



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Pipeline and Hazardous
Materials Safety
Administration**

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

May 21, 2020

Eva Glimsche
Lithium Batterie Service
GbR – Sperberstr. 50e – 81827
Munich, Germany

Reference No. 19-0134

Dear Ms. Glimsche:

This letter is in response to your December 13, 2019, email requesting clarification of the Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMR; 49 CFR Parts 171-180) applicable to the classification of lithium ion batteries. You describe a scenario in which ear plugs or hearing aids are contained within a carrying case and the carrying case charges those items. You state that both the ear plugs / hearing aids and the carrying case contain lithium ion batteries. You ask whether the carrying case that charges the ear plugs and hearing aids is considered “UN3481, Lithium ion batteries contained in equipment” or “UN3480, Lithium ion batteries.” Additionally, you ask the same question regarding the ear plugs / hearing aids.

As described in your scenario, the carrying case would be considered “UN3480, Lithium ion batteries” because the primary purpose of the carrying case is to provide electrical power to another device (i.e., the ear plugs or hearing aids). Additionally, the ear plugs or hearing aids would be considered “UN3481, Lithium ion batteries contained in equipment.”

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dirk Der Kinderen'.

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

Circcarone
19-0134

January, Ikeya CTR (PHMSA)

From: INFOCNTR (PHMSA)
Sent: Tuesday, December 17, 2019 1:32 PM
To: Hazmat Interps
Subject: FW: Written guidance on the shipping of wireless ear plugs in a Powerbank case
Attachments: Glimsche_LOI.docx

Hello Alice and Ikeya,

Please see chain below for interpretation request and attached notes.

Please contact our office with any questions.

Thanks,
Kathryn, HMIC

From: Eva Glimsche [mailto:eva.glimsche@lithium-batterie-service.de]
Sent: Tuesday, December 17, 2019 8:15 AM
To: INFOCNTR (PHMSA) <INFOCNTR.INFOCNTR@dot.gov>
Subject: Re: Written guidance on the shipping of wireless ear plugs in a Powerbank case

Dear Kathryn,

we'd like to get formal guidance as per 49 CFR 105.20 in writing on the questions asked since the regulations do cover this case as a combination of UN 3480 and UN 3481 which in air transport according to Section II of PI 965 may not be packed together in the same outer packaging and would have to be declared as Section IB.

Best regards

Eva

Eva Glimsche
Lithium-Batterie-Service GbR – Sperberstr. 50e – 81827 München - Germany
Büro + 49 - 89 - 43579624 – Mobil + 49 - 171 – 4958177
eva.glimsche@lithium-battery-service.com
www.lithium-battery-service.com

Von: "INFOCNTR (PHMSA)" <INFOCNTR.INFOCNTR@dot.gov>
Datum: Montag, 16. Dezember 2019 um 15:43
An: Eva Glimsche <eva.glimsche@lithium-batterie-service.de>
Betreff: RE: Written guidance on the shipping of wireless ear plugs in a Powerbank case

Dear Eva,

We have received your inquiry about the hazardous materials regulations (HMR) (49 CFR Parts 171-180).

The HMR prescribes the requirements of the Department of Transportation governing the offering and transportation of hazardous materials in interstate, intrastate, and foreign commerce by rail car, aircraft, motor vehicle, and vessel. The hazardous materials regulations are available at the following URL:

<https://www.phmsa.dot.gov/phmsa-regulations>

If you require additional assistance, you may contact the Hazardous Materials Information Center, which is staffed with regulatory specialists who can quickly answer your questions by phone, Monday through Friday, 9 AM - 5 PM EST at +1(202) 366-4488.

Sincerely,

Kathryn, Hazardous Materials Specialist

An e-mail response from this office is considered informal guidance. Formal guidance may be requested in accordance with 49 CFR 105.20. <http://phmsa.dot.gov/hazmat/regs/interps>

From: Eva Glimsche [<mailto:eva.glimsche@lithium-batterie-service.de>]

Sent: Friday, December 13, 2019 5:29 PM

To: INFOCNTR (PHMSA) <INFOCNTR.INFOCNTR@dot.gov>

Subject: Re: Written guidance on the shipping of wireless ear plugs in a Powerbank case

Dear Kathryn,

this case is not covered in 173.185.

Therefore we request written guidance on our question below.

Thanks and best regards

Eva

Eva Glimsche

Lithium-Batterie-Service GbR - [Sperberstr. 50e - 81827 München](https://www.lithium-batterie-service.de)

Büro 089 - 43579624 - Mobil [0171 - 4958177](tel:0171-4958177)

eva.glimsche@lithium-batterie-service.de

www.lithium-batterie-service.de

Am 13.12.2019 um 15:06 schrieb INFOCNTR (PHMSA) <INFOCNTR.INFOCNTR@dot.gov>:

Dear Eva,

We have received your inquiry about the hazardous materials regulations (HMR) (49 CFR Parts 171-180).

The HMR prescribes the requirements of the Department of Transportation governing the offering and transportation of hazardous materials in interstate, intrastate, and foreign commerce by rail car, aircraft, motor vehicle, and vessel. While we cannot provide an exhaustive list of each applicable requirement, we suggest you review section 173.185 for additional information on lithium batteries. The hazardous materials regulations are available at the following URL:

<https://www.phmsa.dot.gov/phmsa-regulations>

If you require additional assistance, you may contact the Hazardous Materials Information Center, which is staffed with regulatory specialists who can quickly answer your questions by phone, Monday through Friday, 9 AM - 5 PM EST at +1(202) 366-4488.

Sincerely,

Kathryn, Hazardous Materials Specialist

An e-mail response from this office is considered informal guidance. Formal guidance may be requested in accordance with 49 CFR 105.20. <http://phmsa.dot.gov/hazmat/regs/interps>

From: Eva Glimsche [<mailto:eva.glimsche@lithium-batterie-service.de>]
Sent: Friday, December 13, 2019 5:19 AM
To: INFOCNTR (PHMSA) <INFOCNTR.INFOCNTR@dot.gov>
Subject: Written guidance on the shipping of wireless ear plugs in a Powerbank case

Dear PHMSA Team,

herewith I request written guidance on the following question:
Is the small case that lithium cell powered ear plugs or hearing aids are kept in for recharging a powerbank?

See photo attached.

To our understanding any article with the main purpose of providing power to another piece of equipment is considered a powerbank and would need to be declared as UN 3480. Whereas the ear plugs respective the hearing aids would need to be declared as UN 3481.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Best regards

Eva

Eva Glimsche
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