




Glossary of Terminology in the Container Industry

Term or Acronym	Definition	Additional information	Link
Ammerican Bureau of Shipping (ABS)	Classification society	ABS website	https://www.eagle.org/
BIC	Bureau International des Containers.		
Paris based organization that maintains the official registry of alpha container prefixes used to identify containers.		www.bic-code.org/	
Bureau Veritas (BV)	Classification society	BV website	www.bureauveritas.com/
Carrier Owned Container (COC)	A container owned or leased by a shipping line – new or used – to transport goods by providing both the container and the transportation service. COC is the opposite of an SOC, and will generate demurrage and detentions costs which an SOC will not.		
CW or Cargo-Worthy Certificate	Certificate issued by a surveyor pursuant to an inspection confirming a container is suitable for transportation under TIT / UIC / CSC....	Example of CW certificate	

Classification Society	Organization that certifies that new containers are built in accordance with the specifications that were issued and that they meet the CSC requirements as well as other requirements set forth in the specifications. The classification society will verify specifications prior to production, attend and verify production, and witness prototype testing.	Example of Classification society certificate	
Container Specification	Complete description of components and assembly methods used in the production of new containers .		
Container surveyor or inspector	Professionals whose function it is to evaluate containers and assess possible damages against a criteria that has been set for them by their principal.		
COR-TEN® or CORTEN	COR-TEN® is a registered trade mark of the United States Steel Corporation. Commonly referred to as CORTEN this type of steel is carbon enriched to make it stronger (than mild steel) and more resistant to corrosion.		www.ussteel.com

CSC	Convention for Safe Containers. The 1972 Convention for Safe Containers to maintain a high level of safety of human life in the transport and handling of containers by providing generally acceptable test procedures and related strength requirements and to facilitate the international transport of containers by providing uniform international safety regulations.	IMO International Maritime Organization	http://www.imo.org/bast/mainframemenu.asp?topic_id=564
CSC Plate	Refers to the plate affixed on the door of a container which records containers serial number, technical data (MGW, tare, payload) manufacture data, owner data and date of last CSC inspection.	Example of a CSC plate	
Demurrage	Fees charged when containers are left inside the terminal for longer than the agreed free days and applicable to all containers that remain at the terminal.		
Detention	Fees charged when containers are held outside the terminal longer than the agreed free time. All units will continue to be charged daily while in the custody of the consignee until returned to the shipping line.		
DPP – Damage Protection Plan	Damage protection offered by containers lessors who are not “technically” allowed to offer insurance which is a regulated market.		

EIR or Equipment Inter-change Receipt	Document established at the time a container arrives in or leaves from a depot that will serve to document the transfer of responsibility. While not systematic, most EIRs will record the verification of a container's condition at the time of transfer.	Example of an EIR	
FEU	Forty-foot Equivalent Unit. 2 TEU = 1 FEU	Example of a 40	
Free on Truck or FOT	Generally accepted acronym (not an INCO-TERM) that implies that containers are delivered on to the truck and that implies that the seller would be responsible for the cost of handling to load the container on to the truck		
Germanischer Lloyd (GL)	Classification society	GL website	www.dnvgl.com/
Handling (depot)	Act of loading or unloading a container onto or from a truck at a depot (normally done for a fee...).		
IICL	Institute of International Container Lessors. Washington DC based organization which groups the largest container & chassis leasing companies in the world . IICL sets repair standards, by which all repairs are carried out, for its members when containers are off hired. Criteria is also used for equipment interchanges between operators. The current edition of their directive is IICL 5.	IICL website	https://www.iicl.org/

IICL repair criteria	Detailed repair criteria issued by the IICL which defines clearly which repairs should be performed on in fleet containers. Criteria addresses all structural aspects as and sets stricter limits on dents or paint damage which are acceptable		
ISO	International Standardization Organization. International Organization based in Geneva that works towards harmonizing worldwide technical standards including those governing the construction of shipping containers.	ISO website	http://www.iso.org/iso/home.htm
MGW (Container)	The maximum weight allowable for a loaded container.		
Payload (Container)	The maximum weight of cargo that can be loaded in a container (Payload = MGW – Tare)		
Prefix (container alpha prefix)	Part of the identification of a container which refers to the 4 letters that proceed the 6 digit serial number and check digit	Detailed information about prefixes	
RAL color coding	RAL is a color matching system first established by Reichs-Ausschuß für Lieferbedingungen und Gütesicherung (German Institute for Quality Assurance and Certification) in 1927 . It is commonly used to select the color of the coating applied on shipping containers.		http://www.ralcolor.com/
Tare (Container)	Weight of an empty container.		

Shipper Owned Container (SOC)	A container owned or leased by the shipper – new or used – to transport goods. With SOCs, shipping lines are contracted to provide only the transport service. SOC is by opposition to COC.		
SPA-H	Superior atmospheric corrosion-resistant steel as defined by the Japan Iron and Steel Federation (JIS) Standard. Generally considered the Equivalent of COR-TEN®.	JIS website	www.jisf.or.jp/en/
Survey Report	Report established a by a surveyor after inspection with a view to documenting condition of the container and generally serving to establish whether the container is suitable for transportation or not.	Example of a Container Survey	
TCT	Timber Component Treatment. Quarantine regulations established by the Australian health ministry (AQIS = Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry). Includes detailed requirements for the treatment of container's wooden floors to avoid the proliferation of pests. Required for the containers to be able to transit through Australia	Australian Government department of Agriculture	http://www.daff.gov.au/biosecurity/import/cargo
TEU	Twenty-foot equivalent unit. Usually refers to a Standard (although could be special) container of 20 feet in length. Commonly used to express vessel capacity or throughput at container factories and ports.	Example of a 20	

TIR	Transports Internationaux Routiers (International Road Transport). An international harmonized system of Customs control that facilitates trade and transport whilst effectively protecting the revenue of each Country through which goods are carried. In order for containers to be able to transport goods under custom seal they need to meet TIR requirements.	IRU website	http://www.iru.org/en_iru_about_tir
UCIRC Criteria	Unified Container Inspection and Repair Criteria (UCIRC) is an International Chamber of Shipping guide available to be used for in-service and on/off hire inspections		
UIC	Union International des Chemins de Fer (International Union of Railways). Containers need to meet UIC requirements in order to be able to transport goods on the rail.	UIC website	http://www.uic.org/
WWT or Wind and Water Tight repair criteria	Criteria under which containers would literally be “Wind and Water Tight”. This commonly used criteria makes no reference to the quality of under-structure of the container and should therefore not be considered as safe for the transport of cargo unless it was explicitly confirmed that containers meet the CSC.		