



Industry Groups Agree Common Action on Crucial Safety Issues

The coming together of five organisations with shared visions for the safety and security of global trade will take advantage of unified information and data sources to bring greater awareness and understanding of issues with the goal of producing preventative output.

21 March 2023

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed on 16 March 2023 by representatives of the five organisations:

- Cargo Incident Notification System (CINS)
- Confidential Human Factors Incident Reporting Programme (CHIRP)
- Container Owners Association (COA)
- International Cargo Handling Coordination Association (ICHCA)
- Ship Message Design Group (SMDG)

The participants have a commonality of purpose to create a framework for cooperation that enables each group to benefit from each other's activities in respect of their strategies in areas of joint interest. These will, in the immediate future concentrate on improved safety during the global transport and handling of goods that have the potential to cause injury to the workforce and/or damage to the environment and the goods themselves.

John Beckett, Chair of ICHCA commented, "This unique grouping of industry leaders has the potential to coordinate data, research and best practices across the broad spectrum of the international movement of cargo. A key goal is to create an awareness throughout the freight industry, amongst operators, regulators and policy makers as to practical and effective measures to improve safety."

A fundamental part of the group's output will be publications, an aim that is close to the heart of Deputy Chair of CINS, Dirk Van de Velde, "As an example of where immediate attention is required, container ship fires are high on the list," he said. "The combined knowledge, experience and database resource of the signatories to this MOU, managed in a coordinated manner, have massive potential to leverage change in safety processes. We will be publishing guidance on the treatment of lithium-ion batteries, among other cargoes, in the near future."

In search of practical changes that will alleviate such dangers, the MOU calls for coordinated efforts both on regional and international issues of common concern and engagement with relevant regulatory bodies including the IMO and other appropriate United Nations agencies.



Other stated aims include working together to initiate innovative worldwide surveys and studies that can assist with the furtherance of these organisations on behalf of their members and associates. There will also be sharing of research findings and publications to strengthen information exchange, while avoiding duplication of effort by pooling resources.

“ CHIRP Maritime is delighted to be part of the MOU. CHIRP Maritime will work with our partners to collect information on operational cargo-related accidents and incidents and share learning with the wider maritime community to promote best practices in the supply chain and reduce the number of cargo incidents on board ships and terminals” explained CHIRP’s David Watkins.

Photo Caption: Adam Parnell – Chirp, Dirk Van de Velde – CINS, John Beckett – ICHCA, Mark Lefebvre – CINS, Patrick Hicks – COA.

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About ICHCA International

Established in 1952, ICHCA International is an independent, not-for-profit organisation dedicated to improving the safety, productivity and efficiency of cargo handling and movement worldwide. ICHCA’s privileged NGO status enables it to represent its members, and the cargo handling industry at large, in front of national and international agencies and regulatory bodies, while its Technical Panel provides best practice advice and develops publications on a wide range of practical cargo handling issues.

Operating through a series of national and regional chapters, including ICHCA Australia, ICHCA Japan and plus Correspondence and Working Groups, ICHCA provides a focal point for informing, educating, lobbying and networking to improve knowledge and best practice across the cargo handling chain.

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