

ANNEX P.1

Keeper's abbreviation marking**Definition of the Vehicle Keeper Marking (VKM)**

A Vehicle Keeper Marking (VKM) is an alphanumeric code, consisting of 2 to 5 letters ⁽¹⁾. A VKM is inscribed on each rail vehicle, near the vehicle number. The VKM denominates the Vehicle Keeper as registered in the Rolling Stock Register.

A VKM is unique in all countries covered by this TSI and all countries that enter into an agreement that involves the application of the system of vehicle numbering and vehicle keeper marking as described in this TSI.

Format of the Vehicle Keeper Marking

The VKM is representation of the full name or abbreviation of the vehicle keeper, if possible in a recognisable manner. All 26 letters of the Latin alphabet may be used. The letters in the VKM are written in capitals. Letters that do not stand for first letters of words in the keeper's name may be written in lower case. For checking uniqueness, the written name will be ignored.

Letters may contain diacritical signs ⁽²⁾. Diacritical signs used by these letters are ignored for checking uniqueness.

For vehicles of keepers that reside in a country that does not use the Latin alphabet, a translation of the VKM in its own alphabet may be applied behind the VKM separated from it by a slash-sign ('/'). This translated VKM is disregarded for data-processing purposes.

Exemptions for using a Vehicle Keeper Marking

Member States may decide to apply the following exemptions.

A VKM is not required for the vehicles whose numbering system does not follow the present annex (*cf.* general remark, point 2). Nevertheless, adequate information about the identity of the vehicle keeper has to be provided to the organisations involved in their operation over networks to which this TSI applies.

When the full name and address information is inscribed on the vehicle, a VKM is not required for:

- vehicles of keepers with such a limited vehicle fleet that this does not warrant the use of a VKM;
- specialised vehicles for infrastructure maintenance.

A VKM is not required for locomotives, multiple units and passenger vehicles used in national traffic only, when:

- they carry their keeper's logo and that logo contains the same and well recognisable letters as the VKM;
- they carry a well recognisable logo that has been accepted by the competent national authority as an adequate equivalent for the VKM.

When a company logo is applied in addition to the application of a VKM, only the VKM is valid and the logo is disregarded.

Provisions about allocation of Vehicle Keeper Markings

A vehicle keeper can be issued more than one VKM, in case:

- the vehicle keeper has a formal name in more than one language;
- a vehicle keeper has good cause to distinguish between separate vehicle fleets within his organisation.

⁽¹⁾ For NMBS/SNCB, the use of an encircled single letter B can be continued.

⁽²⁾ Diacritical marks are 'accent-signs', such as in À, Ç, Ö, Ć, Ž, Å etc. Special letters such as Ø and Æ will be represented by a single letter; in tests for uniqueness Ø is treated as O and Æ as A.

A single VKM can be issued for a group of companies:

- that belong to single corporate structure that has appointed and mandated one organisation within this structure to handle all issues on behalf of all others;
- that has mandated a separate, single legal entity for handling all issues on their behalf, in which event the legal entity is the keeper.

Register of Vehicle Keeper Markings and procedure for allocation

The register of VKM is public and updated on a real time basis.

An application for a VKM is filed with the applicant's competent national authority and forwarded to the central body. A VKM can be used only after publication by the central body.

The holder of a VKM must inform the competent national authority when he ends the use of a VKM, and the competent national authority will forward the information to the central body. A VKM will then be revoked once the keeper has proved that the marking has been changed on all vehicles concerned. It will not be reissued for 10 years, unless it is reissued to the original holder or at his request to another holder.

A VKM can be transferred to another holder, which is the legal successor to the original holder. A VKM stays valid when the holder changes his name to a name that does not bear resemblance to the VKM.

The first list of VKM will be drafted using existing railway company abbreviations.

The VKM will be applied to all new build wagons after entry into force of the relevant TSIs. Existing wagons will have until end 2014 to comply with VKM marking.
