

CTU Code

The use of freight containers, swap bodies, vehicles or other cargo transport units substantially reduces the physical hazards to which cargoes are exposed. However, improper or careless packing of cargoes into/onto such units, or lack of proper blocking, bracing and lashing, may be the cause of personnel injury when they are handled or transported. In addition, serious and costly damage may occur to the cargo or to the equipment.

The types of cargoes carried in freight containers has expanded over many years and innovations such as use of flexitanks and developments allow heavy, bulky items which were traditionally loaded directly into the ships' hold (e.g. stone, steel, wastes and project cargoes), to be carried in cargo transport units.

The person who packs and secures cargo into/onto the cargo transport unit (CTU) may be the last person to look inside the unit until it is opened at its final destination. Consequently, a great many people in the transport chain will rely on the skill of such persons, including:

- road vehicle drivers and other road users when the unit is transported by road;
- rail workers, and others, when the unit is transported by rail;
- crew members of inland waterway vessels when the unit is transported on inland waterways;
- handling staff at terminals when the unit is transferred from one transport mode to another;
- dock workers when the unit is loaded or unloaded;
- crew members of a seagoing ship during the transport operation;
- those who have a statutory duty to inspect cargoes; and
- those who unpack the unit.

All persons, such as the above, passengers and the public, may be at risk from a poorly packed freight container, swap body or vehicle.

Table 1: Summary of contents

Chapter		Referenced annexes		Related informative material ¹	
1	Introduction			IM1	Consequences of improper packing procedures
2	Definitions				
3	Key requirements				
4	Chains of responsibility and information	A1	Information flow	IM2	Typical documents related to transport
		A2	Safe handling of CTUs		
5	General transport conditions	A3	Prevention of condensation damages		
6	CTU properties	A4	Approval plates	IM3	CTU types
7	CTU suitability	A4	Approval plates		
8	Arrival, checking and positioning of CTUs	A4	Approval plates	IM4	Species of concern regarding recontamination
		A5	Receiving CTUs		
		A6	Minimizing the risk of recontamination		
9	Packing cargo into CTUs	A7	Packing and securing cargo into CTUs (supplemented with appendices 1 to 5)	IM5	Quick lashing guides
			Access to tank and bulk tops, working at height	IM6	Intermodal load distribution
		A8		IM7	Manual handling
				IM8	Transport of perishable cargo
10	Additional advice on the packing of dangerous goods				
11	On completion of packing			IM9	CTU seals
12	Advice on receipt and unpacking of CTUs	A5	Receiving CTUs	IM10	Testing CTUs for hazardous gases
		A9	Fumigation		
13	Training in packing of CTUs	A10	Topics for consideration in a training programme		

¹ Available at www.unece.org/trans/wp24/guidelinespackingctus/intro.html.