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Title	IMDG Code 2016 / SUPPLEMENT / Appendix / MSC/Circ.506/Rev.1
Effective Date	1-1-2012
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Note	Incorporating Amendment 35-10

MSC/Circ.506/Rev.1 of 10 January 1990

CONTAINER PACKING CERTIFICATES/VEHICLE PACKING DECLARATIONS

1 The regulations governing the carriage of dangerous goods by sea are contained in chapter VII of the 1974 SOLAS Convention, as amended. Part A of chapter VII regulates the carriage of dangerous goods both in packaged form and in solid form in bulk. Regulation VII/1.3 prohibits the carriage of such cargoes in ships engaged on international voyages except when carried in accordance with the requirements of part A of chapter VII.

2 Regulation VII/1.4 requires that each Contracting Government issue, or cause to be issued, detailed instructions on safe packing and stowage of dangerous goods which include the precautions necessary in relation to other cargo.

3 The provisions of part A of chapter VII are supplemented by the IMDG Code adopted by the Organization by resolution A.81(IV), and the relevant sections and related parts of Appendix B of the Code of Safe Practice for Solid Bulk Cargoes (BC Code) adopted by the Organization by resolution A.434(XI), as have been or may be amended by the Organization's Maritime Safety Committee.

4 Information on the status of adoption and implementation of the IMDG Code is regularly disseminated through an MSC.2 circular. *

* Refer also to chapter 7.9 of the IMDG Code.

5 Regulation 5 of part A of SOLAS chapter VII regulates documentation. The shipping documents to be prepared by the shipper shall include, or be accompanied by, a signed certificate or declaration that the shipment offered for transport is properly packaged and marked, labelled or placarded, as appropriate, and in proper condition for transport.

6 The requirements for shipping documents are explained in the IMDG Code. Subsections 12.3 and 17.7 of the General Introduction to the Code recommend that, when dangerous goods are packed or loaded into a freight container or vehicle, the persons responsible for packing or loading the goods into the container or vehicle should provide a container packing certificate/vehicle packing declaration, the details of which are described in the Code. In addition, the container/vehicle/unit identification number(s) should be indicated.

7 The Maritime Safety Committee has been informed that members of the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) had reported that, in a number of ports, some of which are located in countries which had advised the Organization that they had implemented the IMDG Code, it is difficult and often impossible to obtain container packing certificates. This creates great difficulties for ship operators and, where the flag State regulations require strict compliance with the IMDG Code, the cargo has to be refused if the certificate cannot be obtained. However, the most serious threat facing all ship operators is the risk that dangerous goods may be packed or loaded into a container which, because no packing certificate has been issued, may not be placarded to indicate the danger of its contents. Experience has shown that such a container can remain undetected during transport and may therefore be incorrectly stowed, thus creating a potential danger to the ship. Such a container also poses a serious threat to the safety of inland transport, container terminals and ports.

8 The Organization has also been informed that in a number of accidents involving containers packed or loaded with dangerous goods no information on their contents had been available.

9 Where there is reason to suspect that a unit into which dangerous goods have been packed or loaded is not in compliance with the provisions of the IMDG Code, or where a container packing certificate/vehicle packing declaration is not available, the unit should not be accepted for shipment.

10 The Maritime Safety Committee has agreed that an amendment to regulation VII/5 of SOLAS should be developed by the Sub-Committee on the Carriage of Dangerous Goods to include the provision of container packing certificates/vehicle packing declarations.

11 The Maritime Safety Committee has also decided that, in the interim, Governments should be urged to review their national legislation and take such measures as they consider necessary to require container packing certificates and vehicle packing declarations to be provided by the packer of the unit.

12 To assist Governments in the introduction, at national level, of appropriate legal requirements that such certificates and declarations are provided, the relevant extracts from the General Introduction of the IMDG Code are annexed *.

* The amended texts of subsections 12.3 and 17.7 of the General Introduction to the IMDG Code are not reproduced here.