SMDG Recommendation # 8: Empty tank container with residues

About this document
This document describes the best practice for EDI transmission of “empty tank containers with residues”.

Recommendation:
- Mark the transport equipment as Empty and
- Use equipment attribute code ETR to specify as “Empty Tank with Residue”
- Indicate hazardous properties in a Dangerous Goods declaration

Definition
An “Empty tank container with residue” is defined as a tank container without cargo inside. It is considered as empty from an operational perspective by the carrier, terminals, and customer. It will not be shown on a cargo manifest. However, the container in some cases still contains residues from its previous cargo transport. This cargo remainder might have a Dangerous Goods property. Therefore, the container must be declared and reported as DG-container. Carrier, terminals, and authorities must apply the same IMDG rules as for a DG-container with cargo.

Issue
For many actors in the supply chain there is no clear assignment of such container as “Full” or “Empty”. Depending on a particular use case, it could be considered as Empty because there is no cargo inside, or it could be considered as “Full” because it has a DG property. Some IT systems automatically classify a container as “Full” when it has a DG property.

As a result, the electronic communication of an “MT tank container with residue” is often misunderstood by the receiver, resulting in disarrangement and uneconomic extra email exchange.
Solution

The SMDG has introduced a Status Attribute Code “ETR” for “Empty Tank with Residue”. Carrier, terminals, and customers may use it for declaration in all related EDIFACT messages.

Where “empty” and “full” are denoted, like in the EQD segment, the container shall be marked as “empty”.

The code ETR clearly identifies an “MT tank with residue” as such. Sender and receiver of a message can be sure about the special property of the container, avoiding ambiguities and additional effort for clarification.

The code ETR is published in the SMDG Attribute code list, which is available on https://smdg.org/documents/smdg-code-lists/smdg-handling-and-stoloc-code-lists/

Reason for this solution is that showing such container as “empty” comes closer to the operational reality. This container is not deployed in a cargo transport. The small amount of residue does not justify a declaration as “full”. Hence, marking empty tanks with residues as “Full” is deprecated and considered as bad practice.

Usage in Edifact

The EQD segment:

EQD+CN+ABC1234567+22T3+++4’ (4 means empty)

The attribute code ETR:

FTX+ACF++ETR:ATTRIBUTES:306’ (D.00B and later)
FTX+ACF++ETR:ATT:306’ (before D.00B)

In future, it is intended to use the ATT segment for this purpose. The SMDG guidelines are work in progress. Future syntax example:


DGS declaration:

DGS+IMD+8+2735’
FTX+AAD+++2 METHYL-PENTAMETHYLENEDIAMINE’

Example in COPRAR 2.1.3 (D.00B)

Segment Group 6:

EQD+CN+ABC1234567+22T3+++4’ (empty transport equipment)
... (segments like RFF, LOC, MEA, ...)
FTX+ACF++ETR:ATTRIBUTES:306’ (FTX describing attribute ETR)

Segment Group 8:

DGS+IMD+8+2735’ (DG-class)
FTX+AAD+++2 METHYL-PENTAMETHYLENEDIAMINE’ (DG-substance)
...

(segments/groups like HAN, SG10, NAD, ...)
In case qualifier ACF is used for specification of a coded “construction material” in DE 4441, the qualifier ABS may be used for distinction.
Example in BAPLIE 3.2 (D.21B)

Segment Group 7:

```
EQD+CN+ABCU1234567+22T3+++4'  (empty transport equipment)
...                           (more segments like RFF, LOC, MEA, ...)
...                       
```

Segment Group 11:

```
DGS+IMD+8+2735'        (DG-class)
ATT+26+PSN:DGATT:306+:PSN::AMINES,LIQUID,CORROSIVE,N.O.S.'  (DG-PSN)
ATT+26+TNM:DGATT:306+:TNM::2 METHYL PENTAMETHYLENEDIAMINE'    (DG-tech. name)
...                                     (more segments/groups like MEA, FTX, SG12)
```

Example in BAPLIE 2.2 (D.95B)

Segment Group 2:

```
LOC+147+0020072'        (stowage location)
FTX+ACF+i++ETR:ATTRIBUTES:306' (FTX describing attribute ETR)
...                           (more segments like MEA, DIM, TMP, LOC, RFF)
```

Segment Group 3:

```
EQD+CN+ABCU1234567+22T3+++4'  (empty transport equipment)
```

Segment Group 4:

```
DGS+IMD+8+2735'        (DGS describing DG-class)
FTX+AAD+++2 METHYL PENTAMETHYLENEDIAMINE' (DG substance)
```

In case qualifier ACF is used for specification of a coded “construction material” in DE 4441, the qualifier ABS may be used for distinction.