



# ASSOCIATION OF AMERICANRAILROADS

## **Safety and Operations**

**Jeffrey J. Usher**

Assistant Vice President-Business Services  
and Regional and Short Line Railroad Liaison

April 23, 2014

To the Members:

### **Reference: Operating – Transportation Circular Letter, OT--53- Documentation Requirements For The Acceptance of TOFC/COFC Shipments**

Please be advised that the AAR's Intermodal Operations Committee (IOC) has reviewed this Circular and has determined that the provisions of said circular are defined in each carrier's operating instructions and recommended that the Circular Letter OT-53 be canceled.

Effective immediately, Circular Letter OT-53- Documentation Requirements for the acceptance of TOFC/COFC shipments is canceled.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey J. Usher".



**Association of American Railroads**  
**Safety and Operations • Business Services**  
**425 Third Street, SW • Washington, D.C. 20024**

## CIRCULAR No. OT-53

IN EFFECT AS OF SEPTEMBER 1, 1983

### DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ACCEPTANCE OF TOFC/COFC SHIPMENTS

To the Members:

TOFC/COFC shipments are frequently offered to railroads for transportation without proper shipping instructions, including a complete description of the lading to accompany the shipment. Many of these shipments are often described as "FAK" freight all kinds, but sometimes contain hazardous materials. An accurate description of hazardous materials is vital to emergency response personnel in the event of a derailment or some other type of accident affecting the lading.

Federal regulations require that those parties who tender shipments to carriers must provide documentation on any hazardous materials which are included in the shipment. However, the regulations also require that no person may accept for transportation, a shipment containing hazardous materials without a shipping paper prepared in accordance with the regulations. The final obligation is on the carrier and he, therefore, must demand that his customers and draymen submit shipping papers which contain the proper hazardous material description.

To comply with federal hazardous material regulation and to avoid possible catastrophes which could occur as a result of failure to obtain hazardous descriptions on hazardous lading, it is imperative that all rail carriers implement the following procedure:

Trailers/containers will not be accepted without shipping instructions unless accompanied by shipper's certification that they do not contain hazardous materials. Shipments containing hazardous materials will not be accepted without shipping paper containing hazardous material description.

It is essential that all rail carriers establish a procedure similar to that outlined above, and it is urged that all involved rail departments cooperate in this effort. In particular, sales personnel should promote compliance with this recommended practices with shippers.

On behalf of the General Committee.

Respectfully,

J. J. Robinson