

**ICSO**

International Container Security Organisation

Backgrounder: About ICSO

Solving an immediate and far-reaching problem...

It is estimated that the international shipping industry is responsible for the carriage of over 90% of the global trade in goods (1). In the US alone, of total imports and exports during 2004, over US\$520 billion was carried by containerised ocean cargo. This equates to approximately US\$1.43 billion worth of containerised goods moving through U.S. ports each day (2). Damage to the global economy from a terrorist incident at a major seaport is estimated to be as high as US\$1 trillion. (3)

...with a business-led solution

The ICSO (International Container Security Organisation) is founded by leading companies that believe in-transit intermodal freight container security can be quickly and dramatically improved. Their objective is to formulate a standardised approach for implementing proven technologies and processes for container security devices in combination with best practice recommendations to supply chain participants.

ICSO follows the model of other successful, business-led, self-regulated organisations designed to quickly implement standards for emerging technologies. Examples of this type of organisation include Bluetooth®, Wi-Fi®, EPC, Open Mobile Alliance and 3GPP.

Members of ICSO are highly qualified participants in today's global supply chain. The application of the members' expertise, combined with the extensive experience of the ICSO's President's achievements in the area of standards development for intermodal containerisation, make ICSO uniquely able to rapidly develop and rollout its standards.

The standards: what ICSO will address and how it will proceed

ICSO intends to assist in furthering and implementing the work of the World Customs Organisation (WCO), which one-year ago this week adopted its Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade, and to which 136 countries have so far acceded. ICSO will focus on defining standards for systems and devices that detect and report in-transit container intrusions and other irregularities.

The standards will also specify how additional sensor capabilities can be incorporated into the systems. Examples include radiation detection, changes of temperature and humidity, and changes in container contents. Finally, ICSO will create and publish standards detailing how the information technology systems will store data, transfer data between authorised parties, and ensure the security and privacy of business data.

ICSO commences work immediately upon its formation to define and recommend standards with groups of experts in relevant fields. It anticipates publishing its first standards in the early fall of 2006. Working committees will be formed around major components of the container security systems and devices.

Interactions with other standards and standard organisations

ICSO standards will be as compatible with existing and widely implemented technical and security standards when possible and feasible.

ICSO is independent, separate, and distinct from other standards bodies, including the ISO. ICSO is structured to be unlike typical standards development organisations that have broad-based responsibilities and diverse technical committees. ICSO is solely focused on the problem of in-transit freight container and cargo security to protect international commerce. Its members participate as individual entities. Its working committees will comprehensively address the need for security standards that span freight containers, electromechanical devices, and information systems. It believes that its simple structure will enable it to rapidly issue standards for container security systems and devices. It is also believed that development of standards for security systems is most appropriate for a more-closely held forum than one whose processes require broad disclosure of details, thus thwarting access to those details by criminals or terrorists.