

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT  
WORKING PARTY ON THE TRANSPORT OF DANGEROUS GOODS  
PERIODIC INSPECTION OF IBCs**

1. This note offers guidance to IBC owners on meeting the requirements for periodic inspection of IBCs in the UN Recommendations and Appendix M of the Approved Requirements for Classification and Packaging. It replaces WP/TDG(93)33.
  
2. The term 'Intermediate Bulk Container' for dangerous goods is defined in:
  - i) The United Nations recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods – Chapter 16
  
  - ii) The International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code – IMDG S.26
  
  - iii) The European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road – ADR Appendix A6  
And
  - iv) The International regulations concerning the Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Rail RID Appendix VI

The original definition established in the UN recommendations is reflected in the individual modal regulations.

3. The arrangements for the testing and certification of new IBCs is set out in the Department of Transport paper WP/TDG(96) – Arrangements for the performance testing, certification and marking of packages and IBCs for the transport of dangerous goods in accordance with the Recommendations of the United Nations Committee of Experts on the transport of dangerous goods.
  
4. IBCs are reusable packaging and as such can remain in service for many years, particularly metal, plastics and composite IBCs. The UN Recommendations require that:

"Every IBC should be inspected to the satisfaction of the Competent Authority before it is put into service and thereafter at intervals not exceeding 5 years with regard to:

Conformity to design type including marking;

Internal and external condition;

Proper functioning of service equipment.

It should be noted that "Composite" IBCs must have a new inner bottle (inner receptacle) after 5 years, making sure that the outer frame meets the original design criteria

Thermal insulation need to be removed only to the extent necessary for a proper examination of the body of the IBC".

Additionally:

"The leakproofness test should be repeated at intervals of not more than 2½ years".

5. A report of each inspection should be kept and retained for a short time after the date of the next inspection. The plate on the IBC must be updated at each inspection. The department of Transport considers that it is the responsibility of the owner of the IBC to arrange for these inspections to be undertaken as required.

The annex to this notice gives general guidance on the factors to be considered in undertaking these inspections.

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**GUIDANCE ON THE FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED IN UNDERTAKING PERIODIC INSPECTIONS OF INTERMEDIATE BULK CONTAINERS**

1. Every IBC design type that carries UN certification is required to have been tested as prepared for transport. These tests will specify that certain types of material were used and specific closure systems were fitted. The design type will be certified as the basis of this specification. Modifications to any component could render the certification invalid and the IBC may be deemed unsafe during transport. It is, therefore, incumbent upon the owner to ensure that the IBC he is inspecting (or having inspected by a third party) still meets the original specification against which it was tested).
  
2. To ensure compliance, a full specification, which may need to include the appropriate drawings, will need to be available to the inspector. This will normally be the test report issued by the certification organisation or appropriate extracts from it.
  
3. Where an IBC has been repaired following damage, it is incumbent upon the owner to ensure that it is still in compliance with the original specification.
  
4. In undertaking the required periodic inspections, inspectors should ensure that:
  - a) IBC are cleaned and purged prior to inspection.
  - b) A record sheet is prepared showing the:
    - IBC serial number;
    - UN mark;
    - Date of manufacture of last inspection;
    - Name and address of the inspector;
    - Name and address of the owner;
    - Signature of the inspector on completion of the test,

Certifying that the IBC complies with the appropriate part of Chapter 16 of the UN Recommendations, S.26 of the IMDG Code or Appendix VI/A6 of RID/ADR, as appropriate.

5. During inspections the following points should be considered:

Structure:

The condition and integrity of: Welds  
Top lift fittings  
Base lifting fittings (pallet base)

Inspect for: Corrosion  
Distortion

Vessel/Body

For Metal: Check Welds  
Check for Corrosion

For Plastics: Check for apparent paneling  
Check for apparent embrittlement  
(UV degradation)

For both plastics and metal check for chafing on the base frame.

Equipment:

Top Closures: Check Closing Catches are operational  
Gaskets – replace  
Clamping bands – inspect and replace if necessary

Bottom closures: Where required, ensure two closures in series  
Gaskets – replace  
Check securing mechanism is operational  
Check condition of Blanking plug

Note other equipment/fittings

General: Check Venting devices;  
Carry out leakproofness test in accordance with Chapter 16:  
Check marks on the IBC against test report/certificate.

6. A copy of the inspection report should be returned to the IBC user and retained on the inspector's file.

7. The IBC plate should be embossed in accordance with appropriate parts of Chapter 16.

Annex to DOT/October96

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