



NEWS RELEASE FROM THE CONTAINER OWNERS ASSOCIATION

Container Owners Association publishes “Guide to Container Tracking and Telematics Technology”

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The Container Owners Association, the international organisation representing the common interests of freight container owners, has today published a “Guide to Container Tracking and Telematics Technology”, providing container operators, leasing companies and other relevant stakeholders with an overview of the technology issues that they might face, and the choices that are available to them.

Commencing with a glossary of many of the different industry terms and acronyms that are frequently used, the Guidelines goes on to provide a background of the way that the industry has developed over the past decade. The evolution from ‘wired’ to ‘wireless’ has provided great opportunities - but adds significant complexity, because of the wide range of communication technologies available, how they are used around the world in different countries and communication issues with containers on vessels.

The Guidelines next cover some of the issues for tracking dry freight containers, including such aspects as: data flow, required communication frequency, battery life (and installation cost), power consumption, sensor technology requirements and compatibility with vessel partners. Issues for reefer container communication are also tackled – including landside transit, on-board vessels, global use, telematics technology.

The choices available for landside and inland operation, terminals and on-board vessels are reviewed. On vessels, there are a number of different suitable technologies – these are listed in the document.

The final section covers API - Application Programming Interface. The Guidelines explain that this needs to be integrated and agreed across the industry to ensure data can be transmitted by any hardware provider and provide the same standardised information to data users.

Detailed evaluation work will be required by the vessel and container operator before finalising the specification of a workable wireless data solution for a reefer or dry van fleet.

Cost considerations will include all of the following:

- the purchase and installation of hardware on containers and ships;
- coordinating with terminals on their communication infrastructure;
- data transmission on land under data roaming contracts.

Given the wide variety of communication technologies that will need to be considered, operators of reefers will need to carefully consider the capabilities of products being offered by different telematics suppliers to see which systems best meet their needs both today and over the coming years. They should also consider what options conference and partner shipping lines are utilizing and whether alternative systems are also compatible.

Finally, operators will also need to consider API issues between differing systems to ensure greater flexibility and lower costs of operation over the long term.

The COA "Guide to Container Tracking and Telematics Technology" is available to download from the COA website.

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About the Container Owners Association (COA)

The Container Owners Association was established in November 2004 as an international organisation representing the common interests of all owners of freight containers. The principle aims of the COA are to provide global expertise, to promote common standards and to facilitate international lobbying. <https://www.containerownersassociation.org/>

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