

DANGEROUS GOODS TRAINING AND ITS EFFECT ON CARRIERS OF LPG

By

TIM BARKER
Managing Director
Specialist Training & Consultancy Services Ltd

Companies that carry LPG on their vehicles are increasingly asking training providers about the ADR training implications of the 2004 Carriage of Dangerous Goods and Transportable Pressure Equipment Regulations. I have compiled a list of some of the most frequently asked questions that we are getting here at Specialist Training. Hopefully, the answers should help operators to prepare themselves for next years changes.

What is the background to the training requirements and when does the requirement come into force?

The 2004 Regulations and the 2005 Amendment Regulations, implement the ADR 2005 requirement that all drivers of vehicles which carry dangerous goods over load thresholds should have an appropriate ADR Vocational Training Certificate (VTC). A derogation deferred implementation of this requirement to 1st January 2007. This removes the previous exemption for vehicles less than 3.5 tonnes. The UK objected to this measure in the ADR negotiations two years ago but lost the vote. Subsequent lobbying by Industry bodies for exemptions has similarly been unsuccessful. Current lobbying is aimed at an additional deferment of the introduction date of 1st January 2007. Past history would suggest that a further deferment is unlikely, so it would be wise for the industry to start preparing itself.

How do I know if my drivers will need ADR training?

If the total load on the vehicle is over 333kg of LPG in cylinders the driver needs to hold a VTC. For example a vehicle carrying 8 x 47 kg cylinders of propane would have to be driven by an ADR trained driver. Where the load is less than 333kg, the driver still requires training "appropriate" to the load being carried, although it doesn't have to be the ADR course. This is usually covered by attendance on a one day "Awareness" day.

What is the aim of ADR training?

The aim of ADR training is to introduce the drivers to the hazards associated with the products they carry and what to do in the case of emergencies. It involves taught lessons and practical and written exercises. It covers in a greater depth those issues that a driver may have been taught on an Awareness day training session.

How does an ADR course work?

The ADR is a modular course. To achieve a certificate, a candidate has to attend and pass an exam for the Core Module, the Packages or Tanks module and at least one Class module. Those who carry gas cylinders therefore would have to pass the Core, Packages and Class Two (Gases) modules. This course would last for two and a half days. Additional modules can be added if other classes of dangerous goods are carried, although this would obviously increase course length and cost.

How long does the certificate last?

The VTC lasts for five years. A refresher course can be taken if the certificate is to be renewed. This can take place at any time in the final year of the validity of certificate. The new certificate will then be valid at the end of the first five year period.

How much does a course cost?

Costs vary depending on where you go and the quality of the training organisation. For the two and a half day course comprising Core, Packages and Class Two (Gases) prices can range from £200 to £250 plus Vat plus exam fees of £27 (no vat). There would be additional charges for any other modules that were added.

Does the ADR course cover the requirements for security training?

The Core module of the ADR includes a security element and drivers will receive a basic briefing on dangerous goods security issues. Whilst it gives the drivers a grounding in the matter, it does not relieve an organisation of its duty to deal with security training issues specific to its own operations.

When should I book training?

There will undoubtedly be a rush at the end of the year and availability, and prices, will be affected accordingly. As always, the message is don't leave it to the last minute!

The LPGA and reputable training companies will be available to advise on any aspects of training requirements for the industry. It is in all our interests that the transition to the new training regime is a smooth one, so remember, we are here to help!

