

Army Transportation Command

Customer and Carrier Advisory

December 1, 2025

CA-25-12-01/0071

Subject: Requirements for Hazards of Electromagnetic Radiation of Ordnance (HERO) and Twenty Foot Equivalent Unit (TEU) shipments via rail

Purpose: To provide updated guidance to shippers/carriers on the movement of TEU and HERO shipments via rail.

Be Advised: In the 1990s, the Army procured DODX 48000-series container flatcars (surplus railcars from commercial industry) to support the rapid deployment of ammunition during the initial days of contingency. Originally built in the 1970s, these cars began reaching their 50-year, age-mandated retirements in 2023 and will not be replaced.

Effective December 2025, ARTRANS will commence installation of remote monitoring devices on all DODX chain flat railcars. Until further notice, NO DODX railcars will be utilized for any HERO movements.

Historically, HERO movements loaded by rail have accounted for less than 4% of the average 22,000 carloads shipped annually over the past six years. Of these, movements conducted exclusively on DODX chain flatcars represent less than 0.0123% of total shipments. The Defense Freight Rail Interchange Fleet (DFRIF), consisting of approximately 1,500 commercial railcars, continues to handle most HERO movements. Therefore, restricting the use of DODX cars is not expected to create supply challenges.

There are more than 122,000 commercial well units available, each capable of carrying two TEUs. Depending on design, a single well car contains between one and five individual well units. Altogether, commercial well cars provide capacity for over 240,000 TEUs.

Between 2019 and 2021, 500 single-unit well cars as redesignated as "TPEX", marking them for dedicated military service. Each of these cars carries two TEUs, giving the group a combined capacity of 1,000 TEUs, nearly 80% of the capacity lost with the retirement of the DODX 48000-series cars. Unlike the DODX cars, which were limited to 40,000 pounds per container, the TPEX cars can handle containers up to the standard 52,000-pound limit.

In addition to the 500 'TPEX' single-unit well cars dedicated to military use, commercial railroads also supplement ammunition trains with other well car types available for use. These additional well car types include single-unit, three-unit,

and five-unit well car varieties, all capable of carrying two TEUs per well unit.

As a final provision, the double stacking of TEUs transported by well cars is prohibited, and single TEUs shall not be transported via well cars alone. All TEUs shipped via well cars must be mated (paired). TEUs can be transported via chain flat TPD cars as long as end opening containers are placed door to door. Side opening containers loaded with Sensitive Items (SI) must be shipped via well cars. Side opening containers carrying other than SI can be shipped via chain flat cars but is not recommended.

POC:

SDDC Special Requirements: (618) 220- 4513, DSN 770-4513;
usarmy.scott.artrans.mbx.negotiations-team@army.mil

SDDC Rail Fleet Management: (618) 220- 1730, DSN 770-1730;
usarmy.scott.sddc.mbx.dodx@army.mil

Expiration: N/A

Category: Rail