WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION

Handbook

Customs Convention on Containers, 1972

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Preface

With a view to maximizing the benefits of the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972 and promoting accessions, the Administrative Committee for the Convention decided to prepare a Handbook on the Convention.

The Handbook provides a historical background, a discussion of the benefits of the Convention, the text of the Convention, opinions of the Administrative Committee, practical information relating to the Convention and a section concerning container security. The Handbook is intended to serve as a practical guide to implementing the provisions of the Convention, not only for Customs administrations but also for all other parties concerned with container traffic.

Parties using the Handbook are invited to send to the WCO Secretariat any information of interest and use for the implementation of the Convention, which may be incorporated in the Handbook wherever appropriate.

PART I

Introduction

1. Historical background

It is no exaggeration to say that the introduction of containers revolutionized cargo transportation, in particular maritime transportation. With a view to developing and facilitating the use of containers in international traffic in terms of Customs treatment, the Customs Convention on Containers, 1956, was concluded under the auspices of the United Nations. This Convention was the basis of the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972.

Between 1956 and 1972, the scope of the 1956 Convention expanded. The 1956 Convention was open only to countries which were members of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and to countries which were admitted to the Commission in a consultative capacity or were permitted to participate in certain activities of the Commission and was aimed originally at facilitating the use of containers in Europe. However, many countries outside Europe acceded to it. In addition, in order to keep abreast of the rapid expansion and technical development of containerization, the UNECE's Group of Experts on Customs Questions affecting Transport (later renamed as Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30)), which administers the 1956 Convention, modified and amplified the technical Annexes of the Convention by a number of Resolutions[*].

Accordingly, it was felt that a Convention governing such world-wide traffic should be open to world-wide membership and that it would be appropriate to incorporate the contents of the Resolutions in a single instrument, i.e. a new Convention. At the United Nations/ Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO)[†] Conference held in November 1972, the new Convention, namely the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972 was adopted. As the new Convention was of world-wide application, it was agreed at the time of its adoption that the administration of the Convention should be entrusted to the Customs Co-operation Council (now known as the World Customs Organization) which is the body dealing with Customs matters at a global level. The Convention entered into force on 6 December 1975.

[*] Resolutions No. 21 (December 1967), No. 22 (December 1967), No. 24 (May 1968) , No. 25 (May 1968), No. 27 (May 1963), No. 31 (December 1970)

[†] This organization is now known as the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

2. Advantages of the 1972 Convention

The 1972 Convention has two principal objectives. First, it provides for temporary importation of containers, free of import duties and taxes and free of import prohibitions and restrictions, subject to re-exportation within three months from the date of importation; such temporary admission of containers shall be granted without the production of Customs documents being required on their importation and re-exportation and without the furnishing of a form of security (Articles 3 to 11). In this connection, Annex 2 to the Convention provides for the methods which could be used by each administration to facilitate the temporary admission procedure.

Secondly, the Convention provides for approval of containers for transport under Customs seal. Containers approved by a Contracting Party as complying with the provisions of the Convention for the transport of goods under Customs seal shall be accepted by other Contracting Parties for any system of international carriage involving such sealing (Article 12). Annex 4 to the Convention prescribes technical conditions applicable to containers which may be accepted for international transport under Customs seal. Annex 5 sets out the procedures for the approval of containers complying with the technical conditions prescribed in Annex 4. These technical Annexes are updated, whenever necessary, through the meetings of the Administrative Committee (see point vii below) in order to keep abreast of technical developments of containers.

In addition, it should be noted that the 1972 Convention has a number of advantages which are not provided for in the 1956 Convention; the main additional advantages are summarized below:

i. Containers are allowed temporary admission and re-exportation, whether loaded with goods or not (Article 3.1); under the 1956 Convention containers imported empty had to be re-exported loaded.

ii. Containers may be re-exported through any Customs office, even if that office is different from the office of temporary admission (Article 4.2); under the 1956 Convention there was no provision covering this situation.

iii. The Convention sets out a temporary admission procedure in order to prevent discretionary intervention by each administration (Articles 6 to 8 and Annex 2); under the 1956 Convention the temporary admission procedure was left to regulations in force in each administration.

iv. Internal traffic of temporarily admitted containers is permitted under certain conditions (Article 9 and Annex 3); under the 1956 Convention there was no similar provision.

v. Requirements for temporary admission of component parts intended for the repair of temporarily admitted containers have been considerably eased, and provision has been made for temporary admission of accessories and equipment (Articles 10 and 11); under the 1956 Convention there was no provision for accessories and equipment.

vi. The Convention is open to world-wide membership (Article 18).

vii. The amendment procedure has been made more effective and practical, and provision has been made for an Administrative Committee (Articles 21 and 22 and Annex 7). Through the meetings of the Administrative Committee, the Convention can be updated whenever necessary. Under the 1956 Convention, there was no provision for an Administrative Committee.

viii. In view of technical developments in containerization, Annex 1, provisions concerning the marking of containers, and Annex 6, Explanatory Notes, have been added; Annex 4, Regulations on technical conditions applicable to containers which may be accepted for international transport under Customs seal, have been brought into line with the technical development of containers.

ix. Containers may be approved for the transport of goods under Customs seal at the manufacturing stage by design type (Annex 5, paragraphs 1 (a) and 3 to 14). An approval plate must be affixed to each approved container (Annex 5, paragraphs 3 to 5); under the 1956 Convention, each approved container had to be accompanied by an approval certificate.

In view of the steady increase in container traffic and the advantages discussed above, it is strongly recommended that countries which have not yet acceded to the 1972 Convention, especially countries which are Contracting Parties to the 1956 Convention, should accede to the 1972 Convention as soon as possible.

3. The Container Convention and the security of the international supply chain

Terrorist attacks of the early 21st Century have focused attention on the vulnerability of the international trade supply chain. Responding to the need for a global instrument for supply chain security the WCO introduced the SAFE Framework of Standards (SAFE Framework[*]). The SAFE Framework was adopted in 2005 and has been updated in subsequent versions, most recently in 2021.

The security of containers moving in the international supply chain is an important feature of the SAFE Framework. A separate Part (Part X) containing a seal integrity programme for secure container shipments is included for example. The Customs Convention on Containers, 1972 itself is cited as providing a minimum level of container security through its provisions and traders are encouraged to conform to these.

Thus there is an integral role for the Container Convention in the effective operation of the SAFE Framework.

[*] https://www.wcoomd.org/en/topics/facilitation/instrument-and-tools/frameworks-of-standards/safe_package.aspx

4. Container Security

4.1. Introduction

Since their first appearance in the 1950s the shipping containers have revolutionized the international transport of goods involving a sea leg to the extent that more than half of the value of the world's waterborne trade travels in marine shipping containers.

Terrorist attacks have placed sharp focus on the vulnerability of transport systems to targeting by terrorists.

The WCO, recognizing the unique position of Customs in the international supply chain, launched in June 2005 the SAFE Framework of Standards (SAFE Framework). This is a truly global initiative to which the vast majority of WCO members have formally committed. It aims at protecting world trade from the threats posed by international terrorism, organized crime and ever increasing Customs offences. At the same time it provides a structured platform to facilitate the movement of legitimate goods being traded internationally.

Based on the principles of co-operation, the SAFE Framework cements the bonds between Customs administrations who together commit to the implementation of a series of 29 Standards regarding the security and facilitation of world trade.

The SAFE Framework applies to all modes of transport. In respect of containerized marine transportation there is recognition of the major role of the container in the security of goods moving in the international supply chain and the requirements of the Container Convention are recommended to be applied to maintain basic container integrity. Thus there is a concrete link established between the SAFE Framework and the Container Convention and an important role for the latter in contributing to supply chain security. This section aims to reinforce that link and provide practical information for administrations.

The SAFE Framework, recognizing that container security starts at the point of loading ("stuffing") the container, incorporates a seal integrity programme. The programme aims at maintaining container integrity during transit from the point of stuffing of the container to release from Customs control at destination. Customs are encouraged to apply this programme. It is reproduced at Part X.

The SAFE Framework also encourages Customs administrations to use advanced technologies beyond mechanical sealing and to offer incremental facilitation benefits to the trade accordingly. In this respect Part 2 of this Section offers background on the types of technologies that are being considered by a number of Customs administrations. It should be noted that some of the technologies discussed have yet to be proven commercially viable and meeting Customs' needs and requirements subject to further testing and pilots.

4.2. Container Security: Technology Discussions

Various government entities and private industry have been and are collaborating with technology developers to develop requirements and evaluate technology intended to enhance container security. These discussions have addressed near-term solutions such as the use of mechanical bolt seals, further definition of operational requirements and response protocols, and the need for the development of international technology standards. Additionally, mid-term and long-term technology solutions are being discussed, developed, and assessed in multiple fora by both the public and private sectors in consultation with one another.

As the discussions surrounding the WCO SAFE Framework of Standards show, both industry and government have a role in protecting the global supply chain. The potential for enhancing the security of containerized cargo utilizing technology is a critical component in these efforts.

Any strategy to enhance the security of containerized cargo must take into account the following four strategic objectives:

1. Prevent entry of terrorists, criminals and illegal migrants;
2. Interdict terrorist instruments and contraband at the earliest opportunity;
3. Improve the security of transportation systems; and
4. Facilitate the flow of legitimate commerce and travellers.

Container seals and container security technology may provide a way to facilitate the integrity of containerized shipment and significantly reduce the risk of undetected tampering in transit while enhancing supply chain efficiency.

Container Security Technology

Both public and private sector entities are continuing to evaluate cargo and container security technologies and processes that may: (1) maintain the integrity of the container and the cargo within, (2) record and log data, and transmit such data (3) sense their environment and status. The key to the success of these initiatives is joint collaboration among public and private sector entities.

In general, efforts to address container security-related technologies can be divided into short, medium, and long-term timeframes. The discussion below does not endorse specific products or standards but seeks to provide a perspective on the known efforts and discussions in the field of container security technology.

When reviewing these initiatives, it should be recalled that container security starts at the point of packing (“stuffing”) the container: No container security technology can compensate for breach of container security at the point of origin. In fact, unqualified reliance on such technologies may result in a false sense of security, and may mask the security risks associated with a breach of container security at the point of stuffing.

Short-term:

Private industry, in support of industry partnerships and/or collaboration with Customs administrations, is moving toward the use, reporting and recording of mechanical seals that are compliant with International Standards Organization (ISO) 17712 on high security mechanical seals. In addition to such voluntary initiatives, a Customs seal integrity program using ISO 17712 compliant seals is part of the Guidelines to the Revised Kyoto Convention and has been included as a recommendation to Customs administrations in the SAFE Framework of Standards. The program is reproduced in Part X.

Both industry and Customs administrations are increasingly deploying cargo security technologies. Tracking capabilities are also being deployed as part of supply chain management systems. The range of deployed technologies spans from electronic seals and security devices that are intended to monitor container door openings to devices intended to also monitor various attributes such as container intrusion, temperature, shock, and vibration. The communication protocols include radio frequency (RF), short range communications such as Bluetooth, cellular and satellite communications.

Mid-term:

The use of various types of container security, tracking and/or monitoring devices is expanding. However, significant issues still require consideration, e.g. the technology's durability in harsh environments and overall sustainability (battery life, etc.). Other challenges include setting internationally accepted and recognized, non-proprietary technology standards, data interconnectivity protocols as well as the data ownership issues.

Joint collaboration by private and public partners is essential in developing common operational requirements. Technology that allows for advanced indicators of a container's integrity (e.g. monitoring for 6-sided intrusion, holes through the doors, walls, ceiling or floor, and human occupancy) has the potential to augment current and future risk assessments and allow for more accurate targeting capabilities of high-risk cargo or security breaches, while enhancing the facilitation of cargo deemed low risk through the supply chain.

Long-term:

One area under discussion is the creation of future performance standards and requirements for a "six-sided" container security device augmented with the ability to electronically sense intrusion and human presence and communicate alarms, providing increased visibility of containers in transit. Additionally, such a container could incorporate a standard interface for other types of sensors (e.g., nuclear, chemical, biological, or radiological).

Another vision involves a next-generation of containers built by using alternative materials that are stronger and lighter than existing containers and contain embedded interconnected security features. Such a concept would replace currently-used steel containers with containers made up of advanced composite materials (composites). Composites provide an option for decreasing weight of the overall container, as well as an integrated sensor capability integrated into the container's overall construction prior to assembly. This could allow for the

embedding of security sensors into container walls and floors, while demonstrating comparable strength to steel containers. It is estimated that such a container has the potential to weigh up to 40 percent less than current steel containers, providing weight savings for both maritime and surface transport. Composites might also be less costly and easier to repair therefore decreasing their overall life cycle costs over existing steel containers. However, replacement of the existing world fleet of steel containers will be a very challenging – and costly – proposition as will resolution of other challenges such as ensuring sufficiently and properly dispersed repair facilities.

Another area of interest is cargo security at the sub-container level. As mentioned at the outset of this chapter, container security begins with the "stuffing" process, the point(s) at which cargo is loaded into containers. Currently, there is very little verification offered of the cartons and other goods that are "stuffed" into containers.

Efforts to develop alternative concepts for today's standard shipping cartons that could provide an added layer of security ensuring the carton's integrity when stuffed or delivered should be encouraged. One possibility could be the detection of tampering while in an armed or monitored state by use of a secure "skin" or boundary, and communicate that event to the container security technology through a communications system. Novel technologies utilizing low-cost methods and materials would have to demonstrate cost comparability to existing cartons, as well as minimize the potential for false alarms which may result from the standard handling of cargo.

The exponential use of IoT (Internet of Things) will have a major impact at different levels of supply chain management, including the availability and usage of 'intelligent' tracking and monitoring systems.

Conclusion

Supply chain security is a growing, dynamic area. Container security technology will need to meet ongoing changes in the international security and trade environment. Most importantly, they would need to meet security needs and requirements collaboratively identified, and agreed, by Customs and industry, while avoiding unnecessarily slowing down international trade. Customs administrations, on their own and in cooperation with the private sector, are encouraged to explore the potential use of various technologies and make determinations as to their possible value in light of their reliability, costs, stakeholder needs and security threats. Such determinations would also need to be fully aware of the associated costs to Customs and industry. Also, industry stakeholders would rightfully have the expectation that once a determination has been made by Customs regarding deployment of a technology such a decision would not be reversed or altered within a realistic and appropriate time frame. Through multilateral organizations such as the WCO and at the bilateral and regional level, Customs administrations need to engage in an active process of sharing of information and experience which should be done in cooperation with industry. Together the public and private sector can work together to ensure that operational, policy, and user needs, requirements and objectives are addressed successfully also in the domain of cargo security efforts.

PART II

List of Contracting Parties

POSITION AS REGARDS SIGNATURES, RATIFICATIONS AND ACCESSIONS

(as at 14 June 2021)

Customs Convention on Containers, 1972

concluded in Geneva on 2 December 1972

1. This Convention, which is administered by the Customs Cooperation Council, entered into force on 6 December 1975.

2. The following table sets out the present position regarding signatures, ratifications and accessions, as notified by the Secretary General of the United Nations, acting as depositary of the Convention:

CONTRACTING PARTIES	Dates of signature subject to ratification	Dates of signature without reservation or of deposit of instruments of ratification or accession
ALGERIA	-	1978-12-14
ARMENIA	-	2006-06-09
AUSTRALIA	-	1975-11-10
AUSTRIA	1973-05-22	1977-06-17
AZERBAIJAN	-	2005-01-17
BELARUS	1973-10-22	1976-09-01
BULGARIA	1973-01-12	1977-02-22
BURUNDI	-	1998-09-04
CANADA	1972-12-05	1975-12-10
CHINA	-	1986-01-22

CONTRACTING PARTIES	Dates of signature subject to ratification	Dates of signature without reservation or of deposit of instruments of ratification or accession
CUBA	-	1984-11-23
CZECH REPUBLIC (2)	1973-12-27	1974-09-04
FINLAND	1973-12-26	1983-02-22
GEORGIA	-	1999-06-02
GREECE	1973-01-11	-
HUNGARY	1973-01-10	1973-12-12
INDONESIA	-	1989-10-11
KAZAKHSTAN	-	2005-01-25
KOREA (Rep. of)	1973-01-15	1984-10-19
KYRGYZSTAN	-	2007-10-22
LEBANON	-	2013-08-29
LIBERIA	-	2005-09-16
LITHUANIA	-	2002-03-27
MOLDOVA	-	2016-10-11
MONTENEGRO (2)	-	2006-10-23
MOROCCO	-	1990-08-14
NEW ZEALAND	-	1974-12-20
POLAND	1972-12-20	1982-04-29
ROMANIA	1973-12-11	1975-03-06
RUSSIAN FEDERATION (1)	1973-10-18	1976-08-23
SAUDI ARABIA	-	2008-12-23
SERBIA	-	2001-09-06

CONTRACTING PARTIES	Dates of signature subject to ratification	Dates of signature without reservation or of deposit of instruments of ratification or accession
SLOVAKIA (2)	1973-12-27	1974-09-04
SPAIN	-	1975-04-16
SWITZERLAND	1972-12-05	1976-10-12
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO	-	1990-03-23
TUNISIA	-	2009-03-11
TÜRKIYE	1972-12-15	1994-07-13
TURKMENISTAN	-	2021-06-14
UKRAINE	1973-10-22	1976-09-01
UNITED STATES	1972-12-05	1984-11-12
UZBEKISTAN	-	1996-11-27
NUMBER OF CONTRACTING PARTIES : 41		

(1) On 26 December 1991, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federation of Russia informed the CCC Secretary General that the participation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in the Customs Co-operation Council, in all the organization's bodies, and in all the Conventions, Agreements and other international legal instruments concluded within the framework of the CCC or under its auspices is now being continued by the Federation of Russia.

(2) Succession.

PART III

Text of the Convention

CUSTOMS CO-OPERATION COUNCIL

GENERAL SECRETARIAT

_____

CUSTOMS CONVENTION ON CONTAINERS, 1972

done at Geneva, 2nd December 1972

under the auspices of the United Nations/International Maritime Organization

CUSTOMS CONVENTION ON CONTAINERS, 1972

CUSTOMS CONVENTION

ON CONTAINERS, 1972

PREAMBLE

THE CONTRACTING PARTIES,

DESIRING to develop and facilitate international carriage by container,

HAVE AGREED as follows:

CHAPTER I

General

Article 1

For the purposes of the present Convention:

(a) the term "import duties and taxes" shall mean Customs duties and all other duties, taxes, fees and other charges which are collected on, or in connection with, the importation of goods, but not including fees and charges limited in amount to the approximate cost of services rendered;

(b) the term "temporary admission" shall mean temporary importation, subject to re-exportation, free of import duties and taxes and free of import prohibitions and

restrictions;

(c) the term "container" shall mean an article of transport equipment (lift-van, movable tank or other similar structure):

(i) fully or partially enclosed to constitute a compartment intended for containing goods;

(ii) of a permanent character and accordingly strong enough to be suitable for repeated use;

(iii) specially designed to facilitate the carriage of goods, by one or more modes of transport, without intermediate reloading;

(iv) designed for ready handling, particularly when being transferred from one mode of transport to another;

(v) designed to be easy to fill and to empty; and

(vi) having an internal volume of one cubic metre or more;

the term "container" shall include the accessories and equipment of the container, appropriate for the type concerned, provided that such accessories and equipment are carried with the container. The term "container" shall not include vehicles, accessories or spare parts of vehicles, or packaging. Demountable bodies, are to be treated as containers;

(d) the term "internal traffic" shall mean the carriage of goods loaded in the territory of a State for unloading at a place within the territory of the same State;

(e) the term "person" shall mean both natural and legal persons;

(f) the term "operator" of a container shall mean the person who, whether or not its owner, has effective control of its use.

Article 2

In order to benefit from the facilities provided for in the present Convention, containers shall be marked in the manner prescribed in Annex 1.

CHAPTER II

Temporary admission

(a) Temporary admission facilities

Article 3

1. Subject to the conditions laid down in Articles 4 to 9, each Contracting Party shall grant temporary admission to containers, whether loaded with goods or not.

2. Each Contracting Party reserves the right not to grant temporary admission to containers which have been the subject of purchase, hire-purchase, lease or a contract of a similar nature, concluded by a person resident or established in its territory.

Article 4

1. Containers granted temporary admission shall be re-exported within three months from the date of importation. However, this period may be extended by the competent Customs authorities.

2. Containers granted temporary admission may be re-exported through any competent Customs office, even if that office is different from the one of temporary admission.

Article 5

1. Notwithstanding the requirement of re-exportation laid down in Article 4, paragraph 1, seriously damaged containers shall not be required to be re-exported provided that, in conformity with the regulations of the country concerned and as the Customs authorities of that country may authorize, the containers are :

   (a) subjected to the import duties and taxes to which they are liable at the time when, and in the condition in which, they are presented; or

   (b) abandoned, free of all expense, to the competent authorities of that country; or

   (c) destroyed, under official supervision, at the expense of the parties concerned, any parts or materials salvaged being subjected to the import duties and taxes to which they are liable at the time when, and in the condition in which, they are presented.

2. If, as a result of a seizure, a container granted temporary admission cannot be re-exported, the requirement of re-exportation laid down in Article 4, paragraph 1, shall be suspended for the duration of the seizure.

(b) Temporary admission procedures

Article 6

Without prejudice to the provisions of Articles 7 and 8, containers temporarily imported under the terms of the present Convention shall be granted temporary admission without the production of Customs documents being required on their importation and reexportation and without the furnishing of a form of security.

Article 7

Each Contracting Party may require that the temporary admission of containers be subject to compliance with all, or part of, the provisions of the procedure for temporary admission of containers, set out in Annex 2.

Article 8

Each Contracting Party shall retain the right, when the provisions of Article 6 cannot be applied, to require the furnishing of a form of security and/or the production of Customs documents on the importation or re-exportation of the container.

(c) Conditions of use of containers granted temporary admission

Article 9

1. Contracting Parties shall permit containers granted temporary admission under the terms of the present Convention to be used for the carriage of goods in internal traffic, in which case each Contracting Party shall be entitled to impose one or more of the conditions set out in Annex 3.

2. The facility provided for in paragraph 1 shall be granted without prejudice to the regulations in force in the territory of each Contracting Party regarding vehicles either drawing or carrying containers.

(d) Special cases

Article 10

1. Temporary admission shall be granted to component parts intended for the repair of temporarily admitted containers.

2. Replaced parts not re-exported shall, in conformity with the regulations of the country

concerned and as the Customs authorities of that country may authorize, be :

(a) subjected to the import duties and taxes to which they are liable at the time when, and in the condition in which, they are presented; or

(b) abandoned, free of all expense, to the competent authorities of that country; or

(c) destroyed, under official supervision, at the expense of the parties concerned.

3. The provisions of Articles 6, 7 and 8 shall be applicable mutatis mutandis to temporary admission of component parts, referred to in paragraph 1.

Article 11

1. The Contracting Parties agree to grant temporary admission to accessories and equipment of temporarily admitted containers, which are either imported with a container to be re-exported separately or with another container, or imported separately to be re-exported with a container.

2. The provisions of Article 3, paragraph 2, and Articles 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 shall be applicable mutatis mutandis to the temporary admission of accessories and equipment of containers, referred to in paragraph 1. Such accessories and equipment may be used in internal traffic under the terms of Article 9, paragraph 1, when carried with a container covered by the provisions of the said paragraph.

CHAPTER III

Approval of containers for transport under Customs seal

Article 12

1. To qualify for approval for transport of goods under Customs seal, containers shall comply with the provisions of the Regulations set out in Annex 4.

2. Approval shall be granted under one of the procedures laid down in Annex 5.

3. Containers approved by a Contracting Party for the transport of goods under Customs seal shall be accepted by the other Contracting Parties for any system of international carriage involving such sealing.

4. Each Contracting Party reserves the right to refuse to recognize the validity of the approval of containers which are found not to meet the conditions set forth in Annex 4. Nevertheless, Contracting Parties shall avoid delaying traffic when the defects found are of minor importance and do not involve any risk of smuggling.

5. Before it is used again for the transport of goods under Customs seal, any container,

the approval of which is no longer recognized, shall be either restored to the condition which had justified its approval or presented for reapproval.

6. Where a defect appears to have existed when the container was approved, the competent authority responsible for that approval shall be informed.

7. If it is found that containers approved for the transport of goods under Customs seal in accordance with the procedures described in Annex 5, paragraph 1 (a) and (b), do not in fact comply with the technical conditions of Annex 4, the authority which granted the approval shall take such steps as are necessary to bring the containers up to the required technical condition or to withdraw the approval.

CHAPTER IV

Explanatory Notes

Article 13

The Explanatory Notes set out in Annex 6 interpret some provisions of the present Convention and its Annexes.

CHAPTER V

Miscellaneous provisions

Article 14

The present Convention shall not prevent the application of greater facilities which Contracting Parties grant or may wish to grant either by unilateral provisions or in virtue of bilateral or multilateral agreements provided that such facilities do not impede the application of the provisions of the present Convention.

Article 15

Any contravention of the provisions of the present Convention, and any substitution, false declaration, or act having the effect of causing a person or an article improperly to benefit from the provisions of the present Convention, may render the offender liable, in the country where the offence was committed, to the penalties prescribed by the laws of that country.

Article 16

The Contracting Parties shall communicate to one another, on request, the information necessary for implementing the provisions of the present Convention, and more particularly information relating to the approval of containers and to the technical characteristics of their design.

Article 17

The Annexes to the present Convention and the Protocol of Signature form an integral part of the Convention.

CHAPTER VI

Final clause

Article 18

Signature, ratification, acceptance, approval and accession

1. The present Convention shall be open for signature until 15 January 1973 at the Office of the United Nations at Geneva and subsequently from 1 February 1973 until 31 December 1973 inclusive at the Headquarters of the United Nations at New York by all State Members of the United Nations or of any of the specialized agencies or of the International Atomic Energy Agency or parties to the Statute of the International Court of Justice, and by any other State invited by the General Assembly of the United Nations to become a Party to the present Convention.

2. The present Convention is subject to ratification, acceptance or approval by States which have signed it.

3. The present Convention shall remain open for accession by any State referred to in paragraph 1.

4. Instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession shall be deposited with the Secretary General of the United Nations.

Article 19

Entry into force

1. The present Convention shall enter into force nine months from the date of the deposit of the fifth instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession.

2. For each State ratifying, accepting, approving or acceding to the present Convention

after the deposit of the fifth instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, the present Convention shall enter into force six months after the date of the deposit by such State of its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession.

3. Any instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession deposited after the entry into force of an amendment to the present Convention shall be deemed to apply to the Convention as amended.

4. Any such instrument deposited after an amendment has been accepted but before it has entered into force shall be deemed to apply to the Convention as amended on the date when the amendment enters into force.

Article 20

Termination of the operation of the Customs Convention on Containers (1956)

1. Upon its entry into force, the present Convention shall terminate and replace, relations between the Parties to the present Convention, the Customs Convention on Containers, opened for signature at Geneva on 18 May 1956.

2. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 12, paragraphs 1, 2 and 4, containers approved under the provisions of the Customs Convention on Containers (1956) or under the agreements arising therefrom concluded under the auspices of the United Nations, shall be accepted by any Contracting Party for the transport of goods under Customs seal, provided that they continue to comply with the relevant conditions under which they were originally approved. For this purpose certificates of approval issued under the provisions of the Customs Convention on Containers (1956) could be replaced by an approval plate prior to the expiry of their validity.

Article 21

Procedures for amending the present Convention including its Annexes

1. Any Contracting Party may propose one or more amendments to the present Convention. The text of any proposed amendment shall be notified to the Customs Co-operation Council which shall communicate it to all Contracting Parties and inform the States referred to in Article 18 which are not Contracting Parties. The Customs Co-operation Council shall also, in accordance with the rules of procedure set out in Annex 7, convene an Administrative Committee.

2. Any amendment proposed in accordance with the preceding paragraph, or prepared during the meeting of the Committee, and adopted by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting in the Committee, shall be communicated to the Secretary General of the United Nations.

3. The Secretary General of the United Nations shall communicate the amendment to the Contracting Parties for their acceptance, and to the States referred to in Article 18

which are not Contracting Parties for their information.

4. Any proposed amendment communicated in accordance with the preceding paragraph shall be deemed to be accepted if no Contracting Party expressed an objection within a period of 12 months following the date of communication of the proposed amendment by the Secretary General of the United Nations.

5. The Secretary General of the United Nations shall, as soon as possible, notify all Contracting Parties and the States referred to in Article 18 which are not Contracting Parties whether an objection to the proposed amendment has been expressed. If an objection to the proposed amendment has been communicated to the Secretary General of the United Nations the amendment shall be deemed not to have been accepted and shall be of no effect whatever. If no such objection has been communicated to the Secretary General of the United Nations the amendment shall enter into force for all Contracting Parties three months after the expiry of the period of 12 months referred to in the preceding paragraph, or on such later date as may have been determined by the Administrative Committee at the time of its adoption.

6. Any Contracting Party may, by notification to the Secretary General of the United Nations, request that a conference be convened for the purpose of reviewing the present Convention. The Secretary General of the United Nations shall notify all Contracting Parties of the request and a revision conference shall be convened by the Secretary General of the United Nations if, within a period of four months following the date of notification by the Secretary General of the United Nations, not less than one-third of the Contracting Parties notify him of their concurrence with the request. Such conference shall also be convened by the Secretary General of the United Nations upon notification of a request by the Administrative Committee. The Administrative Committee shall make such a request if agreed to by a majority of those present and voting in the Committee. If a conference is convened in accordance with this paragraph, the Secretary General of the United Nations shall invite to it all States referred to in Article 18.

Article 22

Special procedure for amending Annexes 1, 4, 5 and 6

1. Independently of the amendment procedures set out in Article 21, Annexes 1, 4, 5, and 6 may be amended as provided for in this Article and in accordance with the rules of procedure set out in Annex 7.

2. Any Contracting Party shall communicate proposed amendments to the Customs Co-operation Council. The Customs Co-operation Council shall bring them to the attention of the Contracting Parties and of the States referred to in Article 18 which are not Contracting Parties, and shall convene the Administrative Committee.

3. Any amendment proposed in accordance with the preceding paragraph or prepared during the meeting of the Committee, and adopted by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting in the Committee, shall be communicated to the Secretary General of the United Nations.

4. The Secretary General of the United Nations shall communicate the amendment to the Contracting Parties for their acceptance, and to the States referred to in Article 18 which are not Contracting Parties for their information.

5. The amendment shall be deemed to have been accepted unless one-fifth or five of the Contracting Parties, whichever number is less, have notified the Secretary General of the United Nations, within a period of 12 months from the date on which the proposed amendment has been communicated by the Secretary General of the United Nations to the Contracting Parties, that they object to the proposal. A proposed amendment which is not accepted shall be of no effect whatever.

6. If an amendment is accepted, it shall enter into force, for all Contracting Parties which did not object to the proposed amendment, three months after the expiry of the period of 12 months referred to in the preceding paragraph, or on such later date as may have been determined by the Administrative Committee at the time of its adoption. At the time of adoption of an amendment, the Committee may also provide that, during a transitional period, the existing Annexes shall remain in force, wholly or in part, concurrently with such amendment.

7. The Secretary General of the United Nations shall notify the date of the entry into force of the amendment to the Contracting Parties and inform the States referred to in Article 18 which are not Contracting Parties.

Article 23

Denunciation

Any Contracting Party may denounce the present Convention by effecting the deposit of an instrument with the Secretary General of the United Nations. The denunciation shall take effect one year from the date of such deposit with the Secretary General of the United Nations.

Article 24

Termination

The present Convention shall cease to be in force if the number of Contracting Parties is less than five for any period of twelve consecutive months.

Article 25

Settlement of disputes

1. Any dispute between two or more Contracting Parties concerning the interpretation or application of the present Convention which cannot be settled by negotiation or other means of settlement shall, at the request of one of them, be referred to an arbitration tribunal composed as follows: each party to the dispute shall appoint an arbitrator and these two arbitrators shall appoint a third arbitrator, who shall be Chairman. If three months after receipt of a request, one of the parties has failed to appoint an arbitrator or if the arbitrators have failed to elect the Chairman, any of the parties may request the Secretary General of the United Nations to appoint an arbitrator or the Chairman of the arbitration tribunal.

2. The decision of the arbitration tribunal established under the provisions of paragraph 1 shall be binding on the parties to the dispute.

3. The arbitration tribunal shall determine its own rules of procedure.

4. Decisions of the arbitration tribunal, both as to its procedure and its place of meeting and as to any controversy laid before it, shall be taken by majority vote.

5. Any controversy which may arise between the parties to the dispute as regards the interpretation and execution of the award may be submitted by any of the parties for judgement to the arbitration tribunal which made the award.

Article 26

Reservations

1. Reservations to the present Convention shall be permitted, excepting those relating to the provisions of Articles 1 to 8, 12 to 17, 20, 25 and of the present Article, and those relating to the provisions contained in the Annexes, on condition that such reservations are communicated in writing and, if communicated before the deposit of the instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, are confirmed in that instrument. The Secretary General of the United Nations shall communicate such reservations to all States referred to in Article 18.

2. Any reservation made in accordance with paragraph 1:

   (a) modifies for the Contracting Party which made the reservation the provisions of the present Convention to which the reservation relates, to the extent of the reservation; and

   (b) modifies those provisions to the same extent for the other Contracting Parties in their relations with the Contracting Party which entered the reservation.

3. Any Contracting Party which has communicated a reservation under paragraph 1 may withdraw it at any time by notification to the Secretary General of the United Nations.

Article 27

Notification

In addition to the notifications and communications provided for in Articles 21, 22 and 26, the Secretary General of the United Nations shall notify all the States referred to in Article 18 of the following:

(a) signatures, ratifications, acceptances, approvals and accessions under Article 18;

(b) the dates of entry into force of the present Convention in accordance with Article 19;

(c) the date of entry into force of amendments to the present Convention in accordance with Articles 21 and 22;

(d) denunciations under Article 23;

(e) the termination of the present Convention under Article 24.

Article 28

Authentic texts

The original of the present Convention, of which the Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish texts are equally authentic, shall be deposited with the Secretary General of the United Nations, who shall communicate certified true copies to all States referred to in Article 18.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned Plenipotentiaries, being duly authorized thereto by their respective Governments, have signed the present Convention.

DONE at Geneva this second day of December one thousand nine hundred and seventy-two.

ANNEX 1

Provisions concerning the marking of containers

1. The following information shall be durably marked in an appropriate and clearly visible place on containers:

   (a) the identification of the owner or principal operator, which may be shown either by its full name or by an established identification system, symbols such as emblems or flags being excluded;

   (b) the identification marks and numbers of the container, given by the owner or principal operator; and

   (c) the tare weight of the container, including all its permanently fixed equipment.

2. For freight containers generally considered for maritime use, or for any other container utilizing an ISO standard prefix (i.e. four capital letters ending in U), the identification of the owner or principal operator and the container serial number and check digit of the container shall adhere to the International Standard ISO 6346 and its annexes.

3. For identification marks and numbers on containers to be considered durably marked when plastic film is used, compliance with the following specifications is required:

   (a) a high-quality adhesive shall be used. The film, once applied, shall have a tensile strength lower than its final adhesion so that removal of the film without destroying it is impossible. Film produced by the cast method of production meets these requirements. Film produced by the calendar method of production shall not be used;

   (b) When identification marks and numbers have to be changed, the film to be replaced shall be removed completely prior to the affixing of the new film; placing of new film over an existing film shall not be permitted.

4. The specifications for the use of plastic film for marking containers set out in paragraph 3 of this Annex do not exclude the possibility of using other durable marking methods.

5. Containers approved for transport under Customs seal shall, in addition, bear the following details which shall also be put on the approval plate in accordance with the provisions of Annex 5 :

   (a) the manufacturer's serial number (manufacturer's number); and

   (b) if they have been approved by design type, the identification numbers or letters of the type.

ANNEX 2

Temporary admission procedure under Article 7

1. For the purpose of applying the provisions of Article 7 of the present Convention, each Contracting Party shall use, for checking movements of containers granted temporary admission, the records kept by the owners or operators or their representatives.

2. The following provisions shall be applied :

(a) the owner or operator of the containers will be represented in the country in which the containers are to be granted temporary admission;

(b) the owner or operator or the representative of either will undertake in writing:

(i) to supply to the Customs authorities of the said country, at their request, detailed information concerning the movements of each container granted temporary admission including the dates and places of entry into and exit from the said country;

(ii) to pay such import duties and taxes as may be required in cases where the conditions of temporary admission have not been fulfilled.

ANNEX 3

Use of containers in internal traffic

Each Contracting Party shall be entitled to impose the following conditions on the use, within its territory, as provided for in Article 9 of the present Convention, of containers in internal traffic:

(a) the journey shall bring the container by a reasonably direct route to, or nearer to, the place where export cargo is to be loaded or from where the container is to be exported empty;

(b) the container will be used only once in internal traffic before being re-exported.

ANNEX 4

Regulations on technical conditions applicable to containers which may be accepted for international transport under Customs seal

Article 1

Basic principles

Approval for the international transport of goods under Customs seal may be granted only to containers constructed and equipped in such a manner that:

(a) no goods can be removed from, or introduced into, the sealed part of the container without leaving visible traces of tampering or without breaking the Customs seal;

(b) Customs seals can be simply and effectively affixed to them;

(c) they contain no concealed spaces where goods may be hidden;

(d) all spaces capable of holding goods are readily accessible for Customs inspection.

Article 2

Structure of containers

1. To meet the requirements of Article 1 of these Regulations :

(a) the constituent parts of the container (sides, floor, doors, roof, uprights, frames, cross-pieces, etc.) shall be assembled either by means of devices which cannot be removed and replaced from the outside without leaving visible traces or by such methods as will produce a structure which cannot be modified without leaving visible traces. When the sides, floor, doors and roof are made up of various components, these shall meet the same requirements and be of sufficient strength;

(b) doors and all other closing systems (including stopcocks, manhole covers, flanges, etc.) shall be fitted with a device on which Customs seals can be fixed. This device must be such that it cannot be removed and replaced from outside the container without leaving visible traces, or the door or fastening be opened without breaking the Customs seals. The latter shall be adequately protected. Opening roofs shall be permitted;

(c) apertures for ventilation and drainage shall be provided with a device preventing access to the interior of the container. This device must be such that it cannot be removed and replaced from outside the container without leaving visible traces.

2. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 1 (c) of these Regulations, constituent parts of the container which, for practical reasons, have to include empty spaces (for example, between the partitions of a double wall) shall be permitted. In order that the said spaces cannot be used to conceal goods :

(i) where it covers the full height from floor to roof, or, in other cases, where the space between it and the outer wall is completely enclosed, the lining inside the container shall be so fitted that it cannot be removed and replaced without leaving obvious traces, and

(ii) where a lining is of less than full height and the spaces between the lining and the outer wall are not completely enclosed, and in all other cases where spaces occur in the construction of a container, the number of such spaces shall be kept to a minimum and these spaces shall be readily accessible for Customs inspection.

Article 3

Containers capable of being folded or dismantled

Containers capable of being folded or dismantled shall be subject to the provisions of Articles 1 and 2 of these Regulations; in addition, they shall be fitted with a bolting system which locks the various parts together once the container has been erected. This bolting system must be capable of being sealed by the Customs if it is on the outside of the container when the latter has been erected.

Article 4

Sheeted containers

1. Where applicable, the provisions of Articles 1, 2 and 3 of these Regulations shall apply to sheeted containers. In addition, these containers shall conform to the provisions of this Article.

2. The sheet shall be either of strong canvas or of plastic-covered or rubberized cloth, which shall be of sufficient strength and unstretchable. It shall be in good condition and made up in such a way that once the closing device has been secured, it is impossible to gain access to the load without leaving visible traces.

3. If the sheet is made up of several pieces, their edges shall be folded into one another and sewn together with two seams at least 15 mm apart. These seams shall be made as shown in sketch No. 1 appended to these Regulations; however, where in the case of certain parts of the sheet (such as flaps and reinforced corners) it is not possible to assemble the pieces in that way, it shall be sufficient to fold the edge of the top section and make the seams as shown in sketch No. 2 or 2 (a) appended to these Regulations. One of the seams shall be visible only from the inside and the colour of the thread used for that seam shall be clearly different from the colour of the sheet itself and from the colour of the thread used for the other seam. All seams shall be

machine-sewn.

4. If the sheet is of plastic-covered cloth, and is made up of several pieces, the pieces may alternatively be welded together in the manner shown in sketch No. 3 appended to these Regulations. The edges of the pieces shall overlap by at least 15 mm. The pieces shall be fused together over the whole width of the overlap. The edge of the outer sheet shall be covered with a band of plastic material at least 7 mm wide, affixed by the same welding process. The plastic band and a width of at least 3 mm on each side shall have a well-marked uniform relief stamped on it. The pieces shall be welded in such a way that they cannot be separated and rejoined without leaving visible traces.

5. Repairs shall be made in accordance with the method described in sketch No. 4 appended to these Regulations; the edges shall be folded into one another and sewn together with two visible seams at least 15 mm apart; the colour of the thread visible from the inside shall be different from that of the thread visible from the outside and from that of the sheet itself; all seams shall be machine-sewn. When a sheet which has been damaged near the edges is repaired by replacing the damaged part by a patch, the seam can also be made in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 3 of this Article and sketch No. 1 appended to these Regulations. Sheets of plastic-covered cloth may alternatively be repaired in accordance with the method described in paragraph 4 of this Article, but in that case the plastic band must be affixed to both sides of the sheet, the patch being fitted on the inside of the sheet.

6. The sheet shall be fixed to the container in strict compliance with the conditions set forth in Article 1 (a) and (b) of these Regulations. The following systems can be used :

(a)The sheet can be secured by :

(i) metal rings fixed to the containers;

(ii) eyelets let into the edge of the sheet; and

(iii) a fastening passing through the rings above the sheet and visible from the outside for its entire length.

The sheet shall overlap solid parts of the container by at least 250 mm, measured from the centre of the securing rings, unless the system of construction of the container in itself prevents all access to the goods.

(b)When any edge of a sheet is to be permanently secured to a container, the two surfaces shall be joined together without a break and shall be held in place by strong devices.

(c)When a sheet locking system is used it shall in locked position join the sheet tightly to the outside of the container (as an example see sketch No. 6).

7. The sheet shall be supported by an adequate superstructure (uprights, sides, arches, slats, etc.).

8. The spaces between the rings and the spaces between the eyelets shall not exceed 200 mm. The spaces may, however, be greater but shall not exceed 300 mm between rings and eyelets on either side of the upright if the construction of the container and the sheet is such as to prevent all access to the interior of the container. The eyelets shall be reinforced.

9. The following fastenings shall be used :

(a) steel wire rope of at least 3 mm diameter; or

(b) a rope of hemp or sisal of at least 8 mm diameter encased in a transparent unstretchable plastic sheath.

Wire ropes may have a transparent unstretchable plastic sheath.

10. Each rope shall be in one piece and have a hard metal end-piece at each end. The fastener of each metal end-piece shall include a hollow rivet passing through the rope so as to allow the introduction of the thread or the strap of the Customs seal. The rope shall remain visible on either side of the hollow rivet so that it is possible to ensure that the rope is in one piece (see sketch No. 5 appended to the Regulations). In cases where the sheet has to be fixed to the frame in a system of construction which otherwise complies with the provisions of paragraph 6 (a) of this Article, a thong can be used as fastening (an example of such a system of construction is given in sketch No. 7 appended to these Regulations). The thong has to comply with the requirements stipulated in paragraph 11 (a) (iii) with regard to material, dimensions and shape.

11. At the openings in the sheet, used for loading and unloading, the two surfaces shall be joined together. The following systems can be used :

(a) The two edges of the sheet shall have an adequate overlap. They shall also be fastened by :

(i) a flap sewn or welded in accordance with paragraphs 3 and 4 of this Article;

(ii) rings and eyelets meeting the conditions of paragraph 8 of this Article; the rings shall be manufactured of metal; and

(iii) a thong made of appropriate material, in one piece and unstretchable, at least 20 mm wide and 3 mm thick, passing through the rings and holding together the two edges of the sheet and the flap; the thong shall be secured inside the sheet and fitted either with

- an eyelet to take the rope mentioned in paragraph 9 of this Article, or
- an eyelet which can be attached to a metal ring mentioned in

paragraph 6 of this Article and be secured by the rope mentioned in paragraph 9 of this Article.

A flap shall not be required if a special device, such as a baffle plate, is fitted, which prevents access to the container without leaving obvious traces.

Neither shall a flap be required for containers with sliding sheets.

(b) A special locking system holding the edges of the sheets tightly locked when the container is closed and sealed. The system shall be provided with an opening through which a metal ring mentioned in paragraph 6 of this Article can pass and be secured by the rope mentioned in paragraph 9 of this Article (see sketch No. 8 appended to these Regulations).

12. The identification marks, which must appear on the container in accordance with Annex 1, and the approval plate provided for in Annex 5, shall in no circumstances be covered by the sheet.

Article 5

Containers with sliding sheets

1. Where applicable, the provisions of Articles 1, 2, 3 and 4 of these Regulations shall apply to containers with sliding sheets. In addition, these containers shall conform to the provisions of this article.

2. The sliding sheets, floor, doors and all other constituent parts of the container shall fulfill either the requirements in Article 4, paragraphs 6, 8, 9 and 11 of these Regulations or the requirements set out in (i) to (vi) below.

(i) The sliding sheets, floor, doors and all other constituent parts of the container shall be assembled either by means of devices which cannot be removed and replaced from the outside without leaving obvious traces, or by such methods as will produce a structure which cannot be modified without leaving obvious traces.

(ii) The sheet shall overlap the solid parts at the top of the container by at least ¼ of the actual distance between the tensioning straps. The sheet shall overlap the solid parts at the bottom of the container by at least 50 mm. The horizontal opening between the sheet and the solid parts of the container may not exceed 10 mm measured perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the container at any place when the container is secured and sealed for Customs purposes.

(iii) The sliding sheet guidance, sliding sheet tension devices and other movable parts shall be assembled in such a way that when closed, and Customs sealed, doors and other movable parts cannot be opened or closed from the outside without leaving obvious traces. The sliding sheet guidance, sliding sheet tension devices and other movable parts shall be assembled in such a way that it is

impossible to gain access to the container without leaving obvious traces once the closing devices has been secured. An example of such a system of construction is given in sketch No. 9 appended to these Regulations.

(iv) The horizontal distance between the rings, used for Customs purpose, on the solid parts of the container shall not exceed 200 mm. The space may, however, be greater but shall not exceed 300 mm between the rings on either side of the upright if the construction of the container and the sheets is such as preventing all access to the container. In any case, the conditions laid down in (ii) above shall be complied with.

(v) The distance between the tensioning straps shall not exceed 600 mm.

(vi) The fastenings used to secure the sheets to the solid parts of the container shall fulfil the requirements in Article 4, paragraph 9 of these Regulations.

Article 6

Containers with a sheeted sliding roof

1. Where applicable, the provisions of Articles 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 of these Regulations shall apply to containers with a sheeted sliding roof. In addition, these containers shall conform to the provisions of this Article.

2. The sheeted sliding roof shall fulfil the requirements set out in (i) to (iii) below.

(i) The sheeted sliding roof shall be assembled either by means of devices which cannot be removed and replaced from the outside without leaving obvious traces, or by such methods as will produce a structure which cannot be modified without leaving obvious traces.

(ii) The sliding roof sheet shall overlap with the solid part of the roof at the front side of the container, so that the roof sheet cannot be pulled over the top edge of the upper cantrail. In the length of the container, at both sides, in the hem of the roof sheet, a pre-stressed steel cable shall be inserted in such a way that it cannot be removed and re-inserted without leaving obvious traces. The roof sheet shall be secured to the sliding carriage in such a way that it cannot be removed and re-secured without leaving obvious traces.

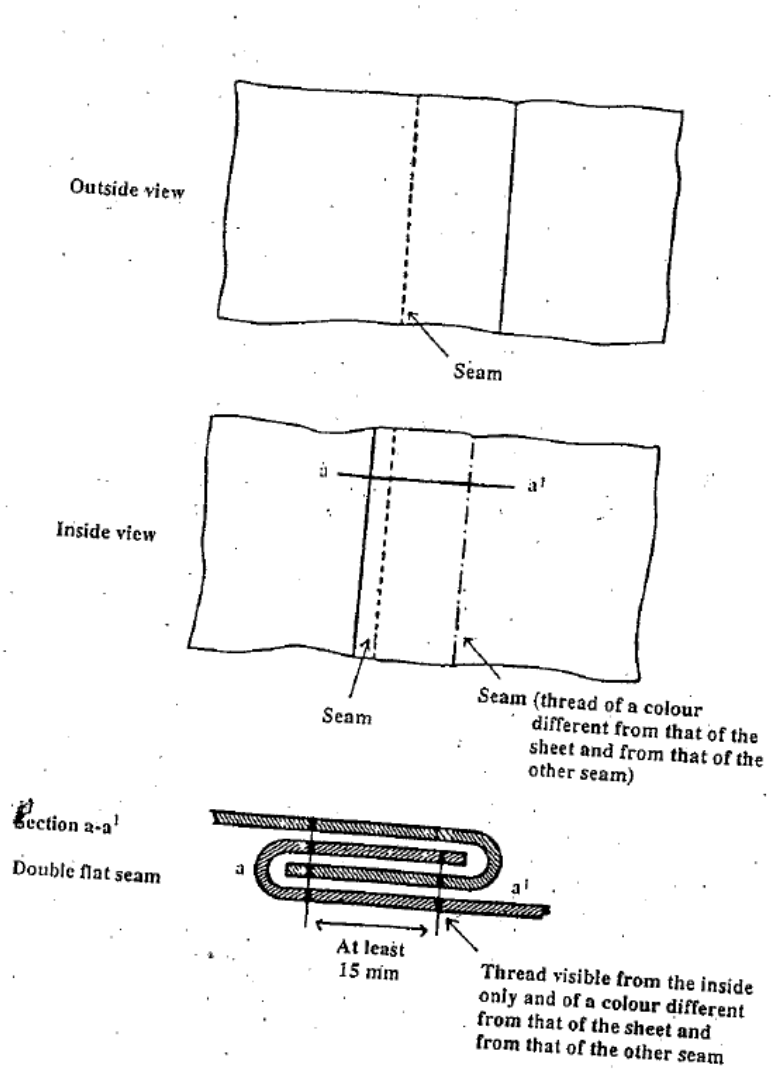
(iii) The sliding roof guidance, the sliding roof tension devices and other movable parts shall be assembled in such a way that when closed, and Customs sealed, doors, roof and other movable parts cannot be opened or closed from the outside without leaving obvious traces. The sliding roof guidance, sliding roof tension devices and other movable parts shall be assembled in such a way that it is impossible to gain access to the container without leaving obvious traces once the closing devices have been secured.

An example of a possible system of construction is shown in sketch No. 10, appended to these Regulations.

Annex 4 - Sketch No. 1

SHEET MADE OF SEVERAL PIECES

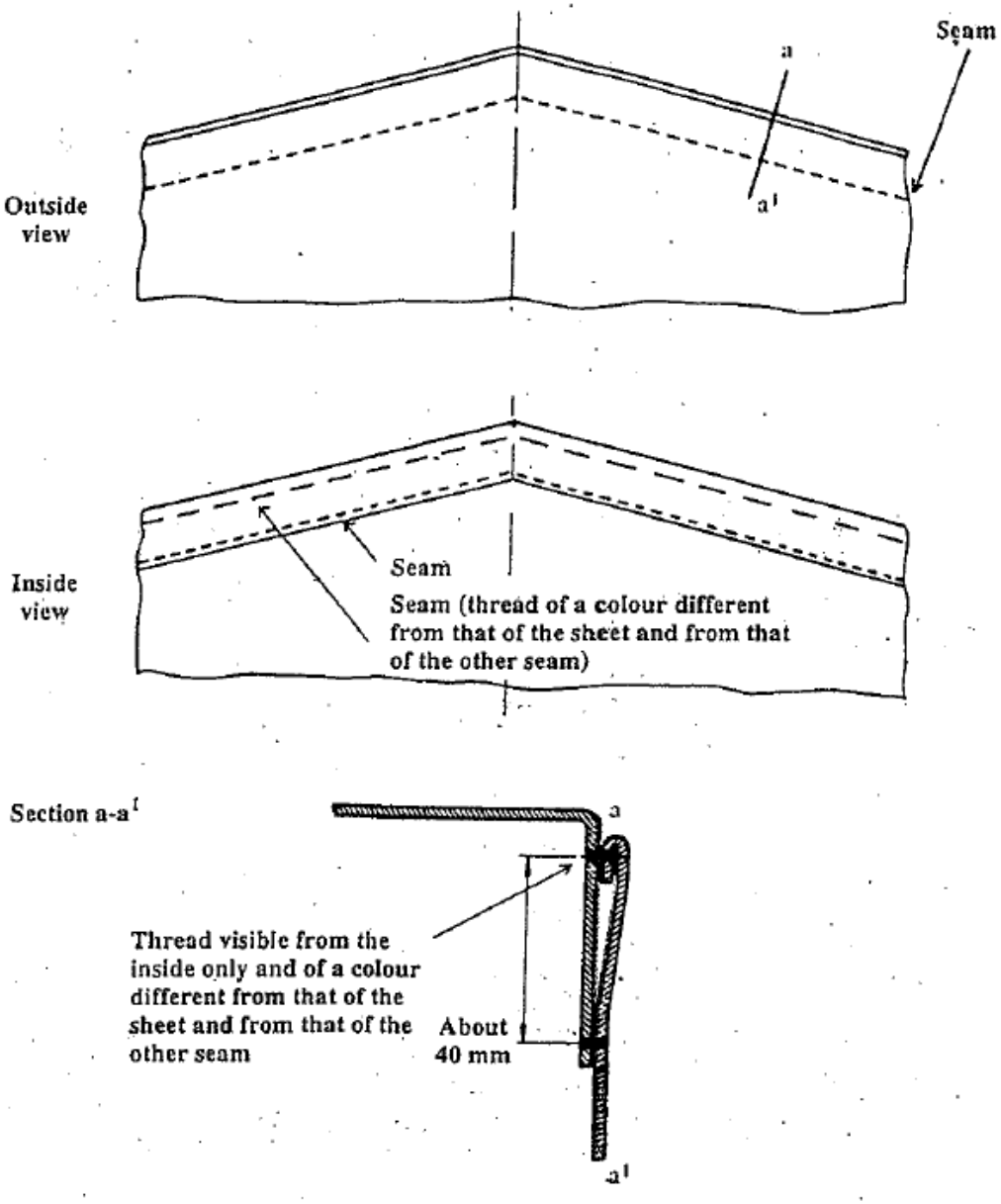
Sewn together by means of seams



Annex 4 - Sketch No. 2

SHEET MADE OF SEVERAL PIECES

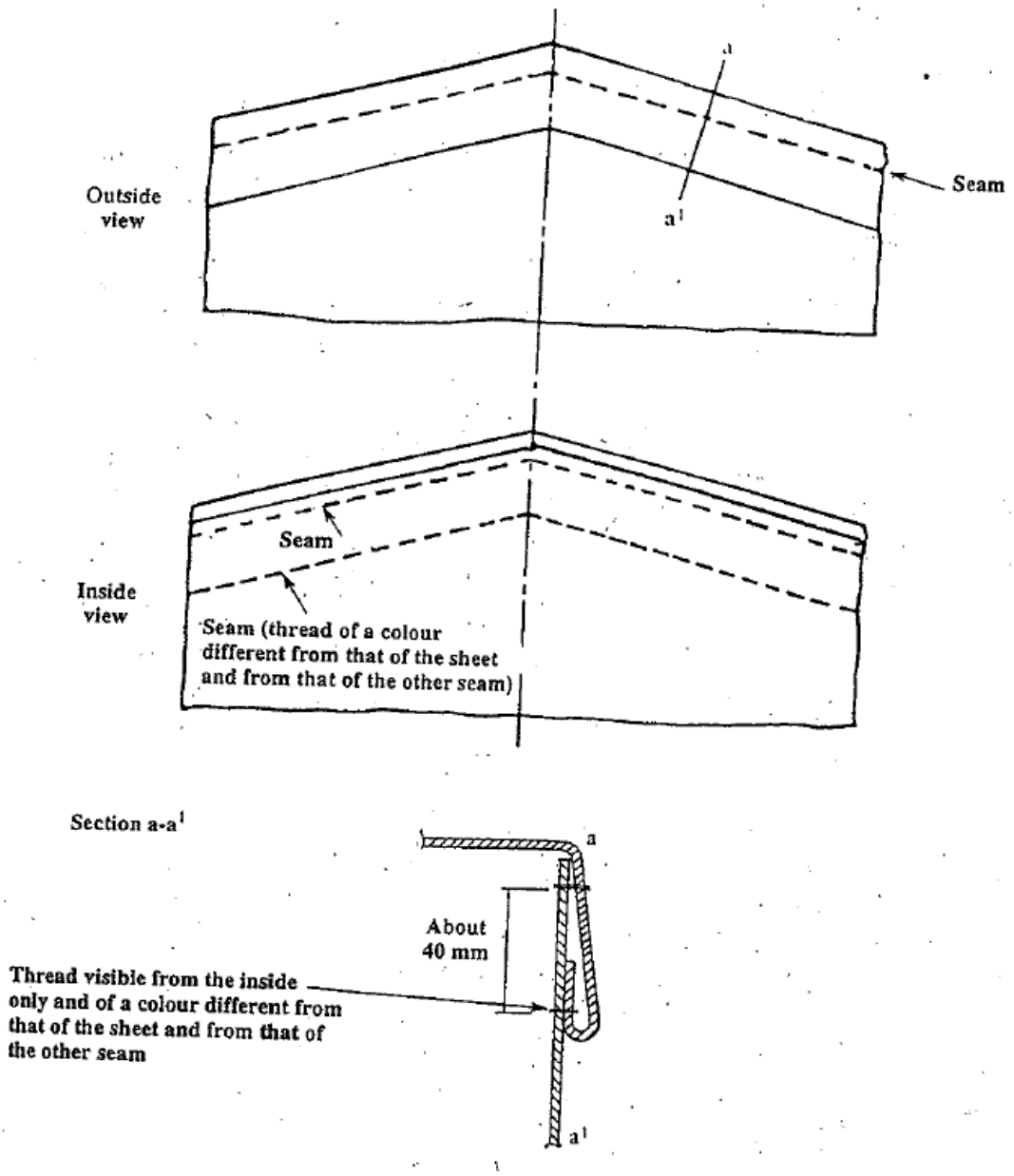
Corner seam



Annex 4 - Sketch No. 2(a)

SHEET MADE OF SEVERAL PIECES

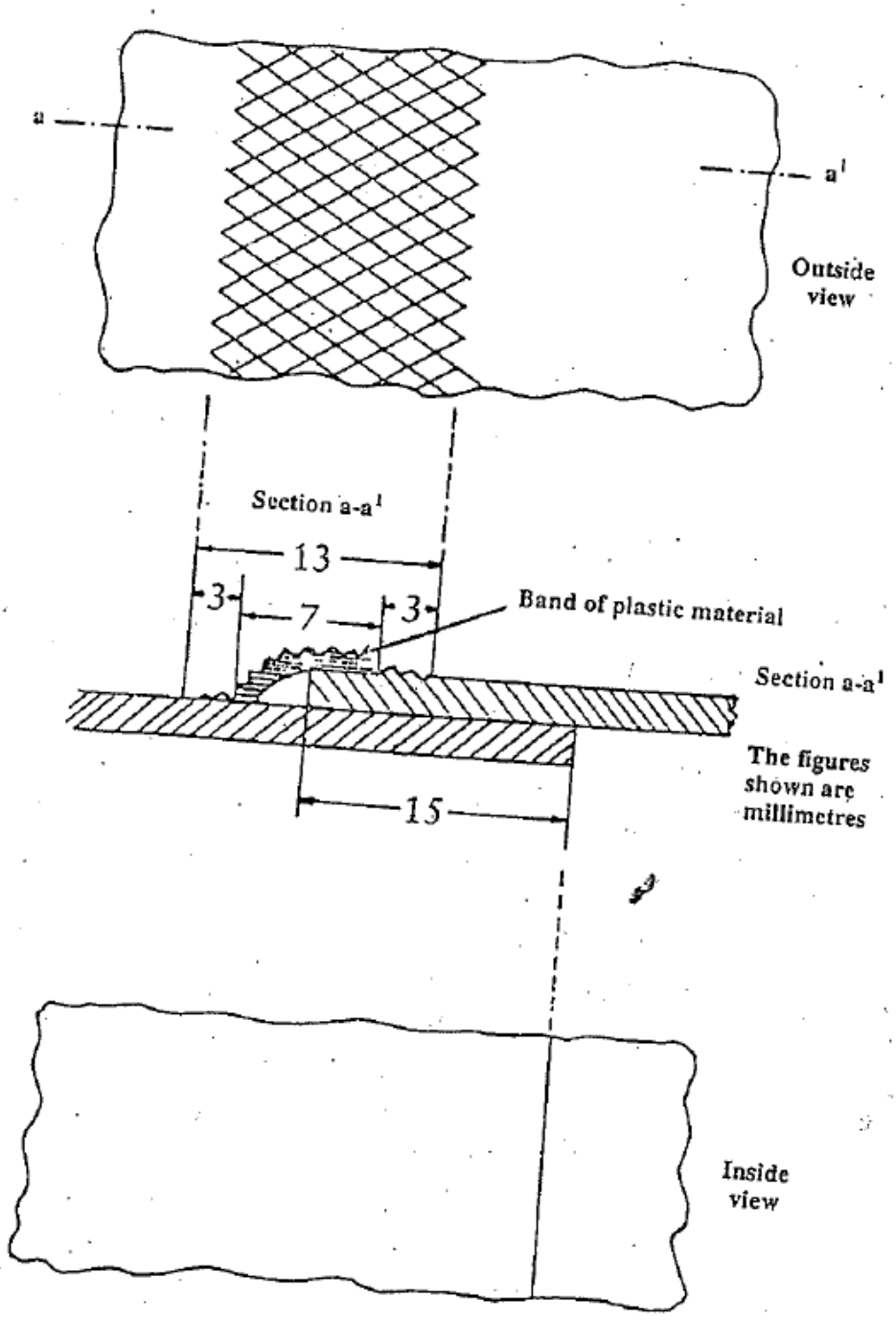
Corner seam



Annex 4 - Sketch No. 3

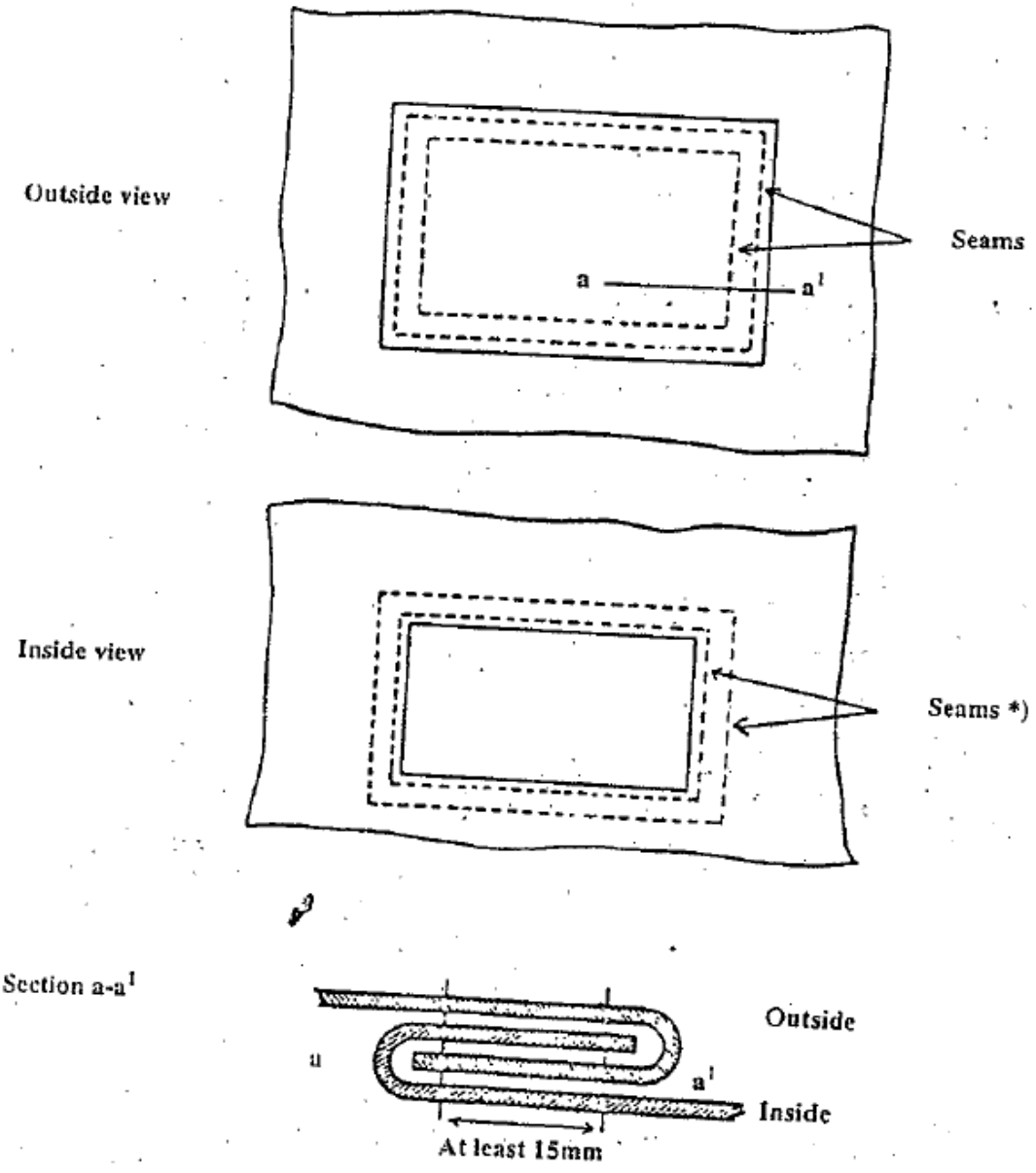
SHEET MADE OF SEVERAL PIECES

Welded together



Annex 4 - Sketch No. 4

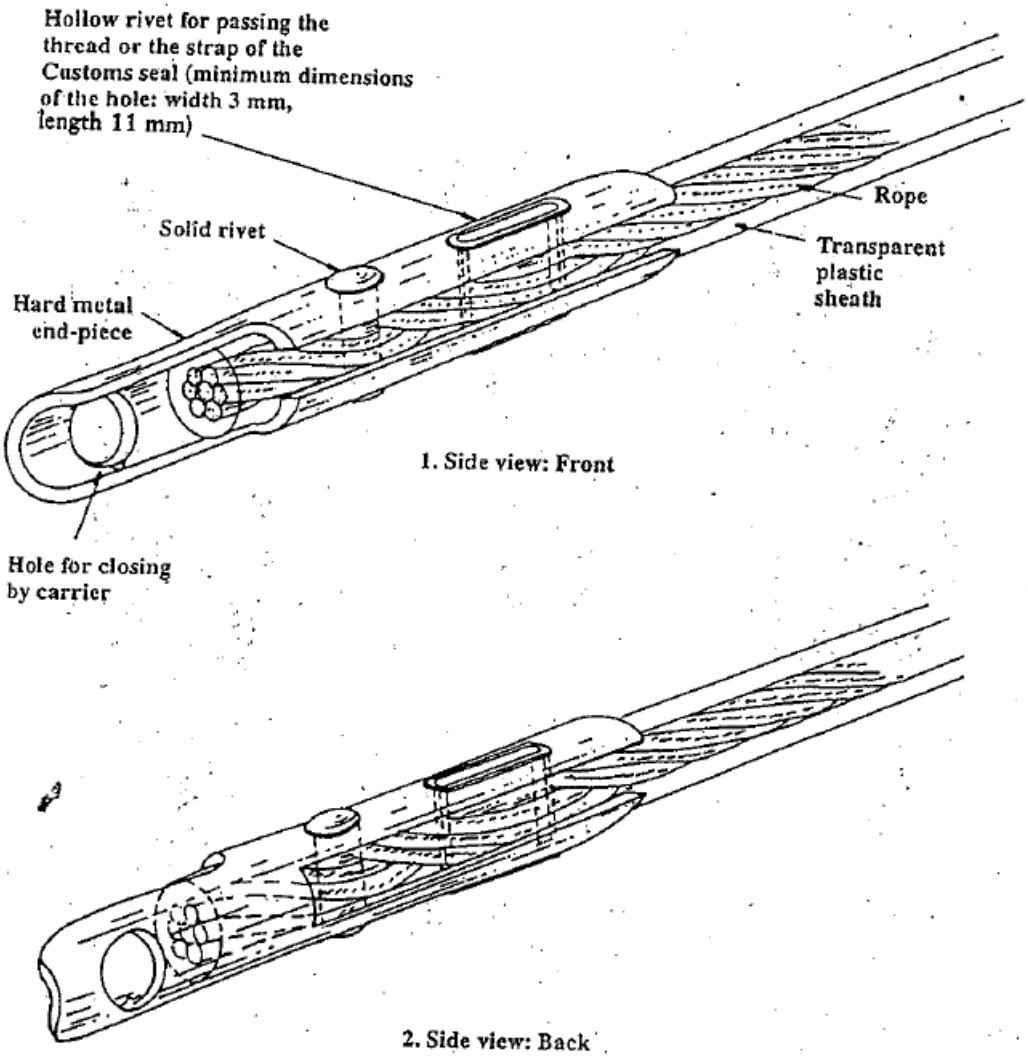
REPAIR OF THE SHEET



*) Threads visible from the inside shall be of a colour different from that of the threads visible from the outside and from that of the sheet

Annex 4 - Sketch No. 5

SPECIMEN OF END-PIECE

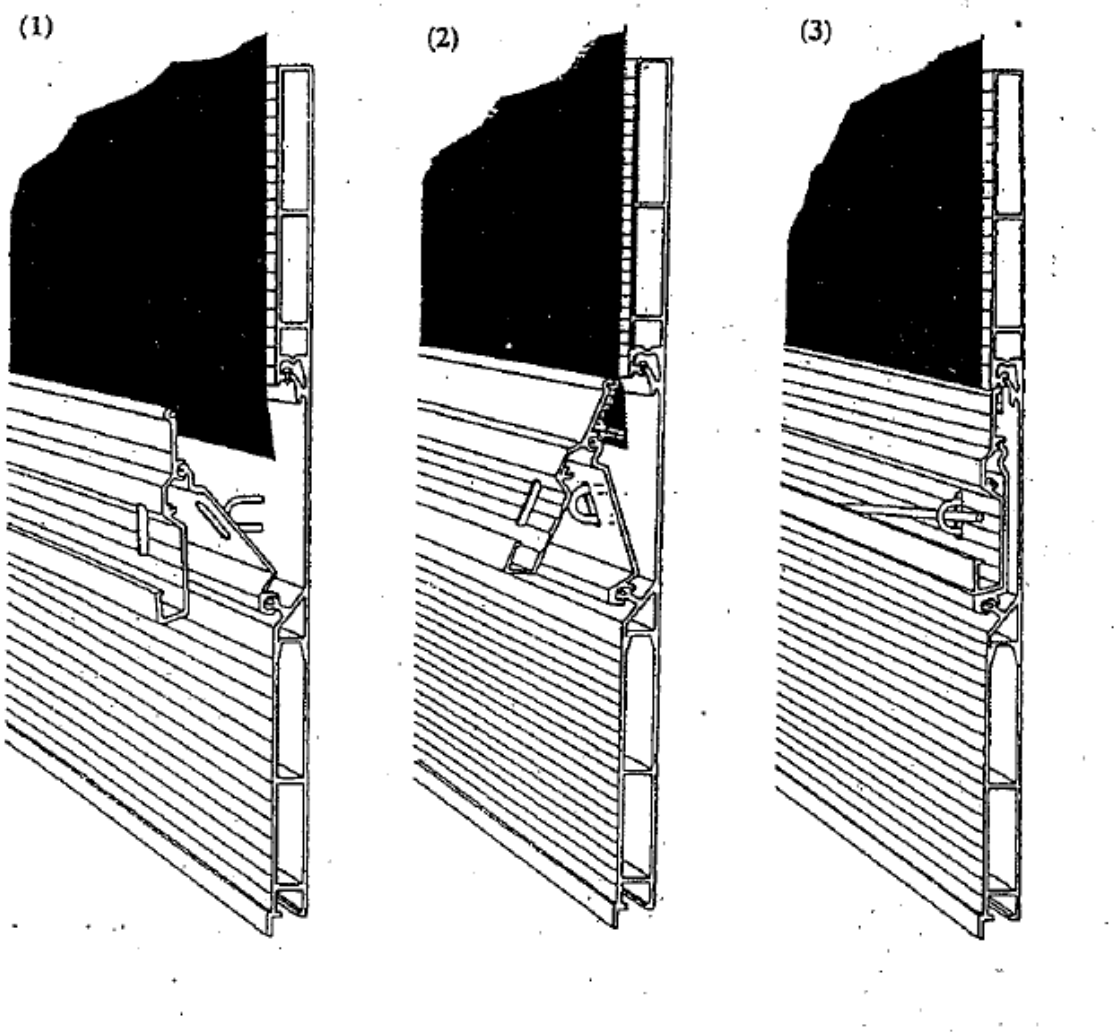


1. Side view: Front

2. Side view: Back

Annex 4 - Sketch No. 6

EXAMPLE OF SHEET LOCKING SYSTEM

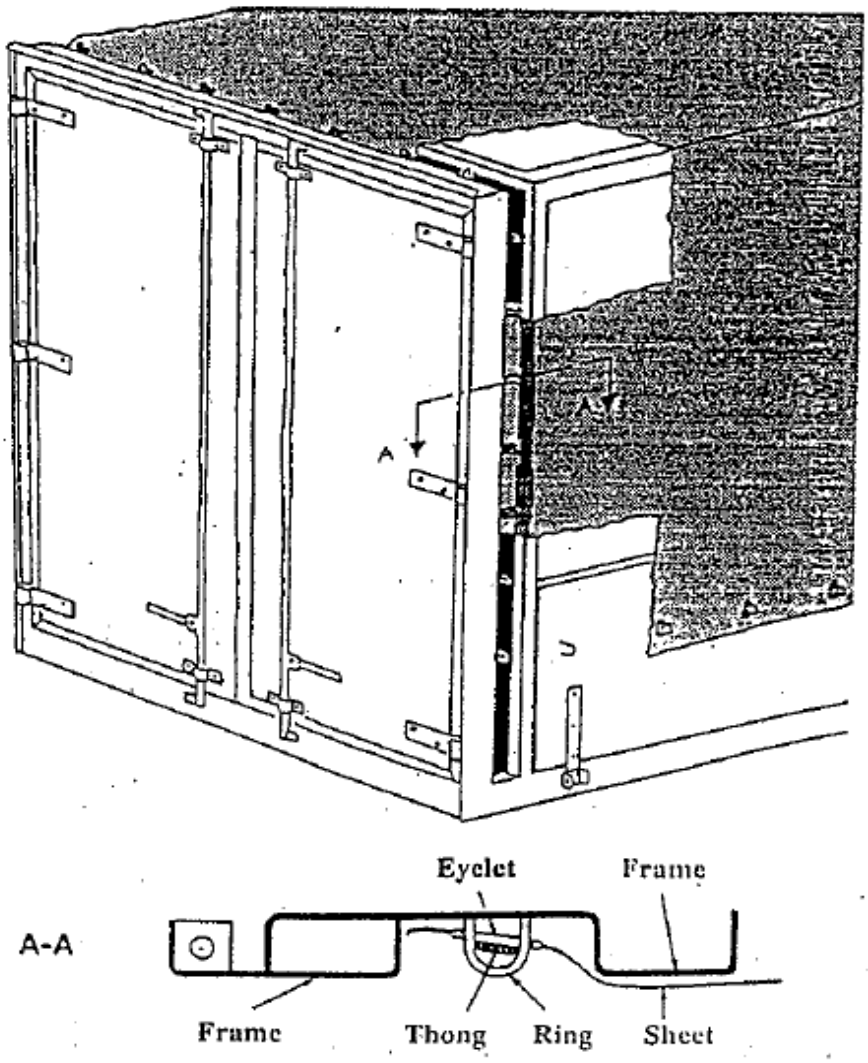


Description

This sheet locking system is acceptable provided that it is fitted with at least one metal ring at each gate end. The openings through which the ring passes are oval and of a size just sufficient to allow the ring to pass through it. The visible part of the metal ring does not protrude more than twice the maximum thickness of the fastening rope when the system is locked.

Annex 4 - Sketch No. 7

EXAMPLE OF SHEET FIXED TO SPECIAL-SHAPED FRAME



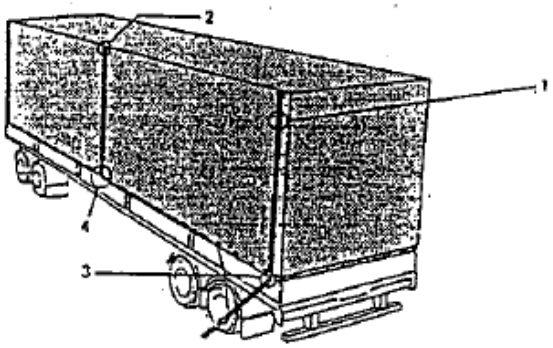
Description

This fastening device of the sheet to the container is acceptable provided that the rings are recessed in the profile and do not protrude more than the maximum depth of the profile. The width of the profile shall be as narrow as possible.

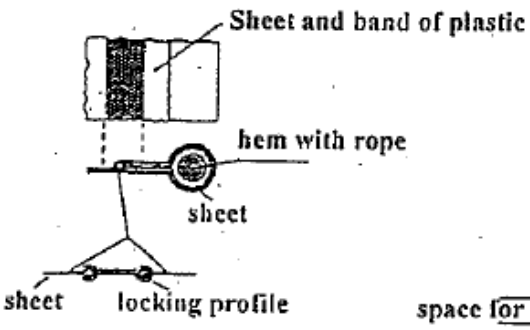
Annex 4 - Sketch No. 8

SHEET LOCKING SYSTEM AT OPENINGS FOR LOADING AND UNLOADING

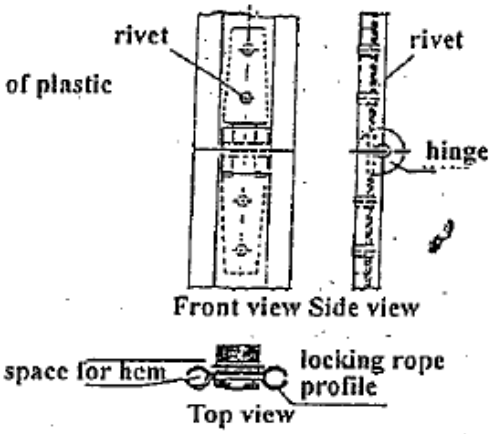
(Description see next page)



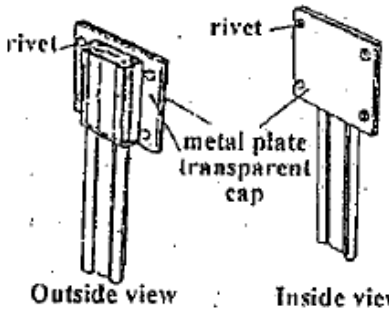
Sketch No.8.1



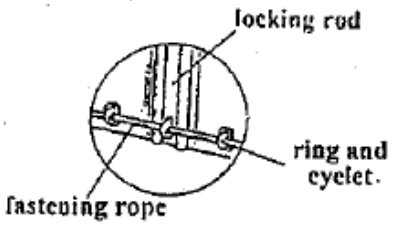
Sketch No. 8.3



Sketch No.8.2



Sketch No.8.4

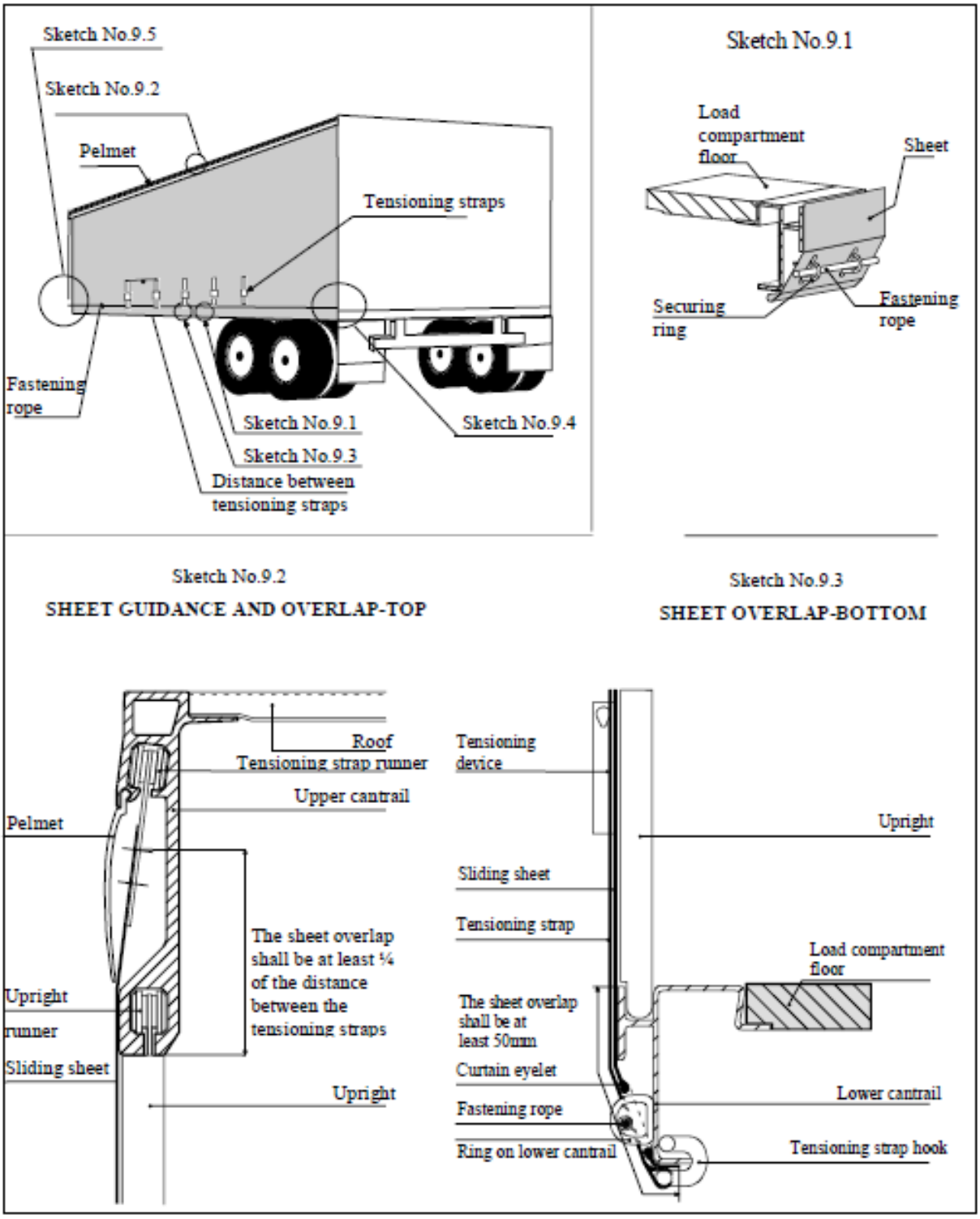


Description

In this locking system the two edges of the openings in the sheet used for loading and unloading are united by means of an aluminium locking rod. The sheet openings are provided with a hem over its entire length enclosing a rope (see sketch No. 8.1.). This makes it impossible to pull the sheet out of the locking rod's profile. The hem shall be on the outside and welded in accordance with Annex 4, Article 4, paragraph 4 to the Convention. The edges are to be passed into the open profiles on the aluminium locking rod and slid into two parallel longitudinal channels which should be closed at their lower end. When the locking rod is in its upper position the edges of the sheets are united. At the upper end of the opening the locking rod is stopped by a transparent plastic cap fixed by riveting to the sheet (see sketch No. 8.2.). The locking rod consists of two sections, joined by a riveted hinge, to allow folding for easy fitting and removal. This hinge must be designed in such a way as not to allow the removal of the swivel pin once the system is locked (see sketch No. 8.3.). At the lower part of the locking rod is an opening through which the ring passes. The opening is oval and of a size just sufficient to allow the ring to pass through it (see sketch No. 8.4.). The fastening rope will be pulled through this ring to secure the locking rod.

Annex 4 – Sketch No. 9

EXAMPLE OF A CONSTRUCTION OF A CONTAINER WITH SLIDING SHEETS

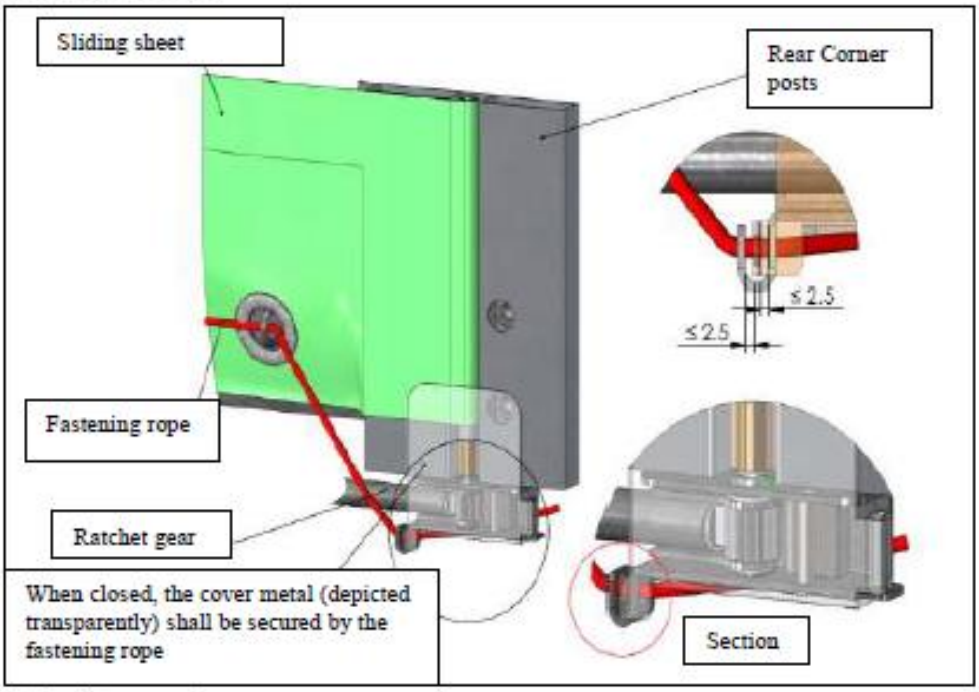


Sketch No. 9 continued

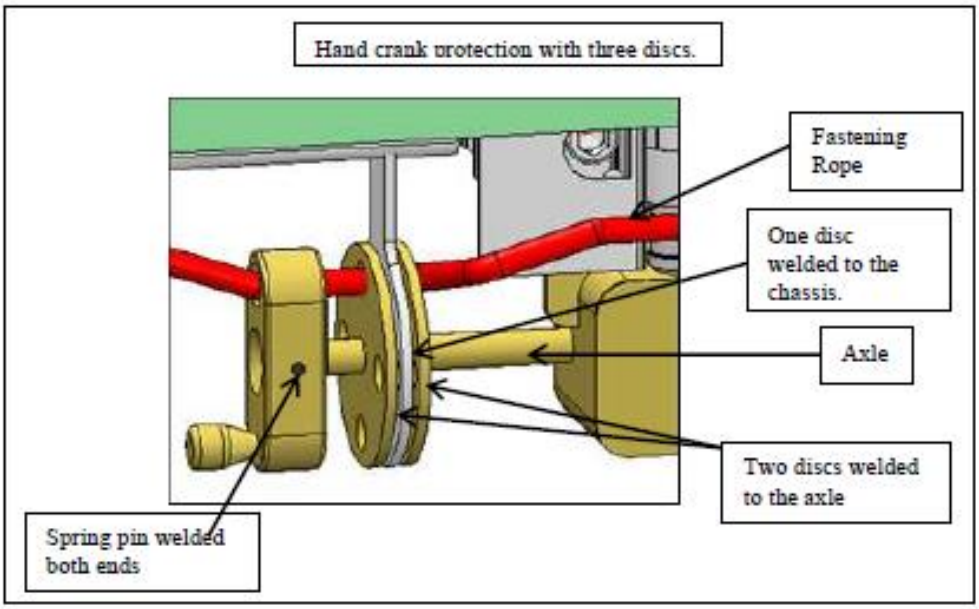
Sketch No. 9.4

To tighten the sliding sheets in the horizontal direction, a ratchet gear is used (normally at the rear end of the container). This sketch shows two examples, (a) and (b), of how the ratchet or gearbox may be secured.

(a) Ratchet securing



(b) Gearbox securing

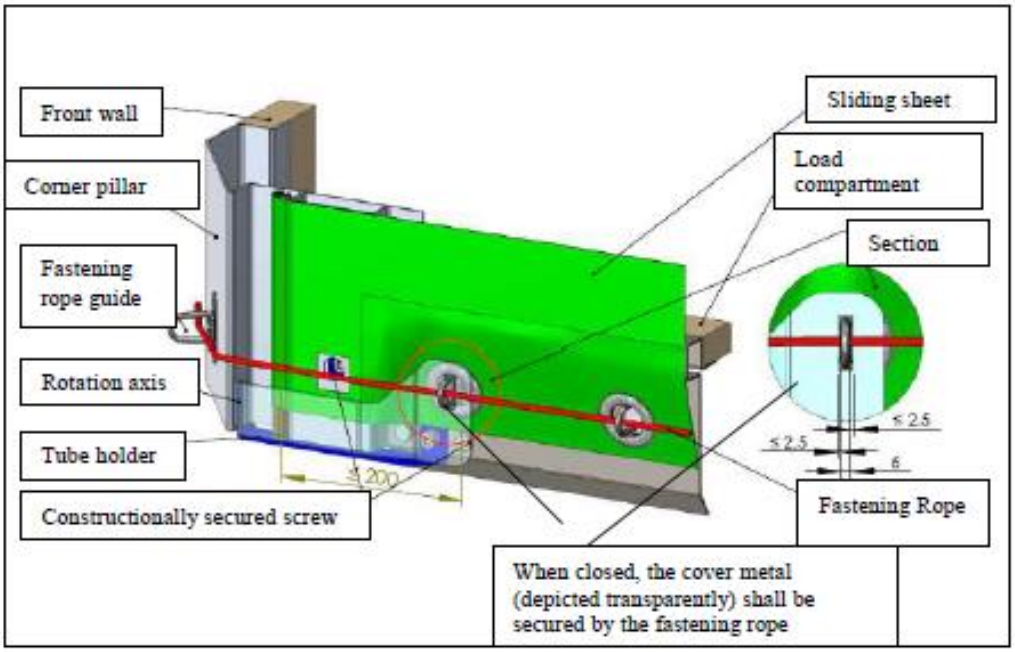


Sketch No. 9 continued

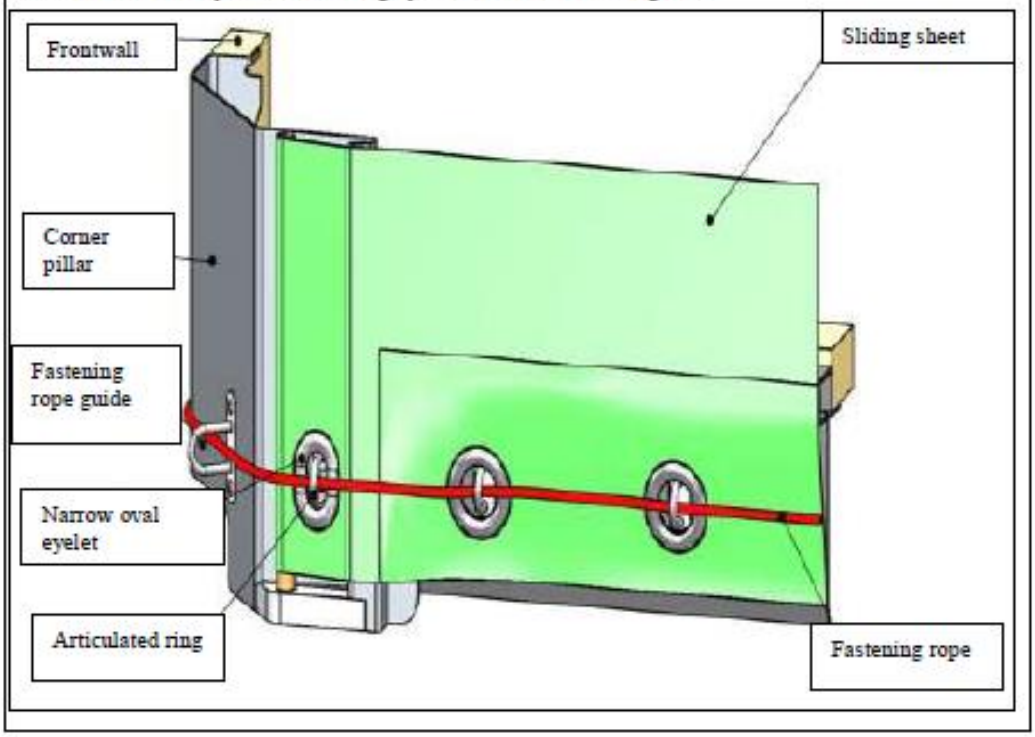
Sketch No. 9.5

To fix the sliding sheet on the other side (normally the front of the container), the following systems, (a) or (b), may be used.

(a) Cover metal



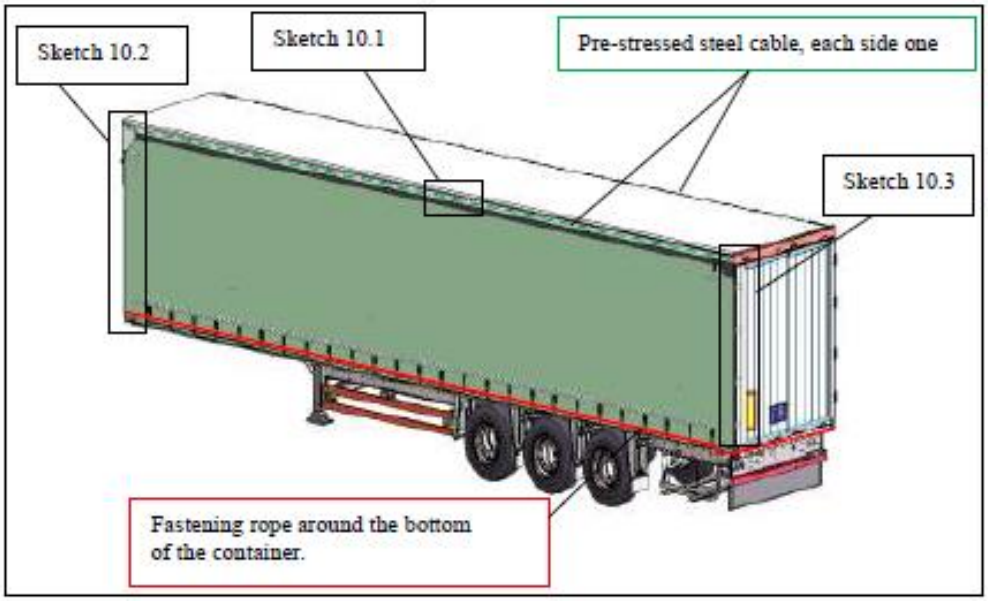
(b) Narrow oval eyelet, anti-lifting system for the tensioning tube



Annex 4 – Sketch No. 10

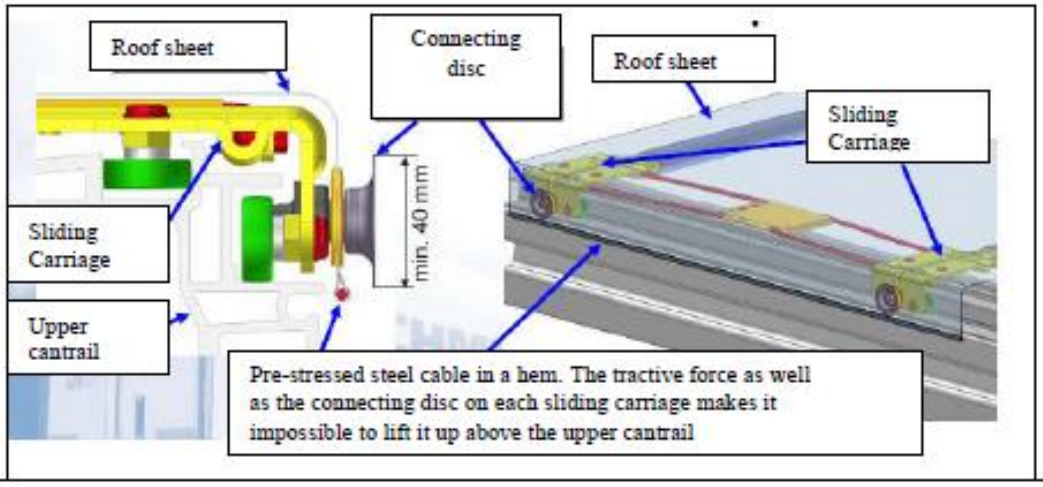
EXAMPLE OF A CONSTRUCTION OF A CONTAINER WITH A SHEETED SLIDING ROOF

This sketch shows an example of a container and the important requirements described in Article 6 of these Regulations.



Sketch No. 10.1

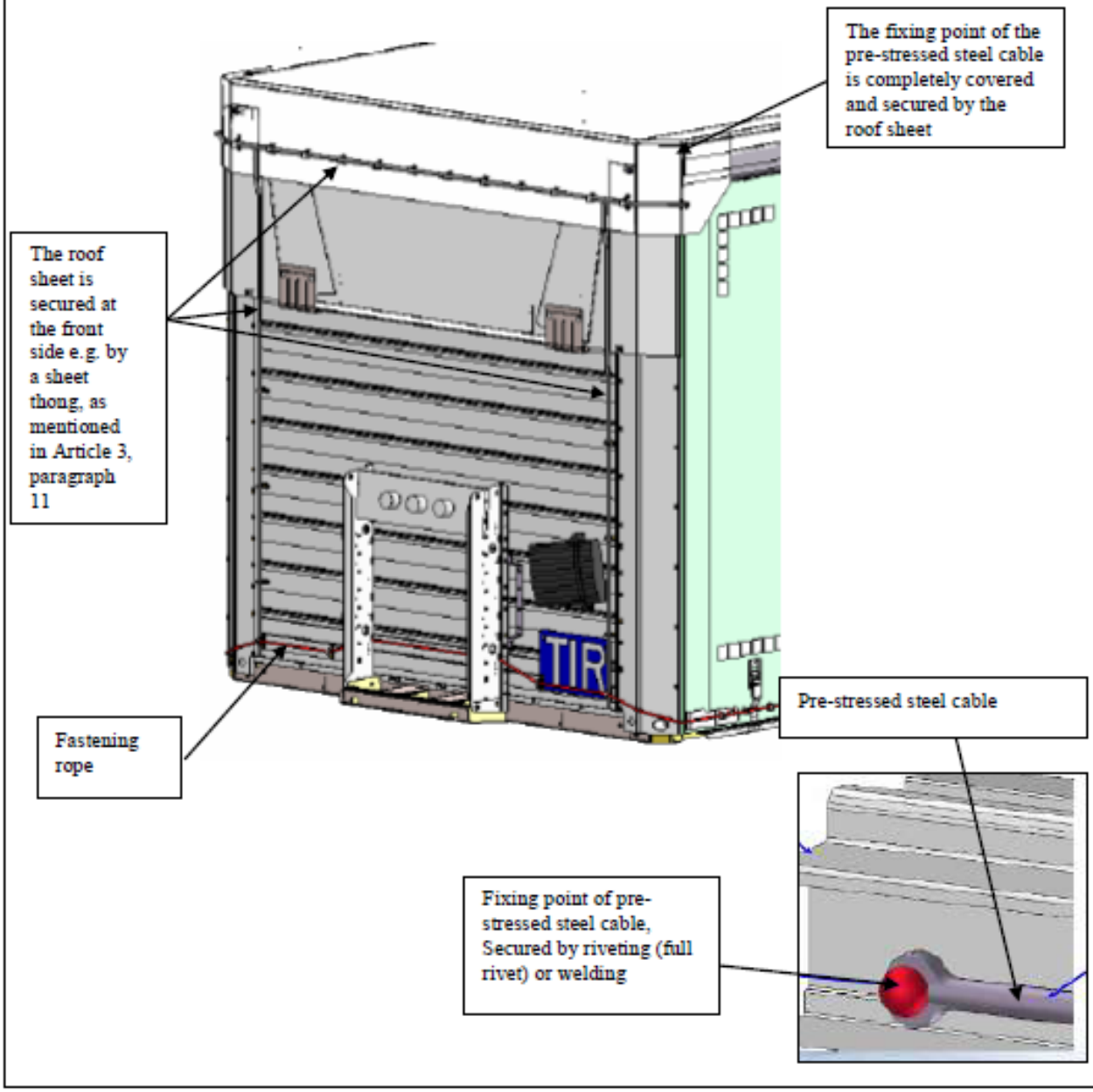
Two pre-stressed steel cables, embedded in a hem, are fixed on each side of the container. This pre-stressed steel cable is fixed to the front (see sketch 10.2) and rear of the body (see sketch 10.3). The tractive force as well as the connecting disc on each sliding carriage makes it impossible to lift up the hem with the pre-stressed steel cable above the upper cantrail.



Sketch No. 10 continued

Sketch No.10.2

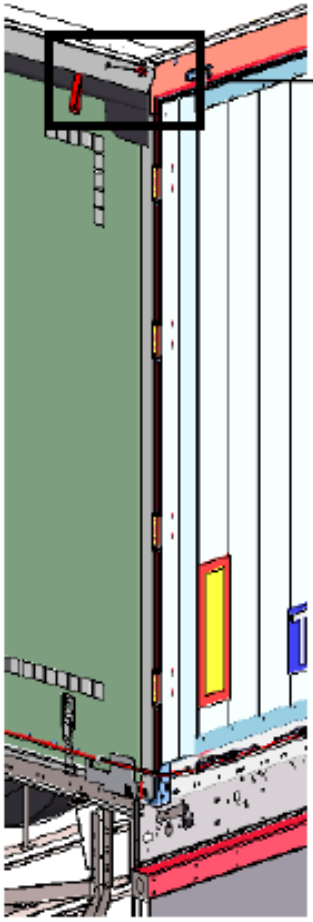
The sliding roof sheet shall overlap with the solid part of the roof at the front side of the container, so that the roof sheet cannot be pulled over the top edge of the upper cantrail

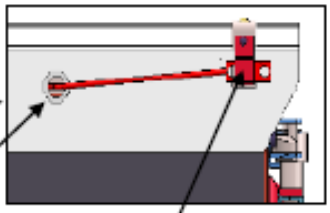


Sketch No. 10 continued

Sketch No.10.3

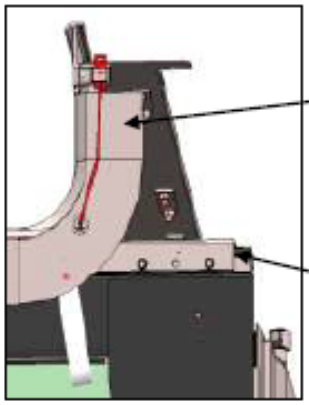
At the rear, a special device, such as a baffle plate, is fitted to the roof, preventing access to the container, without leaving obvious traces when the doors are closed and sealed.





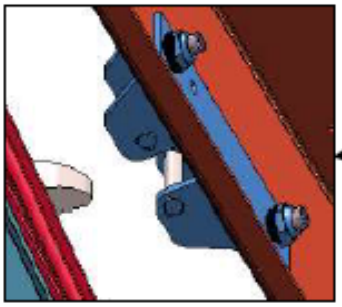
Pre-stressed cable goes in a hem

The fixing point of the pre-stressed steel cable is completely covered, and the metal cover is secured by welding or riveting (full rivet)



Tensioning device on the lever mechanism. By folding down the part of the roof with the tensioning device, the pre-stressed steel cable will be under tension

Sliding carriage from the roof sheet (closed) with lock system (inside)



By closing and sealing the doors, the systems are customs secure.

ANNEX 5

Procedures for the approval of containers complying with the technical conditions prescribed in Annex 4

General

1. Containers may be approved for the transport of goods under Customs seal either :

(a) at the manufacturing stage, by design type (procedure for approval at the manufacturing stage); or

(b) at a stage subsequent to manufacture, either individually or in respect of a specified number of containers of the same type (procedure for approval at a stage subsequent to manufacture).

Provisions common to both approval procedures

2. The competent authority responsible for granting approval shall issue to the applicant, after approval, a certificate of approval valid, as the case may be, either for an unlimited series of containers of the approved type or for a specified number of containers.

3. The beneficiary of approval shall affix an approval plate to the approved container or containers before their use for the transport of goods under Customs seal.

4. The approval plate shall be affixed permanently and in a clearly visible place adjacent to any other approval plate issued for official purposes.*

5. The approval plate, conforming the model No. 1 reproduced in Appendix 1 to this Annex, shall take the form of a metal plate measuring not less than 20 cm by 10 cm. The following particulars shall be stamped into or embossed on the plate or indicated on its surface in any other permanent and legible way, in at least the English or the French language :

(a) the words "Approved for transport under Customs seal";

(b) an indication of the country in which approval was granted either by name, or by means of the ISO alpha-2 country code provided for in International Standard ISO 3166, or by the distinguishing sign used to indicate the country of registration of motor vehicles in international road traffic, and the number (figures, letters, etc.) of the certificate of approval and the year of approval (e.g. "NL/26/73" means "Netherlands, certificate of approval No. 26, issued in 1973");

(c) the serial number assigned to the container by the manufacturer (manufacturer's number);

* See also Part VII of the Handbook.

(d)if the container has been approved by type, the identification numbers or letters of the type of container.

6. If a container no longer complies with the technical conditions prescribed for its approval, it shall, before it can be used for the transport of goods under Customs seal, be restored to the condition which had justified its approval, so as to comply again with the said technical conditions.

7. If the essential characteristics of a container are changed, the container shall cease to be covered by the approval and shall be reapproved by the competent authority before it can be used for the transport of goods under Customs seal.

Special provisions for approval by design type at the manufacturing stage

8. Where the containers are manufactured by type series, the manufacturer may apply to the competent authority of the country of manufacture for approval by design type.

9. The manufacturer shall state in his application the identification numbers or letters which he assigns to the type of container to which his application for approval relates.

10. The application shall be accompanied by drawings and a detailed design specification of the container type to be approved.

11. The manufacturer shall give an undertaking in writing that he will :

(a)produce to the competent authority such containers of the type concerned as that authority may wish to examine;

(b)permit the competent authority to examine further units at any time during the production of the type series concerned;

(c)advise the competent authority of any change, of whatever magnitude, in the design or specification before proceeding with such change;

(d)mark the containers in a visible place with, in addition to the markings required on the approval plate, the identification numbers or letters of the design type and the serial number of the container in the type series (manufacturer's number);

(e)keep a record of containers manufactured to the approved design type.

12. The competent authority shall state what changes, if any, must be made to the proposed design type so that approval may be granted.

13. No type-approval by design type shall be granted unless the competent authority has satisfied itself by examination of one or more containers manufactured to the design type concerned that containers of that type comply with the technical conditions prescribed in Annex 4.

14. When a container type is approved there shall be issued to the applicant a single certificate of approval conforming to model No. II reproduced in Appendix 2 to this Annex and valid for all containers manufactured in conformity with the specifications of the type so approved. Such certificate shall entitle the manufacturer to affix to every container of the type series an approval plate in the form prescribed in paragraph 5 of this Annex.

Special provisions for approval at a stage subsequent to manufacture

15. If approval has not been applied for at the manufacturing stage, the owner, the operator, or the representative of either, may apply for approval to the competent authority to which he is able to produce the container or containers and for which he seeks approval.

16. An application for approval submitted under paragraph 15 of this Annex shall state the serial number (manufacturer's number) placed on each container by the manufacturer.

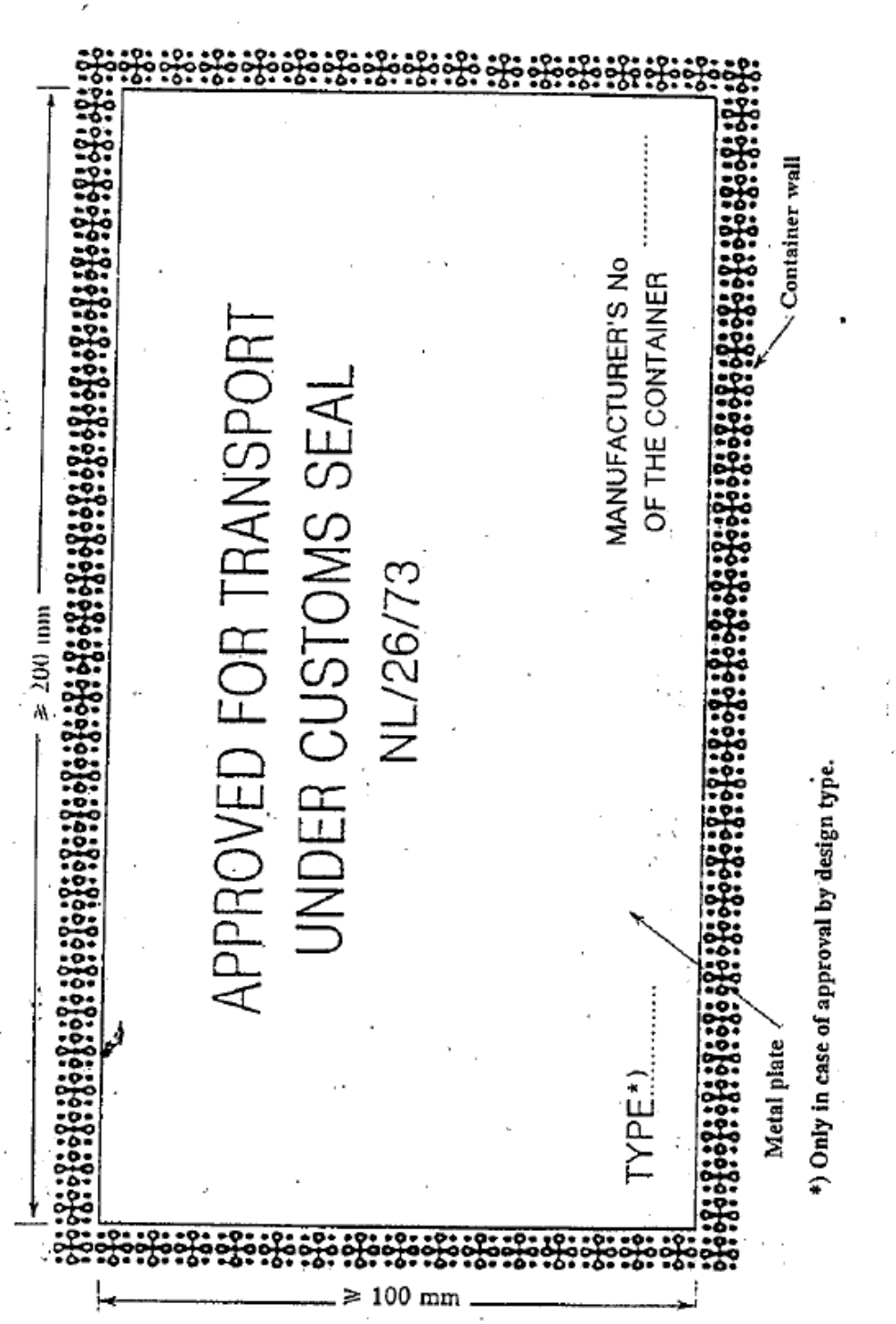
17. When the competent authority has ascertained that the container or containers comply with the technical conditions prescribed in Annex 4, by examination of as many containers as it considers necessary, it shall issue a certificate of approval conforming to model No. III reproduced in Appendix 3 to this Annex and valid solely for the number of containers approved. Such certificate, which shall bear the manufacturer's serial number or numbers assigned to the container or containers to which it relates, shall entitle the applicant to affix to each container so approved the approval plate prescribed in paragraph 5 of this Annex.

Appendix 1 to Annex 5

MODEL No.1

APPROVAL PLATE

(English version)

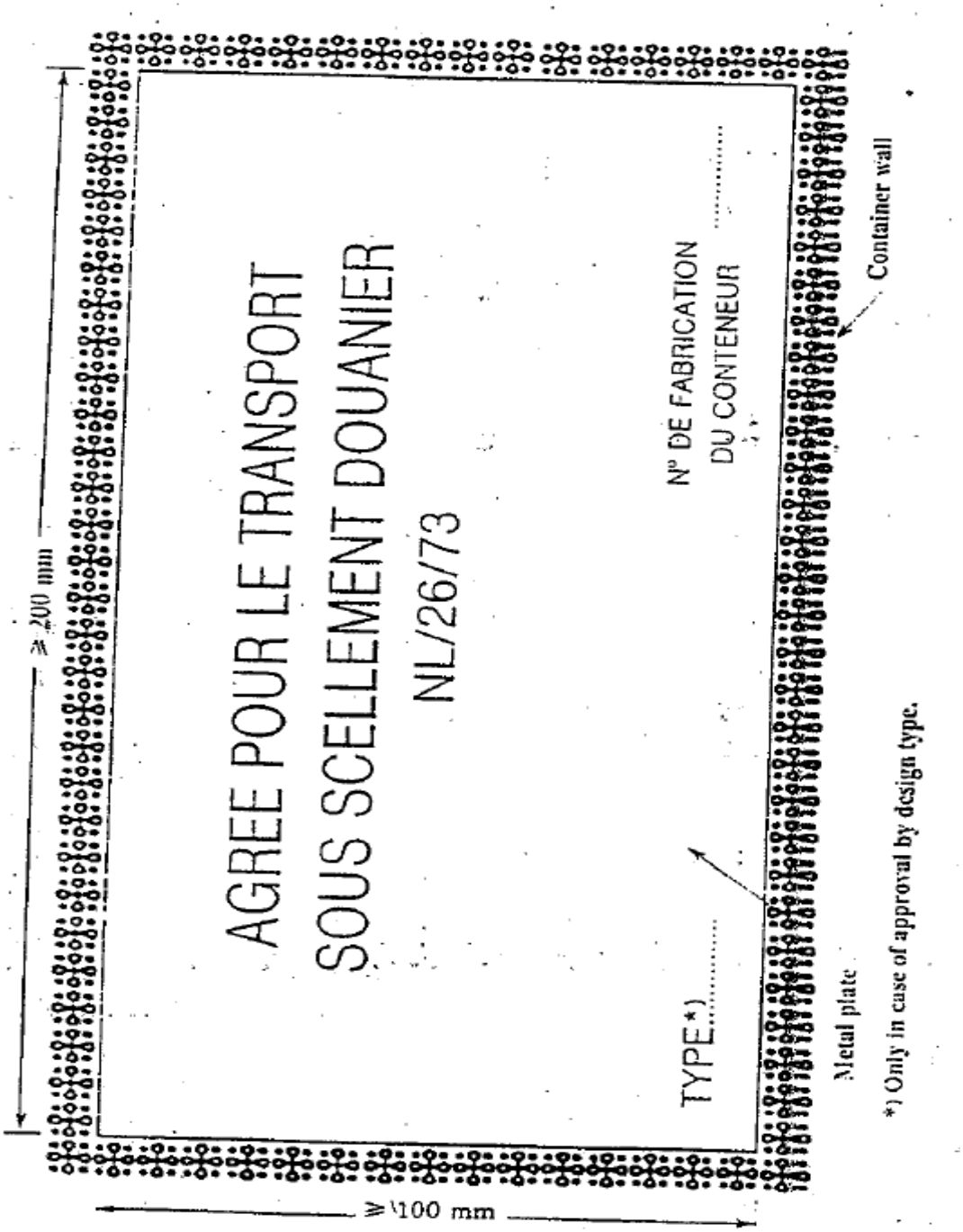


Appendix 1 to Annex 5

MODEL
No.1

APPROVAL
PLATE

(French
version)



Appendix 2 to Annex 5

MODEL No. II

Customs Convention on Containers, 1972

Certificate of approval by design type

1. Certificate No.(*).....

2. This is to certify that the container design type described below has been approved and that containers manufactured to this type can be accepted for the transport of goods under Customs seal.

3. Kind of container .....

4. Identification number or letters of the design type .....

5. Identification number of the working drawings .....

6. Identification number of the design specifications .....

7. Tare weight .....

8. External dimensions in centimetres .....

9. Essential characteristics of structure (nature of materials, kind of construction, etc.)
.....
.....
.....
.....

10. This certificate is valid for all containers manufactured in conformity with the drawings and specifications referred to above.

11. Issued to .....
(manufacturer's name and address)
who is authorized to affix an approval plate to each container of the approved design type manufactured by him,

at ..... on ..... 19 ....
(place) (date)

by .....
(signature and stamp of issuing service or organization)

(See notice overleaf)

_____

(*) Insert the letters and figures, which are to be marked on the approval plate (see paragraph 5 (b) of Annex 5 to the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972).

IMPORTANT NOTICE

(Annex 5, paragraphs 6 and 7,
to the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972)

6. If a container no longer complies with the technical conditions prescribed for its approval, it shall, before it can be used for the transport of goods under Customs seal, be restored to the condition which had justified its approval, so as to comply again with the said technical conditions.

7. If the essential characteristics of a container are changed, the container shall cease to be covered by the approval and shall be reapproved by the competent authority before it can be used for the transport of goods under Customs seal.

Appendix 3 to Annex 5

MODEL No. III

Customs Convention on Containers, 1972

Certificate of approval granted at a stage subsequent to manufacture

1. Certificate No.(*) .....

2. This is to certify that the container (containers) specified below has (have) been approved for the transport of goods under Customs seal.

3. Kind of container(s) .....

4. Serial number(s) assigned to the container(s) by the manufacturer .....
.....

5. Tare weight ....

6. External dimensions in centimetres .....

7. Essential characteristics of structure (nature of materials, kind of construction, etc.)
.....
.....
.....
.....

8. Issued to .....
(manufacturer's name and address)
who is authorized to affix an approval plate to the above-mentioned container(s)

at ..... on ..... 19 ....
(place) (date)

by .....
(signature and stamp of issuing service or organization)

(See notice overleaf)

(*) Insert the letters and figures, which are to be marked on the approval plate (see paragraph 5 (b) of Annex 5 to the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972).

IMPORTANT NOTICE

(Annex 5, paragraphs 6 and 7,
to the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972)

6. If a container no longer complies with the technical conditions prescribed for its approval, it shall, before it can be used for the transport of goods under Customs seal, be restored to the condition which had justified its approval, so as to comply again with the said technical conditions.

7. If the essential characteristics of a container are changed, the container shall cease to be covered by the approval and shall be reapproved by the competent authority before it can be used for the transport of goods under Customs seal.

ANNEX 6

Explanatory Notes

Introduction

(i) In accordance with the provisions of Article 13 of the present Convention, the Explanatory Notes interpret some provisions of the present Convention and of its Annexes.

(ii) The Explanatory Notes do not modify the provisions of the present Convention or of its Annexes but make their contents, meaning and scope more precise.

(iii) In particular, having regard to the principles laid down by the provisions of Article 12 of the present Convention and of Annex 4 thereto for the approval of containers for transport under Customs seal, the Explanatory Notes specify, where appropriate, the construction techniques to be accepted by the Contracting Parties as complying with those provisions. The Explanatory Notes may also specify which construction techniques, if any, do not comply with those provisions.

(iv) The Explanatory Notes provide a means of applying the provisions of the present Convention and of its Annexes according to the development of technology and economic requirements.

0. Main text of the Convention

0.1 Article 1

Subparagraph (c)(i) - Partially enclosed containers

0.1.(c)(i)-1 The term "partially enclosed", as applied to equipment in Article 1, subparagraph (c)(i), relates to equipment generally consisting of a floor and a superstructure marking off a loading space equivalent to that of a closed container. The superstructure is generally made up of metal members forming the frame of a container. Containers of this type may also comprise one or more lateral or frontal walls. In some cases there is only a roof attached to the floor by uprights. This type of container is used in particular for the carriage of bulky goods (motor cars, for example).

Subparagraph (c) - Accessories and equipment of the container

0.1.(c)-1 The term "accessories and equipment of the container" shall cover in particular the following devices, even if they are removable :

(a) equipment for controlling, modifying or maintaining the temperature inside the container;

(b) small appliances, such as temperature or impact recorders, designed to indicate or record variations in environmental conditions and impact;

(c) internal partitions, pallets, shelves, supports, hooks, and similar devices used for stowing goods.

Subparagraph (c) - Demountable bodies

0.1.(c)-2 The term "demountable body" means a load-compartment which has no means of locomotion and which is designed in particular to be transported upon a road vehicle, the chassis of which, together with the under-framing of the body is especially adapted for this purpose. It covers also a swap-body which is a load-compartment designed especially for combined road and rail transport.

1. Annex 1

1.1 Paragraph 1 - Use of plastic film for identification marks and numbers on containers

1.1-1 For identification marks and numbers on containers to be considered durably marked when plastic film is used, compliance with the following specifications is required :

(a) a high-quality adhesive shall be used. The film, once applied, shall have a tensile strength lower than its final adhesion so that removal of the film without destroying it is impossible. Film produced by the cast method of production meets these requirements. Film produced by the calendar method of production shall not be used;

(b) when identification marks and numbers have to be changed, the film to be replaced shall be removed completely prior to the affixing of the new film; placing of new film over an existing film shall not be permitted.

1.1-2 The specifications for the use of plastic film for marking containers set out in subparagraph 1.1-1 of this Explanatory Note do not exclude the possibility of using other durable marking methods.

4. Annex 4

4.2 Article 2

Subparagraph 1.(a) - Assembly of constituent parts

4.2.1.(a)-1

(a) Where joining devices (rivets, screws, bolts and nuts, etc.) are used, a sufficient number of such devices shall be inserted from outside, traverse the assembled constituent parts, protrude inside and there be firmly secured (e.g. riveted, welded, bushed or bolted and swaged or welded on the nut). However, conventional rivets (i.e., rivets whose placing requires handling from both sides of the assembly of constituent parts) may also be inserted from the inside. Notwithstanding the above, container floors may be secured by means of self-tapping screws, self-drilling rivets or rivets inserted by means of an explosive charge or pins inserted pneumatically, when placed from inside and passing at right angles through the floor and the metallic cross-pieces underneath, on condition, except in the case of self-tapping screws, that some of their ends be flush with the level of the outside part of the cross-piece or be welded on to it.

(b) The competent authority shall determine what joining devices, and how many of them, must fulfil the requirements of subparagraph (a) of this Note; they shall do so by making sure that the constituent parts so assembled cannot be displaced without leaving visible traces. The choice and placing of other joining devices are not subject to any restriction.

(c) Joining devices which can be removed and replaced from one side without leaving visible traces, i.e. without requiring handling from both sides of the constituent parts to be assembled, shall not be allowed under subparagraph (a) of this Note. Examples of such devices are expansion rivets, blind rivets and the like. However, blind rivets can be used on condition that a sufficient number of other joining devices as described in Annex 6, Explanatory Note 4.2.1.(a)-1 (a) to the Convention are used to assemble constituent parts.

(d) The assembly methods described above shall apply to special containers, for example to insulated containers, refrigerated containers and tank containers in so far as they are not incompatible with the technical requirements which such containers must fulfil having regard to their use. Where, due to technical reasons, it is not practicable to secure parts in the manner described in sub-paragraph (a) of this Note, the constituent parts may be joined by means of the devices mentioned in subparagraph (c) of this Note provided that the joining devices used on the inner face of the wall cannot be tampered with from the outside.

Subparagraph 1.(b) - Doors and other closing systems

4.2.1.(b)-1

(a) The device on which Customs seals can be fixed must :

(i) be secured by welding, or by not less than two joining devices conforming to subparagraph (a) of Explanatory Note 4.2.1.(a)-1; or

(ii) be so designed that when the container has been closed and sealed the device cannot be removed without leaving visible traces

It must also:

(iii) incorporate holes of not less than 11 mm in diameter or slots of at least 11 mm in length by 3 mm in width; and

(iv) afford equal security whatever type of seal is used.

(b) Butt hinges, strap hinges, hinge-pins and other devices for hanging doors and the like must be secured in conformity with the requirements of subparagraphs (a)(i) and (ii) of this Note. Moreover, the various components of such devices (e.g. hinge plates, pins or swivels), provided that they are necessary to guarantee Customs security of the container (see sketch No. 7 appended to this Annex), shall be so fitted that they cannot be removed or dismantled when the container is closed and sealed without leaving obvious traces. However, where such a device is not accessible from outside, it will suffice if, when the door or the like has been closed and sealed, it cannot be detached from the device without leaving visible traces. Where a door or closure-device has more than two hinges, only those two hinges nearest to the extremities of the door need be fixed in conformity with the requirements of subparagraphs (a)(i) and (ii) above.

(c)Exceptionally, in the case of insulated containers, the Customs sealing device, the hinges and any fittings the removal of which would give access to the interior of the container or to spaces in which goods could be concealed, may be fixed to the doors of such containers by means of the following systems :

(i) Set bolts or set screws which are inserted from the outside but which do not otherwise meet the requirements of Explanatory Note 4.2.1.(a)-1, sub-paragraph (a) above, on condition that :

the tails of the set bolts or set screws are fixed into a tapping plate or similar device fitted behind the outer layer or layers of the door structure; and

the heads of the appropriate number of set bolts or set screws are so welded to the Customs sealing device, hinges, etc., that they are completely deformed and that the set bolts or set screws cannot be removed without leaving visible signs of tampering (see sketch No. 4 appended to this Annex).

(ii) A fastening device which is inserted from the inside of the insulated door construction on condition that:

the fastening pin and securing collar of the device are assembled by pneumatic or hydraulic tooling and fixed behind a plate or similar device fitted between the outer layer of the door structure and the insulation;

the head of the fastening pin is not accessible from the inside of the container; and

a sufficient number of securing collars and fastening pins are welded together and the devices cannot be removed without leaving visible signs of tampering (see sketch No. 8 appended to this Annex).

The term "insulated container" is to be taken to include refrigerated and isothermic containers.

(d) Containers comprising a large number of such closures as valves, stopcocks, manhole covers, flanges and the like must be designed so as to keep the number of Customs seals to a

minimum. To this end, neighbouring closures must be interconnected by a common device requiring only one Customs seal, or must be provided with a cover meeting the same purpose.

(e) Containers with opening roofs must be constructed in such a manner as to permit sealing with a minimum number of Customs seals.

Subparagraph 1.(c) – Ventilation apertures

4.2.1.(c)-1

(a)Their greatest dimension must, in principle, not exceed 400mm.

(b) Apertures permitting direct access to the container must be obstructed:

(i) by means of wire gauze or perforated metal screens (maximum dimension of holes 3 mm in both cases) and protected by welded metal lattice-work (maximum dimension of holes: 10mm; or

(ii) by means of a single perforated metal screen of sufficient strength (maximum dimension of holes: 3mm; thickness of the screen: at least 1mm).

(c) Apertures not permitting direct access to the container (e.g. because of elbow or baffle-plate systems) must be provided with devices referred to in subparagraph (b), in which, however, the dimensions of the holes may be as much as 10 mm (for the wire gauze or metal screen) and 20 mm (for the metal lattice-work).

(d) Where openings are made in sheets, the devices referred to in subparagraph (b) of this Note must in principle be prescribed. However, blocking devices in the form of a perforated metal screen fitted outside, and wire or other gauze fitted inside, will be allowed.

(e) Identical non-metal devices may be allowed provided that the holes are of the requisite dimensions and the material used is strong enough to prevent the holes from being substantially enlarged without visible damage. In addition, it must be impossible to replace the ventilation device by working from one side of the sheet only.

(f) The ventilation aperture may be provided with a protective device. This shall be secured to the sheet in such a way as to permit Customs inspection of the aperture. This protective device shall be secured to the sheet at a distance of less than 5cm from the screen of the ventilation aperture.

Subparagraph 1.(c) – Drainage apertures

4.2.1.(c)-2

(a) their greatest dimension must, in principle, not exceed 35mm.

(b) Apertures permitting direct access to the goods must be provided with the devices described in subparagraph (b) of Explanatory Note 4.2.1.(c)-1 for ventilation apertures.

(c) When drainage apertures do not permit direct access to the goods, the device referred to in subparagraph (b) of this Note will not be prescribed, on condition that the apertures are provided with a reliable baffle system readily accessible from inside the container.

4.4 Article 4

Paragraph 3 – Sheets made up of several pieces

4.4.3-1

(a)The several pieces constituting one sheet may be made of different materials conforming to the provisions of Annex 4, Article 4, paragraph 2.

(b)Any arrangement of the pieces which adequately guarantees security will be allowed in making up the sheet, on condition that the pieces are assembled in conformity with the requirements of Annex 4, Article 4.

Subparagraph 6.(a)

4.4.6.(a)-1

Examples of a construction system for affixing container sheets and of a system of affixing sheets around containers' corner-castings, acceptable from a Customs point of view, are given in sketches No. 1, No. 2 and No. 3 appended to this Annex.

Subparagraph 6.(a)(i) - Sheeted containers with sliding rings

4.4.6.(a)-2

Metal securing rings on metal bars fixed to the containers are acceptable for the purposes of this paragraph (see sketch No. 5 appended to this Annex) provided that :

(a) the bars are affixed to the container at maximum spacings of 60 cm and in such a manner that they cannot be removed and replaced without leaving obvious traces;

(b) the rings are made with a double hoop or equipped with a central bar and made in one piece without the use of welding; and

(c) the sheet is fixed to the container in strict compliance with the conditions set forth in Annex 4, Article 1 (a) of this Convention.

Subparagraph 6.(a)(i) - Sheeted containers with swivel rings

4.4.6.(a)-3 Metal swivel rings, each of which rotates in a metal bracket fixed to the container are acceptable for the purpose of this paragraph (see sketch No. 6 appended to this Annex) provided that :

(a) each bracket is affixed to the container in such a manner that it cannot be removed and replaced without leaving obvious traces; and

(b) the spring under each bracket is completely enclosed by a bell-shaped metal cover.

Subparagraph 6.(b) - Permanently-secured sheets

4.4.6.(b)-1 Where one or more edges of the sheet are permanently attached to the body of the container, the sheet shall be held in place by one or more strips of metal or other suitable material secured to the body of the container by joining devices meeting the requirements of sub-paragraph (a) of Note 4.2.1.(a)-1 of this Annex.

Paragraph 8 - Spaces between the rings and between the eyelets

4.4.8.-1 Spaces exceeding 200 mm but not exceeding 300 mm are acceptable over the uprights if the rings are recessed in the side boards and the eyelets are oval and so small that they can just pass over the rings.

Paragraph 9 - Textile-cored fastening ropes

4.4.9.-1 For the purposes of this paragraph, ropes comprising a textile core surrounded by at least four strands consisting solely of steel

wire and completely covering the core will be allowed on condition that the ropes (without taking into account the transparent plastic sheath, if any) are not less than 3 mm in diameter.

Subparagraph 11.(a)(i) - Sheet-tensioning flaps

4.4.11.(a)(i) The sheets of many containers are provided on the outside with a horizontal flap pierced by eyelets running along the length of the side of the container. Such flaps, known as tensioning flaps, are used to tauten the sheet by means of tensioning cords or similar devices. Such flaps have been used to conceal horizontal slits made in the sheets giving improper access to the goods carried in the container. It is therefore recommended that the use of flaps of this type should not be allowed. The following devices may be used instead :

(a) tensioning flaps of similar design fixed on the inside of the sheet; or

(b) small individual flaps each pierced by one eyelet secured to the outside surface of the sheet and spaced at such distances as will permit an adequate tensioning of the sheet.

Alternatively, it may be possible in certain cases to avoid the use of tensioning flaps on sheets.

Subparagraph 11.(a)(iii) - Sheets thongs

4.4.11.(a)(iii)-1 The following materials are regarded as suitable for making thongs :

(a) leather;

(b) non-tensile textile materials including plastic-proofed or rubberized cloth, provided that such materials cannot after severance be welded or reconstituted without leaving obvious traces. Furthermore, the plastic material used to cover thongs shall be transparent and smooth surfaced.

4.4.11.(a)(iii)-2 The device shown in sketch No. 3 appended to this Annex meets the requirements of the last part of subparagraph 11.(a) of Article 4 of Annex 4. It also meets the requirements of Annex 4, Article 4, paragraph 6, subparagraph (a).

5. Annex 5

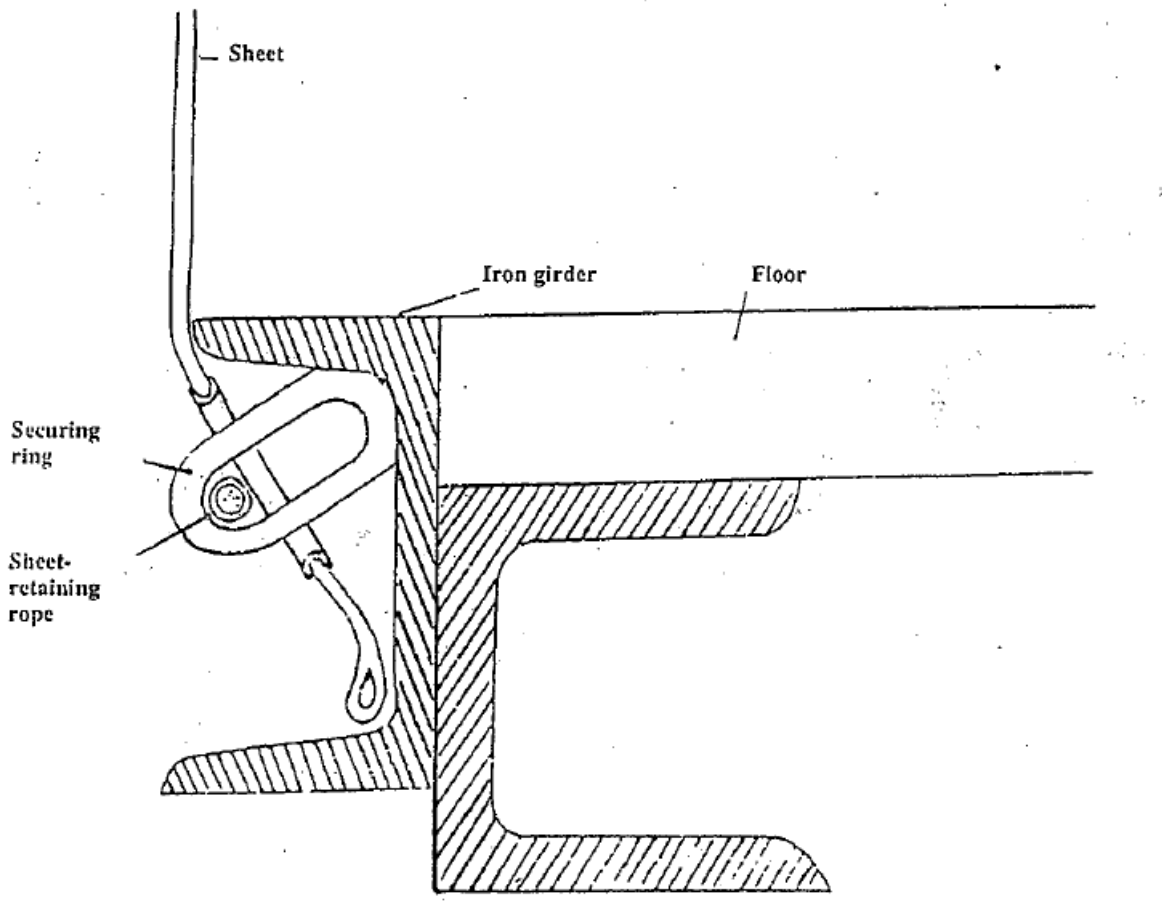
5.1 Paragraph 1 - Approval of a combination of sheeted containers

5.1.-1 If two sheeted containers, approved for transport under Customs seal have been joined together in such a way that they form one container, covered by a single sheet and fulfilling the conditions for transport under Customs seal, a separate certificate of approval, or approval plate, shall not be required for the combination.

Annex 6 – Sketch No.1

CONSTRUCTION DEVICE FOR AFFIXING CONTAINER SHEETS

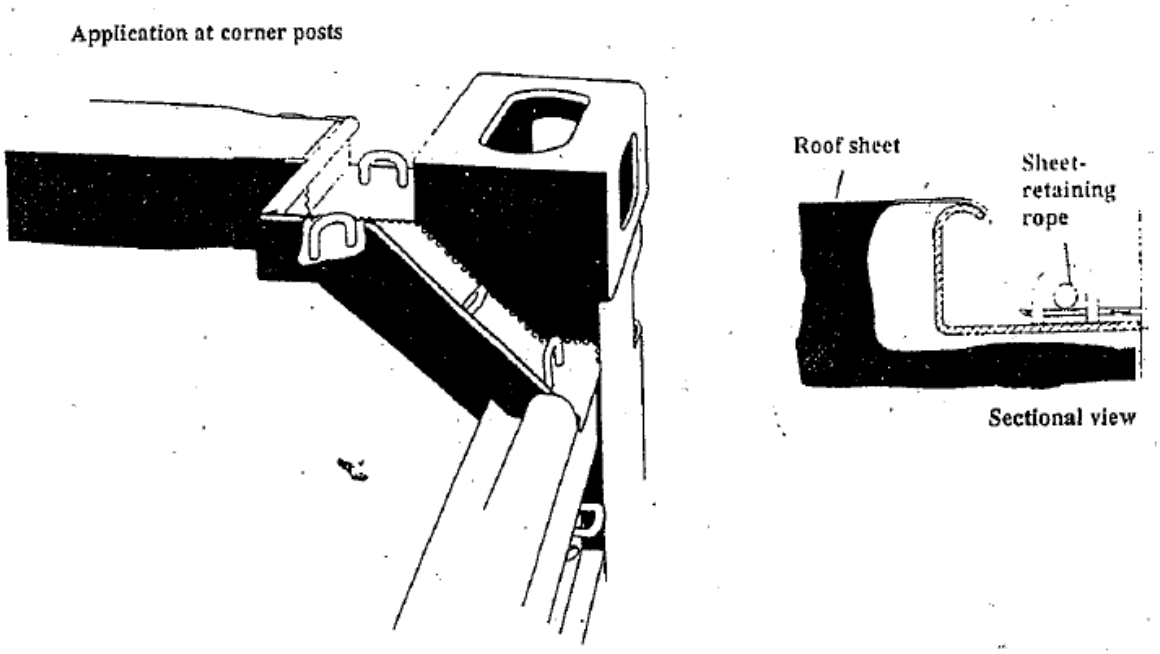
The device illustrated below meets the requirements of Annex 4, Article 4, Subparagraph 6(a).



Annex 6 - Sketch No. 2

DEVICE FOR AFFIXING SHEETS AROUND CONTAINERS' CORNER-CASTINGS

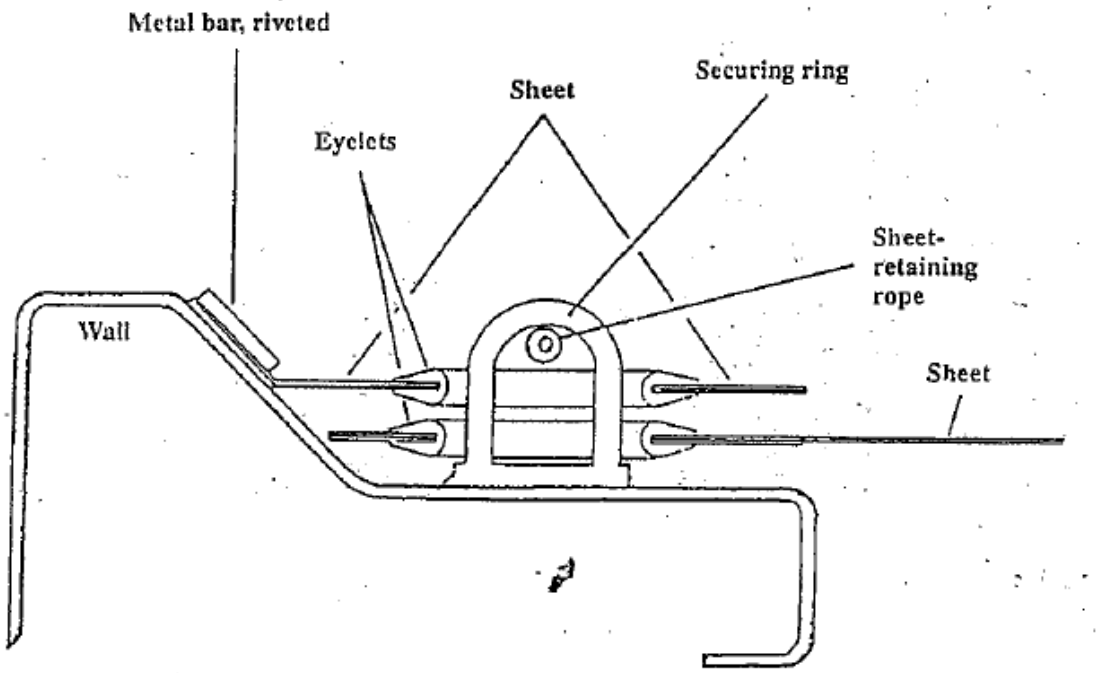
The device illustrated below meets the requirements of Annex 4, Article 4, paragraph 6(a).



Annex 6 – Sketch No. 3

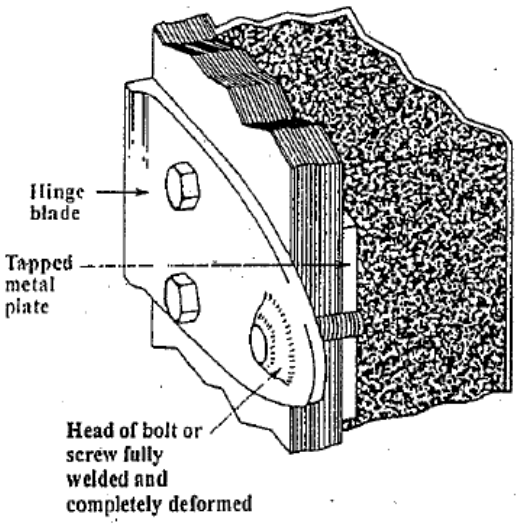
FURTHER EXAMPLE OF A METHOD OF AFFIXING CONTAINER SHEETS

The device illustrated below meets the requirements of the last part of Subparagraph 11.(a) of Article 4 of Annex 4. It also meets the requirements of Annex 4, Article 4, paragraph 6.

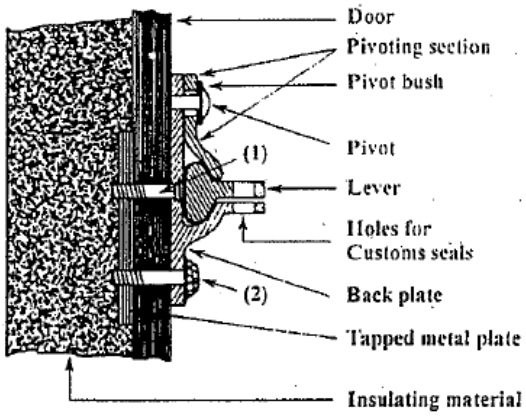


Annex 6 - Sketch No. 4

EXAMPLE OF HINGE AND CUSTOMS SEALING DEVICE
ON DOORS OF INSULATED CONTAINERS



Hinge



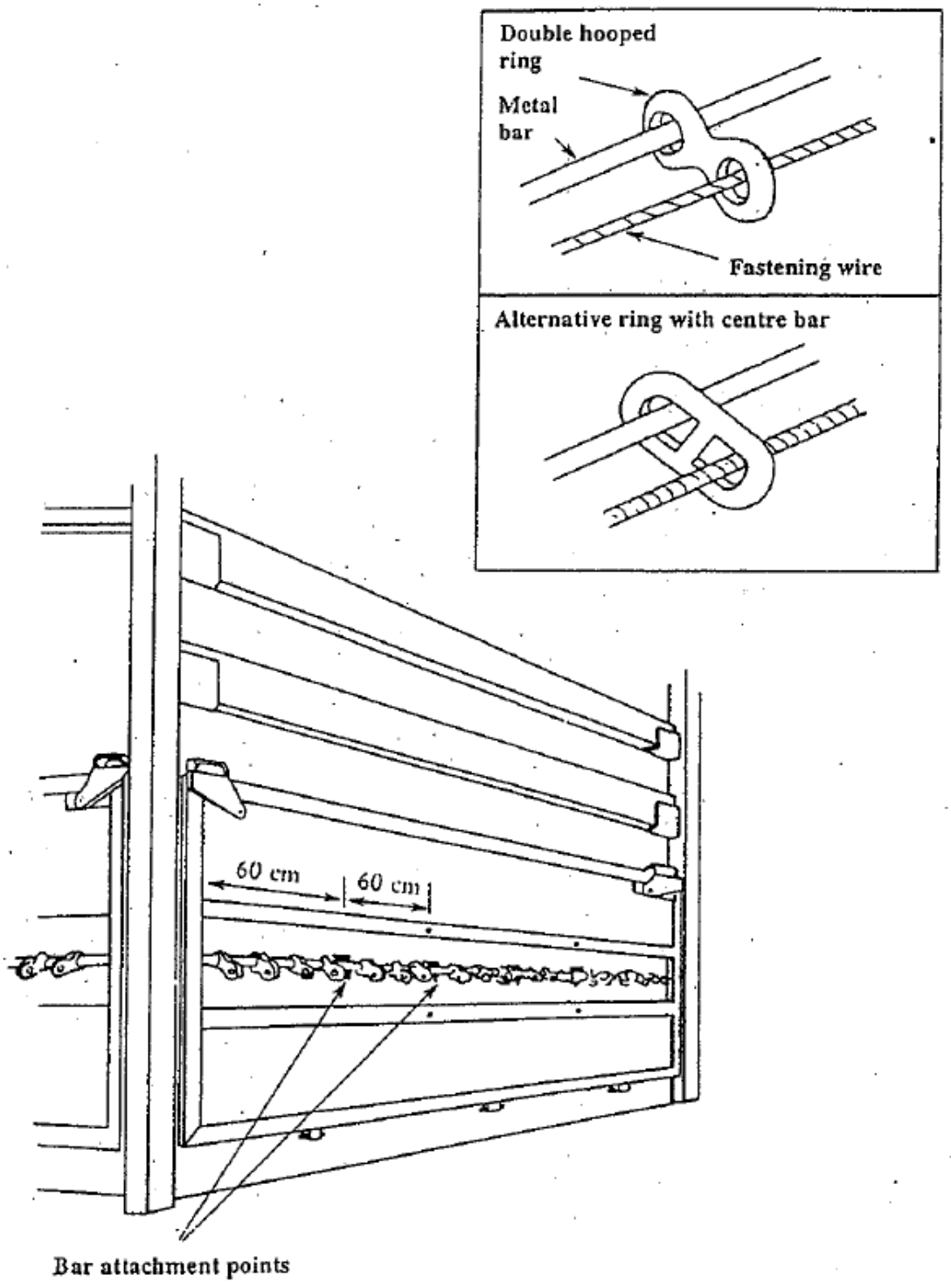
(1) Set-screw head completely deformed by welding. Not accessible when door sealed

(2) Head of set-bolt or set-screw completely deformed by welding

Customs sealing device

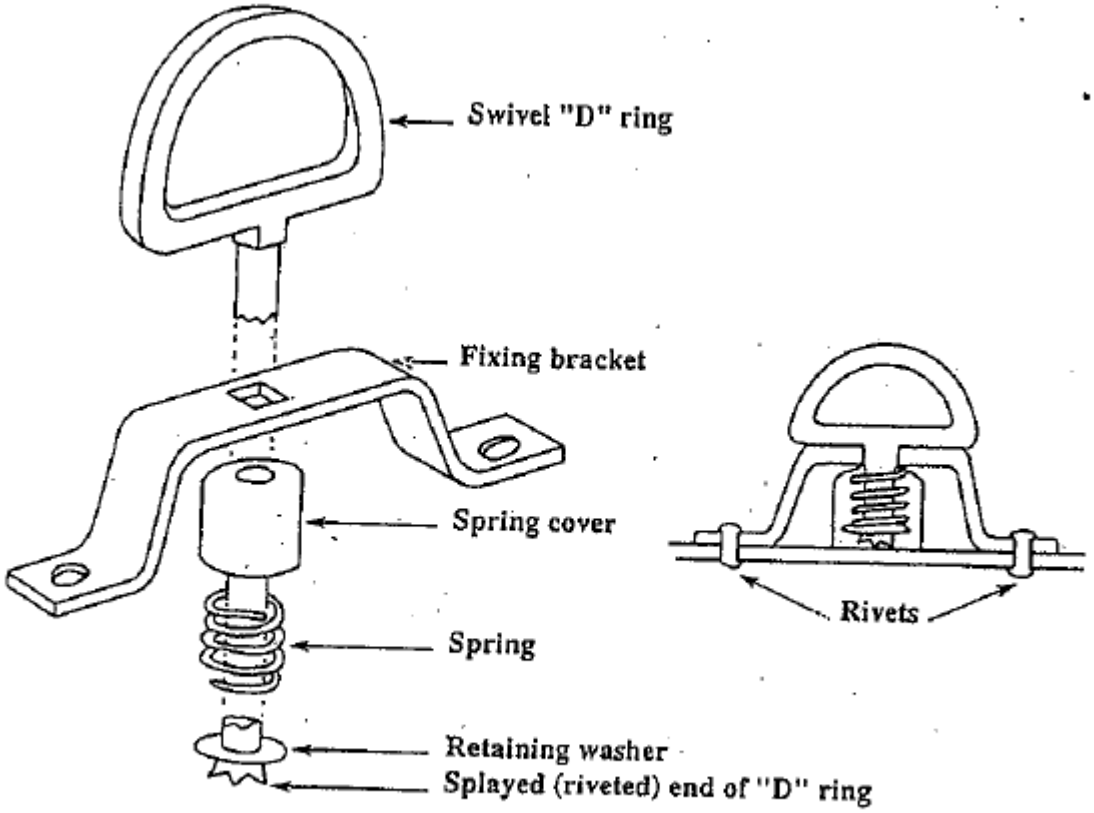
Annex 6 - Sketch No. 5

SHEETED CONTAINERS WITH SLIDING RINGS



Annex 6 - Sketch No. 6

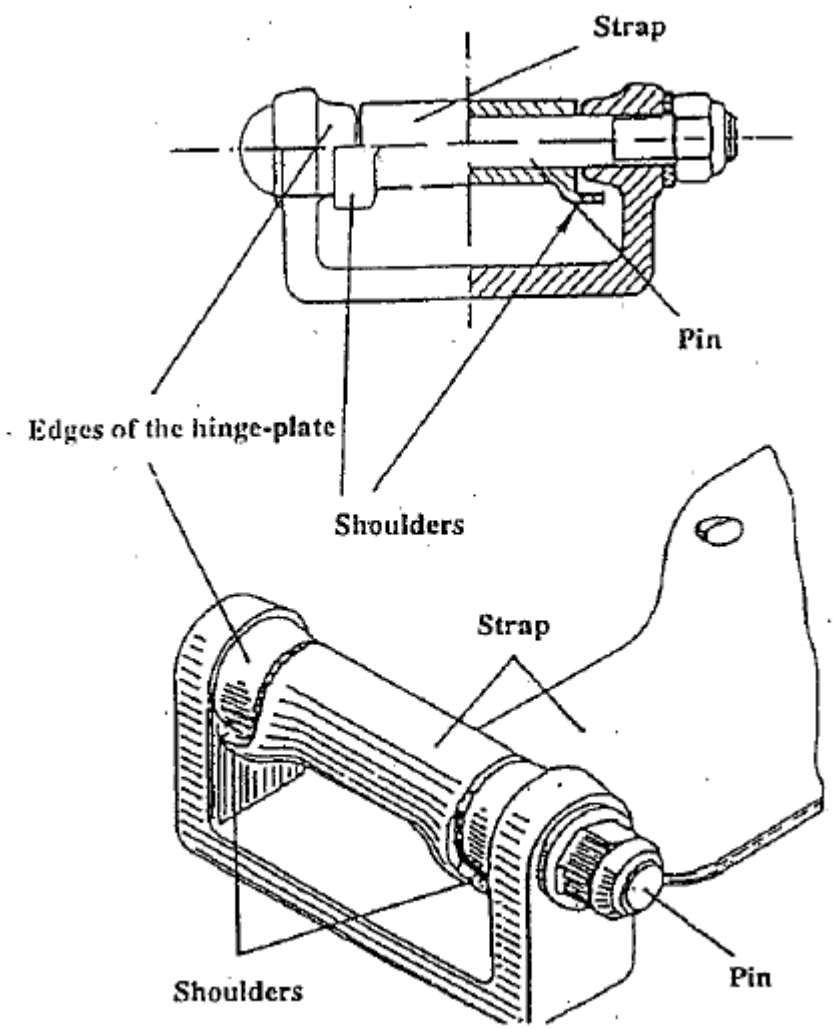
EXAMPLE OF A SWIVEL RING ("D" RING)



Annex 6 - Sketch No. 7

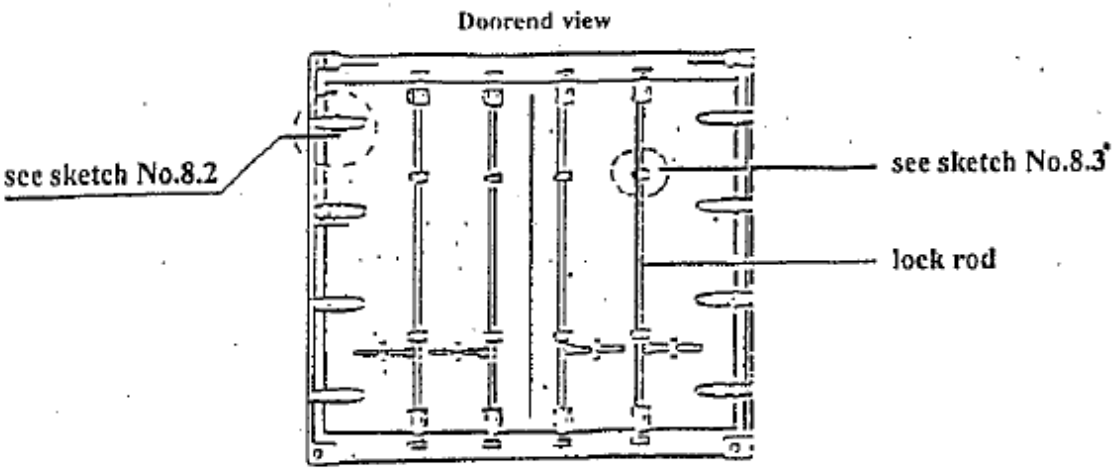
EXAMPLE OF A HINGE NOT REQUIRING SPECIAL PROTECTION FOR THE HINGE-PIN

The hinge illustrated below complies with the requirements of Explanatory Note 2.2.1(b), paragraph (b), second sentence. The design of the strap and the hinge-plate make any special protection of the pin unnecessary, since the shoulders of the strap extend behind the edges of the hinge-plate. These shoulders therefore prevent the Customs-sealed door from being opened at the hinged side without leaving obvious traces, even if the unprotected pin has been removed.

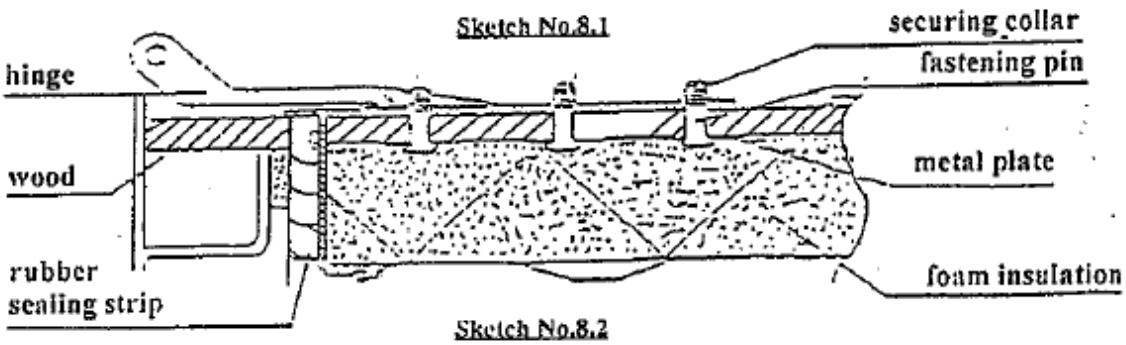


Annex 6 - Sketch No. 8

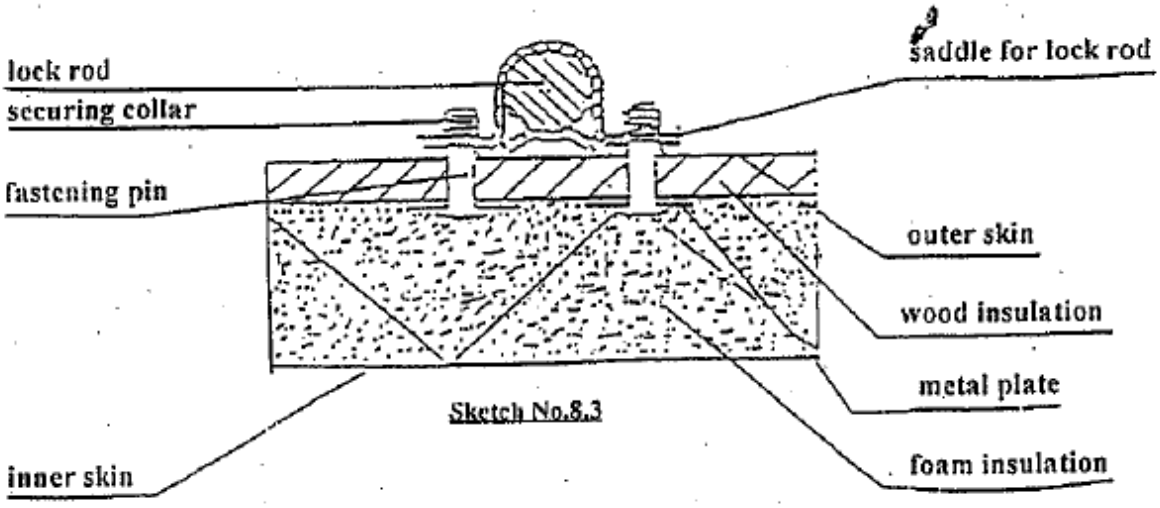
EXAMPLE OF A FASTENING DEVICE INSERTED FROM THE INSIDE OF INSULATED DOOR CONSTRUCTION



Sketch No.8.1



Sketch No.8.2



Sketch No.8.3

ANNEX 7

Composition and rules of procedure of the Administrative Committee

Article 1

1 The Contracting Parties shall be members of the Administrative Committee.

2 The Committee may decide that the competent administrations of States referred to in Article 18 of the present Convention which are not Contracting Parties or representatives of international organizations may, for questions which interest them, attend the sessions of the Committee as observers.

Article 2

The Customs Co-operation Council shall provide the Committee with secretariat services.

Article 3

The Committee shall, at its first session each year, elect a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman.

Article 4

The competent administrations of the Contracting Parties shall communicate to the Customs Co-operation Council proposed amendments to the present Convention and the reasons therefor, together with any requests for the inclusion of items on the Agenda of the sessions of the Committee. The Customs Co-operation Council shall bring them to the attention of the competent administrations of the Contracting Parties and of the States referred to in Article 18 of the present Convention which are not Contracting Parties.

Article 5

1 The Customs Co-operation Council shall convene the Committee at a time fixed by the Committee but not less frequently than once every two years and also at the request of the competent administrations of at least five Contracting Parties. It shall circulate the draft Agenda to the competent administrations of the Contracting Parties and of the States referred to in Article 18 of the present Convention which are not Contracting Parties at least six weeks before the Committee meets.

2 On the decisions of the Committee, taken by virtue of the provisions of Article 1, paragraph 2, of these rules, the Customs Co-operation Council shall invite the competent administrations of the States referred to in Article 18 of the present

Convention which are not Contracting Parties and the international organizations concerned to be represented by observers at the sessions of the Committee.

Article 6

Proposals shall be put to the vote. Each Contracting Party represented at the meeting shall have one vote. Proposals other than amendments to the present Convention shall be adopted by the Committee by a majority of those present and voting. Amendments to the present Convention, and decisions referred to in Article 21, paragraph 5, and Article 22, paragraph 6, of the present Convention regarding entry into force of amendments, shall be adopted by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting.

Article 7

Before the closure of its session, the Committee shall adopt a report.

Article 8

In the absence of relevant provisions in this Annex, the Rules of Procedure of the Customs Co-operation Council shall be applicable unless the Committee decides otherwise.

PROTOCOL OF SIGNATURE

At the time of signing the present Convention of this day's date the undersigned, being duly authorized by their Governments, make the following declarations:

1 The addition, for the purpose of calculating import duties and taxes levied on importation, of the weight or value of containers granted temporary admission to the weight or value of the goods they contain, conflicts with the principle of the temporary admission of containers. The addition of a legally-determined tare-weight factor to the weight of goods conveyed in containers is permissible if it is made because of the absence of packaging or because of the nature of the packaging, and not because the goods are conveyed by container.

2 The terms of the present Convention shall not preclude the application of national provisions or of international agreements, not of a Customs nature, regulating the use of containers.

3 The one-cubic-metre limitation of the internal volume, provided for in Article 1 of the present Convention, does not imply the application of more restrictive regulations to containers of a smaller volume, and the Contracting Parties shall endeavour to apply a temporary admission procedure to the latter similar to that which they apply to containers defined in the present Convention.

4 As far as the procedures for the temporary admission of containers provided for in Articles 6, 7 and 8 of the present Convention are concerned, the Contracting Parties recognize that the abolition of all Customs documents and guarantees would enable them to achieve one of the main purposes of the present Convention, and they will make every effort to attain this.

———————

PART IV

Declarations and Reservations

(Unless otherwise indicated, the declarations and reservations were made upon ratification, acceptance, approval, accession or succession.)

Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan

Reservation:

The Republic of Azerbaijan does not permit empty and loaded containers going to and coming from the Republic of Armenia, as well as containers belonging to the legal and physical persons and the persons controlling and exploiting containers, registered in the Republic of Armenia, to enter its territory.

Belarus

Belarus

Upon signature and upon ratification:

The Government of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic considers that the provisions of article 18 of the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972, which bar certain States from participation in it, are contrary to the universally recognized principle of the sovereign equality of States.

As to the provisions of article 25 regarding the settlement by arbitration of disputes concerning the interpretation and application of the Convention, the Government of the Byelorussian SSR declares that the adoption of this provision should not be interpreted as changing the view of the Government of the Byelorussian SSR that a dispute may be referred to an arbitration tribunal for consideration only with the consent of all parties to the dispute in each individual case.

Cuba [11]

Cuba

Declaration:

The Government of the Republic of Cuba considers that the provisions of article 18 of the Convention are of a discriminatory nature since they deprive certain States of the right to sign

and accede to the Convention, contrary to the principle of universality.

With reference to the rules set forth in article 25 of the Convention, the Government of the Republic of Cuba considers that differences arising between Parties should be resolved through direct negotiations by diplomatic means.

Czech Republic [8]

Czech Republic

Romania

Romania

Upon signature and confirmed upon ratification:

The Government of the Socialist Republic of Romania considers that the provisions of article 18 of the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972, concluded at Geneva on 2 December 1972, are not in accordance with the principle that multilateral treaties, the aims and objectives of which concern the world community as a whole, should be open to participation by all States.

Russian Federation

Russian Federation

Upon signature and upon ratification:

The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics considers that the provisions of article 18 of the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972, which bar certain States from participation in it, are contrary to the universally recognized principle of the sovereign equality of States.

As to the provisions of article 25 regarding the settlement by arbitration of disputes concerning the interpretation and application of the Convention, the Government of the USSR declares that the adoption of this provision should not be interpreted as changing the view of the Government of the USSR that a dispute may be referred to an arbitration tribunal for consideration only with the consent of all parties to the dispute in each individual case.

Slovakia [8]

Slovakia

Spain

Spain

Reservation to article 9:

Concerning containers granted temporary admission for the carriage of goods in internal traffic such admission will not be granted in Spain.

Switzerland [1]

Switzerland

(a) Switzerland shall grant temporary admission to containers, in accordance with the procedure laid down in article 6 of the Convention;

(b) The use of containers which have been admitted temporarily for internal traffic, as provided for in article 9 of the Convention, shall be authorized subject to the two conditions laid down in annex 3 to the Convention.

Türkiye

Türkiye

Upon signature:

With reservations to paragraphs 3 and 4 of article 19.

Ukraine

Ukraine

Upon signature and confirmed upon ratification:

The Government of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic considers that the provisions of article 18 of the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972, which bar certain States from participation in it, are contrary to the universally recognized principle of the sovereign equality of States.

As to the provisions of article 25 regarding the settlement by arbitration of disputes concerning the interpretation and application of the Convention, the Government of the Ukrainian SSR declares that the adoption of this provision should not be interpreted as changing the view of the Government of the Ukrainian SSR that a dispute may be referred to an arbitration tribunal for consideration only with the consent of all parties to the dispute in each individual case.

End Note

1. With the declaration by which the ratification "shall also apply to the Principality of Liechtenstein for as long as the latter is bound to the Swiss Confederation by a customs union treaty."

2. Amendments to the Convention and annexes were adopted as follows:

Amendments to:	Author of the proposal:	Date of circulation:	Date of entry into force:
Annexes 4 and 6	Customs Cooperation Council	8 Dec 1981	8 Mar 1983
Annexes 1, 5, 6 and 7	Customs Cooperation Council	18 June 1984	18 Sep 1985
Annex 6	Customs Cooperation Council	8 Nov 1985	1 Jan 1988*
Article 1, par. c, and Annex 6	Customs Cooperation Council	1 Dec 1988	1 Mar 1990
Annex 4 and 6	Customs Cooperation Council	10 Mar 1994**	10 Jun 1995
Annexes 1 and 4	Customs Cooperation Council	20 Apr 2007	20 Jul 2008
Annexes 1 and 4	Customs Cooperation Council	1 Aug 2019	1 Nov 2020

*For all the Contracting Parties, except the United States of America and Canada which had objected to the proposed amendments.

** Amendments were proposed by the Customs Co-operation Council to the Convention and Annex 7 of the Convention on that same date. An objection thereto having been made by the Government of the United States of America and received by the Secretary-General on 9 March 1995, that is to say, before the expiry of the twelve-month period provided for in article 21 (4), the said amendments are deemed not to have been accepted.

3. *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Resumed Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 1A* (E/4832/Add.1), p.15.

4. Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 1 (E/5044), p. 3.

5. Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-third Session Supplement No. 1 (E/5209), p. 5.

6. The German Democratic Republic had acceded to the Convention with a declaration

on 4 October 1974. For the text of the declaration, see United Nations, Treaty, Series, vol.988, p.?253. See also note 2 regarding “Germany” in the “Historical Information” section in the front matter of this volume.

7. See note 2 under “China” regarding Hong Kong in the in the “Historical Information” section in the front matter of this volume.

8. Czechoslovakia had signed and approved the Convention on 27 December 1973 and 4 September 1974, respectively, with a declaration. For the text of the declaration, see United Nations, Treaty Series, vol.988, p.250. See also note 1 under “Czech Republic” and note 1 under “Slovakia” in the “Historical Information” section in the front matter of this volume.

9. See note 1 under "Montenegro" in the "Historical Information" section in the front matter of this volume.

10. With the following declaration: "Accession to the Convention shall not extend to the Cook Islands, Niue and the Tokelau Islands".

11. Upon a request from the Secretary-General for clarification as to whether the declaration to article 25 was deemed to modify the legal effects of that article, the Government of Cuba replied that the declaration did not constitute a reservation.

PART V

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE FOR THE CUSTOMS CONVENTION ON CONTAINERS, 1972

Confirmed by the Council - June 2005

Updated – February 2017

Chairperson : Elected at each meeting

Vice-Chairperson : Elected at each meeting

Established : 1976

Duration : Unspecified

1. Mandate

The Administrative Committee for the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972 is stablished to consider the implementation of the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972 and any amendment proposed thereto.

The Administrative Committee shall also maintain the Handbook and issue Opinions and Comments for inclusion therein.

2. Membership

The Committee shall consist of Contracting Parties to the Convention. The Committee may decide that States referred to in Article 18 which are not Contracting Parties or representatives of international organizations may attend the sessions of the Committee as observers.

3. Purpose and Scope

To achieve the mandate, the Administrative Committee shall :

- Examine proposals for amendments to the Convention.
- Examine proposals for inclusion in the Handbook and where appropriate issue Opinions and Comments for inclusion therein.
- Examine relevant developments in other WCO working bodies and international organizations, as appropriate.

4. Key Deliverables

The Committee shall adopt a report. This report shall contain comments on the Agenda Items discussed and their conclusions.

The Committee shall recommend amendments to the Convention to the Contracting Parties.

The Committee shall issue Opinions and Comments for inclusion in the Handbook, as appropriate.

5. Means of Operation

The Administrative Committee shall, on the occasion of every session, elect a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson.

Agenda :

The Agenda for each session shall be drawn up by the Secretary General. It shall include any proposals for amendments to the Convention communicated by the Contracting Parties. The draft Agenda shall be circulated to the competent administrations of the Contracting Parties and of the States referred to in Article 18 of the Convention which are not Contracting Parties, at least six weeks before the Committee meets.

Rules of Procedure :

The Rules of Procedure for the Administrative Committee are set out in the Convention. In the absence of relevant provisions in the Convention, the Rules of Procedure of the Council shall be applicable unless the Committee decides otherwise.

Quorum:

A quorum shall not be required for taking any formal decision.

6. Resources Required

Meetings :

The Secretary General shall convene the Committee at a time fixed by the Committee, but not less frequently than once every two years and also at the request of the competent administrations of at least five Contracting Parties.

General administrative arrangements :

The general administrative arrangements for the Administrative Committee, including the date and duration of each session and the priorities to be fixed for the items on the Committee's Agenda, are the responsibility of the Secretary General.

PART VI

Opinions and Comments by the Administrative Committee
for the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972

A number of problems concerning the interpretation of the Convention have been discussed and opinions expressed at meetings of the Administrative Committee for the Convention, of which Contracting Parties are Members and to which other Parties referred to in Article 18 of the Convention and interested international organizations are invited.

Although the opinions agreed by the Administrative Committee are not binding upon the Contracting Parties, all concerned have recognized that these views are of great value and offer useful guidance to Customs administrations and other interested Parties. These opinions have been grouped under Section 1 below.

The Administrative Committee has also examined a number of questions which, although not the subject of opinions, have given rise to comments which might be of interest to Parties concerned. These questions are dealt with under Section 2 below.

1. Opinions

(i) Customs sealing devices.

Adopted at the 1st Meeting of the Administrative Committee for the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972, Doc. 27.370, paragraph 22 and supplemented with the updates of the Handbook – 13th Meeting of the Administrative Committee for the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972, 14-15 May 2012 and 16th Meeting of the Administrative Committee for the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972, 27-28 February 2017.

The Customs sealing devices Illustrated hereafter are satisfactory for the purposes of the Convention.

Examples of Customs sealing devices

The most common seal location on containers will vary according to when the container was built.

If the container was built before ISO 1496-1/Amendment 5 from 2006 took effect, the typical location for affixing a bolt seal would be in the seal eyes on the container door handles*.

Not all containers built after ISO 1496-1/Amendment 5 from 2006 took effect may have seal eyes in the door handles for affixing a bolt seal. However, containers built after ISO 1496-1/Amendment 5 became effective will typically, and irrespective of whether they have seal eyes

* ISO 1496-1/Amendment 5 from 2006 was incorporated in a new version of the standard published in 2013 as ISO 1496-1:2013. However, it is still relevant to differentiate between containers built before or after ISO 1496-1/Amendment 5 from 2006 took effect.

in their door handles, have an alternative sealing device for bolt seals that is commonly referred to as the “SecuraCam”. Such containers can also accommodate usage of cable (or wire) seals.

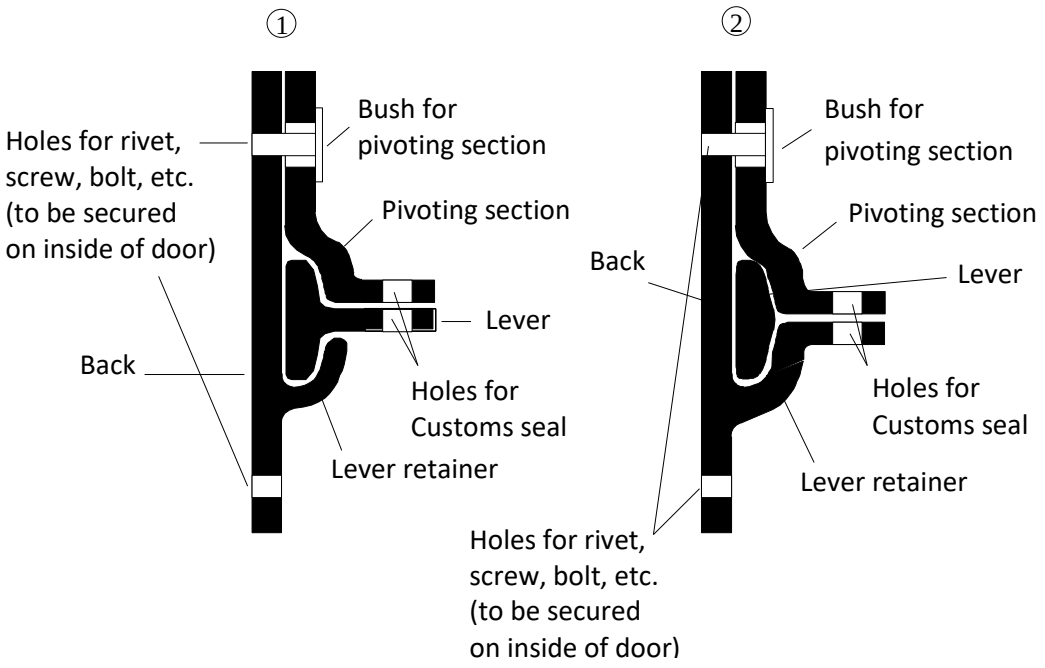
These differences between sealing devices and locations according to when a container was built are discussed further below.

Sealing location on containers built before ISO 1496-1/Amendment 5 from 2006 took effect

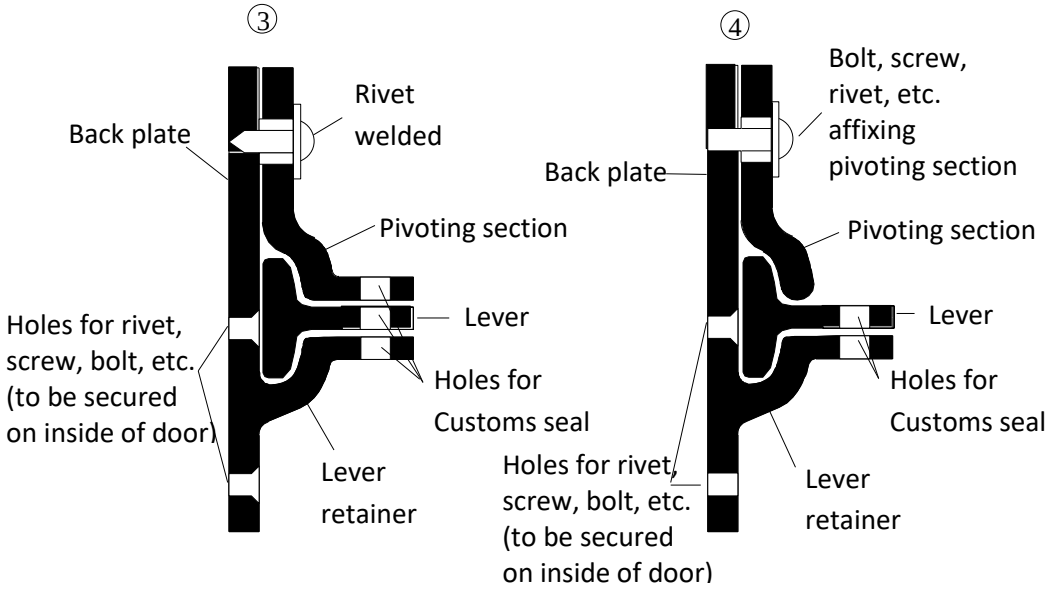
Sketches 1-4 below and the accompanying photos illustrate the affixing of a bolt seal in the seal eyes on the container door handle of a container built before ISO 1496-1/Amendment 5 from 2006 took effect:

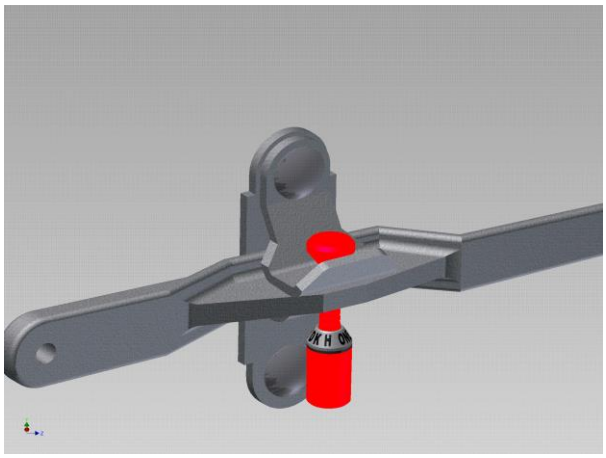
Sketches 1 to 4 (side view)

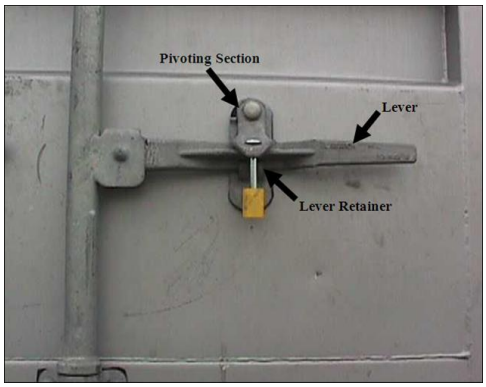
Example of a Customs sealing device



In particular sealing device No. 1 is prone to tampering if the above-mentioned requirements are not fulfilled. In view of their better protection against manipulation prior to affixing Customs seals, the devices given below should preferably be used.







Front photos view of sketches

NB. The Customs sealing devices shown in Sketches No. 3 and 4 may also be used for securing the doors of refrigerated and insulated containers and vehicles. Where so used, the sealing devices may be affixed by means of at least two set bolts or set screws fixed into a metal tapping plate inserted behind the outer layer of the door.

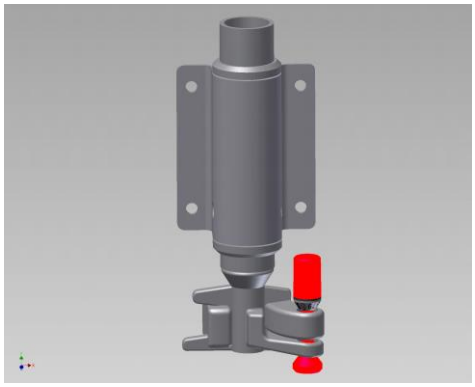
In such cases the heads of the set bolts or set screws must be so welded that they are completely deformed.

Sealing locations on containers built after ISO 1496-1/Amendment 5 from 2006 took effect

Some containers built after ISO 1496-1/Amendments 5 from 2006 took effect may have sealing eyes in an elongated door handle in which bolt seals may be affixed. However, other containers built after ISO 1496-1/Amendment 5 from 2006 took effect will not have seal eyes in the door handle.

However, all such containers will typically have **two** alternative sealing locations or devices as illustrated in the below photos:

[Photo 1]



- *SecuraCam:*

  In the above photo No. 1, the sealing device at the bottom of one of the container's locking rod bars is commonly referred to as the "SecuraCam" sealing location. It is meant for the affixing of bolt seals.

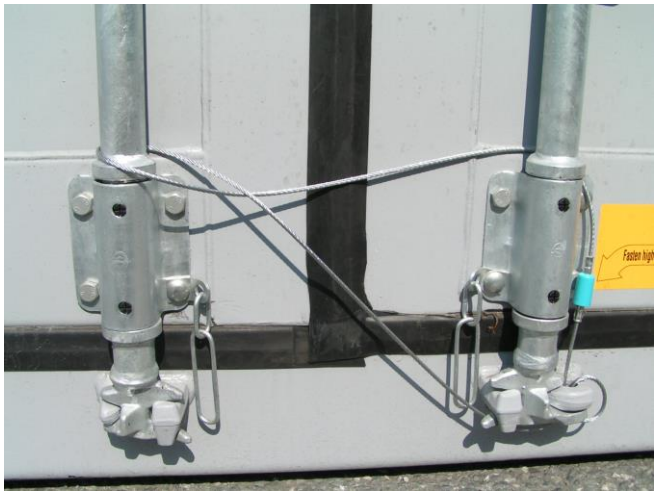
  The exact location on the container of the "SecuraCam" sealing device and its design are illustrated in the below photo No. 2:

[Photo 2]

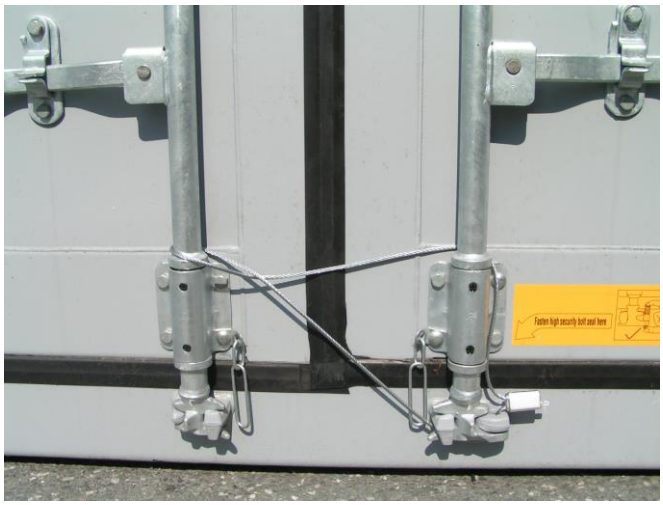
- *Cable (or wire) seals:*

  If cable (or wire) seals are used, they should be wrapped around two of the container's locking rod bars such that the seal precludes the undetected opening of either container door as illustrated in the following three photos Nos. 3-5:

[Photo 3]



[Photo 4]



[Photo 5]

(ii) Time period for temporary admission of containers prescribed in Article 4 of the Convention.

Adopted at the 3rd Meeting of the Administrative Committee for the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972, Doc. 32.540, paragraph 17.

Considering that, according to Article 4 of the Convention, the time period of three months for temporary admission of containers can be extended by the Customs and that containers may remain in a country for a longer time than three months owing to the non-availability of a load, the Customs should endeavour to regulate this time period as liberally as possible. In particular, given that the procedures for requesting and granting an extension may involve the expenditure of considerable time and expense by both the operator and the Customs, it is advisable for the Customs administrations, wherever appropriate, to provide for a time period longer than three months (e.g. six months or one year) in their legislation; this could dispense with the procedures for extension of the time period in many cases, thereby facilitating the movement of containers.

(iii) Measures to ensure the continued compliance of containers with the standards for transport of goods under Customs seals (Article 12 and Annex 5 of the Convention).

Adopted at the 3rd Meeting of the Administrative Committee for the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972, Doc. 32.540, paragraph 52.

Customs Administrations should undertake specific measures constituent with national operating conditions and national regulations to ensure that containers approved by their national certifying authorities continue to comply with the standards under which they were approved for transport of goods under Customs seal. The following measures are recommended:

1. Where the same certifying authorities approve containers under both the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972, and the International Convention for Safe Containers,

periodic checking of containers, either on a regular or random basis, to ensure that they still comply with the standards under which they were approved for transport of goods under Customs seal can be performed at the same time as the re-examination performed in accordance with the International Convention for Safe Containers, Annex I, regulation 2; or

2. Containers can be checked during normal Customs controls to ensure that they continue to comply with standards, preferably in connection with a system of selective examination and/or recertification; or
3. The Customs authorities can establish a verification system of randomly selected containers in co-operation with a container-certifying authority.

(iv) Measures to ensure the continued compliance of containers with the standards for transport of goods under Customs seals (Article 12 and Annex 5 of the Convention).

Adopted at the 4th Meeting of the Administrative Committee for the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972; 25-27 May 1987.

1. When a container has a serious defect and consequently no longer complies with the standards under which it was approved for transport under Customs seal, the Customs should notify the party responsible for the container and afford him the opportunity to restore the container to the condition which had justified its approval if this can be accomplished expeditiously. After the appropriate repairs to the container, it can continue its trip under Customs seal. If the container is not properly repaired or if the party concerned prefers to have the container repaired in another country where the approval was given, the Customs should either:
   (a) refuse sealing and transport approval if sealing is considered necessary, or
   (b) remove the container from circulation and have the contents transshipped to another means of transport, or
   (c) allow the container to go forward under appropriate procedures which do not involve any risk of smuggling or loss or damage to the container's contents, the defect being annotated on transit documents.

   If deemed necessary in order to ensure that the container will be properly repaired, the Customs should cause the approval plate to be removed.

2. When the Customs causes the approval plate to be removed or when a serious defect is discovered in a series of containers which renders them no longer in compliance with the standards under which they were approved for transport under Customs seal, the approval authority or, where appropriate, the Customs administration responsible for the approval should be notified accordingly. The original certifying authority should be invited to participate in the recertification process when it is conducted outside the territory of that Contracting Party.

   Note: A container shall be considered to have a serious defect if:

   (a) goods can be removed from, or introduced into, the sealed part of the container without leaving visible traces of tampering or without breaking the Customs seal;

(b) customs seals cannot be simply and effectively affixed to the container;
(c) it contains concealed spaces where goods may be hidden or;
(d) spaces capable of holding goods are not readily accessible for Customs inspection.

2. Comments

(i) Repair of sheets on containers

1st Meeting of the Administrative Committee for the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972, Doc. 27.370, paragraph 15 and 16.

Having adopted an amendment to Article 4 of Annex 4 of the Convention, the Committee agreed to note that in ECE Resolution No. 38, which is the basis of the above-mentioned amendment, governments were recommended to cease to accept, after 1 January 1977, for use in the international transport of goods under Customs seal, plastic covered sheets which had not been repaired in accordance with that recommendation. Furthermore, governments had been recommended not to accept canvas sheets which had not been repaired in accordance with the provisions of all the Conventions mentioned in the Resolution, that is, the TIR Conventions of 1959 and 1975 and the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972.

(ii) The term "established identification" in paragraph 2 of Annex 1 to the Convention

2nd Meeting of the Administrative Committee for the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972, Doc. 31.400, paragraph 38.

Noting the existence of the IATA's ULD Code and taking account of the fact that owner codes are not allocated by Customs, the Administrative Committee agreed that the term "established identification" covered, inter alia, the code provided for in ISO Standard 6346, IATA's ULD Code, and any other established identification.

PART VII

CSC Safety Approval Plate and Approval Plate for Transport under Customs Seals

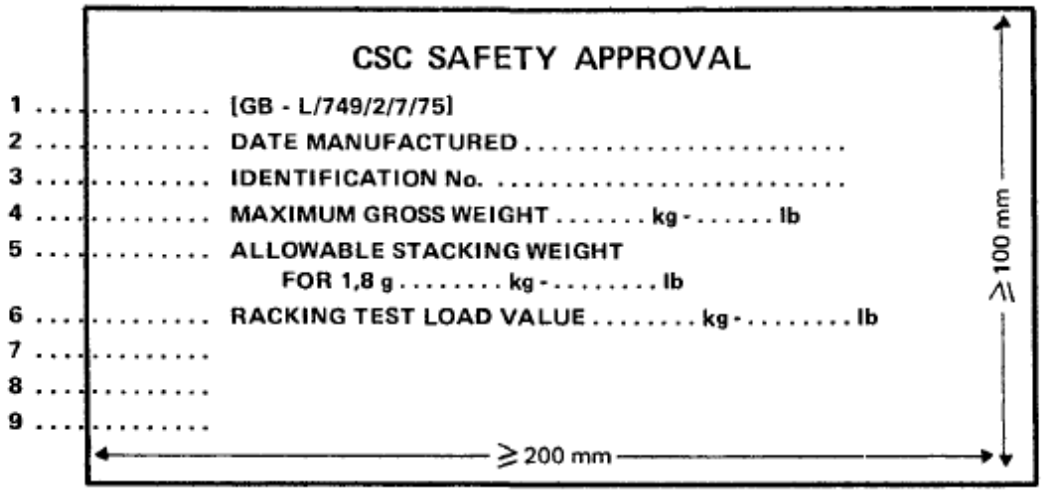
I. APPLICABLE LEGISLATION

- **The International Convention for Safe Containers, 1972**

Appendix to Annex 1 of the International Convention for Safe Containers reads as follows:

Appendix

The Safety Approval Plate, conforming to the model reproduced below, shall take the form of a permanent, non-corrosive, fire-proof rectangular plate measuring not less than 200 mm by 100 mm. The words "CSC SAFETY APPROVAL" of a minimum letter height of 8 mm and all other words and numbers of a minimum height of 5 mm shall be stamped into, embossed on or indicated on its surface in any other permanent and legible way.



1. Country of Approval and Approval Reference as given in the example on line 1. (The country of Approval should be indicated by means of the distinguishing sign used to indicate country of registration of motor vehicles in international road traffic.)
2. Date (month and year) of manufacture.
3. Manufacturer's identification number of the container or, in the case of existing containers for which that number is unknown, the number allotted by the Administration.
4. Maximum Operating Gross Weight (kilogrammes and lbs.).
5. Allowable Stacking Weight for 1.8 g (kilogrammes and lbs.).
6. Transverse Racking Test Load Value (kilogrammes and lbs.).
7. End Wall Strength to be indicated on plate only if end walls are designed to withstand a load of less or greater than 0.4 times the maximum permissible payload, i.e. 0.4 P.
8. Side Wall Strength to be indicated on plate only if the side walls are designed to withstand a load of less or greater than 0.6 times the maximum permissible payload, i.e. 0.6 P.
9. First maintenance examination date (month and year) for new containers and subsequent maintenance examination dates (month and year) if Plate used for this purpose.

Figure 1 shows an example of a CSC safety approval plate.

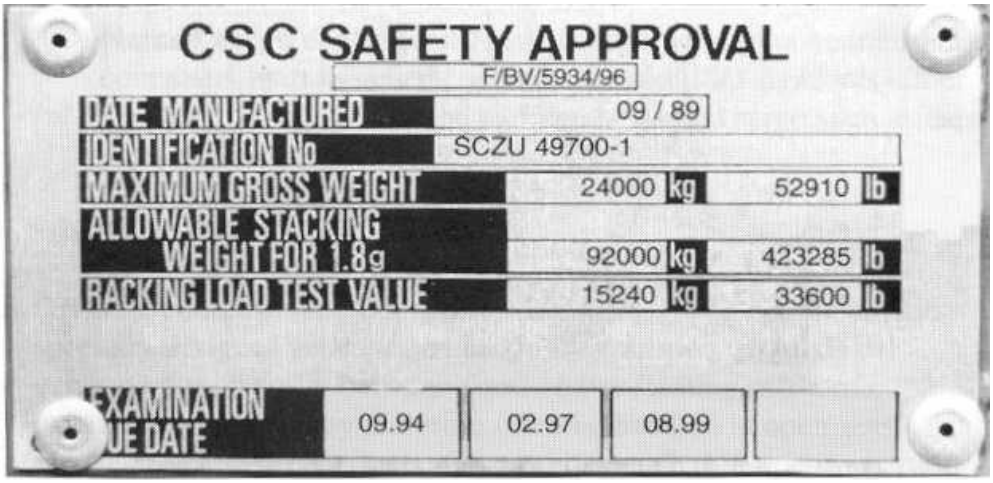


Figure 1: Example of a CSC safety approval plate

- **The Customs Convention on Containers, 1972 and the Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods Under Cover of TIR Carnets, 1975**

Annex 5 of the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972 contains the following provisions, which, inter alia describe the model approval plate shown in Figure 2.

“General

1. Containers may be approved for the transport of goods under Customs seal either:

   (a) at the manufacturing stage, by design type (procedure for approval at the manufacturing stage); or

   (b) at a stage subsequent to manufacture, either individually or in respect of a specified number of containers of the same type (procedure for approval at a stage subsequent to manufacture).

Provisions common to both approval procedures

2. The competent authority responsible for granting approval shall issue to the applicant, after approval, a Certificate of Approval valid, as the case may be, either for an unlimited series of containers of the approved type or for a specified number of containers.

3. The beneficiary of approval shall affix an approval plate to the approved container or containers before their use for the transport of goods under Customs seal.

4. The approval plate shall be affixed permanently and in a clearly visible place adjacent to any other approval plate issued for official purposes.

5. The approval plate, conforming the model No. 1 reproduced in Appendix 1 to this Annex, shall take the form of a metal plate measuring not less than 20 cm by 10 cm. The following

particulars shall be stamped into or embossed on the plate or indicated on its surface in any other permanent and legible way, in at least the English or the French language:

(a) the words "Approved for transport under Customs seal";

(b) an indication of the country in which approval was granted either by name, or by means of the ISO alpha-2 country code provided for in International Standard ISO 3166, or by the distinguishing sign used to indicate the country of registration of motor vehicles in international road traffic, and the number (figures, letters, etc.) of the certificate of approval and the year of approval (e.g. "NL/26/73" means "Netherlands, certificate of approval No. 26, issued in 1973");

(c) the serial number assigned to the container by the manufacturer (manufacturer's number);

(d) if the container has been approved by type, the identification numbers of letters of the type of container.

6. If a container no longer complies with the technical conditions prescribed for its approval, it shall, before it can be used for the transport of goods under Customs seal, be restored to the condition which had justified its approval, so as to comply again with the said technical conditions.

7. If the essential characteristics of a container are changed, the container shall cease to be covered by the approval and shall be re-approved by the competent authority before it can be used for the transport of goods under Customs seal."

Appendix 1

Model No. I
Approval plate
(English version)

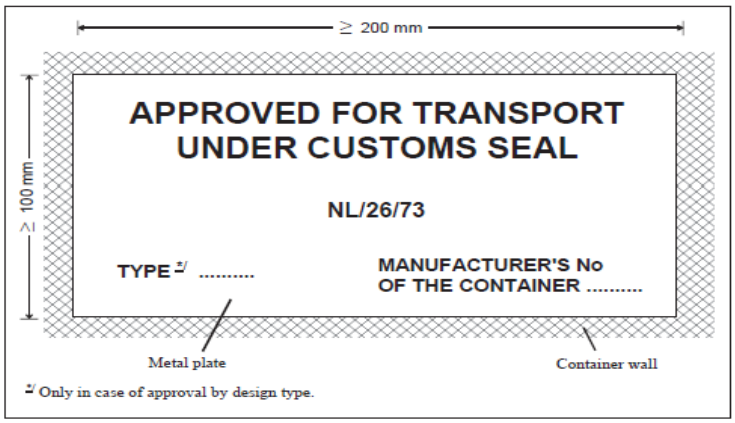


Figure 2: Model approval plate for transport under Customs seals

This text is repeated in Annex 7, Part II of the **Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods Under Cover of TIR Carnets, 1975**, however, with comments and an explanatory note thereto.

II. COMBINED PLATES

In practice, the approval plate for transport under Customs seals and the CSC safety approval plate are often combined in a single plate, as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Example of a consolidated approval plate

III. PAST CONSIDERATIONS BY UNECE WORKING BODIES REGARDING THE TIR CONVENTION

- Considerations by the UNECE Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30)

At its sixty-seventh session (January 1990), the UNECE Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30) considered the acceptability, from a Customs viewpoint, of a new grouped data plate concept for containers. This concept envisaged the clustering of all relevant certification and approval plates required by international conventions on a base plate to be mounted on a container at a clearly visible place while maintaining the integrity of the information required by each of the conventions concerned. The introduction of a base plate would substantially reduce the number of holes or welds required for affixing approval plates on containers, thus reducing deterioration of container walls. At the same time, the base plate would allow to affix the required information in such a way that it was possible to add, change or remove the relevant approval plate in keeping with the provisions of the conventions concerned. The Working Party felt that this grouped data plate concept for containers fulfilled the requirements of Annex 7, Part II, paragraph 4 of the Convention and, given the interest of transport operators in this concept, could by applied on a voluntary basis wherever feasible and, thus, approved the text of a comment to said paragraph 4 (TRANS/WP.30/133, paras. 18–25.

“Grouped data plate

The use of a base plate affixed permanently and in a clearly visible place to the approved container on which the required approval plates can be grouped together and are mounted in such a way as to preclude their easy removal, is admissible as long as the requirements of Annex 7, Part II of the Convention are complied with.”

At its sixty-eighth session (June 1990), the Working Party was informed that the grouped data plate concept had been discussed at the IMO Sub-Committee on Containers and Cargoes at its thirtieth session (January 1990) and that it had been agreed that the concept could be included in the Harmonized Interpretation and Implementation of the International Convention for Safe Containers of 1972.

- Considerations by the TIR Executive Board (TIRExB)

At its sixty-fifth session (October 2015) the TIRExB recapitulated the applicable legislation and practice applied since the early nineties of combining the TIR approval plate and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) International Convention for Safe Containers (CSC) safety approval plate. The ongoing practice of combined approval plates was confirmed at the session. Considering that the issue was addressed by the comment to Annex 7, Part II, paragraph 4 on “grouped data plate”, the Board was of the opinion that no amendment to the legal text of the TIR Convention was required.

PART VIII

International Instruments and Documentation Relating to
the Customs Convention on Container, 1972

Conventions

- Customs Convention on the international transport of goods under cover of TIR carnet (TIR Convention) (United Nations, 15 January 1959 and 14 November 1975).
- International Convention on the simplification and harmonization of Customs procedures (as amended) (revised Kyoto Convention (WCO 26 June 1999).
- International Convention for Safe Containers (International Maritime Organization, 1972), as amended.

CCC Recommendations

- Customs sealing system in connection with the international transport of goods (11 June 1968).
- Links between Customs transit systems (16 June 1982).
- Action against Customs fraud relating to containers (15 June 1983).
- Use of codes for the representation of data elements (22 May 1984).
- Customs formalities in connection with the temporary admission of Container Security Devices (June 2013).

Other documentation

- SAFE Framework of Standards (WCO June 2021).
- BIC Code System for marking of containers.
- International Standard ISO 3166.
- International Standard ISO 1496-1.
- International Standard ISO 6346.
- International Standard ISO 17712.
- International Standard ISO 18185.

Part IX

RECOMMENDATION OF THE CUSTOMS CO-OPERATION COUNCIL CONCERNING CUSTOMS FORMALITIES IN CONNECTION WITH THE TEMPORARY ADMISSION OF CONTAINER SECURITY DEVICES (CSDs)

THE CUSTOMS CO-OPERATION COUNCIL*,

DESIRING to facilitate and enhance the security of international carriage by container,

RECOGNIZING that Container Security Devices (CSDs) are increasingly being utilized in the global supply chain and it is appropriate to provide facilitation in connection with the temporary admission of such devices,

CONSIDERING that the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972, the Convention on Temporary Admission done at Istanbul in 1990 and the Convention on the A.T.A. Carnet for the Temporary Admission of Goods provide for and encourage the granting of temporary admission to accessories and equipment of and for temporarily admitted or not temporarily admitted containers, which are either imported with a container to be re-exported separately or with another container, or imported separately to be re-exported with a container,

HAVING REGARD to recommended practices 7 and 8 of Chapter 3 of Specific Annex J of the International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures (Revised Kyoto Convention),

RECOMMENDS that Members of the Council and members of the United Nations Organization or its specialized agencies, and Customs or Economic Unions should comply with the following definition of CSDs and their Customs formalities:

1. For the purposes of this Recommendation, Container Security Device (CSD) means an accessory or a piece of equipment that can be affixed to, on, inside or form part of a container or a load compartment and which is intended to detect tampering or intrusion into the container or load compartment either through either door or through any other side. CSDs include mechanical and electronic seals. The device may or may not be reusable and may or may not have additional functionalities such as monitoring the status of the goods and container tracking,

2. CSDs are not subject to any individual Customs formalities in connection with the temporary admission of a container if they are accessories or equipment of that container,

3. CSDs, which are imported separately from a container and are intended to be re-exported being affixed to a temporarily admitted or not temporarily admitted container, should be granted temporary admission provided that the person (or their representative) causing the temporary importation:

- *upon presentation of the devices to Customs, declares in the required manner that the devices are intended for the use of containers in international traffic, and*
- *if required, keeps a record of the usage of the temporarily imported devices that Customs may, upon request, inspect or access electronically*

The person (or their representative) may be required to furnish a form of security.

4. Reusable CSDs that are not re-exported should be made subject to appropriate Customs measures.

REQUESTS Members of the Council and members of the United Nations Organization or its specialized agencies, and Customs or Economic Unions which accept this Recommendation to notify the Secretary General of the Council of the date from which they will apply the Recommendation and of the conditions of its application. The Secretary General will transmit this information to the Customs administrations of all Members of the Council. He will also transmit it to the Customs administrations of the members of the United Nations Organization or its specialized agencies and to Customs or Economic Unions which have accepted this Recommendation.

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* The Customs Co-operation Council is the official name of the World Customs Organization.

PART X

Extract from the SAFE Framework of Standards,
Pillar 1 – Customs-to-Customs: item 3

Seal Integrity for Secure Containers

3.1. Importance of specifying security relationships

Greater clarity and consensus about the relationships among the parties in the movement of secure containerized goods, coupled with consistent application and enforcement of those relationships, will provide multiple benefits to all of those parties. These benefits include:

- Improved security against acts of terrorism that exploit the global trade in goods.
- Reduced risk of economic hardship caused by disruptions to or closures of trade in response to terrorist acts.
- Improved security against theft and diversion of cargo, with consequent reductions in direct losses and indirect costs, such as insurance.
- Improved security against illegal transport of materials such as narcotics and weapons, and of persons.
- Improved security against the illegal movement of “black market” and “grey market” trade goods.
- Reduced risk of evasion of duties and taxes.
- Increased confidence in international trading systems by current and potential shippers of goods.
- Facilitation dividends, such as a reduced number of examinations (reduced border times) and access to simplified procedures.

3.2. Responsibilities along the chain of custody

A. Cross-cutting responsibilities

There are responsibilities and principles that apply throughout the life cycle of a containerized shipment of goods. The emphasis is on the relationships among parties upon changes in the custody or possession of the container. That emphasis does not reduce and should not obscure the fundamental responsibility of the shipper for the safe and secure stuffing and sealing of the container. Each party in possession of the container has security responsibilities while cargo is entrusted to them, whether at rest at a node or while moving

between nodes. Each party with data that needs to be filed with the government for Customs and security screening purposes has responsibilities. Those responsibilities include:

- Protecting the physical goods from tampering, theft, and damage.
- Providing appropriate information to government authorities in a timely and accurate manner for security screening purposes.
- Protecting the information related to the goods from tampering and unauthorized access. This responsibility applies equally to times before, during and after having custody of the goods.

Security seals are an integral part of the chain of custody. The proper grade and application of the security seal is addressed below. Security seals should be inspected by the receiving party at each change of custody for a cargo-laden container. Inspecting a seal requires visual check for signs of tampering, comparison of the seal's identification number with the cargo documentation, and noting the inspection in the appropriate documentation. If the seal is missing, or shows signs of tampering, or shows a different identification number than the cargo documentation, then a number of actions are necessary:

The receiving party must bring the discrepancy to the attention of the party tendering the container and the shipper. The receiving party must note the discrepancy on the cargo documentation. The receiving party should notify Customs or law enforcement agencies, in accordance with national legislation. Where no such notification requirements exist, the receiving party shall refuse custody of the container pending communication with the party tendering the container and until such discrepancies can be resolved. Once discrepancies have been resolved, the receiving party shall affix a security seal to the container and note the particulars, including the new seal number, on all pertinent cargo documentation.

Security seals may be changed on a container for legitimate reasons. Examples include inspections by an exporting Customs administration to verify compliance with export regulations; by a carrier to ensure safe blocking and bracing of the lading; by an importing Customs administration to confirm cargo declarations; and by law enforcement officials concerned with other regulatory or criminal issues.

If public or private officials should remove a security seal to inspect the lading, they will install a replacement in a manner that meets the requirements specified below, and note the particulars of the action, including the new seal number, on the cargo documentation.

B. Stuffing site

The shipper/consignor is responsible for securely stuffing the container and for the accurate and complete description of the cargo. The shipper is also responsible for affixing the cargo security seal immediately upon the conclusion of the stuffing process, and for preparing documentation for the shipment, including the seal number.

The cargo security seal should be compliant with the definition of high-security mechanical seals in ISO 17712. The seal should be applied to the container in a manner that avoids the vulnerability of the traditional container door handle seal location to surreptitious tampering. Among the acceptable ways to do this are alternative seal locations that prevent swivelling of an outer door locking cam or the use of equivalent tamper evident measures, such as cable seals across the door locking bars.

The land transport operator picks up the load. The transport operator receives the documentation, inspects the seal and notes the condition on the documentation, and departs with the load.

C. Intermediate terminal

If the container movement is via an intermediate terminal, then the land transport operator transfers custody of the container to the terminal operator. The terminal operator receives the documentation, inspects the seal and notes the condition on the documentation. Normally, the terminal operator sends an electronic notification of receipt (status report) to other private parties to the shipment. The terminal operator prepares or stages the container for its next movement, which could be by road, rail or barge. Similar verification and documentation processes take place upon pickup or departure of the container from the intermediate terminal. It is rare that public sector agencies are involved in or informed about intermodal transfers at intermediate terminals.

D. Loading ocean terminal

Upon arrival at the loading ocean terminal, the land transport operator transfers custody of the container to the terminal operator. The terminal operator receives the documentation and normally sends an electronic notification of receipt (status report) to other private parties to the shipment. The terminal operator prepares or stages the container for loading upon the ocean vessel.

The carrier or the ocean terminal as agent for the carrier inspects the condition of the seal, and notes it accordingly; this may be done at the ocean terminal gate or after entry to the terminal but before the container is loaded on the ship. Public agencies in the exporting nation review export documentation and undertake necessary export control and provide safety certifications. The Customs administrations that require advance information receive that information, review it, and either approve the container for loading (explicitly or tacitly) or issue “do not load” messages for containers that cannot be loaded pending further screening, including possible inspection.

For those countries that have an export declaration and screening requirements, the carrier should require from the shipper documentation that the shipper has complied with the relevant requirements before loading the cargo for export. (The shipper/consignor is, however, responsible for compliance with all prevailing documentation and other pertinent export requirements.) Where applicable, the ocean carrier must file its manifest information to those importing Customs agencies that require such information. Shipments for which “do-not-load”

messages have been issued should not be loaded onboard the vessel pending further screening.

E. Transhipment terminal

The transhipment terminal operator shall inspect the security seal between the off-loading and re-loading of the container. This requirement may be waived for transhipment terminals which have security plans that conform to the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code (ISPS Code produced by the International Maritime Organization).

F. Off-loading ocean terminal

The receiver/consignee usually arranges for a Customs broker to facilitate clearance of the shipment in the off-loading ocean terminal. Generally, this requires that the cargo owner provide documentation to the broker in advance of arrival.

The ocean carrier provides advance electronic cargo manifest information to the terminal operator and to the importing Customs administration as required. Customs may select containers for different levels of inspection immediately upon off-loading or later. Customs may inspect the condition of the seal and related documentation in addition to the cargo itself. If the container is to travel under Customs control to another location for clearance, then Customs at the off-loading terminal must affix a Customs seal to the container and note the documentation accordingly.

The receiver/consignee or Customs broker pays any duties and taxes due to Customs and arranges the Customs release of the shipment. Upon pickup for departure from the ocean terminal, the land transport operator inspects and notes the condition of the seal, and receives documentation from the terminal operator.

G. Intermediate terminal

The processes in intermediate terminals in the importing country are analogous to those in intermediate terminals in exporting countries.

H. Unloading site

Upon receipt of the container, the consignee or deconsolidator inspects the seal and notes any discrepancy on the documentation. The consignee unloads the container and verifies the count and condition of the lading against the documentation. If there is a shortage, damage, or an overage discrepancy, it is noted for claims or insurance purposes, and the shipment and its documentation are subject to audit and review. If there is an anomaly related to narcotics, contraband, stowaways or suspicious materials, the consignee Customs or another law enforcement agency must be informed.

PART XI

BIC Code System for marking of containers

1. Introduction

The Bureau International des Containers (BIC) was elected at the beginning of the 1970's by ISO Technical Committee 104 (in charge of the development of the standard for freight containers) as the unique worldwide registrar office for the registration and protection of the prefix for container owners and operators.

The codification system was later called the "BIC code system".

The system was incorporated into ISO Standard 6346 ('Freight Containers- Coding, Identification and Marking (see extract in part XII)

The BIC is responsible for keeping the content of the Register up to date (i.e. the data base of the BIC codes), and currently makes it available in the following formats:

1) the annual printed Register entitled "CONTAINERS BIC CODE".

2) a permanently updated database, publicly accessible online on the BIC web site: www.bic-code.org.

3) a website specially designed for queries from smartphones with direct access to the prefix database, www.bic-code.org/mobile.

4) Automated real-time download service (e-BIC), available free of charge to all Customs administration. Available in csv or xml format, the file may be downloaded manually or may be automated to allow integration into Customs systems. For information contact: bic@bic-code.org.

One paper copy of the "CONTAINERS BIC CODE" Register is sent free of charge to each BIC code holder; the BIC also provides copies to the WCO on the basis of one free copy per Member, plus a stock for WCO headquarters. Additional copies may be ordered directly from: Bureau International des Containers (BIC), website: www.bic-code.org.

2. General presentation of the container identification system:

See detailed information included in the yearly publication of the "CONTAINERS BIC CODE" Register, or browse on www.bic-code.org.

3. Issuance of the registration certificate

The certificate delivered upon registration of a prefix is valid for a period covering the current calendar year. A new certificate is issued each year upon receipt of the payment of the yearly protection charge billed at the beginning of each year.

4. List of BIC codes

See www.bic-code.org or ask for hard copy issue of the BIC Register by writing to bic@bic-code.org.

PART XII

Extract of the ISO Standard N° 6346: 1995)

(Agreed at the 9th Meeting of the Administrative Committee for the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972; 7-8 November 2006, Doc PB0024E1)

Introduction

This International Standard provides a system for the identification and presentation of information about freight containers. The identification system is intended for general application, for example in documentation, control and communications (including computer systems), as well as for display on the containers themselves.

This extract of ISO Standard 6346 is reproduced by kind permission of the International Organization for Standardization:

3. Identification system and its associated marks

3.1. Identification system

The identification system shall consist only of the following elements, all of which shall be included:

International identification system of container owners

- owner code: three letters;
- equipment category identifier: one letter
- serial number: six numerals
- check digit: one numeral

3.1.1. Owner code

The container owner's code shall consist of three capital letters, shall be unique and shall be registered with the International Container Bureau (B.I.C. - Bureau International des Containers), either through an affiliated national registration organization or directly with:

Bureau International des Containers (B.I.C)

Website: www.bic-code.org.

3.1.2 Equipment category identifier

The equipment category identifier consists of one capital letter of the Latin alphabet as follows:

- U for all freight containers;
- J for detachable freight container-related equipment;
- Z for trailers and chassis

3.1.3 Serial numbers

The container serial number shall consist of six Arabic numerals. If the series of significant numerals does not total six, they shall be preceded by sufficient zeroes to make up six numerals. (For example, if the series of significant numerals is 1234, the serial number is 001234).

3.1.4 Check digit

The check digit provides a means of validating the transmission accuracy of the owner code and serial number (Refer to Annex A of ISO Standard N° 6346: 1995). The check digit shall validate the owner code, equipment category identifier and serial number of the container.

PART XIII

Last Voyage Containers

(Agreed at the 10th Meeting of the Administrative Committee for the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972; 7 November 2007, Doc PB0028E1)

The owner or operator (which in Article 1 of the Convention is defined as "the person who, whether or not the owner, has effective control of its use") of the container is responsible for ensuring that its container is numbered and marked as prescribed in Annex 1 of the Customs Convention on Containers (which corresponds to Annex B3, Appendix II of the Istanbul Convention).

However, certain categories of containers may not always be numbered and marked correctly. This may in particular be the case for so-called "last voyage containers"*, and containers that are not owned and operated by liner shipping companies (the latter category is typically referred to as "shipper owned containers").

Carriers, which transport containers in international traffic falling under the scope of the Convention, cannot be held responsible for ensuring compliance with the numbering and marking requirements for containers that they do not themselves own and operate.

Similarly, carriers that are obligated to report the numbers on the containers they are carrying to Customs administrations, including as part of their advance cargo declarations under national cargo risk assessment programs pursuant to the WCO SAFE Framework of Standards, and to other appropriate national authorities, where applicable, may rely on what is physically marked on the exterior of the container upon taking custody of the container for carriage.

Customs administrations have the discretion to designate containers for which incomplete numbers have been reported as "high risk" that ultimately, and where warranted, may result in inspection or other preventive measures.

* A "last voyage container" is a container that has been sold as second hand for transport to a location where it will be used for other purposes, e.g. housing, storage etc. The seller of the container will typically remove the three (3) letter owner code and perhaps also the one (1) letter equipment identifier as well as any company logos from the exterior of the container before its transfer to the purchaser.

PART XIV

International Standards of Relevance for Container Security

1. International mechanical seal standard

The ISO has developed an International Standard for mechanical seals (ISO 17712). The most recent version was published in 2013. ISO 17712 describes three types of mechanical seals:

- High security seal
- Security seal
- Indicative seal.

A Normative Annex in ISO 17712 sets out Best Practices for seal manufacturers. It contains, for example, recommendations for how to ensure that seals only be delivered to ***bona fide*** users, record keeping of seal deliveries and the numbering of seals,.

The SAFE Framework of Standards recommends that Customs consider implementing a container integrity programme involving the use of a high security seal meeting the conditions of ISO 17712. Certain Customs administrations have implemented such a programme either as part of their AEO programmes and/or as a legislative requirement that loaded import containers be sealed with ISO compliant seals.

ISO 17712 Freight containers –Mechanical seals

2. Container end door design

In 2006 the ISO published an amendment to its container standard (ISO 1496-1)[*]. The amendment, which applies to new built containers, addresses the traditional door handle seal location vulnerability. It also ensures that entry into the container via either of the doors can be detected by verifying the condition of the seal that has been affixed to the container.

In a concurrent effort, the ISO has amended its Technical Report 15070 that supplements ISO 1496-1. In addition to incorporating the container door end security Amendment discussed above, the amended Technical Report includes design recommendations on how to address recognized vulnerabilities to the so-called Customs plate on the left door of the container.

International Standard ISO 1496-1.1990/DAmd 5: 2006 "Series 1 freight containers – Specification and testing – Part 1 General cargo containers for general purposes – Amendment 5 Door end security

Technical Report 15070 Amendment 2

[*] The amendment has been incorporated in the revised version of ISO 1496-1 that was published in 2013.

3. Electronic seals

In 2005-2006 the ISO published the five standards that together make up its international standard for electronic seals (e-seals). Essentially, the standards provide for a RFID-based version of the ISO mechanical high security seal. The e-seal is a read-only seal as a capability to write to the seal would be associated with unacceptable security risks, e.g. unauthorized deletion and/or alteration of the data in the seal. This data consists of the following:

- The identity number of the seal manufacturer,
- A unique seal number,
- An indication of the date and time when the seal was closed and when it was opened,
- A remaining battery life indicator.

The e-seal operates in 2 frequency bands, the 433 MHz and the 2.45GHz bands, which ensures global coverage.

a. *ISO 18185-1 Freight containers – Electronic seals - Part 1: Radio-frequency communication protocol*
b. *ISO 18185-2 Freight containers – Electronic seals - Part 2: Application requirements*
c. *ISO 18185-3 Freight containers – Electronic seals - Part 3: Environmental characteristics*
d. *ISO 18185-4 Freight containers – Electronic seals - Part 4: Data protection*
e. *ISO 18185-7 Freight containers – Electronic seals – Part 7: Physical layer*

4. Container identity

For seal verification purposes, the seal number needs to be associated with the number of the container onto which the seal is affixed.

Various technologies exist for capturing of the container number, e.g. Optical Character Reading (OCR) and RFID technology.

The ISO has developed a Technical Specification (ISO 10891) for the capturing of the container number trough RFID technology. ISO 10891 describes a container RFID tag (or "license plate tag"), permanently affixed to the container, containing limited data relating only to physical identification and description of the container to which it is affixed. The container tag should last the lifetime of its associated container (except possibly in situations where the container changes ownership or equipment ID or the tag is damaged). Container tags are currently not widely used.

5. Outlook: Further standardization

Container security is a most complex system of interrelated activities in information and data capture and controlled re-distribution. Standardization will be an important tool to streamline these activities and to ensure interoperability and compatibility.

PART XV

Additional Information Relating to the Convention

1. Marking with plastic film, information supplied by the United States.
2. Technical characteristics of containers, information supplied by France.
3. Information on national regulations - Australia - Spain

1. Marking with plastic film information, supplied by the United States

We understand that plastic film is presently used on 90 % of the containers around the world. It is well suited for out-door environments. It is easily printed with very durable screen printing inks, die cuttable, and subject to being adhesive coated with an excellent bond between the adhesive and the film. Such markings have been known to remain serviceable for over 13 years. This marking method appears to be more durable than other currently utilized methods of container marking, i.e. decalcomania and paint. Vinyl (Plastic film) is the preferred method of marking because:

(i) Clumbers are highly resistant to action of sea water and sunlight and tend to preserve the underlying metal from corrosion to a greater degree than paints.

(ii) Pigmented film is the preferred media because the colour extends the entire thickness of the film coating, is thicker than paints, and is, therefore, more resistant to abrasion or erosion than paints or screen printed coatings on decals. Thin (2 mil) films are preferred because they are more difficult to peel up at the edge.

(iii) Films are obtainable in a large variety of colours which would be hard to match by unauthorized persons, making it difficult to alter or add numbers without being evident.

(iv) The preferred method of marking is by use of die-cut letters or numbers which are not removable by ordinary means. This makes any attempt to change a serial number very difficult since overlaying of other numbers would be obvious. Screen printed numbers on sheets of pressure sensitive material, on the other hand, could be overlaid with similar-appearing material, thus altering identification in a way difficult to detect.

(v) A number of products in the class of pressure-sensitive vinyl films are available, not all of which are suitable for this application. For example, a number of low-cost calendered vinyls are available, which because of their thickness and tensile strength and low adhesion to the substrate, or often low bond strength: between film and adhesive, are removable by slowly pulling them away once a corner is loosened. Calendered films, also, typically, have less outdoor durability than premium cast films. What is needed is a cast film having equal or less strength than the bond to the substrate, and which has coloured pigment throughout, and which has outdoor durability in terms of legibility of at least eight (8) years.

Although we do not believe that a high degree of specificity in describing the term "durably marked" is needed, we would like to offer the following list of film specifications suggested by United States industry sources:

A. Letters and numbers must be die-cut from pigmented high durability pressure sensitive cast vinyl films.

B. Film thickness, 2 mils (50 m) (nominal).

C. Adhesive must be permanent, weather resistant acrylic.

D. Film should have a minimum of eight (C) years (vertical Southern exposure) durability and maintain physical integrity and reasonable colour permanence.

E. Film shrinkage should be less than 1/1G" over the life of the markings at the edges.

F. Film tensile strength should not exceed sir. (G) Pounds per inch width (nominal).

G. Peel adhesion strength of the adhesive should nominally exceed 6.5 pounds/inch width (etched aluminium panel) initially and have- a tendency to increase with time.

H. Adhesion values of the adhesive must maintain at or above initial values and there must be no "softening" of the adhesive from plasticizer migration.

We understand that film possessing these qualities is generally available around the world.

We would also like to provide the following discussion, regarding various aspects of plastic film, which was furnished by United States industry sources:

<u>(i) Are some vinyls more durable than others?</u>

Yes. All PVC vinyls are sold as compounded mixtures of PVC resin (available in various molecular weights which affects durability), plasticizers (some better than others), pigment to provide the colour (durability varies with type, content, grinding), and other components to aid manufacture, improve impact resistance, ultraviolet light resistance, decrease fungus growth, etc.

The two most widely used types of vinyl films are "cast" and "calendered". For container-marking applications, the cast film is generally recommended because:

A. Durability (based on actual outdoor weathering of case films exceeds that of calendered by a factor of at least 2:1.

B. Cast films, having a normal actual film thickness (excluding adhesive) of about SO microns, are much more difficult to pick away at and remove than calendered films (usual thickness, 100 mils).They also have lower tensive strength so that even if a corner is picked up, the film will rip rather than allow itself to be picked off.

C. Cast films exhibit far less shrinkage than calendered film. The significance of this is, if the markings shrink, they can leave adhesive behind to pick up dirt. In an extreme case, shrinkage can cause edges of a marking to release and curl.

(ii) A comparison of cast and calendered vinyl films

The terms cast film and calendered film are often discussed when questions are asked regarding what types of film should be used in various marking applications. Although both these terms are descriptive of "vinyl" or polyvinyl chloride films, the chemical and physical properties of calendered vinyls can and usually do vary from cast vinyls.

How are these products made? Cast vinyls are generally coated out of liquid mixtures called organosals. The vinyl components (PVC resin, plasticizers, stabilizers, pigments, modifiers, etc.) are mixed with organic solvents to achieve a coatable liquid material. The material is spread or "cast" on a moving flat or "web" solvents are driven off in an oven, and finally tile remaining solids are fused together at elevated temperature. The cast film exits from the oven as a non-oriented product on a carrier web. The cast vinyl film can be adhesive-coated and stripped from the web to form a marking film.

Calendered films are manufactured without the use of organic solvents. The PVC resin plasticizers, pigments and other components are heated and kneaded to allow mixing to take place. The compounded vinyl mass is formed into a "rope" and conveyed to sets of heated rolls. Each subsequent set of calendar rolls runs faster than the previous set, squeezing and stretching the vinyl into a film of desired thickness. : 1t the end of the calendering; operation the film is wound upon itself and is then ready for adhesive coating.

The difference in manufacturing techniques for cast and calendered films created differences in finished products in terms of physical and mechanical properties. More flexibility exists in a casting process and this allows the manufacturer more freedom in selecting components to formulate the finished film, and thus a wide range of properties can be achieved.

Cast vinyl films are generally thinner than calendered products and are typically in the range of 1 - 3 mils (.001 - .O03 inch). Because of this, they tend to be more conformable than calendered vinyls, which generally are at least 3 - 4 mils thick. Cast films can be conformed to compound surfaces such as a corrugated and riveted trailer side. For these applications, it is critical that the entire product construction, including adhesives, liners, inks, clears, and

premasks be properly engineered to work together to yield satisfactory performance. Cast films are generally suitable for the production of attractive emblems, labels, markings, striping and signs for commercial and industrial applications which require resistance to severe weather and handling conditions. Because of the flexibility in choosing raw materials, components can be selected to yield a long-term durable product.

Imparting a residual stress into a vinyl material is inherent in a calendering operation because the film is continually being stretched, squeezed and cooled until its ultimate thickness is achieved. This generally results in more shrinkage of markings made from calendered film than is experienced with cast products. Calendered films have their application in the production of markings and point of purchase displays for exterior and interior use on flat and mildly compound-curved surfaces. Because of their thickness, markings prepared from calendered films can often be applied without using an application tape (premask), whereas it is generally advisable to use a premask on a cast product. Calendered vinyl films are typically stronger than cast films because they are much thicker. This allows calendered films to be physically pulled off a substrate, whereas cast films tend to require special measures for removal, and are therefore more vandal-resistant.

In selection of the best film for a given application, the demands of the service must be carefully considered: type of service, geometry of the application surface, durability needs, economics, removability, appearance, vandal resistance, to name a few, any of these characteristics will depend not only on the type of film used in the film manufacture, but also on the adhesive, inks, clears, and premasks, which must all be mutually compatible to achieve the desired results of a successful graphic marking program.

(iii) How can markings be rendered counterfeit resistant?

Cut out letters made from premium cast film with a high strength, permanent adhesive, are very difficult to peel away, and any attempt to do so is apparent. Even if one were to get one off, it would be very difficult to find similar material to use to replace the number that would match. One could go one step farther and use a coloured film, which would be all the harder to match up.

If the method used is to screen print numbers onto a cast film, there is a way to provide additional protection from tampering. The usual construction of a number strip is to screen print black numbers on white film and cover with a protective thin layer of clear varnish. To guard against the removal of a number by rubbing with some solvent and painting in another number (not an easy job to do without detection, but possible) the following construction is possible:

A. Use a coloured cast base film.

B. Coat the entire surface of the film with a coating of white inks (a flood coat).

C. Screen the numbers onto the white background using a dark shade of ink (such as dark blue, brown, etc.) having good colour retention in weathering.

D. Top coat the marking with a protective clear coating.

This construction accomplishes the following:

A. If anyone were to attempt to wipe away one or more digits of a number, he would also remove the white layer and expose the coloured base film - obvious evidence of tampering.

B. The only way of altering such a number would be to overlay a white film with numbers on it. The objective of the coloured ink numbers is to make exact colour matching extremely difficult.

2. Technical characteristics of containers, information supplied by France*

Containers generally consist of a metal frame in the form of a right-angled parallel pipe, a box body, one or more opening systems, and rings or corner pieces fitted to facilitate handling.

There are five categories of containers depending on the intended use:

(i) General-purpose containers

The most common containers are general-purpose; the frame usually comprises steel or aluminium sections, and the sides are made of metal panels as is the roof which may be detachable (Opening roof) or open and coverable with a sheet (open top). The floors generally consist of assembled wooden boards or very strong plywood panels and are fitted on top of metal cross-pieces.

The most common means of opening these containers is the two-leaf end door, each leaf being fitted with a double camlocking system.

Containers may, however, have other opening systems. Side doors (used particularly for rail transport), detachable metal roof, open roof covered with a sheet.

(ii) Special containers for bulky goods

These are essentially "flat type" containers consisting of a simple base structure (floor or chassis) fitted with corner posts (which may or may not be adjustable in height) designed to limit their volume to that of closed containers.

Containers of identical structure to the above also exist for the transport of motor vehicles; they are fitted, in addition, with a special system for blocking the wheels.

* A more comprehensive description can be found in IMO/ULO/UNECE Code of Practice For Packing of Cargo Transport Units (CTU Code), Chapter 6, as well as in the “Informative Material Related to the IMO/ULO/UNECE Code of Practice For Packing of Cargo Transport Units (CTU Code)”, Chapter IM 3. Please refer to http://www.imo.org/en/OurWork/Safety/Cargoes/CargoSecuring/Pages/CTU-Code.aspx and http://www.unece.org/trans/wp24/guidelinespackingctus/intro.html

(iii) Containers for transporting goods at constant or controlled temperatures

This category includes thermal containers whose sides, doors, roof and sometimes floor are lined with insulating material such as polyurethane. Some thermal containers incorporate dehumidifiers, and anti-condensation, ventilation or heating systems.

Many thermal containers are fitted with a self-contained refrigeration system. This may consist of a simple liquid gas (generally liquid nitrogen) evaporation device, though self-contained refrigeration units (detachable or fixed) are increasingly used in international transport, particularly by sea.

(iv) Liquid containers or tank containers

(v) Dry bulk containers or hopper containers

3. Information on national regulations

- AUSTRALIA

Australia's only variation to the technical requirements of the Convention is to require a twelve month security without surety.

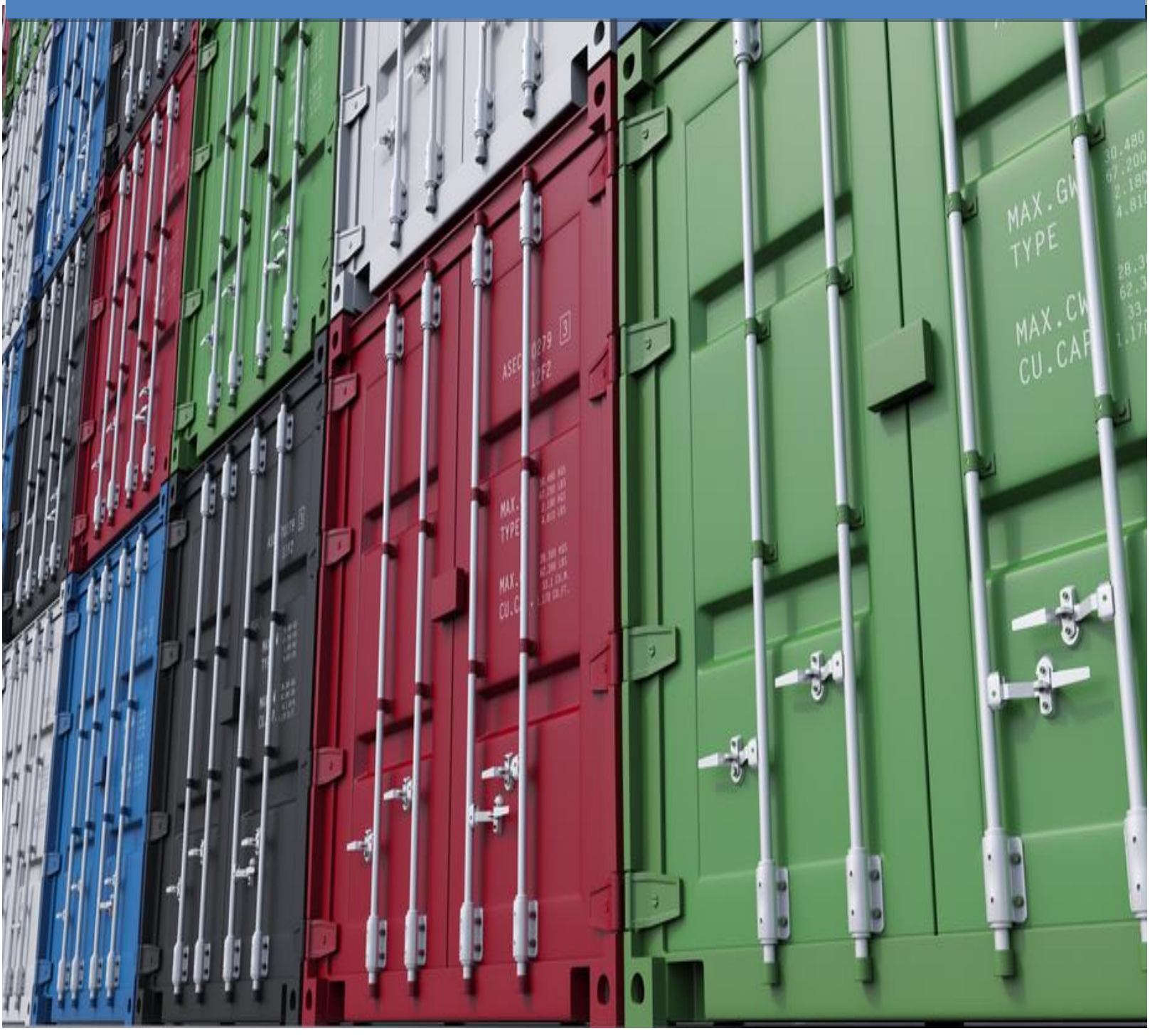
- SPAIN

Under the terms of a Decree of 28 March 1904 (Official State Bulletin of 9 April) "As a general rule, containers shall be granted temporary admission without the production of a temporary importation document being required and without tire furnishing of a form of security". Thus, the temporary importation of containers is in accordance with Article 6 of the Convention.

The same Decree authorizes the Customs administration to grant longer periods for re-exportation when warranted by special circumstances; however the normal period for re-exportation is three months, with a possible extension of 45 days.

Containers covered by the temporary admission procedure may not be used for the carriage of goods in internal traffic, in accordance with the reservation entered by Spain in respect of Article 9 of the Convention.

There are no specific national standards relating to technical requirements for containers.

Containers have to be approved by a Committee consisting of a Customs official, an engineer attached to the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance and a representative of the national guaranteeing association who participates as an adviser. There are 19 Committees covering the entire country.

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