Bureau International des Containers
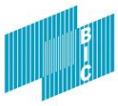et du Transport Intermodal

3 Million Containers, 500 Users:

BIC BoxTech Database Improves Efficiency and Simplifies SOLAS Compliance

The database of container technical details launched by the Bureau International des Containers (BIC) has now been loaded with the details of almost 3 million containers. With the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) 3-month relaxed enforcement period for new container weighing rules having come to an end, the database continues to grow.

Launched in July 2016, the BIC's BoxTech Technical Characteristics Database (TCD) supports shippers, carriers, leasing companies and container owners following the introduction of new SOLAS* mandatory container weight verification requirements. There is no charge for ocean carriers and container leasing companies to upload fleet details to the database, which now has more than 500 registered users around the world. With new container details added to the database each week, demand and interest in the service continue to increase.

The database makes fulfilling the recently introduced SOLAS requirements easier for Method 2 shippers, which is especially important now that the IMO's period of leniency has come to an end. However, in addition to those benefitting from automated access to tare weights for SOLAS VGM declarations, many users are also signing-up for easy access to container size and type, and other technical characteristics.

Simple to use, the BoxTech database provides fast, automated access to reliable data. It is available to use either via a website or an API, which provides the option to automatically integrate data into users' systems. Either method helps to improve efficiency by enabling shippers, forwarders, terminals, carriers and leasing companies, as well as rail operators, haulers and insurers, to avoid the unnecessary manual administration related to sourcing and capturing details such as container tare weight, size and payload.

"We developed the pilot database in close partnership with container owners, operators and shippers to ensure it would meet their needs and minimize disruption as the new SOLAS requirements came into force," says Douglas Owen, Secretary General of the BIC, the international organization supporting the container industry with 2100 container owner/operator members in 120 countries. "Now, four months on, we've found that there is a tremendous amount of interest in the supply chain which goes beyond SOLAS, both in terms of safety and improved efficiency."

Douglas Owen continues "In speaking with BoxTech users we've found that many aspects of the supply chain can be made more efficient when participants have easy access to data. They are telling us that having data in a single location makes great sense and that they want to move away from manual re-keying of data."

"We'll continue to work with our members and with shippers, forwarders and other relevant parties to ensure that the BoxTech TCD provides the best level of support – both for SOLAS-focused shippers and those signing-up for other reasons," he concludes.

The BIC supports the international container industry with multiple registration databases and provides the BoxTech Technical Characteristics Database on a non-profit and non-commercial basis.

For more information on the Boxtech Technical Characteristics Database visit www.bic-boxtech.org and view the FAQs.

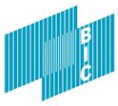For more information about the BIC, visit www.bic-code.org.

*SOLAS - International Maritime Organization "Safety of Life at Sea" Convention

ENDS

497 WORDS

About the BIC

Founded under the auspices of the International Chamber of Commerce in 1933 as a neutral, non-profit, international organization, the BIC today has over 2100 members in 120 countries. The BIC has played an important role in the growth of containerization, with its long-established and active role in the development of industry standards and its appointment by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) in 1972 as the industry's global container

prefix registry – a registry further endorsed by international customs conventions. Since 2013 the BIC has also operated the Global ACEP Database, under the guidance of the IMO. The BIC recently launched the BoxTech Technical Characteristics Database to help simplify compliance with SOLAS container weight requirements.

Today, the BIC code is the "international calling card" of nearly every container in international trade, allowing for proper identification and facilitating the crossing of borders without delay. With a mission to promote the safe, secure and sustainable expansion of intermodal transportation, the BIC enables professional dialogue amongst its members, standards bodies, governments and other industry organizations. The BIC holds official observer status as a NGO at both the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the World Customs Organization (WCO), and contributes regularly as an observer to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and other organizations.

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