SUBJECT 1

SUBJECT 1: Item (Rule) 640 – Mixed Shipments and Articles Classified by Weight or Quantity

Re: **Item (Rule) 640 – Mixed Shipments and Articles Classified by Weight or Quantity**

Contact: Adam Mercer FCDC@nmfta.org

Proponent: Freight Classification Development Center

Quick View

The Quick View feature is not intended to replace contextual information within this document. To understand the potential impact of the recommended changes shown here, please read the full proposal.

Subject 1: Item (Rule) 640 – Mixed Shipments and Articles Classified by Weight or Quantity

Quick View: Item (Rule) 640 is amended to provide new requirements regarding mixed shipments.

- Item (Rule) 110 amended

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Present Classification Provisions

Item 110

DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATIONS OF TERMS, PUNCTUATION AND REFERENCES

Secs. 1-8. (c) Not Involved.
Sec. 8. (d) Unless otherwise provided, where a shipment consists of multiple handling units the density shall be calculated on each handling unit, except that where shipping papers show only a total weight for all handling units tendered the density may be calculated by using the total weight and the total cube.
Secs. 9-24. Not Involved.

Item 640

MIXED SHIPMENTS AND ARTICLES CLASSIFIED BY WEIGHT OR QUANTITY

Sec. 1. Single shipments, subject to one rate or class, will be charged at the actual or authorized estimated weight and at the rate or class applicable, subject to the minimum charge in carriers' tariffs.

Sec. 2. Single shipments subject to two or more rates or classes, when differently classed articles are separately packaged, will be charged at the actual or authorized estimated weight, and at the rate or class applicable to each, subject to the minimum charge in carriers' tariffs (see Note 5).

Sec. 3. (a) Except as provided in Sec. 3. (b), the charge for a package (see Note 1), or pallet, platform, rack or skid meeting the requirements of Item 265, containing or bearing differently classed articles, shall be at the rate or class provided for the highest classed article in or on the package, pallet, platform, rack or skid. All the articles need not be specified on the shipping order or bill of lading, but only one of the articles taking the highest rate or class must be specified; in such instances the following notation must also appear on shipping order and bill of lading: 'And other articles classed the same or lower,' which may be abbreviated to 'RS or L' (see Note 6).

Sec. 3. (b) When articles subject to different classes in packages, containers or shipping forms authorized in the applicable classification description for such articles are securely unitized on lift truck pallets, platforms, racks or skids meeting the requirements of Item 265, they will be charged for at the actual weights of the separate articles, in the authorized packages or shipping forms used, at the applicable classes (see Notes 3 and 5) subject to the following:

(1) Bill of lading and shipping order must specify the separate articles and the total weight of each article so unitized. Bill of lading and shipping order must bear the notation: 'The above contained on (insert number) pallets (platforms, racks or skids, as the case may be).'

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Present Classification Provisions—Continued

Item 640 (continued)

(2) Each shipment must have affixed thereto a packing slip listing the separately identified articles and the total weight of each such article unitized thereon.

(3) The weight of pallets, platforms, racks, skids, unitizing material or packing devices as required by Paragraph 3(b)(5) must be shown on shipping order and bill of lading and will be charged for at the lowest class applicable to any article or articles comprising not less than 5 percent of the weight unitized on such pallet, platform, rack or skid.

(4) Any article in a shipment which is not unitized on pallets, platforms, racks or skids must be separately listed on the bill of lading and shipping order and will be charged for at the class applicable to such articles.

(5) When unitization to pallets, platforms, skids or racks is by container of box-type fiberboard construction, packing devices must be used in any unoccupied space between inner packages and inside top of outer container. Packing devices used must be of sufficient strength and design to prevent collapse of the outer container when top loaded with other freight.

(6) When carrier or its agent finds that the weight of the unitized pallet, platform, rack or skid stated by the shipper is inaccurate, the carrier or agent shall correct the weight. The difference between the actual weight and the stated weight will be added to or subtracted from, as the case may be, the highest classed article on the pallet, platform, rack or skid. Upon submission of satisfactory proof that the weight correction should be apportioned to other article(s) on the pallet, platform, rack or skid, the weight distribution will be adjusted accordingly.

Note 1—The term 'package' has the same meaning as the definition for 'in packages' in Item 680, Sec. 5.

Note 2—Not currently used.

Note 3—Articles unitized in outer containers meeting the requirements for complying boxes and secured on lift truck pallets, platforms, racks or skids, meeting the requirements of Item 265, will be subject to the classes applicable to the same articles when tendered in boxes.

Sec. 4. When the description for an article specifies an individual minimum weight per package or piece (see Note 4, Sec. 6), no provision being made for packages or pieces weighing less than the specified individual minimum, the total charge for a number of packages or pieces of a lesser weight shall be the same as would accrue on a like number of similar packages or pieces, each of the specified individual minimum weight.

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Present Classification Provisions—Concluded

Item 640 (concluded)

Sec. 5. When the description for an article in bundles specifies an individual minimum weight per bundle, no provision being made for the article 'loose,' a single loose article or piece weighing as much as or greater than the specified individual minimum weight per bundle, shall be charged for as a bundle.

Sec. 6. When an article is differently classed according to different weights of shipping packages or loose pieces (see Note 4), the total charge for a number of packages or pieces of a lesser weight shall be no greater than the charge for a like number of similar packages or pieces each of greater weight. This section does not apply where different classes are published in individual items according to the density (pounds per cubic foot) of articles or shipping packages.

Note 4—The term 'Shipping packages or loose pieces' refers to the shipping package or loose piece of freight and does not refer to the inner container or articles enclosed in a shipping package.

Sec. 7. Each package or piece of freight which weighs less than the individual minimum weight provided in the description must be charged for at such individual minimum weight in accordance with Secs. 4 or 6 of this Item, and each package or piece of freight which equals or exceeds the specified minimum weight must be charged for at actual weight.

Sec. 8. Unless otherwise provided, where a provision makes reference to specific mixtures based on an allowance or restriction by count, weight or percentage, such provision will not apply when the allowance or restriction is exceeded, as in the case of a maximum allowance, or is not met, in the case of a minimum requirement. In instances where the maximum allowance is exceeded or the minimum requirement is not met, the provisions of Secs. 1 through 7 are applicable.

Note 5—When the billed weight is higher than the actual weight, the resulting deficit weight will be charged for at the rate applicable to the lowest classed article contained in the shipment.

Note 6—When the billed weight is higher than the actual weight, the resulting deficit weight will be charged for at the rate applicable to the lowest classed article contained in the mixed packages comprising the shipment provided the shipper also specifies such lowest classed article on the bill of lading and shipping order at time of shipment.

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Proposed Classification Provisions

It is proposed to amend Item 110, Definitions and Explanations of Terms, Punctuations and References, to read as follows:

Item 110

DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATIONS OF TERMS, PUNCTUATION AND REFERENCES

Secs. 1-8. (c) No Change.
Sec. 8. (d) Unless otherwise provided, where a shipment consists of multiple handling units, the density shall be calculated on each handling unit, except that where shipping papers show only a total weight ⇉and/or cube for all handling units tendered. ⇉In such cases, the density shall be calculated on the total weight and cube, unless the weight and dimensions of each handling unit are subsequently identified by the carrier.
Secs. 9-24. No Change.

It is proposed to amend Item 640, Mixed Shipments and Articles Classified by Weight or Quantity, to read as follows:

Item 640

MIXED SHIPMENTS

Sec. 1. When a single handling unit or shipment is subject to one class, it will be assessed using the actual or authorized estimated weight and at the applicable class.

Sec. 2. (a) When a single handling unit contains articles subject to different classes, the bill of lading must specify each article separately. Except as outlined in Secs. 1, 2(b) and 3, each handling unit shall be classified in accordance with the 13-subprovision density scale published within this Classification (see Notes 1, 2, and 3). When this section is used, the following notation must appear on all contractual shipping documents: '640 Sec. 2(a).'

Note 1—When the shipper has provided weight and dimensions for each handling unit on the original bill of lading, those weights and dimensions will be used to calculate density. When the carrier or its agent finds that the weight and/or dimensions of a handling unit stated by the shipper are inaccurate, the carrier or its agent shall correct the weight and/or dimensions.

Note 2—Where shipping papers show only a total weight and/or cube for all handling units tendered, and the carrier does not independently determine the weight and/or dimensions of each handling unit, the density shall be calculated by using the total weight and the total cube.

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Proposed Classification Provisions—Continued

Item 640 (continued)

Note 3—The 13-subprovision density scale is shown below:

Less than 1	400
1 but less than 2	300
2 but less than 4	250
4 but less than 6	175
6 but less than 8	125
8 but less than 10	100
10 but less than 12	92.5
12 but less than 15	85
15 but less than 22.5	70
22.5 but less than 30	65
30 but less than 35	60
35 but less than 50	55
50 or greater	50

Sec. 2. (b) In the case that a unitized handling unit contains an article bearing the HS&L symbol (✋), Bomburst symbol (✪), or has classes based on packaging, greatest dimension, or another factor besides density, except as outlined in Sec. 3, the handling unit will be assessed at the class provided for the highest-classed article in or on that handling unit. Each handling unit subject to this section must be identifiable through the shipping documents and/or markings on the handling unit itself. When the articles subject to this section cannot be associated with specific handling units in a shipment, the highest applicable class of such articles shall apply only to those handling units whose contents cannot be determined. Properly identified handling units shall retain their applicable classifications. When this section is used, the following notation must appear on all contractual shipping documents: '640 Sec. 2(b).'

Sec. 3. When articles subject to different classes are securely unitized as a single handling unit, they will be assessed at the actual weights of the separate articles, in the authorized packages or shipping forms used, at the applicable classes subject to the following:

(1) The bill of lading and shipping order must specify the separate articles and the total weight of each article so unitized on the handling unit. The bill of lading and shipping order must bear the notation: '640 Sec. 3. The above contained on (insert number) pallets (platforms, racks or skids, as the case may be).'

(2) Each handling unit must have affixed thereto a packing slip listing the separately identified articles and the total weight of each such article unitized thereon.

(3) The weight of pallets, platforms, racks, skids, or unitizing material must be shown on the bill of lading and shipping order and will be assessed at the lowest class applicable to any article(s)on the handling unit.

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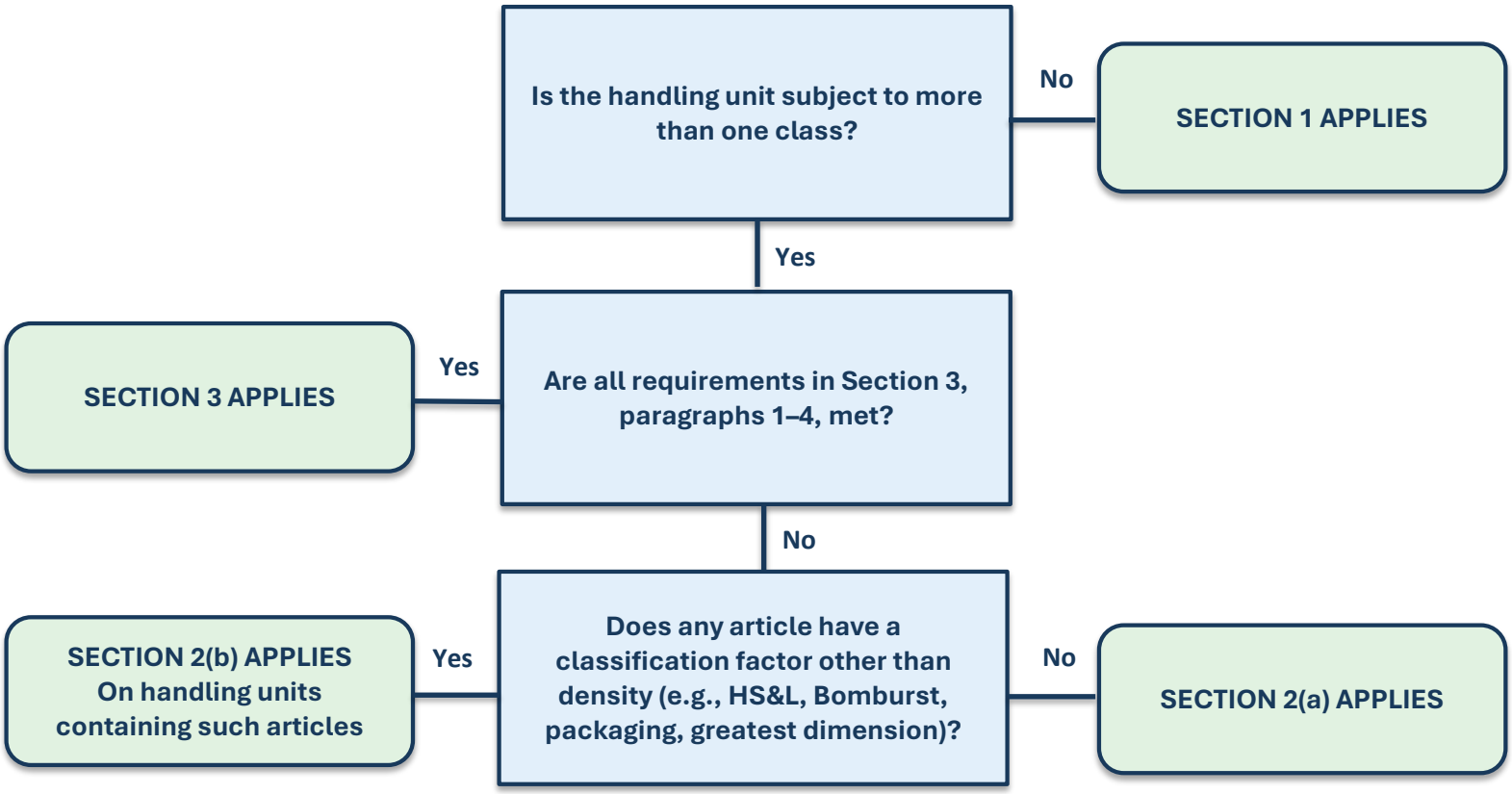
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Proposed Classification Provisions—Continued

Item 640 (continued)

(4) When the carrier or its agent finds that the weight of the unitized handling unit stated by the shipper is inaccurate, the carrier or its agent shall correct the weight. The difference between the actual weight and the stated weight will be added to or subtracted from, as the case may be, the highest classed article on the handling unit.

A flowchart is shown below outlining the application of Item (Rule) 640:



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Analysis and Conclusion

This proposal was docketed by the FCDC to amend the provisions of Item (Rule) 640. A proposed update to Item (Rule) 640 was originally docketed by the FCDC in Subject 1 of Docket 2026-1 and discussed at the FCDC's public meeting on March 10, 2026, in Savannah, GA. However, following substantial industry feedback, the FCDC voted to disapprove that proposal. Subsequently, a proposal was submitted by the Classification Resource Committee (CRC) to update Item (Rule) 640 as part of Docket 2026-2 (Subject 1) and was discussed by the FCDC at its public meeting on September 29, 2026, in Long Beach, CA. Following industry feedback, the FCDC voted to disapprove that proposal.

This proposal would update Item (Rule) 640 to provide new requirements and guidelines regarding mixed shipments. Concurrently, Item (Rule) 110 would be updated, as shown in the Proposed Provisions herein.

In format, this proposal is largely similar to the proposal that appeared on Docket 2026-2. However, based on feedback received and discussions held at the FCDC's public meeting, this proposed version of Item (Rule) 640 differs in several ways.

First is the addition of an itemization section, Sec. 3. This section allows for a mixed shipment to be assessed at the actual weight of the separate articles, given that all the required conditions are met. The addition of this section was requested during the discussion at the FCDC's Docket 2026-2 public meeting. The newly proposed Sec. 3 addresses a concern regarding the application of Sec. 2(b) disincentivizing consolidation; specifically, the addition of Sec. 3 would allow shippers who do not want to utilize Sec. 2(b) an alternative option. With this proposed Sec. 3, if the required information is provided, articles will be assessed at their individual classes, regardless of how they are consolidated.

Sec. 2(b) has also been updated to more specifically outline the application of the section to individual handling units and set the requirements for identifying handling units subject to it. As an alternative to Sec. 3, this section provides a method for assessing mixed handling units containing articles subject to class adjustments, while ensuring the applicable class requirements are maintained.

Another change is the removal of language that feedback suggested was vague or unclear. The verbiage in Sec. 2(a) outlining when the total weight and cube could be used to calculate the density of a handling unit was removed and replaced with Notes 1 and 2, which delineate the scenarios in which each method of density calculation is to be used. The suggested language amendment to Item (Rule) 110, Sec. 8(d) has also been updated to match the scenarios outlined in those Notes.

Finally, language has been added to each section to specify the notation that must be used on the contractual shipping documents to clarify which section of the Rule is being used. This is based on feedback that the previous language was too ambiguous.

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