



## INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING REQUIREMENTS FOR SHIPPING CONTAINERS

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### **CSC Certification and International Shipping**

Shipping containers intended for international ocean transport must have a valid CSC (Convention for Safe Containers) Safety Approval Plate confirming that the container meets the applicable international safety requirements for handling, stacking, and transport.

A container without a valid CSC plate or other acceptable evidence of current CSC compliance may be rejected for loading by a marine terminal or steamship line.

### **New and One-Trip Containers**

New and one-trip containers are generally delivered with a manufacturer's CSC Safety Approval Plate. The initial CSC approval is generally valid for five years from the container's date of manufacture, provided the container remains in satisfactory condition.

A "one-trip" container has typically made only one ocean voyage from its manufacturing location and is normally still within the initial CSC approval period. If the original CSC plate is intact, legible, and valid, a new physical survey is not necessarily required solely because the container is being shipped internationally.

However, the specific requirements of the steamship line, terminal, destination country, or freight forwarder must always be confirmed before booking.

### **CSC Inspection After the Initial Five-Year Period**

After the initial five-year period, the container must remain under an accepted inspection program to maintain its eligibility for international transport.

- **ACEP — Approved Continuous Examination Programme:** The container is maintained under an approved continuous inspection program, with examinations performed as part of the program.
- **PES — Periodic Examination Scheme:** The container is periodically inspected by an authorized/qualified inspector. A PES examination may maintain CSC validity for a maximum period of 30 months, subject to the applicable requirements and the container's condition.

CSC validity may be maintained through either:

## Containers Purchased from a Leasing Company or Other ACEP Operator

An additional consideration arises when purchasing a container from a major leasing company or other organization operating the container under an ACEP program.

For example, a container purchased from a leasing company such as CAI may have been maintained under the seller's ACEP program while it was part of the seller's fleet. Once the container is sold and transferred to a new owner, it may no longer remain covered by the seller's continuous inspection program.

In such circumstances, the buyer may need to arrange an independent third-party marine survey/PES inspection to establish the container's continued CSC compliance under its new ownership.

- Establish the condition of the container before it enters the buyer's international shipment.
- Support export and ocean-freight documentation;
- Satisfy the requirements of the steamship line, terminal, freight forwarder, or destination country;
- Document that the container remains structurally sound and suitable for international transport;
- Establish the container's independent CSC inspection record following a change of ownership;

The surveyor may inspect the container for structural integrity, including its frame, corner castings, doors, flooring, walls, roof, and other safety-critical components. If the container passes inspection, the surveyor can document the inspection and apply or update the appropriate CSC/PES identification in accordance with the applicable inspection scheme.

## SOC — Shipper-Owned Container

When the container is owned by the shipper rather than the steamship line, it is generally booked as an SOC (Shipper-Owned Container).

- SOC indemnity or similar documentation, acknowledging that the shipper owns and is responsible for the container rather than the steamship line.
- Documentation confirming the container's current identification and condition;
- CSC/PES inspection or survey documentation, when required;
- Bill of Sale / Proof of Ownership identifying the specific container and its original factory/container number;

The steamship line or freight forwarder may require documentation establishing both ownership and the container's eligibility for international transportation. Depending on the carrier, this may include:

### When a Marine Survey Is Required

- **The container may have sustained damage during domestic transportation or storage.**
- **The shipper wants independent documentation confirming that the container is structurally sound before export.**
- **The steamship line, terminal, freight forwarder, or destination authority requires a current survey.**
- **The CSC plate is missing, damaged, illegible, or otherwise questionable.**
- **The container was previously covered under an ACEP program and is being transferred to a new owner.**
- **The original five-year CSC period has expired.**

A third-party inspection or marine survey may be required or advisable in several circumstances, including:

## **Important: Confirm Requirements Before Booking**

CSC requirements are international safety requirements, but carrier and terminal procedures can vary. A container that appears to have a valid CSC plate may still be subject to additional documentation or inspection requirements imposed by the particular steamship line, terminal, freight forwarder, or destination.

For this reason, anyone purchasing a container for international export should confirm the requirements with the steamship line or freight forwarder before the container is picked up or transported to the loading terminal.

This is particularly important for SOC shipments and containers purchased from leasing companies or other fleet operators.

## **ModalART Inspection Services**

ModalART can arrange inspection services prior to unit pick-up at a terminal or depot facility for an additional fee.

A qualified marine surveyor can inspect the container and provide the appropriate inspection documentation when required for international transportation.

For customers purchasing containers specifically for overseas shipment, ModalART recommends confirming the steamship line's SOC and CSC requirements before booking the container for export.

ModalART can help coordinate the inspection process and provide the documentation necessary to facilitate a smooth international shipping process.