



IMO Code of Safe Practice for Cargo Stowage and Securing (CSS Code)

The IMO CSS Code is in place to provide an international standard to promote the safe stowage and securing of cargoes. This Code was updated in December 2014 to include more graphics and figures to aid ship owners and operators meet the requirements set forth in the Code. In general the CSS Code covers the following topics:

- Safe cargo stowage and securing in such a way that the ship and persons on board are not at risk
- Persons commissioned to work with lashing/un-lashing of cargo should be properly qualified and trained
- The safe execution of securing cargoes depend on proper planning, execution, and supervision
- For planning purposes, the most severe weather conditions must be taken into account for cargo stowage and securing.

SUMMARY

Container lashing and un-lashing is a very hazardous, and physically demanding job that can lead to serious injury. Proper safety precautions including; situation awareness, communication between crew members, following procedures, proper PPE, and warm up/stretching prior to work are all measures that will help reduce the chance of injury associated with lashing/un-lashing activities. The IMO CSS Code also offers many helpful resources for ship owners and operators to address the proper stowage and securing of cargoes. The safety of the personnel performing the task of lashing and un-lashing the containers must remain at the forefront. The process of lashing/un-lashing containers must continue to be examined closely, and will hopefully adjust in the future to reduce the dangers associated with performing this type of job.

Lessons Learned and Corrective Actions

The MSRI near miss and injury database records associated with container lashing and un-lashing demonstrate the serious dangers associated with performing this job. Some of the lessons learned from reviewing these incidents include:

- Stowing equipment properly after job is finished to maintain a clean working area
- Any damaged equipment should be reported and fixed right away
- Clear communication and understanding of hand signals is important
- Continuous training on proper lashing / un-lashing process
- Proper PPE worn and available
- Reminders to workers to maintain situation awareness
- Warm up body with stretches before performing physical work