

Dangerous Goods Safety Adviser examinations

Feedback and guidance for candidates

Introduction

This paper provides general feedback received from the Dangerous Goods Safety Adviser (DGSA) markers appointed to mark the examination papers. It aims to highlight areas where weak performance has been identified in recent examinations.

The comments will not apply to all candidates, but it is hoped that the observations will help those who have been unsuccessful to prepare for re-sitting the examination.

General

- Please remember that you can lose marks through illegible handwriting and poor presentation of your answers.
- Many candidates fail to read questions with sufficient care or miss key words within the question such as '**explain**' or '**give reasons**'. The requirement to '**explain**' or '**give reasons**' for your answer means you should identify the key steps taken to reach your answer. This allows an examiner to give suitable credit for the methods used. Similarly, you can lose marks if no explanation is given. Examples of the approach to answering questions can be found within the following document: http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/DGSA_Sample_Papers_Guidance_Notes.pdf
- References are generally presented correctly, but some candidates use page numbers which is not acceptable.
- Special provisions and special packing provisions must be addressed when answering questions.
- Examiners have found that candidates who needed to re-sit the examination have often had difficulty with the following requirements:
 - The list of substances in the index to RID/ADR is not comprehensive; there are other lists in Part 2. You need to be aware of them.
 - You must be aware that the dangerous goods rules are multimodal; whilst a detailed knowledge of the air and sea rules is not required, you must know how RID/ADR address the relationship.
 - Packaging codes (UN) apply to packagings, IBCs, large packagings, packagings for infectious substances and pressure receptacles (cylinders). Some types of packaging require additional markings. You need to understand that there are many packaging types in addition to drums and IBCs.

- You must be able to use the relevant parts of RID/ADR to identify the packaging codes and the additional markings applicable to all packaging types.
- Even when 'CDG2009' is pre-entered on the answer paper, some candidates quote RID/ADR references.
- You must be aware that there are a number of UK national derogations to RID/ADR.
- You must be able to distinguish the difference between the 'mixed packing' and 'mixed loading' rules.
- You must understand the tank hierarchy.
- You must be familiar with the transport document completion requirements.
- Many candidates have not been able to identify the difference between 'limited quantities', 'limited loads' and 'fully regulated consignments'.
- Limited quantities and excepted quantities are **not** exemptions from ADR.

Core

- Please refer to the general comments above, particularly those relating to answer presentation and the requirements for an explanation.
- DGSA-related questions do not always relate to 'the duties of the DGSA'; some may relate to reporting or qualification requirements etc.
- A question relating to the determination of a class or packing group, particularly through the use of the 'table of precedence' may not require the allocation of a proper shipping name; if this is required, it will be asked for in the question.
- You must understand the 'limited quantities' and 'excepted quantities' regime and its application, including the new marking requirements.

All classes

- 'All classes' means that a question can relate to any class. You must not assume that all the questions are limited to classes 3, 6.1 and 8.
- Candidates have had difficulty with the following areas in recent examinations. Please ensure that you:
 - understand the requirements for 'limited quantity' consignments (packing and marking)
 - are able to identify the difference between 'limited quantities', 'excepted quantities' and 'fully regulated consignments'

- understand that the general provisions located before the actual packing instructions are an integral part of the packing instructions and questions may relate to this area; you must know the contents of 4.1.1, 4.1.2 and 4.1.3
- understand the rules for orientation arrows
- understand the difference between requirements relating to the design and testing of a packaging and conditions of use
- know that DGSA's are not always required for the shipment of dangerous goods
- be aware that certain packaging types have a finite life
- are able to distinguish between a 'package' and an 'overpack'
- know that dangerous goods meeting the rules of classification are never exempt from RID or ADR unless there is specific statement to that effect eg special provision. In some cases, there are relaxations from all requirements

Road

- The narrative text at the beginning of each case study is integral to answering the questions it contains. You will need to constantly refer to that narrative.
- In recent examinations, candidates have had difficulties with the following aspects:
- distinguishing between the marking requirements for vehicles carrying bulk/tank loads and those carrying packages. This is a basic requirement for a DGSA. Problems with this issue may be linked to a failure to read the question properly. Some candidates were also unable to distinguish between 'labels' and 'placards' and 'tanks' and 'containers'
- differentiating between 'limited quantities' (3.4) and 'load-related exemption' (1.1.3.6)
- distinguishing between accident reports, which are the responsibility of the DGSA under 1.8.3, and serious accident or incident notifications, which are required under 1.8.5
- understanding the safety obligations of the participants (1.4)
- accurately describing the duties of a DGSA described in ADR 1.8
- recognising the detailed requirements shown in the columns on the right-hand page in Table A of ADR

Failure to take account of this feedback and guidance may lead to poor performance.