

Risk Management

Entry into enclosed spaces – freight containers

III/4



ENTRY INTO A DRY CARGO FREIGHT CONTAINER

BEWARE, IT IS AN ENCLOSED SPACE!

ENTRY INTO IT MAY BE DANGEROUS!

BEFORE OPENING AND ENTRY, STOP AND THINK!

An enclosed space is not normally subject to continuous ventilation. It may be subject to life threatening atmospheric or physical change.

Ensure a **COMPETENT** person assesses potential hazards before entry.

- Are labels or placards present at the outside?
- Are potentially hazardous substances liable to be present?
- Is there enough oxygen?
- Is the cargo in the container hazardous?
- Has some of it decomposed?
- Has anything leaked?
- Are there residues of any previous cargoes?
- Can the air in the space be breathed safely?
If not, can the air be made safe to breathe, eg by adequate ventilation?
- Will the air remain safe to breathe throughout the work?
- Can unrestricted entry into the container be allowed?
If not, entry should only be allowed under a safe system of work and the control of a **RESPONSIBLE** person.

Additional precautions that may be needed include:-

- Further air monitoring
- A permit to work in the container
- Respiratory and other appropriate personal protective equipment
- Additional training and instruction
- Additional supervision
- Rescue arrangements

LET'S BE CAREFUL IN THERE!

DO NOT ENTER A CONTAINER WITHOUT ADVISING YOUR SUPERVISOR

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ENTRY INTO A DRY CARGO FREIGHT CONTAINER

BEWARE, IT IS AN ENCLOSED SPACE!

As general freight containers are enclosed spaces, entry into them can be dangerous in some circumstances. In addition to the hazards of inadequately secured cargo, the atmosphere inside a general cargo freight container may be hazardous.

Dangers	Examples
<i>Toxic gases or vapours</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leakage from packages due to faulty packing or damage in transit • Use of fumigants • Leakage of cylinders etc. • Vapours from recently made products (mostly solvents or other volatile compounds) • Decomposition of fish meal, logs, bark or other cargoes
<i>Cargo under fumigation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fumigant gas present in the space
<i>Residues of fumigants</i> (In plates or strips of plates, sleeves, blankets or pellets of aluminium or magnesium phosphide which are put on top of, or within, the cargo)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A white powder may be a silent witness that fumigation is or has taken place with aluminium or magnesium phosphide. It may still evolve phosphine following a rise in temperature or humidity
<i>Flammable gases or vapours</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leakage of packages due to faulty packaging or damage in transit • Leakage of gas lighters or aerosols
<i>Direct contact with hazardous substances</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leakage or breakage of packages
<i>Lack of oxygen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxidation (rotting) of organic or vegetable materials • Rotting Cargoes • Replacement by other gases

Freight containers carrying dangerous goods or 'under fumigation', must be placarded in accordance with the IMDG Code.

It is essential that freight containers are adequately ventilated before entry.

If there is any doubt, freight containers should be tested for toxic or flammable gas concentrations and oxygen content before entry is allowed.

REMEMBER - VENTILATE BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE! IF IN DOUBT, STOP AND ASK FOR ADVICE

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The dangers of enclosed spaces are universal and are widely found in work activities. The two main concerns are lack of oxygen and presence of harmful gases or vapours. In this pocket card, ICHCA International and the TT Club have addressed the very practical issue of entry into freight containers that can present a danger to port workers and others who may be required to enter them during their work. The dangers, together with examples, are given and the necessary precautions that will ensure safety are specified.

Over the years, a number of shoreside employees have been affected as a result of these dangers. Containers may be opened at

marine terminals and are always opened for entry at their destination. Freight container atmospheres can be contaminated by leakage from cargo, past or present, fumes emitted from dunnage etc or by fumes that entered before the doors were closed. Principally, however, the danger can come from fumigation activities and the residue of a fumigant added at the commencement of a journey.

Enclosed spaces can be large such as a ship's hold but they can also be small and a freight container can present a number of dangers and this pocket card is recommended for everybody who might be exposed to such risks.



The **TTClub** is the international transport and logistics industry's leading provider of insurance and related risk management services.

Established in 1968, as a mutual association, we specialise in the insurance of liabilities, property and equipment for intermodal operators. Customers are drawn from a wide range of the world's shipping lines, port authorities, cargo and passenger handling terminals, freight forwarders, and logistics companies. Having developed in step with the multi-modal industry, TT is recognised as an independent industry forum, liaising closely with national and international trade associations, including FIATA, IAPH, WSC, ESPO, EIA, ILO, ICHCA and the IMO.

As a mutual insurer, the Club exists to provide its policyholders with benefits that include specialist underwriting expertise, a world-wide office network providing claims management services, and first class risk management and loss prevention advice. This is one of a number of publications that seek to disseminate good practice through the supply chain.

For more information on TT Club and its services please visit: www.ttclub.com



ICHCA International is dedicated to the promotion of safety and efficiency in the handling and movement of goods by all modes and throughout the supply chain. Originally established in 1952 and incorporated in 2002, it operates through a series of National Sections, Regional Chapters, Panels, Working Groups and Correspondence Groups and represents the cargo handling world at various international organizations, including the International Maritime Organization (IMO), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Standards Organization (ISO).

Its members include port terminals, transport, companies and other groups associated with cargo handling and coordination.

Members benefit from consulting services and informative publications dealing with technical matters, "good practice" advice, and cargo handling news.

For more information on ICHCA International and its services please visit: www.ichca.com