

**From:** [Nickels, Matthew \(PHMSA\)](#)  
**To:**  
**Cc:** [Baker, Yul \(PHMSA\)](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Question on Interp letter  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 26, 2025 10:12:10 AM

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Yul, please use this version of email with attachments instead of my email from yesterday, 8/25/25 2:49PM. Bob updated the documents he wanted to submit.

- PDF Incoming
- PDF Interp Example he thinks helps his pov
- WORD doc draft response he developed

Thank you!

**Mr. Matthew B. Nickels**

Acting Director, Standards & Rulemaking Division  
Office of Hazardous Materials Safety  
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration  
U.S. Department of Transportation

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**From:** Nickels, Matthew (PHMSA) <Matthew.Nickels@dot.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 25, 2025 2:49 PM  
**To:** Hazmat Interps  
**Cc:** Baker, Yul (PHMSA)  
**Subject:** FW: Question on Interp letter

Hey Yul, please process. Thank you!

**Mr. Matthew B. Nickels**

Acting Director, Standards & Rulemaking Division  
Office of Hazardous Materials Safety  
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration  
U.S. Department of Transportation

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**From:** Bob Richard <[brichard@hazmatsafety.com](mailto:brichard@hazmatsafety.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 25, 2025 1:02 PM  
**To:** Nickels, Matthew (PHMSA) <[Matthew.Nickels@dot.gov](mailto:Matthew.Nickels@dot.gov)>  
**Cc:** Kelley, Shane (PHMSA) <[shane.kelley@dot.gov](mailto:shane.kelley@dot.gov)>; Ryan Paquet <[rpaquet@hazmatsafety.com](mailto:rpaquet@hazmatsafety.com)>  
**Subject:** RE: Question on Interp letter

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the Department of Transportation (DOT). Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Matt,

Please accept the attached request for interpretation. This request is very straightforward and consistent with prior interp responses. In fact, it is like the attached 1405-0294 interp. Is there anyway since this is so clear and consistent with PHMSA's previous responses that it could be expedited? I have drafted a response if that is helpful. Our client is getting pushback from a consignee who does not understand that the HMR can serve as a CAA in certain circumstances and has requested a written letter from PHMSA.

Best Regards,

Bob Richard

Hazmat Safety Consulting, LLC.



August 25, 2025

Mathew Nickels  
Chief Standards Development Branch  
Standards and Rulemaking Division  
PHMSA  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Nickels,

This letter is requesting clarification that the Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMR; 49 CFR Parts 171-180) may serve as a competent authority approval for shipments offered in accordance with the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code. We recognize that a Competent Authority Approval (CAA), as defined in §105.5, is an approval by the competent authority that is required under an international standard, and that a specific regulation in the HMR may be considered a CAA if it satisfies the requirement of an international standard—see, for example, section 4.1.3.7 of the IMDG Code. We recognize that PHMSA has confirmed this in several interpretation letters and statements made in public forums (e.g., Reference No. 24-0017). Nevertheless, due to a current shipment frustration, we are requesting written confirmation relevant to a shipment my client is offering by vessel transportation in accordance with the IMDG Code.

The hazardous material that will be offered for transportation is UN1838, Titanium Tetrachloride, 6.1 (8), PGI. It is an Inhalation Hazard-Zone B material packaged in conformance with 49 CFR §173.227(b). 49 CFR §173.227(b) is assigned to UN1838 in the § 172.101 Hazardous Materials Table. §173.227(b) authorizes various non-bulk packagings for transportation, including for vessel transportation. The IMDG Code packaging instruction is P602 which specifies a hydrostatic test pressure of 300 kpa for one of its potential packaging options utilizing a drum or composite packaging. At §178.605(d) the HMR specifies a hydrostatic test pressure of 250 kpa for PGI hazmats. 4.3.1.7 of the IMDG Code:

4.1.3.7	Packagings, including IBCs and large packagings, not specifically authorized in the applicable packing instruction shall not be used for the transport of a substance or article unless specifically approved by the competent authority and provided: .1 the alternative packaging complies with the general provisions of this chapter; .2 when the packing instruction indicated in the Dangerous Goods List so specifies, the alternative packaging meets the provisions of part 6; .3 the competent authority determines that the alternative packaging provides at least the same level of safety as if the substance were packed in accordance with a method specified in the particular packing instruction indicated in the Dangerous Goods List; and .4 a copy of the competent authority approval accompanies each consignment or the transport document includes an indication that alternative packaging was approved by the competent authority.
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clearly applies and authorizes packaging authorized by the competent authority.

We are requesting written confirmation that if the material is packaged and transported in accordance with §173.227(b) and all applicable HMR requirements that a competent authority approval (CAA) is not required because the authorization in the HMR for use of packaging in conformance with 49 CFR 173.227(b) for transportation of a UN1838 serves as a U.S. CAA.

If you require any additional information or have questions regarding this request, please do not hesitate to contact me. I appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

*Robert Richard*

Robert Richard

Vice President Hazmat Safety Consulting LLC

This letter is in response to your August 2, 2024 email requesting clarification of the Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMR; 49 CFR Parts 171-180) regarding vessel transportation of UN1838, Titanium Tetrachloride, 6.1 (8), PGI an Inhalation Hazard-Zone B material packaged in conformance with 49 CFR 173.227(b). You ask whether the packaging in the HMR using this hazardous materials description satisfies the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code requirement for a competent authority approval (CAA), or if a CAA letter is still required to transport it internationally via vessel. More specifically, you ask whether a CAA (letter) is required to transport UN1838 when packaged in conformance with 49 CFR 173.227(b) for vessel transportation.

The answer is no. Your understanding is correct that 49 CFR 173.227(b)—which is assigned to the UN1838 entry in the § 172.101 Hazardous Materials Table—authorizes various non-bulk packagings for transportation, including for vessel transportation.

Note also that a CAA, as defined in § 105.5, is an approval by the competent authority that is required under an international standard, and that a specific regulation in the HMR may be considered a CAA if it satisfies the requirement of an international standard—see, for example, section 4.1.3.7 of the IMDG Code. Therefore, the authorization in the HMR for use of packaging in conformance with 49 CFR 173.227(b) for transportation of a UN1838 serves as a U.S. CAA.



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

**Pipeline and Hazardous  
Materials Safety  
Administration**

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

April 24, 2024

Melanie Barker  
Regulatory Specialist  
Champion X  
11177 S. Stadium Drive  
Sugar Land, TX 77478

Reference No. 24-0017

Dear Ms. Barker:

This letter is in response to your March 7, 2024, email requesting clarification of the Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMR; 49 CFR Parts 171-180) regarding vessel transportation of “UN3286, Flammable liquid, toxic, corrosive, n.o.s., 3 (6.1, 8), PG II” in composite intermediate bulk containers (IBCs). You ask whether the IBCs authorized in the HMR for a commodity transported using this hazardous materials description satisfies the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code requirement for a competent authority approval (CAA), or if a CAA letter is still required to transport it internationally via vessel. More specifically, you ask whether a CAA (letter) is required to transport a 31HA1 composite IBC for vessel transportation of this material.

The answer is no. Your understanding is correct that special provision IB2—which is assigned to the UN3286 Packing Group (PG) II entry in the § 172.101 Hazardous Materials Table—authorizes composite (31HZ1) IBCs for transportation, including for vessel transportation. Further, the HMR authorizes the use of composite IBCs for UN3286 materials, provided the packaging meets the conditions and limitations in § 173.243(d).

Note also that a CAA, as defined in § 105.5, is an approval by the competent authority that is required under an international standard, and that a specific regulation in the HMR may be considered a CAA if it satisfies the requirement of an international standard—see, for example, section 4.1.3.7 of the IMDG Code. Therefore, the authorization in the HMR for use of composite IBCs for transportation of a UN3286 PG II material serves as a U.S. CAA.

I hope this information is helpful. Please contact us if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Dirk Der Kinderen  
Chief, Standards Development Branch  
Standards and Rulemaking Division

**From:** INFOCNTR (PHMSA)  
**To:** Dodd, Alice (PHMSA)  
**Cc:** Hazmat Interops  
**Subject:** FW: Question regarding transportation of materials classified as UN3286  
**Date:** Thursday, March 14, 2024 11:58:17 AM

Hi Alice,

Please see the below interpretation request.

Let me know if you need anything.

Regards,

-Breanna

**From:** Barker, Melanie <Melanie.Barker@championx.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 7, 2024 11:51 AM  
**To:** PHMSA HM InfoCenter <PHMSAHMInfoCenter@dot.gov>  
**Subject:** Question regarding transportation of materials classified as UN3286

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the Department of Transportation (DOT). Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

I have been receiving questions regarding transport of materials classified as UN3286 Flammable liquid, toxic, corrosive, n.o.s., 3(6.1.8), PG II in IBCs by sea and one specific vessel that is refusing to accept the cargo without a letter from DOT. We have **31HA1** composite totes which appears to be an authorized composite IBC under Special Provision IB2 according to **49 CFR 172.102(c)(4)** and table found in **49 CFR 178.702(a)(2)**.

IB2 – *Authorized IBCs:* Metal (31A, 31B and 31N); Rigid plastics (31H1 and 31H2); Composite (31HZ1).

If 31HA1 composite IBCs are authorized containers to transport materials classified as UN3286 Flammable liquid, toxic, corrosive, n.o.s., 3(6.1.8), PG II by DOT, then does that extend to being authorized under IMDG? The IMDG regulations list packing instruction IBC 99 which states: *Only IBCs which are approved for these goods by the competent authority may be used (see 4.1.3.7). A copy of the Competent Authority approval shall accompany each consignment or the transport document shall include an indication that the packaging was approved by the Competent Authority.*

Can you provide a Letter of Interpretation for IB2 or advise if an application for a Competent Authority approval is required? Additionally, if a Competent Authority certification will be required, what documentation will need to be provided in order to receive an approval. We have attempted to apply for a Competent Authority certification in the past and were rejected on grounds of documentation.

Symbols	Hazardous materials descriptions and proper shipping names	Hazard class or Division	Identification Numbers	PG	Label Codes	Special provisions (§ 172.102)	(8)			(9)		(10) Vessel stowage	
							Packaging (§ 173.***)			Quantity limitations (see §§ 173.27 and 175.75)		Location	Other
							Exceptions	Non-bulk	Bulk	Passenger aircraft/rail	Cargo aircraft only		
G	Flammable liquid, toxic, corrosive, n.o.s.	3	UN3286	I	3, 6.1, 8	T14, TP2, TP13, TP27	None	201	243	Forbidden	2.5 L	E	21, 40, 100
				II	3, 6.1, 8	IB2, T11, TP2, TP13, TP27	150	202	243	1 L	5 L	B	21, 40, 100

Best Regards,  
**Melanie Barker**  
Regulatory Specialist

**CHAMPIONX**  
11177 S. Stadium Dr, Sugar Land, Texas 77478  
T +1 281 632 8105 E [melanie.barker@championx.com](mailto:melanie.barker@championx.com)

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