



# Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance

North American Standard Inspection Program

## I N S P E C T I O N B U L L E T I N

2011-02

January 14, 2011

### Identifying Intermodal Equipment Providers for Intermodal Chassis

#### Summary

This *Inspection Bulletin* clarifies the five marking options available to intermodal equipment providers (IEPs) for identifying intermodal chassis per 49 CFR 390.21(g)(4), and provides guidance for identifying the IEP using the fifth marking option, 49 CFR 390.21(g)(4)(v)—an internet or telephonic database query.



#### Background

On December 17, 2008, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) published the “Requirements for Intermodal Equipment Providers (IEPs) and for Motor Carriers and Drivers Operating Intermodal Equipment (IME)” final rule. The regulations made IEPs subject to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) for the first time, and called for shared safety responsibility among IEPs, motor carriers, and drivers of intermodal equipment (IME) on our Nation’s highways. The goal of the IEP rule is to ensure IME is safely maintained, equipped, loaded, and operated. The requirements became fully effective on December 17, 2010.

The new rules require that the IEP mark its equipment with its legal name (or a single trade name) and a unique identification number issued by FMCSA (USDOT number) using one of five marking options. By its nature, intermodal equipment rapidly changes possession, and sometimes even ownership, in the course of intermodal transport operations. Consequently, documentation, maintenance of equipment, and assessment of accountability sometimes can be challenging. The five marking options are described concisely on page 6. This *Inspection Bulletin* highlights the fifth option, in particular, which allows an IEP to “mark” its chassis by including it in an easy-to-use database readily accessible via telephone or internet connection.

In order to provide an efficient database query option, the Intermodal Association of North America developed the Global Intermodal Equipment Registry, or GIER, under allowance by FMCSA. To use a GIER query, the inspector will need to provide the license plate number or the internationally standardized equipment identification alpha numeric (Equipment Prefix, normally 4 letters (alpha), followed by a 6 digit control number (numeric)) that appears on the curb side of the intermodal chassis. Additional information for using GIER is included below.

At the time this bulletin went to press, training materials and FMCSR reference materials were in the process of being updated to incorporate these new IEP rules and marking options. This *Inspection Bulletin* was therefore developed to help provide guidance and prevent the issuance of unnecessary and incorrect violation citations under 49 CFR 390.21(g)(4)(v).

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A successful database query using the Global Intermodal Equipment Registry (GIER) to obtain the IEP name and USDOT number for a particular piece of intermodal equipment at the roadside is considered a valid marking of the equipment, per regulation 49 CFR 390.21 (g)(4)(v).

**How to Conduct a GIER Registry Query**

The GIER Registry can be accessed through one of three query methods: (1) web-based internet query; (2) via a telephonic service through a toll-free number; or (3) via a GIER-integrated version of ASPEN on a PC with internet connectivity. Instructions for each are described below.

***GIER Registry Query via Web Browser***

The web-based GIER Registry query is conducted as follows:

1. With a web browser, open <http://GIERregistry.com>
2. Click the **EQUIPMENT INQUIRY** button on the left hand side.
3. The Equipment Inquiry form opens as follows:

Equipment Inquiry - Internet Explorer provided by Dell

https://gier-prod.gierregistry.com/GIER/Company/SingleUnitInquiry/

Equipment Inquiry

Search Criteria: Equipment Prefix/Number

Date / Time (hh:mm): 12/30/2010 - 09:57

Equipment #: [ ] - [ ]

Search Clear Back

Help

Done Internet | Protected Mode: On 100%

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4. Select your Search Criteria [Equipment Prefix (alpha)/Number (6 digit control number)] or License Plate Number.
5. Complete the form date and time of inspection and click the Search button. GIER will output in its report window the name and USDOT number for the party responsible for the roadworthiness of the equipment at the time and date entered in the query. A sample GIER results return screen follows.

*Sample GIER results return screen:*

### Equipment Inquiry

Help 

Search Criteria:

Date / Time (hh:mm):  -

Equipment #:  -

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**Current Intermodal Equipment Provider** (party responsible for road worthiness as of date/time entered above)

IEP SCAC: <b>UPRR</b>	IEP US DOT No: <b>53433</b>
IEP Name: <b>Union Pacific Railroad</b>	Phone: <b>(402)544-3684</b>
Contact: <b>John Smith</b>	Time: <b>10:27</b>
Date: <b>12/30/2010</b>	Equipment Number: <b>139000</b>
Equipment Prefix: <b>UPHZ</b>	Inspection Type: -
Last Inspection Date: -	Equipment Type:
Equipment Category: <b>53CH</b>	

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**Previous Intermodal Equipment Provider**

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**Registered Owner**

GIER will return the name and valid US DOT Number for the party responsible for the equipment at the time/date entered in the query. If a name and US DOT number are returned, then the equipment is properly marked per the fifth marking option, 49 CFR 390.21(g)(4)(v). If GIER does not return the name and US DOT number, the inspector (and the IEP) must fall back on the first four marking options to confirm compliance with 49 CFR 390.21(g)(4).

For technical assistance with the online public inquiry feature, please contact GIER's Information Services Help Desk (877) 523-0225, 08:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

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**GIER Registry Query via Toll-Free Telephonic Service**

The toll-free telephonic access to GIER information is available 24 hours a day at **(877) 511-GIER (4437)**. *Note: the telephonic service only provides the IEP information current at the time the call is made. Users should use the online public inquiry if they wish to obtain the current IEP for a specific date and time.*

To use toll free access to GIER:

1. Call toll-free number **877-511-4437** to access GIER via Integrated Voice Response System (IVR).
2. The caller will be prompted to speak or enter (via the telephone keypad) the alpha/numeric equipment ID number (normally a 4 letter alpha prefix followed by 6 digit numeric) found on the **intermodal chassis**. **Do not use information found on the container.** (see example in figure below)
3. If multiple combinations of the alpha information entered are found, the IVR will speak the various alpha prefix combinations and the caller will be asked to select the correct one.
4. If the chassis is registered in GIER, the IVR will return the following information:
  - a. IEP Company Name
  - b. IEP US DOT Number

*Sample alpha numeric intermodal equipment identification number:*



*Note: In this example the four letter alpha prefix followed by 6 digit numeric is ZCSZ (Equipment Prefix - alpha) 400002 (6 digit control number). **Remember: Use only information found on the chassis itself. Never use information found on the intermodal container.***

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***GIER Registry Access via Integrated ASPEN Query***

For those jurisdictions who use the ASPEN software for recording results of roadside inspections, Inspectors may use ASPEN to identify the IEP responsible for the piece of equipment they are inspecting by gathering the identifying information on the chassis and capturing that information in ASPEN. See steps below.

When vehicle type "IC" is selected, the "Intermodal Equipment Provider Information" box will appear. Complete the "Vehicle Information" section, which includes the make, year, VIN, License Plate #, State, Equipment ID, and GVWR. After the information is completed, click the "Get IEP Data" button and the information for the IEP responsible for the chassis being inspected will populate in the "IEP Information" section.

*Screenshot of ASPEN with Get IEP Data button circled:*

The screenshot displays the ASPEN v2.13.1 software interface. The main window shows an inspection report for vehicle type "IC" (Intermodal Chassis). A dialog box titled "Intermodal Equipment Provider Information" is open, allowing the user to input vehicle details and retrieve IEP data. The "Get IEP Data" button is highlighted with a red circle. The vehicle information entered includes Make: TRKM, Year: 2007, VIN: 1H0947JDJKSJCM123, License Plate #: 1937146, State: ME, Equipment ID: EMCZ 543115, and GVWR: 55,000. The IEP information shows USDOT#: 1909838, Chassis Pool: [empty], Name: EVERGREEN SHIPPING AGENCY (AMERICA) CORP., and Source of Identification: Intermodal Equipment Web Service Lookup. There are also checkboxes for "Did the IEP provide the driver space to perform a pre-trip inspection?" (Yes selected) and "Did the driver perform a pre-trip inspection?" (Yes selected).

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**Identifying Intermodal Equipment Providers for Intermodal Chassis****Overview of Five Marking Options for Intermodal Equipment**

Intermodal equipment marking requirements apply to each IEP. All units of intermodal equipment being interchanged to a motor carrier must identify the IEP. The IEP must be identified by its legal name or a single trade name and its US DOT number. The intermodal equipment must be identified using any one of the following methods:

1. Permanently mark each unit it plans to interchange 390.21 (g)(4)(i);
2. Mark each unit it plans to interchange, using a label 390.21 (g)(4)(ii);
3. Ensure identifying information appears on the interchange document (or interchange receipt provided by the IEP, or facility, to the driver) that must be on-board the power unit 390.21 (g)(4)(iii);
4. Include identifying information on the trailer documentation kept in a weatherproof compartment on the chassis 390.21(g)(4)(iv); or
5. Maintain identifying information in an electronic database that is available via real-time internet or telephonic access 390.21(g)(4)(v) (the GIER Registry, reviewed in this document, is the principal example). The regulation effective date was December 17, 2010.