



CANDIDATE PERFORMANCE REPORT

November 2023

The purpose of this document is to highlight key subject areas from this examination diet where our examiners reported that candidates performed well and topics that candidates found demanding.

The report also provides guidance to help candidates prepare for future assessments.

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Core

Diet	November 2023
National pass rate	78.9%

Some candidates failed to show the steps taken to determine an answer, despite this detail being requested in the question. When this happens, examiners have insufficient information to assess the candidate's understanding of the topic.

Candidate Performance

Areas that candidates performed well in:

Topic 1 – Classification

Questions on this topic were generally answered well. Some candidates had difficulty interpreting the Table of Hazard Precedence and problems applying Packing Group criteria within Classes.

Topic 5 – Marking, Labelling and Placarding

Questions on this topic were well answered. Some candidates lost marks by not providing full references.

Topic 9 – Legal Framework

Questions on this topic relating to security provisions (9.3) were well answered.

Areas that candidates found demanding:

Topic 3 – Packing and tank provisions

Feedback from examiners shows that candidates struggled with this topic area.

Topic 6 – Exemptions and Concessions

Candidates found it difficult to apply the requirements of the regulations in practical situations.

Topic 9 – Legal Framework

Candidates found it difficult to apply the requirements of the regulations in practical situations.

Road

Diet	November 2023
National pass rate	54.2%

Candidate Performance

Areas that candidates performed well in:

Candidates performed well in the following topic areas:

Topic 1 – Transport equipment

Topic 3 – Documentation

Topic 7 – Operational procedures

Questions on these topic areas were answered well with the majority of candidates accessing the marks available.

Areas that candidates found demanding:

Many candidates lost marks by providing an incorrect or incomplete reference.

Candidates did not perform well in the areas of:

Topic 2 – Marking and Placarding

Topic 3 – Documentation

Topic 4 – Compliance Thresholds

Topic 8 – Emergency Response Requirements

Answers for this topic area were missing key information.

Many candidates lost marks by providing an incorrect or incomplete reference, specifically in the following topic areas:

Topic 2 – Marking and Placarding

Topic 3 – Documentation

Candidates also failed to provide all required references or did not complete them in full.

Many candidates lost marks by not fully reading the requirements of the question and only completing one part of a question.

Candidates displayed a lack of understanding of the regulatory regime, specifically the DGSA's role and the application of the UK CDG regulations.

Some candidates appeared to be confused between “mixed packing” and “mixed loading” requirements.

Several candidates found the requirements relating to the placement of panels and/or placards on transport units carrying tanks demanding, under both the UK CDG and ADR rules.

Many candidates failed to understand parking supervision requirements.

Rail

Diet	November 2023
National pass rate	75%

Overall, the performance of candidates in this diet was satisfactory.

Some candidates lost marks for incomplete or insufficiently detailed answers. Questions relating to a specific substance(s) must be answered accordingly – the information provided in the answer must directly relate to the substance(s) concerned.

Candidates need to ensure they clearly understand the distinction between the accident and incident reporting requirements arising, respectively, under 1.8.3 and 1.8.5 of RID.

As is often the case, a lack of attention to detail resulted in marks being lost on questions relating to transport document entries.

A number of candidates lost marks on questions relating to the UK national regulations – CDG2009 (as amended). Candidates preparing for the Rail exam need to be familiar with the structure and scope of CDG2009 (as amended) and understand the extent to which these regulations amend the provisions of RID.

Candidate Performance

Areas that candidates performed well in:

The performance of candidates on most syllabus topics was satisfactory.

Areas that candidates found demanding:

The performance of some candidates was below expectations on questions relating to the following specific topic areas:

Topic 1 – Transport Equipment

Some candidates failed to appreciate that the requirements applicable, respectively, to RID tanks and UN portable tanks are not fully aligned and that the reference sources are in different chapters of RID.

Topic 2 – Marking and Placarding

Questions relating to the application of the UK national CDG regulations – CDG2009 (as amended) – in particular, requirements relating to the Emergency Action Code – were not well answered and/or referenced.

Topic 3 – Documentation

A number of candidates lost marks on questions concerning transport document completion, mainly due to a lack of attention to detail.

Topic 11 – Legal Framework

Questions relating to the assignment of duties under RID were not well answered.

Inland Waterways

Diet	November 2023
National pass rate	50%

The results for this diet were mixed.

Some candidates showed a good understanding of the ADN Agreement and how to apply its provisions.

The performance of some candidates suggested they were unfamiliar with the syllabus and not well prepared for the exam.

Candidate Performance

Areas that candidates performed well in:

Some candidates performed well on all syllabus topics. Others had problems with all aspects of the syllabus for this exam.

Areas that candidates found demanding:

Some of the candidates who attempted the exam at this diet had problems with questions across all syllabus topics – relating to both tank vessel operations and the transport of dangerous goods in packages.

All Classes

Diet	November 2023
National pass rate	62.8%

Marks were lost by candidates failing to ensure that all elements of a question were answered. For example, where questions required more than one detail in the answer, these were not all provided.

Unless otherwise stated, references are required to support answers. Many of the questions require candidates to visit two or more areas of text to establish the answer(s). In such cases, references are required for each area of text consulted to provide the full answer.

Candidates failing to provide sufficient references is a common fault and some references quoted did not support the answers given.

Where a specific substance is quoted, the answer will be particular to that substance rather than an answer from a general section.

Candidate Performance

Areas that candidates performed well in:

Candidates performed well in the following topics:

Topic 1 – Classification

Candidates did very well in identifying UN numbers and proper shipping names.

Topic 2 – Packaging and Tank Provisions

Candidates demonstrated a good understanding of package selection requirements for specific substances and interpreting the need for inners to be made of particular materials.

A question on maximum permitted quantities for specific package types and substances was answered particularly well.

Topic 3 – Marking and Labelling

In general candidates demonstrated a sound understanding of package marking and labelling requirements.

Areas that candidates found demanding:

Many marks were lost due to packing instruction references being incomplete. The regulatory part, chapter, section and sub-section are required, in addition to the packing instruction number.

Topic 1 – Classification

Some candidates failed to demonstrate an understanding that 'litre' (not 'kilogram') is the relevant unit of measurement where a question clearly relates to a liquid.

A significant number of candidates failed to correctly prepare a sample being sent to a laboratory for accurate classification.

Topic 2 – Packing and Tank Provisions

Some candidates failed to recognise the distinctions between a 'single' and a 'combination packaging' and a 'combination packaging' and an 'overpack'.

Topic 3 – Marking, Labelling and Placarding

Several candidates correctly identified a Large packaging from the UN approval mark but then marked it as an IBC.

Marks were lost by candidates placing incorrect mark(s) and label(s) on the package, in addition to the correct marks and labels.

Some candidates marked a package as an overpack.

Topic 4 – Documentation

Many candidates did not provide accurate transport document entries by failing to provide a technical name after the PSN.

Preparing candidates for future assessments

General

Prior to the examination(s), candidates are encouraged to review the relevant syllabus for the examination(s) they intend to sit and attempt the relevant sample questions on the SQA website.

It is strongly recommended that candidates familiarise themselves with Instructions to Candidates and Notes before starting the examination.

Candidates must ensure they read questions fully and provide complete answers to all parts of a question.

All elements of each question should be read through prior to answering, thus preventing duplication of answers.

Where required in the question, it is important that candidates show the key steps in their decision making.

Candidates must also ensure that references where required, include the relevant part, chapter, section and sub-section (as applicable).

Candidates need to be familiar with the UK Carriage of Dangerous Goods etc Regulations (CDG2009 as amended) – in particular requirements relating to the Emergency Action Code.

Candidates must be able to provide relevant references from CDG2009 and, when required, the associated texts e.g. the Dangerous Goods Emergency Action Code List (DG EAC List).

Before submitting a completed paper, candidates should carefully check that their written answers cover all elements asked within the question.

Core

Candidates are encouraged to read and understand the DGSA syllabus prior to sitting the exam. They are also encouraged to attempt the sample questions provided on the DGSA website in preparation for the exam.

Candidates are encouraged to make sure they understand the definitions of the various danger classes and the criteria for establishing Class and Packing Group assignment. They must also know how to use the Table of Hazard Precedence (Topic 1).

Candidates need to be able to recognise the difference between 'limited quantities' and 'excepted quantities' as these topics are regularly confused, leading to the loss of a substantial number of marks (Topic 6.1).

Candidates need to ensure they clearly understand terminology e.g. the distinction between package 'marks' and 'labels' and transport unit 'marks' and 'placards'.

Candidates must be able to identify the various types of containment method e.g. drums, IBCs etc., and the options available in terms of materials of construction. They must also be able to determine the information relating to packaging type and operational constraints indicated by the UN Package Code (Topics 3.1 to 3.3).

Candidates are encouraged to ensure they understand the criteria for the use of 'orientation arrows' on packages containing liquids (Topic 4.1).

Road

Candidates are encouraged to read and understand the DGSA Road syllabus prior to sitting the exam. They are also encouraged to attempt the sample questions provide on the DGSA website in preparation for the exam.

Candidates should also familiarise themselves with the UK CDG Regulations and the Emergency Action Code requirements.

Rail

Candidates are encouraged to study the DGSA Rail syllabus in detail prior to taking the exam.

Candidates need to ensure they understand the structure, content and requirements of the UK national legislation and not just the requirements of the international RID regulations.

Inland Waterways

All candidates are encouraged to read and understand the DGSA Inland Waterways syllabus prior to the sitting of the exam.

Candidates should ensure that they read questions carefully and provide complete answers and references.

All Classes

Candidates should study the DGSA All Classes syllabus prior to sitting examination.

In preparation, they are encouraged to attempt the sample questions provided on the DGSA website. This will go some way to giving (particularly new) candidates a good idea of what to expect.