

EXPLOSIVES HAZARDS

Fact Sheet No 9: Transport of Explosives

Before explosives (including explosives articles) can be transported in the United Kingdom they are required to be classified in the form and packaging in which they will be transported. Classification is undertaken by the HSE (for civil explosives), or the Ministry of Defence (for military explosives). When classified an explosive will be assigned a Hazard Division, a Compatibility Group and a UN Number. (See Fact Sheet 15 for further information on classification).

Unclassified explosives can only be transported for the purpose of testing in connection with the classification of that explosive. The transport of unclassified explosives requires specific authorisation by the HSE.

For transport, explosives must be suitably packaged. All packages must be of sound construction, using suitable and compatible materials: they must be designed and constructed so that they prevent goods leaking or escaping during transport. Damaged packaging must not be used.

Each design of package must be tested and certified, and carry the allocated UN Mark.

Packages, including the articles and substances and any inner packaging, must be properly labelled. Packages with illegible, damaged or incorrect labels must not be transported.

The transport of explosives on public roads is regulated under the Carriage of Explosives by Road Regulations 1996 (as amended). The purpose of these regulations is to minimise the risk to the public during the transport of explosives on public roads. The regulations cover:

- Measures to prevent and mitigate the consequences of accidents, including controls on loading, supervision, routing, duration, delivery and unloading.
- Security measures.
- Prohibition of the transport of certain types of explosives.
- Minimum standards of construction for vehicles.
- Limits on the quantity of explosives that can be carried in different types of vehicle.
- Limits on the types and amounts of explosives that can be carried together.
- Information to be displayed on vehicles and containers, and documentation to be carried with the vehicle.

Drivers and attendants of vehicles carrying explosives must hold a valid vocational training certificate, which is appropriate to the transport of explosives (with certain minor exceptions).

Where explosives (including articles) that are subject to the Control of Explosives Regulations 1991 and/or the Firearms Act 1968, are being transported, the persons transporting the goods and the person receiving them, must hold an Explosives Certificate and/or a Firearms Certificate (Section 5 Authorisation).