



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Pipeline and Hazardous
Materials Safety
Administration**

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

February 1, 2022

Mr. Tim Jennings
Ultra Life Communications Systems
1457 Miller Store Road
Suite 106
Virginia Beach, VA 23455

Reference No. 21-0080

Dear Mr. Jennings:


This letter is in response to your July 23, 2021, email requesting clarification of the Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMR; 49 CFR Parts 171-180) applicable to lithium ion batteries. You state that your company has developed a new product that houses a vibration isolated 6U half rack flight case with an uninterrupted power supply (UPS) and a drawer that holds a personal computer bolted to the rack. You also state that there is a lithium ion battery which supplies power to the electronics in the case—but only when the source of power (i.e., external AC power) is no longer available—and it continues to provide AC power until the lithium ion battery is fully drained. Finally, you state the power switch to operate the UPS is within the sealed case preventing any accidental activation of the product during transportation. You seek clarification to determine—for shipping purposes—if the lithium ion battery should be described as “UN3481, Lithium ion batteries contained in equipment *including lithium ion polymer batteries, 9*” or “UN3481, Lithium ion batteries packed with equipment *including lithium ion polymer batteries, 9*.”

Based on the description of the product and the drawings you provided in your email, the lithium ion battery—as described—is considered a self-contained battery for the primary purpose of providing electrical power to separate equipment (i.e., the UPS) and therefore, should be described as “UN3480, Lithium ion batteries *including lithium ion polymer batteries, 9*.”

This is consistent with previously issued letters of interpretation (Ref. Nos. 16-0018 and 16-0125).

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". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "D".

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

Baker

From: [INFOCNTR \(PHMSA\)](#)
To: [Dodd, Alice \(PHMSA\)](#)
Cc: [Hazmat Interps](#)
Subject: FW: Request for Letter of Interpretation
Date: Friday, July 23, 2021 2:20:54 PM
Attachments: [image011.png](#)
[image012.png](#)

21-0080

Hi Alice,

Please see the below Interpretation request.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

Regards,

-Breanna

From: Jennings, Tim <tim.jennings@ulbi.com>
Sent: Friday, July 23, 2021 10:27 AM
To: INFOCNTR (PHMSA) <INFOCNTR.INFOCNTR@dot.gov>
Cc: Jones, Breanna CTR (PHMSA) <breanna.jones.ctr@dot.gov>
Subject: Request for Letter of Interpretation

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,

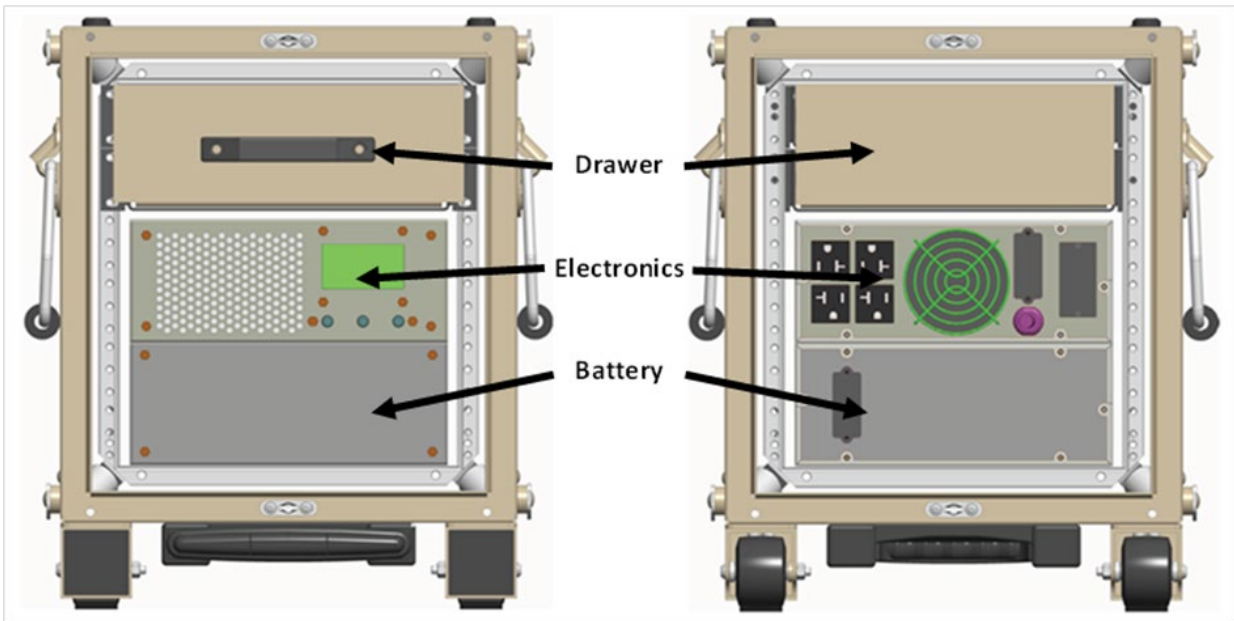
We have developed a new product that includes a lithium battery, and we are looking for an interpretation of whether the product is UN3481 “packed with equipment” or “contained in equipment.”

The equipment, as shown in the image below houses a vibration isolated 6U half rack with an uninterruptable power supply (UPS) and a drawer to hold a PC, all bolted to the rack. The battery in question only connects to the power supply electronics within the case, such that when the primary source of power (external AC power) is no longer available, the UPS will continue to provide AC power until the battery fully drains. The switch to turn the UPS on is within the sealed case preventing any accidental turn on of the equipment during transportation.

I am pleased to provide any additional information that will help with this interpretation. Please contact me at the undersigned.

Thank you,

Tim



Front (no cover shown)

Rear (no cover shown)



Product with both covers attached

Tim Jennings | VP, Engineering and Operations | Ultralife Communications Systems | Office (757) 419-2402 | tim.jennings@ulbi.com | <http://www.ultralifecorp.com> **We. Are. Power.**
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