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NEWS

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New packing laws hold non-compliant consignors responsible for damage

Consignors and any company involved in the transport of cargo, whether general freight, refrigerated or dangerous goods by road, rail or water, in any form of container, trailer, tanker or rail car, will be required by law to implement and adhere to the new IMO/ILO/UNECE Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units (CTU).

Compliance requires contents to be firmly secured to prevent movement when transported, particularly under turbulent conditions, as well as a stable distribution of weight (within the weight limitations) inside the container prior to sealing and shipping the consignment. The new regulations for the verification of container weight will come into effect in July 2016. This means that the consignor, in other words, the company responsible for packing the contents, will be liable for all the costs associated with any damage incurred should an incident occur while the cargo is in transport.

These essential compliance issues were discussed by industry leaders from all over the world at the recent CTU Packing Roadshow in Durban.

Captain Richard Brough from London, director of the International Cargo Handling Coordination Association (ICHCA) commented: "Container weight verification is crucial as part of this whole process; being a tonne or so out on your calculations can have devastating effects and cause major accidents and losses. With these new measures, it is hoped that high impact incidents will be significantly reduced, if not eradicated."

Justin Reynolds from the International Maritime Insurance company TT Club added that, "Disastrous transport incidents are often a result of a domino effect following a single cause, whether it's weight, packing or securing related. It's therefore exceptionally important that we encourage behavioural change through regulations at all levels of the supply chain, to reduce loss and serious liability."

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