
Improperly declared dangerous goods putting lives at risk in the supply chain

2023/09/28 16:10 στην κατηγορία INTERNATIONAL

Despite industry and government efforts, dangerous cargo that has not been declared, or that has been incorrectly declared or labelled, continues to cause fires and explosions, hurting and killing vessel crew and transportation staff.

In response to this continued safety challenge the World Shipping Council (WSC), representing liner carriers, is taking additional action to strengthen cargo safety standards and protect the lives of the people working in the supply chain, the environment, and the integrity of the global supply network.

Over the past decade, containership fires have seen a disturbing rise, with a notable number resulting in casualties and total losses. According to the 2023 Allianz Safety and Shipping Review, there have been 64 reported fires on containerships in the past five years. TT Club estimates that a serious ship fire occurs every sixty days. One of the key factors contributing to these fires is hazardous cargo that has not been declared, mis-declared or that has not been properly packed by shippers.

Despite comprehensive and clear international and national regulations on the transport of dangerous goods, these goods continue to be mis-declared or not declared at all, which complicates detection, may result in ship fires and make firefighting much more challenging. In 2022, fire-related incidents at sea surged by over 17% compared to the previous year.

Recognizing the urgent need for enhanced safety measures, the WSC is spearheading a comprehensive approach to safeguard lives, protect the marine environment, and secure cargoes and vessels. Building on screening processes and policies already in use by member carriers, the WSC is developing a shared industry process for cargo screening and inspections.

“A common industry approach to cargo safety will create a safer working environment not only for ship crews, but for everyone involved in inland transport or working in ports and terminals, as well as for the communities around us. For shippers, it will make ocean transport more efficient and dependable, by stopping dangerous shipments that can disrupt the supply chain,” says John Butler, President & CEO of the WSC.

Request for Proposals for digital tools and operation

This voluntary initiative, the Cargo Safety Program, will rely on a digital solution made up of a Common Screening Tool, Verified Shipper Database, and a Database of Approved Container Inspection Companies, provided and operated by an independent third-party vendor.

The core functionality of the system will be to screen booking information against a comprehensive keyword library and risk algorithm. High-risk bookings will be flagged for further investigation and/or inspection, and lessons learned through experience will be used to continuously improve the screening tool. The emphasis is on identifying and correcting dangerous conditions before containers with dangerous cargoes are introduced into the supply chain.

Today the WSC starts the process of finding an independent third-party provider with high integrity to develop the digital tools and manage the Cargo Safety Program process for cargo screening and inspections. Eligible providers can [download the full RfP here](#). The deadline for submission of a proposal is Sunday, 26 November at 23:59 GMT.

This common safety approach will significantly mitigate the risks associated with non-declared or improperly declared, labelled or packed dangerous goods across the supply chain. At the same time, the system will streamline the transport of compliant dangerous goods in line with national and international regulations.

(World Shipping Council)