

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

1. **Please ensure that you have studied and prepared yourself appropriately before attempting to sit any of the DGSA examinations.**
2. Remember that you can lose marks through illegible handwriting and poor presentation of answers.
3. Many candidates fail to read questions with sufficient care and/or ignore key words within the question such as '**explain**' or '**give reasons**' or '**show in full**'. The requirement to '**explain**' or '**give reasons**' for your answer means you must identify the key steps taken to reach your answer, '**show in full**' requires a more expansive response. This allows an examiner to give suitable credit for the methods used.
4. Similarly, you can lose marks if no explanation is given. Examples of the approach to answering questions can be found within the DGSA [Sample Papers Guidance](#) webpage accessible via the link.

References are generally presented correctly but some candidates use page numbers which is not acceptable; all references **must** be complete and accurate. It should be noted that 'Annex A' and 'Annex B' are not suitable references.

- a. Please note in particular:
 - a. that dangerous goods meeting the rules of classification are never exempt from RID or ADR unless there is a specific statement to that effect e.g. a special provision; in some cases, there are relaxations from all requirements.
 - b. special provisions and special packing provisions must be addressed when answering questions;
 - c. the list of substances in the index to RID/ADR is not comprehensive; there are other lists in Part 2;
 - d. substances may have more than one entry in the Dangerous Goods List resulting in different packing groups etc.
 - e. 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;
 - f. packaging codes (UN) apply to packagings, IBCs, large packagings, tanks, packagings for infectious substances and pressure receptacles (cylinders). Some types of packaging require additional markings

- g. there is a difference between 'mixed packing' and 'mixed loading' rules;
- h. 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 any additional markings and be prepared to answer questions relating to any of the packaging chapters in RID/ADR;
- i. sections of RID/ADR devoted to the movement of dangerous goods in tanks are specific in their relevant Chapter headings. Many candidates seem unaware of the difference between tanks of Chapter 6.7 (UN portable tanks) or 6.8 (RID/ADR tanks) and also fail to take account of the class-specific sub-sections within these chapters;
- j. when 'CDG2009' is pre-entered on the answer paper, you must quote the applicable reference(s) from these Regulations and **must not** provide RID/ADR references;
- k. there are several UK national derogations to RID/ADR;
- l. there is a tank 'hierarchy' which provides for the use of alternative tanks;
- m. the transport document completion requirements;
- n. the difference between 'limited quantities', 'limited loads' and 'fully regulated consignments';
- o. that 'limited quantities' and 'excepted quantities' are **not** exemptions from ADR;
- p. security is not the same as vehicle supervision, the relevant chapters being 1.10, 8.5 and 8.4 respectively;
- q. the distinction between 'overpacks' and 'packaging'.

Core

1. **Please refer to the general comments above, particularly those relating to answer presentation and the requirements for an explanation.**
2. You must have an understanding of the 'limited quantities' and 'excepted quantities' regimes and their application.
3. DGSA-related questions do not always relate to 'the duties of the DGSA'; some may relate to reporting or qualification requirements etc.
4. A question relating to the determination of a class or packing group, particularly when using 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.

All classes

1. **Please refer to the general comments above, particularly those relating to answer presentation and the requirements for an explanation.**
2. 'All classes' means that a question can relate to any class. You must not assume that all questions are limited to specific classes, for example Classes 3, 6.1 and 8.
3. Before attempting this paper, please ensure that you are able to identify and or understand:

- a. requirements for 'limited quantities' consignments (packing and marking);
- b. differences between 'limited quantities', 'excepted quantities' and 'fully regulated consignments';
- c. that general packing provisions located before the actual packing instructions i.e. 4.1.1, 4.1.2 and 4.1.3, are an integral part of the packing instructions and questions may relate to this area;
- d. the rules for orientation arrows; including size and positioning;
- e. differences between requirements relating to the design and testing of a packaging and conditions for its use;
- f. that DGSA's are not always required for the shipment of dangerous goods;
- g. that certain packaging types have a finite life;
- h. the distinction between a 'package' and an 'overpack';

Road

1. **Please refer to the general comments above, particularly those relating to answer presentation and the requirements for an explanation.**
2. Before attempting this paper, please ensure that you are able to identify and or understand:
 - a. security provisions and the reporting requirements concerning accidents; these are a vital part of the DGSA's duties;
 - b. the tank-vehicle placarding and marking requirements and how to reference them; there is a difference between 5.3.1.1 and 5.3.1.1.1;
 - c. the structure of UK Regulations and the requirement to quote references from them and not ADR;
 - d. how many fire extinguishers are needed and their basic sizes and how to explain the extinguisher provisions;
 - e. the difference between 'security' requirements (1.10) and vehicle supervision (8.5/8.4), these are separate issues.
3. Some Candidates demonstrate they are looking for a question to which they know the answer, rather than ensuring they answer the question being asked.
4. A few Candidates are still attempting more than one case study. Only **one** of the three options is required to be completed.

Rail

1. **Please refer to the general comments above, particularly those relating to answer presentation and the requirements for an explanation.**
2. Some candidates have problems interpreting the scope and application of the security provisions (1.10) and cannot identify and/or explain when a security plan is required.
3. Candidates often seem to be unaware of the tank marking requirements for UK national rail journeys under CDG2009 (as amended) and the mandatory variations from RID's provisions that apply to such operations.
4. A few Candidates are still attempting more than one case study. Only **one** of the three options is required to be completed.
5. Candidates often fail to distinguish between the DGSA accident (1.8.3) and Dangerous goods incident (1.8.5) reporting requirements.
6. Questions relating to bulk transport are frequently misinterpreted with candidates incorrectly referring to the chapters.

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