of the research project show that the 20/80 rule for tank-containers in rail transport is not justified, special marking would have to be considered so that tank-containers that do not comply with this rule are not loaded onto road vehicles. However, completion of the research project must first be awaited.

Next session

The 19th session of the RID Committee of Experts' standing working group will be held in Luxembourg in the week from 17 to 21 November 2025. This will be the last session of the biennium at which proposals for the 2027 edition of RID can still be discussed. At the 20th session of the standing working group in May 2026, only minor corrections to decisions already taken can be made.

Jochen Conrad
Katarina Burkhard

CALENDAR OF OTIF'S MEETINGS IN 2025

DATE	EVENT	ORG	LOCATION
24 - 28 March	RID/ADR/ADN Joint Meeting	UNECE	Berne - Switzerland
8 - 10 April	7 th session of the ad hoc Committee on Legal Affairs and International Cooperation		Berne - Switzerland
15 - 16 April	Ad hoc Working Group on the Harmonization of RID/ADR/ADN with the United Nations Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods	UNECE	Geneva - Switzerland
23 April	2 nd session of the Supervisory Authority		Berne - Switzerland
27 - 28 May	140 th Session of the Administrative Committee	★	Vienna - Austria
17 - 18 June	17 th session of the Committee of Technical Experts		Berne - Switzerland (HYBRID MEETING)
19 June	Working Group WG TECH. 55 th Session		Berne - Switzerland (HYBRID MEETING)

EVENTS WITH OTIF PARTICIPATION IN 2025

DATE	EVENT	ORG	LOCATION
17 - 20 March	2025 FIATA HQ Meeting	FIATA	Geneva - Switzerland (HYBRID MEETING)
18 - 19 March	UIC Group of Experts on the Carriage of Dangerous Goods	UIC	Wrocław - Poland
26 March	CIM Workshop	CIT	Berne - Switzerland (HYBRID MEETING)
27 March	CIM Committee	CIT	Berne - Switzerland (HYBRID MEETING)
26 - 27 March	Legal Matters Working Group	RNE	Vienna - Austria
8 - 9 April	Railway Interoperability and Safety Committee (RISC)	European Commission	Brussels - Belgium (HYBRID MEETING)
6 - 8 May	Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods, WP.15 (117 th session)	UNECE	Geneva - Switzerland
14 - 15 May	CIV Working Group	CIT	Berne - Switzerland (HYBRID MEETING)

★ Federal Ministry of Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology (A)

EVENTS WITH OTIF PARTICIPATION IN 2025

DATE	EVENT	ORG	LOCATION
20 - 23 May	International Transport Forum – Summit 2025	ITF - OECD	Leipzig - Germany
25 - 26 June	Railway Interoperability and Safety Committee (RISC)	European Commission	Brussels - Belgium (HYBRID MEETING)
30 June - 4 July	66 th session of the UN Sub-Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods	UNECE	Geneva - Switzerland
25 - 29 August	RID/ADR Editorial and Translation Conference	Federal Roads Office (FEDRO)	Switzerland
26 - 29 August	Temporary Working Group on Annex 2 to SMGS “Provisions for the Carriage of Dangerous Goods”	OSJD	Warsaw - Poland



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The Bulletin editor