



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

**Research and  
Special Programs  
Administration**

173.166  
400 Seventh Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

JUN 2 1999

Mr. Edwin C. Amsler  
Mitsubishi Motor Manufacturing  
of America  
100 N. Mitsubishi Motorway  
Normal, IL 61761

Ref. No. 98-0374

Dear Mr. Amsler:

This is in response to your letter dated October 29, 1998, concerning air bag devices that are packed in non-specification, reusable high strength plastic containers for transportation from a manufacturing facility to the assembly facility under § 173.166(e)(4) of the Hazardous Materials Regulations (49 CFR Parts 171-180).

You state that the airbag devices are packed in open-top reusable containers that are stacked on a skid. The containers do not have lids and are constructed to interlock when stacked on top of each other, with a top cap placed on the topmost container. The stacked containers are then banded twice in both directions to the skid. You enclosed four photographs showing two different loading configurations for the air bags as prepared for transportation. Your questions are paraphrased and answered as follows:

- Q1. Do the containers depicted in attachments 1 and 1-A meet the requirements prescribed in § 173.166(e)(4)(ii)?
- A1. Section 173.166(e)(4)(ii) requires a container or dedicated handling device that is not completely enclosed by design to be covered with plastic, fiberboard, or metal and secured to the container by banding or other comparable methods. It is the opinion of this Office that your stacked, high strength plastic containers when fitted with a top cap and securely banded to the skid satisfy the requirements of a dedicated handling device.
- Q2. Do the closures on the containers depicted in attachments 2 and 2A meet the requirements prescribed in § 173.24(f)?

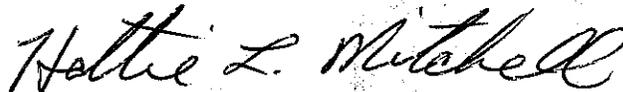


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A2. The general requirements in § 173.24 apply to all packagings. As required by § 173.24(f), the closure on a container must be designed, closed and secured to the container so that under conditions (including the effects of temperature and vibration) normally encountered in transportation there is no release of the hazardous material from the container. Therefore, your packaging configurations would satisfy the applicable requirements provided the following conditions are met: (1) the air bag devices are properly secured against movement within the containers (§ 173.166(e)(4)(iii)); and (2) the skid of stacked containers fitted with a top cap is tightly secured to prevent both the release of the airbag devices from the containers and the release of the containers from the skid during normal transportation conditions.

Please contact this office if we can be of further assistance. A copy of this response has been sent to the Illinois Department of Transportation, Division of Traffic Safety.

Sincerely,



Hattie L. Mitchell, Chief  
Regulatory Review and Reinvention  
Office of Hazardous Materials Standards

Mr. E. T. Mazzullo  
Director, Office of Hazardous Materials  
U. S. Department of Transportation, RSPA  
400 - 7<sup>th</sup> Street, South West  
Washington D.C., 20590-0001

Date: October, 29, 1998

Subject: Clarification of 49CFR, 178.166(e)(4)(ii)  
49CFR, 173.24(f)

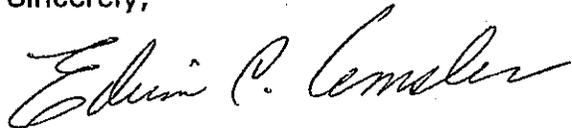
Dear Mr. Mazzullo,

I would like to get a clarification and interpretation of the above packaging standards. I have attached pictures (with descriptions of the packaging) of two different styles of packaging.

Please advise if these meet the guidelines of the 49CFR. If in your opinion and interpretation, they do not meet the guidelines, what must be changed to meet your interpretations of the standards.

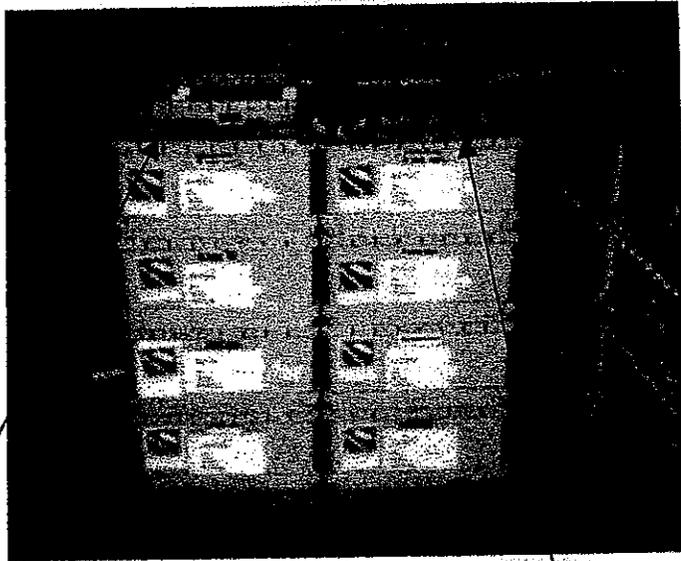
Thank you for your assistance in this matter,

Sincerely,



Edwin C. Amsler  
Operations Specialist/Safety Coordinator

Attach: Pictures with explanations of packaging  
(Attach: 1 and 1A)  
(Attach: 2 and 2A)



Does this meet the requirements of 49CFR 178.166(e)(4)(ii)?  
Please note that each container does not have a lid. We place the  
containers on top of each other and then put a top cap on the skid.  
It is then banded twice in both directions.

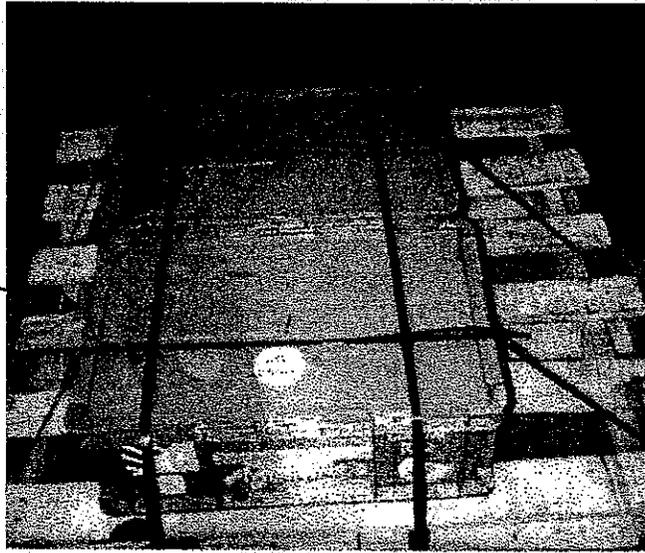
Attachment #1

**NOTE:**

Containers do not have individual lids. Containers are stacked on top of each other to form a covering. Top cap is placed on top and banded twice in both directions



NOTE:  
Ties are not inserted  
into lids.



Does this package meet the guidelines of the 49 CFR 173.24(f)?

Attachment # 2

**NOTE:**

Lids are not tied down  
with tie downs



Attachment # 2-A