

COA Guidelines for Cargo-Worthy Shipper Owned Containers

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These Guidelines are intended for qualified industry professionals; persons who have completed appropriate technical and health and safety training.

Users of these Guidelines should carry out their own risk assessment and ensure the guidance is fit for their purpose and the container is safe and reliable for transport and in accordance with regulations applicable in the region of use.

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COA Guidelines for Cargo-Worthy Shipper Owned Containers (SOC)

Introduction.

This document, published by the Container Owners Association, provides guidance for shippers and shippers' agents, when presenting Shipper Owned Containers (SOC) for acceptance by the Carrier (Shipping Line).

The guidance refers to the structural condition of the container. It does not include any matters related to the cargo and the shipment which must be notified to the carrier in accordance with the carrier's booking procedures.

The shipper must present containers in acceptable structural condition e.g. COA Criteria for Cargo-Worthy (CCW) and examined to the requirements of the IMO Convention for Safe Containers (CSC).

These Guidelines provide a unified approach to the vetting procedures of SOC's by carriers.

The Guidelines do not take precedence over any specific procedures issued by an individual carrier. Other carriers (eg road and rail) might implement separate acceptance procedures.

The Guidelines do not include any matters relating to the cargo which is the subject of the carrier booking process, such as relevant regulations, declaration of goods, packing according to the CTU Code, verified gross mass etc.

The term "shipper owned container" in this context means **any container "supplied" by the shipper or any other party**, (and, therefore, **not** a container supplied or otherwise controlled by the individual carrier that transports the container).

Typically, shipper owned containers are containers which are:

- Not supplied by the carrier
- Owned, supplied, leased or otherwise operated by a shipper
- Owned, supplied, leased or otherwise operated on behalf of the shipper by a third party.
- Non-alliance carrier owned, supplied, leased or otherwise operated containers.

Many of these containers might be traded containers acquired from a carrier or leasing company and sold or otherwise supplied to the shipper.

The Guidelines are intended for the use of the professional container agent, inspectors and operatives; qualified persons who have completed appropriate training, including training in risk assessment and health and safety requirements.

1. Acceptance criteria for SOC containers

All containers shall:

- Be adequately maintained and fit for purpose.
- Comply with appropriate standards and regulations

Table 1 - Acceptance criteria for SOC containers

Standard	Requirement / remarks
Criteria for Cargo Worthy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ COA Criteria for Cargo Worthy CCW ▪ IICL6, UCRIC and equivalent criteria
Convention for Safe Containers (CSC),	Display a valid: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CSC safety approval plate ▪ NED - Next examination date, or ▪ ACEP - Approved continuous examination programme
ISO compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ISO 668 – Freight container dimensions. ▪ ISO1496 – Freight container specification and tests. ▪ ISO 6346 – Freight container markings.

Note:

- Special containers or modified containers – see Table 2
- Container dimensions other than standard 20ft and 40ft – see Table 2
- Where National regulations apply e.g. Australian Marine Order part 44 additional requirements might be requested by the carrier.
- **This SOC guidance refers to the structural condition of the container. It does not include any matters related to the cargo and the shipment which must be notified to the carrier in accordance with the carriers booking procedures.**

2. Special containers

Table 2 - Additional requirements for special containers

Container type	Requirements / remarks
<p>Reduced stacking/racking</p> <p>e.g. Special or containers, such as those designed for land use</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Notify the carrier at time of booking: <p>Note:</p> <p>Reduced stacking/racking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stacking below superimposed mass of 192,000 kg ▪ Racking: below minimum transverse force of 150 kN
20ft 9'6" containers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Notify the carrier at time of booking:
<p>Containers of lengths / widths other than ISO 20ft and 40ft</p> <p>e.g. 10ft, 30ft, 45ft, swap bodies etc</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Notify the carrier at time of booking:
One door open	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Notify the carrier at time of booking:
<p>Modified containers not in compliance with CSC or ISO</p> <p>e.g. accommodation modules, offices or any other modification where dimensions exceed ISO</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Notify the carrier at time of booking:

Note:

Modifications procedures to a container original design, undertaken after original manufacture, require that the CSC type approval re-assessed by an AIB (authorised inspection body)

3. Special containers – Tanks and operating reefers

Table 3 - Additional requirements for tanks and operating reefers

Container type	Requirements / remarks
Tank containers (UN portable tanks)	<p>Notify the carrier at time of booking to confirm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Valid periodic inspection and test certificate ▪ Valid cleanliness document (if shipped empty and clean) ▪ Notification of any required special operating procedures ▪ Maintained to ITCO ACC – acceptable container condition
<p>Reefers - operational</p> <p>Note:</p> <p>Non-operating reefers - dry freight container conditions apply, See Table 1 & 2</p>	<p>Notify the carrier at time of booking to confirm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Required operating procedures ▪ Operation at 380V/50Hz or 440V/60Hz ▪ Plug fitted ISO standard CEE- 17, earth pin at 3 o'clock ▪ Reefer pre-tripped and in running condition. ▪ Temperature setting above -22°C (-8°F). ▪ Spare parts kit as appropriate; arrange with carrier

Note:

- Tanks and operating reefers must be notified to the carrier at the time of booking
- CSC requirements – see Table 1
- Reefers and tanks with reduced stacking and racking – see Table 1
- Non-standard dimensions – see Table 2

Appendix 1 SOC declaration form

Container identification prefix, serial no & cd	ISO type and size code	Date of manufacture	CSC NED (next examination date) or ACEP no.	Maximum Gross Mass Kg	Stacking if below 192,000kg	Racking if below 15,300Kg

Note:

- SOC declaration form to be completed only if requested by the carrier

Appendix 2 - CSC Safety Approval Plate

CSC (Convention for Safe Containers) is an IMO statutory requirement for the structural condition of freight containers transported at sea.

CSC is administered by the “contracting party” i.e. the governmental administration of the country where the container owner is registered. Procedures might vary by administration. Refer to the administration in the country where the owner is registered.

Refer to IMO publication for information
<http://www.imo.org/en/Publications/Pages/CurrentPublications.aspx>

1 CSC Plate

The CSC plate may remain affixed to the container in the event that the container is subject to sale agreement between the seller and the buyer.

The buyer (the new owner) is responsible for maintenance and examination of the container in accordance with CSC. Ref. Article II (10)

The CSC safety plate displays:

- Type approval reference
- Date of manufacture
- Identification no.
- Gross mass & tare
- Allowable stacking mass
- Racking test load
- Next examination date or ACEP mark



2 CSC PES (Periodic Examination Scheme)

A Periodic Examination Scheme (PES) requires that containers are subject to an examination at up to 30-month periods commencing 5 years from date of manufacture.

The examination date is confirmed by fitting a NED (Next Examination Date).

The owner of an approved container shall examine the container or have it examined in accordance with the procedure either prescribed or approved by the contracting party (the government administration) in the country where the owner is registered. Ref: Annex 1 Reg.2.2a)

On completion of an acceptable examination the CSC plate should be marked with the next examination date (NED).



3 CSC ACEP (Approved Continuous Examination Programme)

An ACEP (Approved Continuous Examination Programme) requires the container to be examined periodically during service in accordance with an approved ACEP procedure. The CSC plate is marked with the owner's ACEP reference but a NED (next examination date) is not displayed.

The owner of an approved container shall examine the container or have it examined in accordance with the procedure either prescribed or approved by the contracting party (the government administration) in the country where the owner is registered. Ref: Annex 1 Reg.2 2a)



4 CSC Examination - Periodic Examination Scheme

The container should be examined to ensure that it is in an acceptable structural condition in accordance with the owner's approved procedure i.e. the procedure approved by the administration of the owner's country of registration.

Typically, an approved procedure will include an examination of the container condition to the criteria of an industry accepted container condition such as:

- CCW - COA Criteria for Cargo Worthy
- UCIRC - Unified Container Inspection & Repair Criteria
- IICL 6 - International Institute of Container Lessors.

If the owner does not operate an approved procedure, the owner should consult an authorised inspection body of the administration of the owner's country of registration.

5 Who should undertake the CSC examination?

The approved procedure should specify the qualification of the examiner. Often this person is a surveyor employed by a container depot. Alternatively, a qualified independent surveyor.

If the container is to be re-approved (for example, when the CSC plate type approval data is missing or the container is modified), an AIB (accredited inspection body) appointed by the competent authority of the Administration should be contacted.

The examination may be undertaken by a person having such knowledge and experience of containers as will enable him to determine whether it has any defect that could place any person in danger. Ref. CSC.1/Circ.138/Rev.1 12.4.1.3

Container Owners Association

These Guidelines are published by the Container Owners Association.
For further information, contact the Secretariat Office:

Email: secretary@containerownersassociation.org
Web: www.containerownersassociation.org