



COA Members Newsletter: Issue 33 – December 2007

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1. Appointment of COA Technical Manager

The COA is pleased to announce the appointment of Erik Hansen as its new Technical Manager. Based in Qingdao, China, Erik is a container consultant, with many years’ experience in the container business, specialising in container design, manufacturing, inspection and repair

The COA Technical Manager’s role (which is a part-time position) covers a range of technical matters including: overall management of the COA’s current Working Groups; development of new Working Group activity; and responding to specific technical enquiries from COA Members.

Erik can be contacted on: technical@containerownersassociation.org

2. COA 2008 Technical Programme

With the appointment of the Technical Manager, planning is now under way to strengthen and expand the COA’s Technical Programme for 2008. The COA Board of Directors is now reviewing a number of initiatives to be launched during the course of 2008. In the meantime, the focus at the beginning of year will be on the following:

Repair Working Group

Following requests from a number of shipping lines and leasing companies, the COA is taking the initiative to create a standard set of COA-recommended container interchange inspection criteria. The COA’s Repair Working Group will be convened in early 2008 to work on this project.

In the first instance, a document will be prepared by the COA Technical Manager, comparing the four inspection criteria which are presently in use in the industry (UCIRC, SeaWorthy, “IICL-Light” and IICL-5). The document will compare the key differences between these four criteria.

Flexitank Working Group

Progress continues on the development of a COA Code of Practice for Flexitanks. The Flexitank Working Group met in Amsterdam in early December. A report on the activities of this WG can be found in item 3 below

Environmental Working Group

An Environmental Working Group is to be established, with the aim of developing a COA strategy for the development of environmentally-friendly containers.

This WG will co-operate and co-ordinate with the on-going research work on *Alternative Container Flooring Systems* that has been undertaken by the **Flooring Working Group**.

In addition, the Environmental WG will also investigate issues relating to other aspects of container design, production and operation, including container coatings and reefer containers.

Standard Container WG/Development of a standard door locking gear installation

Within the Standard Container Working Group, the creation of a COA-recommended standard door locking installation will be investigated. One problem faced by many container owners is the non-standard installation of door locking gear. In many cases, the positioning of the top and bottom cams deviates by 5-10 mm, causing problems when the door gear is replaced or repaired.

A recommended common standard installation procedure for the door gear will be prepared.

3. Flexitank Working Group: Further Update

As part of its work on the development of a standard COA-recommended Flexitank Code of Practice, the COA's Flexitank Working Group met in Amsterdam on Wednesday 5th December.

The first issue to be addressed by the Working Group is that of Container Selection. A Container Selection Check List has now been prepared by the WG. The check list was developed taking elements and best practice and identifies difference from the Unified Container Inspection and Repair Criteria (UCIRC) and the IICL General Guide for Container Cleaning.

The Checklist comprises a Standard Form, which can be used by all parties in the Flexitank Operation process; and will enable, for example, depots to check what type of containers they should supply for flexitank operations.

This Checklist will be tested during December and January to confirm that it is workable. It will subsequently be published end-January 2008.

Following the publication of the Checklist, Phase 2 of the Flexitank WG's work will commence early in 2008. This work will focus on testing the flexitank/container combination and the development of a standard set of tests.

The 3rd Phase will focus on the operation and safe handling of flexitanks. This work will take place in the 2nd half of 2008.

Further information on the Flexitank WG from ets.consulting@btinternet.com

4. "Learning from Annabella": 1-day Seminar on 22 January 2008

COA Members may be interested to know about "Learning from Annabella", a conference taking place at the Museum in Docklands, close to London's Canary Wharf, on 22 January 2008.

Taking as its starting point a report by the UK Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) into a stack collapse on board the 868TEU UK-flag container vessel Annabella in February 2007, the conference will address the question "Is the shortsea container shipping industry capable of implementing safe working practices given the operational complexities and commercial pressures it faces today?". Amongst the issues to be discussed will be several that concern container owners and lessors.

The charterer of Annabella is primarily a shortsea feeder operator and carries both deepsea containers and European shortsea intermodal equipment. While the ocean carriers present mostly 20ft and 40ft ISO containers for carriage, perhaps with the occasional 8ft wide 45ft too; the rest of the cargo carried in the European shortsea trades tends to be very much non-ISO. There will be 45ft 'palletwide' (2.5m wide) containers, now the mainstay of the intra-European container trades; there will be 45ft reefers, some of which are actually longer than 45ft; and 20ft and 30ft dry bulk and tank containers, many also 2.5m wide. Few of these will meet the ISO standard

rating for allowable stack weights of 213.36 tonnes and to make things even more confusing, the 45ft containers will have different stacking capabilities depending on whether the load is being supported on the 40ft or 45ft posts. Truly a ship planner's nightmare.

This proliferation of non-standard equipment, now being exacerbated by APL's decision to launch 53ft containers 8ft 6in wide on the transpacific trades, comes at a time when stack heights and weights are increasing. Not only are ships getting bigger, but also novel designs like Annabella are seeing nine and ten high stacking on ships of under 1000TEU. The organisers will be inviting the audience to consider what changes need to be made. One suggestion is bound to be that stacking capabilities, especially of the European intermodal container designs and of deepsea 53 footers, need to be brought more in line with those found on standard 20ft and 40ft ISO containers.

COA Members can benefit from a 10% discount on the Conference Registration Fee (that is, £225 + VAT instead of £250 + VAT). The Conference Programme and Registration Form are available on the COA website.

Further information from David Cheslin or Anna Skordai on: +44 (0)20 7480 0601 or email davidcheslin@dunelmpr.co.uk.

The MAIB report is available on: http://www.maib.dft.gov.uk/cms_resources/Annabella.pdf

5. Container Pavilion at Transport Logistic China: Shanghai, 17-19 June 2008

The Container Owners Association and the International Tank Container Organisation are jointly organising a Container Pavilion at transport logistic China 2008, taking place in Shanghai, 17-19 June 2008. (For further information about transport logistic China 2008, visit: www.transportlogistic-china.com)

Members of the COA and of ITCO are invited to participate in the Container Pavilion. A comprehensive Stand Package is available, including fully equipped and furnished exhibition stands (sized 4m x 3m and above), together with a number of other marketing and promotional opportunities.

Further information about the Container Pavilion, including stand packages and the floorplan, can be found on the COA Website. (www.containerownersassociation.org)

6. 6th Members Meeting – Shanghai, 16 June 2008

Prior to transport logistic China 2008, the COA's 6th Members Meeting will take place in Shanghai on Monday 16 June 2008.

The main theme of the Conference will be "Container Shipping and the Environment". There will be presentations, panel discussions and break-out sessions on a number of issues relating to the environmental challenges of container shipping, container ports, container operations and container manufacturing.

Further information about the Container Pavilion and the COA 2008 Members Meeting is available from the COA Secretariat (secretary@containerownersassociation.org)

7. New Members

The COA is pleased to welcome the following new member to the Association:

- **Civet** (www.civet.com.cn). Civet (Zhuhai) Container Factory Ltd is a manufacturer of containers based in Zhuhai, China

- **EMPL.** EMPL offers container surveying services
- **Langh Ship** (www.langhship.fi). Oy Langh Ship AB is a privately-owned Finnish shipping line offering a range of cargo solutions utilising specialist container equipment
- **PD Ports** (www.pdports.co.uk). PD Ports is a leading UK ports business, offering end-to-end supply chain solutions
- **Progeco Holland** (www.progeco.fr). Progeco provides a wide range of container management services. Its specialist operations include the supply and installation of bulk liners, bulk bags and flexitanks in shipping containers - either at one of our terminals or at customer sites.
- **Sigma Logistic** (www.sigmalogistic.com) Istanbul-based Sigma Logistic offers a range of container solutions, forwarding services and integrated cargo operations
- **United Containers** (www.unitedcontainers.co.nz) United Containers Ltd is a leading provider of empty container depot services, with 14 facilities located throughout New Zealand and Fiji

8. Further Information

For further information about anything in this newsletter, or if you would like to contribute to the next issue (January 2008), contact Patrick Hicks – secretary@containerownersassociation.org