

## INTERMODAL EQUIPMENT APPROVAL—RECOMMENDED PROCEDURE

Adopted: June 2014

### 1.0 SCOPE

**1.1** This standard outlines the procedures governing application for approval of specialized intermodal equipment such as hoppers, racks, and other non-standard container types for interchange in intermodal rail service. This standard should be followed when a specialized type of intermodal equipment does not conform to all of the standards defined in Association of American Railroads (AAR) *Manual of Standards and Recommended Practices (MSRP)*, Specification M-930, “Closed Van Containers for Intermodal Service.”

**1.2** Depending upon the scope of deviation from Specification M-930, this approval process could extend beyond 12 months.

**1.3** Specification M-930 should be referenced for determining applicable requirements for new intermodal shipping products.

**1.4** It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all manufacturers and suppliers of subcomponents meet AAR requirements.

### 2.0 APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OR CONDITIONAL APPROVAL

**2.1** The request for approval and all other correspondence regarding approval of new intermodal equipment shall be directed to the Association of American Railroads as follows:

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| Director—Business Services<br>Association of American Railroads<br>425 Third Street SW, Suite 1000<br>Washington, DC 20024 |
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**2.2** A separate application for approval shall be made for each different design of equipment for which approval is requested. Each application shall address sections of Specification M-930 that are not met or are not applicable to the equipment submitted for approval. For sections not met, an equal or more stringent requirement must be specified.

**2.2.1** Should the applicant determine that the Specification M-930 standard does not apply at all or in part, the request for approval shall so state, and applicant shall submit the proposal to the AAR Intermodal Operations Committee (IOC) for handling of such circumstances. Any product that deviates from Specification M-930 may require additional testing under maximum designed load to ensure equipment integrity.

**2.2.2** Previously approved equipment designs may be used as a basis for AAR IOC review and approval of related equipment on a case-by-case basis. In instances not affecting design, material, or performance, such requests for approval must cite the equipment on which such a request is based. Applicant must provide details of variances from the previously approved design and include a statement to the effect that no change in design, material, or performance will be made.

**2.3** Each request for approval must be accompanied by all relevant information, including drawings, calculations, material listings, test data, and other information pertinent to the approval. All material identified as confidential or proprietary will be handled as such by the AAR IOC and AAR staff.

**2.4** The applicant will identify country of origin of the product if manufactured or assembled outside of North America.

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**2.5** Applicant is responsible for all inspection and testing costs, including transportation and reasonable out-of-pocket expenses for an official AAR representative should testing be conducted at a location other than an AAR site. In such cases, the request for approval must state that the applicant will reimburse AAR for all costs associated with testing. Settlement of all AAR-related testing costs must be made prior to issuance of conditional approval or approval.

**2.6** For testing at the Transportation Technology Center (TTCI), TTCI should be contacted for estimated costs and payment information. Contact information is available at [www.aar.com](http://www.aar.com).

**2.7** Upon receipt of request for approval, AAR IOC will review and provide feedback to the applicant within 90 days of the receipt.

### **3.0 TEST/INSPECTION PROCEDURES**

**3.1** If testing or inspection is required, the applicant is responsible for scheduling the test with TTCI or another AAR-approved test facility. This will include submission of test procedures and a proposed test schedule sufficiently in advance of the testing to permit review of the test schedule and assignment of an official AAR representative.

**3.2** All testing for the purposes of obtaining AAR IOC approval or certification must be conducted at AAR-designated facilities or an AAR-approved alternate location in North America. In the event special circumstances preclude testing in North America, AAR approval must be requested in writing. Certification or approval testing must be witnessed by at least one designated AAR representative.

**3.3** Upon review and acceptance of the test proposal, the IOC will arrange for an official AAR representative. A time period of no less than three weeks should be allowed between the request for and assignment of an official AAR representative.

**3.4** Certification tests are to be conducted on intermodal equipment that deviates from AAR M-930 standards. Certification tests are not to be used for equipment development. Any design changes or adjustments made during or after certification testing must be reported to AAR IOC and include all documents cited in paragraph 2.3.

**3.5** A report based on results of tests will be provided by the AAR representative to the applicant and to the AAR IOC.

**3.6** For laboratory tests (if required), representatives of other manufacturers will not be permitted to be present during tests except by permission of the applicant of the equipment being tested.

**3.7** The applicant's representative may discontinue the test and withdraw the equipment at any time. This action must be confirmed in writing to the AAR within 24 hours.

**3.8** The AAR IOC will exercise such supervision over the tests as considered necessary in order to adhere to the test procedures specified in the applicable individual application.

#### **4.0 CONDITIONAL AND UNLIMITED APPROVAL**

As a result of the AAR IOC's satisfactory review of the application and all available test or inspection results, conditional approval or approval will be granted and the applicant so notified.

##### **4.1 Conditional Approval**

**4.1.1** In order to provide a uniform method of evaluating service experience, the AAR may grant conditional approval of specific allotments of equipment for test in North America interchange to determine actual service performance. Reports are required to identify the number of units distributed along with subsequent service performance experience. This information is used by the AAR in consideration of requests for unlimited approval, new location of manufacture, and change in design or material.

**4.1.2** When stipulated in the AAR letter of conditional approval, the applicant is required to furnish a semiannual distribution and service report that is due within 30 days of the January 1 and July 1 reporting dates. The distribution portion must include the total distribution at the end of the reporting period. The service performance portion must include all known malfunctions or difficulties experienced during the reporting period, as well as action taken to correct such difficulties or malfunctions.

##### **4.2 Approval**

In the instance where conditional approval is granted, after a 2-year service test period or other period specified by the AAR IOC, the manufacturer may request unlimited approval (also called "approval"). The AAR IOC shall review distribution and service reports covering the test period and may require further testing or inspection of the field test equipment. Based upon the IOC review of service reports of additional testing (if required), unlimited approval will be granted or denied and the applicant so notified.

#### **5.0 WITHDRAWAL OR DENIAL OF APPROVAL**

**5.1** In the event the applicant fails to respond to AAR correspondence within 60 days, or if the applicant fails to comply with the foregoing reporting requirements, the AAR may consider withdrawal of conditional approval or unlimited approval of the equipment.

**5.2** In the event that conditional approval is pending and the applicant fails to respond to AAR correspondence within 60 days, the AAR IOC may terminate consideration of the application for conditional approval. Denial of conditional approval may require the applicant to begin the application process again and repeat all required testing. This determination will be made by the AAR IOC when the subject is reopened.

**5.3** The AAR IOC may withdraw conditional approval or approval at any time on the basis of unsatisfactory service performance or for safety reasons. In such cases, the applicant will be notified of reasons for pending withdrawal of approval and afforded the opportunity to correct such deficiencies prior to withdrawal of approval.

#### **6.0 APPEAL PROCESS**

**6.1** If conditional approval or approval is denied by the AAR IOC, the applicant will be notified of the reasons for denial. The applicant may appeal the committee's decision by responding in writing to the AAR Director—Business Services (see paragraph 2.1). Applicant's correspondence must address all reasons for denial of approval.

**6.2** At the request of the applicant and at the applicant's expense, the AAR IOC will meet with the applicant during a regularly scheduled IOC meeting or at a time designated by the committee. Requests for meetings with the AAR IOC should be received by the AAR Director—Business Services (see paragraph 2.1) at least 30 days prior to the regularly scheduled IOC meeting.

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**7.0 REQUEST FOR APPROVAL TO CHANGE OR MODIFY CONDITIONALLY APPROVED OR APPROVED EQUIPMENT**

An applicant must submit in writing a request for approval to change or modify the design, manufacture of parts, or material of conditionally approved or approved equipment. Changes cannot under any circumstances be introduced into production before the AAR has approved the change and the applicant advised in writing of the approval.

**8.0 TRANSFER OF APPROVALS**

**8.1** Specific equipment approval granted to a company by name is not automatically transferable to another company if change of ownership occurs. Changes in ownership may require a reconsideration of approval and must be submitted in writing to the AAR. The AAR IOC will consider the nature of the request for transfer of approval and determine if re-approval proceedings or other courses of action are necessary.

**8.2** It is the responsibility of the new owner to notify the AAR within 30 days of the change of ownership. This information will initiate AAR IOC consideration of transfer of approval.