

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Safe Transport of Containers by Sea, Guidelines on Industry Best Practice

Submitted by International Chamber of Shipping (ICS)

SUMMARY

Executive summary:	ICS, in conjunction with the World Shipping Council, is about to publish 'Safe Transport of Containers by Sea, Guidelines on Industry Best Practice'.
Strategic direction:	5.2
High-level action:	5.21
Planned output:	
Action to be taken:	Paragraph 8
Related documents:	

1 The International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), in conjunction with the World Shipping Council (WSC), is about to publish 'Safe Transport of Containers by Sea, Guidelines on Industry Best Practice'.

2 At the time of writing, this new ICS/WSC publication – the development of which has been led by an expert working group comprising representatives of the global industry - is being finalised and printed. However, it is intended that copies will be available at the Committee meeting (one copy per delegation).

3 It will be recalled that in response to recent incidents involving containerships, most notably the collapse of a stack of containers on board the 'Annabella', and issues arising from the loss of the 'MSC Napoli', ICS and WSC (the latter representing the world's major container shipping lines) undertook to develop comprehensive best practice guidance for the maritime container industry, with a view to minimising the dangers to containerships, their crews and all personnel involved with the transportation of containers.

4 The primary responsibility for the safe transportation of containers by sea rests with containership operators, both the shore based management and the seafarers serving on board. However, there are many other parties in the transport chain concerned with the movement of containers. There are those employed by shipping lines involved with the booking and assignment of cargoes, and the subsequent arrangements for stowage planning; and there are the freight forwarders, ports and terminal operators and - particularly important - the shippers, from whom the cargo originates. All of these players have important responsibilities which are addressed by the ICS/WSC Guidelines.

5 Particular emphasis is given in the Guidelines to the responsibilities of those involved with the correct packing, labelling and weighing of cargoes when they are stuffed into containers, and the safe handling and stowage of these containers when they are loaded on board a ship, the latter

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requiring complex planning, calculations, and the use of sophisticated computer systems. There is also the maintenance and inspection of the containers themselves. All of these activities have a direct bearing on the safety of ships and the reduction of the risks to the lives of ships' crews and other personnel in the transport chain.

6 The ICS/WSC Guidelines reflect the good practices that are already undertaken by the vast majority of responsible companies in the industry, but they have been consolidated in one place to provide a useful resource that should be of benefit to all concerned with the safe transportation of containers.

7 'Safe Transport of Containers by Sea, Guidelines on Industry Best Practice' is being published by Marisec Publications - see www.marisec.org/pubs, but will be also be available from most maritime booksellers.

8 The Committee is invited to note the above information and take action as appropriate.