

Medical Physicists are frequently involved in shipping radioactive materials or supervising those who do. Current U.S. Department of Transportation Hazardous Material Regulations, 49 CFR Parts 171 - 185, require hazmat employees to have documented training specified in 49 CFR 171 Subpart H. A hazmat employee is defined as an individual who: (1) loads, unloads or handles hazardous material; (2) manufactures, tests, reconditions, repairs, modifies, marks or otherwise represents containers, drums or packagings as qualified for use in the transportation of hazardous materials; (3) prepares hazardous materials for transportation; (4) is responsible for safety of transporting hazardous materials; or (5) operates a vehicle used to transport hazardous materials. Recurrent training is required at least once every three years. (The IATA two year training interval is not applicable and is generally misunderstood.) FAA has escalated inspection and enforcement and facilities who ship radiopharmaceuticals to other laboratories, return radiopharmaceuticals or radioactive sources to suppliers or otherwise ship radioactive materials have been cited for failure to provide and document this training.

The course will cover typical shipments by air and highway which are encountered in a medical institution. Items such as fissile materials, highway route controlled quantities, rail shipments, vessel shipments and such will be omitted, although specific questions may be addressed. A major objective of the course is to provide the process of shipping radioactive material in a sequential and logical fashion. Radioactive material shipments of excepted packages and Type A packages will be emphasized. The new exempt material activity concentrations and exempt consignment activity limits will be presented, as well as the new international proper shipping names and UN numbers which currently may be used, but which become mandatory on October 1, 2004.

The program is designed to meet the DOT training requirements, but it is the hazmat employer's responsibility to ensure that each hazmat employee is properly trained. It is the hazmat employer's responsibility to determine the degree to which this course meets the employer's requirements, including contents of the course and the examination. Participants will gain sufficient knowledge to prepare training programs for others in their institutions. Handouts will summarize the course. The examination at the conclusion will be self graded in the course and retained by the participant to form part of his training documentation. Certification of course attendance will be through the AAPM CEU documentation system.