

Chapter Four

HOW TO TAKE INITIAL PREVENTATIVE STEPS IN STOWAGE TO PROTECT YOUR GOODS FROM DAMAGE

The use of intermodal containers for the transport of a great variety of cargo has become increasingly popular in recent years. Development of specialized containers with a wide range of types, sizes and configuration permits containerization of most cargo. This facilitates prompt door-to-door movement of the complete shipment, with significant reduction in the risk of damage. However, in order to minimize damage you should:

- Determine the cargo to be shipped — volume and characteristics.
- If not already palletised, goods should be stowed on pallets.
- Select the right container for the goods. — see chapter 6.
- Select the proper container service for the purpose.
- Make sure that the size of the container is matched to the cargo.
- Ensure that the carrier of your choice will handle it.
- Check that the weight to be loaded does not exceed the container's maximum permitted net weight.
- Inspect the container to ensure proper accommodation and protection of the cargo.
- Inspect the container on arrival for damage.
- Ensure that the doors can be closed and locked properly.
- Have the cargo and a definite plan of loading ready.
- Inspect goods prior to loading to ensure perfect condition, and that the initial packaging is correct and intact.
- Load with a concept of balance, each way, in the container.
- Take photographs of the goods in stowage, half way through when loading a twenty foot container and twice in a forty foot container (at one third and two thirds load).
- Stow, block, and lash the goods in the container in a manner which will prevent damage to the goods, container or transport vehicle.
- Ensure that drums and liquid containers are sealed tightly and not leaking.