Yves Guengant talks about regulations

Yves Guengant,
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IMEMG: What are the reference documents defining Insensitive Munitions?

YVES GUENGANT: Insensitive Munitions (I.M) are defined in NATO STANAG 4439, the policy document that covers the introduction and assessment of IM. Its supporting document is AOP 39.

IMEMG: Are Insensitive Munitions only defined by NATO?

YG: Actually, no. The United Nations' recommendations on the transport and storage of dangerous goods, which covers the civilian field, also address I.M.

IMEMG: Could you be more specific about the organisations responsible for establishing regulations concerning the transport and storage of dangerous goods?

YG: There are two. The United Nations as well as NATO specify recommendations to be implemented in each country. The UN's Orange Book, which is actually orange, is the Manual of Tests and Criteria that defines the different classes of dangerous goods. In this document, "Class 1" includes everything that is liable to explode. It is subdivided into six Hazard Divisions (HD). UN recommendations are adapted by the relevant competent bodies for each transport category: i.e. road, rail, inland waterways, sea, and air. In Europe, road transport regulations are governed by the European Commission for the 27 member countries. Air transport of dangerous goods is ruled by the ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organisation) and, maritime transport by the IMDG (International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code). Regarding storage, it is up to national civilian authorities to decide the applicable regulation in each country (safety distances, quantities allowed…).

However, none of these regulations are directly applicable to the military which have their own model established by NATO in the Allied Ammunition Storage and Transport Publication (AASTP).

IMEMG: What about the transport and storage of Insensitive Munitions (IM) in that case?

YG: Insensitive Munitions are ruled by both NATO standard HD1.2.3 and UN standard HD1.6, depending on whether a ship or a depot is civil or military and is used during peacetime or wartime.

IMEMG: What are the benefits of these two classifications?

YG: As a key improvement to the HD1.1 usual rule, both regulations allow to safely transport or store four to six times more explosive items in the same space. However, it is somehow difficult to materialize these advantages because of the dual NATO/UN regulation system *[See page 3].*

« Hazard Divisions? »

HD1.1 concerns ordinary explosives **and munitions generating mass explosion**; HD1.2 refers to anything that generates fragments without mass explosion; HD1.3 addresses anything which burns making very strong flames; HD1.4 for articles generating moderate danger i.e. fireworks, 1.5 for insensitive explosives mainly for civilian use, 1.6 for insensitive munitions.

In order to qualify as an Insensitive Munition under the UN rules, there are several tests on both energetic materials and on munitions which need to be passed, e.g. Fast Heating and Bullet attack which are very similar to the NATO tests.

More information on next page

The last version of the IM card

NEW

French IM Policy release

The purple October 2010 IM card was widely distributed at the IMEMTS in Munich. But, in the meantime, France has just issued its IM/MURAT domestic policy. Indeed, the "INSTRUCTION MINISTERIELLE N°211893" prepared by DGA /IPE and signed by the French Ministry of Defence stands as the implementing document of STANAG 4439 (signed and ratified by France). It replaces the Doctrine MURAT released in 1993. From the former document, we could note that MURAT Labels are still in force. There are slight changes to be coherent with NATO SSD 1.2.3 (for Label 2*) and UN HD 1.6 (for Label 3*). It is mandatory that new munitions abide by MURAT requirements. The IM signature of in-service munitions has to be determined. New IM card available early January.