



# Container Deck Operations Vessel and Port Charter

**Working together for safer ports  
and skilled port workers**

---

**Find out more  
[portskillsandsafety.co.uk](http://portskillsandsafety.co.uk)**

**One voice for Ports Skills and Safety**

**This Charter outlines the safety commitments for visiting shipping lines and for UK ports to ensure the health and safety of all persons working on container deck operations.**



Your ship becomes the designated workplace for stevedores as soon as they board.

---



We all have a legal and moral duty to protect the health and safety of our stevedores and crew while at work.

---



It is essential that working conditions on board each ship do not adversely impact the safety and health of personnel onboard.

---



By ensuring safe working conditions on your ship, we can significantly reduce the likelihood of injury and ill health during work activities.

---



By ensuring a safe working environment, we will commit to work your ship safely and efficiently, without incident.

---



We will report any issues promptly and work with you to implement timely solutions and corrective actions.

---



When your ship visits our ports, you must ensure there is a safe working environment for all personnel by following the key safety expectations described in this booklet.

---



By working together, we can make UK ports safer places for your crew and for our stevedores.

**Thank you for your support and compliance with these key commitments to health and safety.**



## Shipping Line Expectations



## Stevedore/Port Commitments

### Reporting of Vessel Defects and Action

- Commitment to resolve vessel issues identified at UK Ports and recorded in our UK Vessel Condition Monitoring systems.
- Report vessel and equipment defects promptly to Supervisors.
- Report defects in vessel condition monitoring system to be raised with shipping lines for corrective action.

### Plan For Safe Loading or Discharge

- Plan to load or discharge the ship in a way that reduces safety and health risks to stevedores.
- Planning should ensure different sized containers are loaded to suit the size of vessel and minimise risks to personnel during handling.
- Load designated areas of vessel with same size containers being unloaded. Avoids double handling of lashing gear, increases efficiency.
- All vessel crew are authorised (and expected) to interrupt any operation that appears to be unsafe.
- Ensure adequate resources to work each vessel safely and efficiently.
- Follow vessel loading plan, unless this directly impacts safety of personnel.
- All stevedores are authorised (and expected) to interrupt any operation that appears to be unsafe.
- Provide our stevedores with all required Personal Protective Equipment to work safely.
- Minimum 2 box rule, lashers to spreader.
- Never walk under suspended loads.

### Ensure Safe Access and Egress

- Properly rigged/netted gangways, <55° to horizontal. Safe Working Load visible.
- Non-slip, correctly maintained walkways and gantries, free from obstructions.
- Ensure good housekeeping on access routes and gantries, no trip/slip hazards.
- Only connect/disconnect reefer cables once lashing operations are complete.
- Lashing gantries setup to allow stevedores to place lashing bars without standing on or leaning over or through handrails.
- Maintain 3-point contact on ladders.
- Report all housekeeping issues to Vessel Master and crew or resolve issues, where safe to do so.
- Maintain good housekeeping during work.
- Ensure access ways are not blocked with equipment or create tripping or potential dropped object hazards during work.
- Stevedores must not stand on handrails and are discouraged from leaning over or through handrails, where possible.



## Shipping Line Expectations



## Stevedore/Port Commitments

### Ensure Functioning Vessel Lighting

- Vessel lighting must be functional and maintained to enable stevedores to move around the ship and lash safely.
- Report poor lighting and utilise alternative lighting (cranes) where available to enable safe work.

### Mooring Line Safety

- Mooring lines to be tended to regularly to ensure vessel does not shift and impact the gantry/crane operator.
- Stay clear of tops of gangways and other potential mooring line snap back areas.
- Stay out of line of fire.

### Secure Hatch Covers

- Hatch covers must be painted high visibility colours and maintained for ease of operation.
- Ladder access hatch covers must be free of loose equipment, closed and secured or barriers erected.
- Secure openings with safety chains or bars, where present, to prevent falls.
- Close ladder access hatch covers after use to secure openings or replace barriers as appropriate.
- Use safety chains or bars, where present, to prevent falls from height.
- Never work near open hatches or adjacent to an open hatch.

### Use of Collective and Personal Fall Protection

- Protective handrails must be fitted on all walkways, lashing gantries and areas where there is a risk of falling.
- Handrail top must be solid; approximately 1100 mm high. Mid rail of handrails should preferably be solid. If constructed of wire, then these must be taught.
- Handrail toe boards must be fitted to minimise potential dropped objects.
- Vertical metal ladders must be properly maintained, free from grease/other contaminants, ideally with safety hoops.
- Test integrity and security of handrails by giving them a firm shake.
- Take personal Fall Protection Equipment (FPE) to Quayside and inspect before use.
- Confirm FPE is certified, in good condition, without modifications and compatible components.
- Use FPE where there is a risk of a fall from height and no other fall protection exists.
- Use FPE with 100% tie-off and attach to designated anchor points.



## Shipping Line Expectations



## Stevedore/Port Commitments

### Safe Handling of Equipment

- Lashing gear must be properly maintained and lubricated (e.g. turnbuckles).
- Lashing gear must be free from damage to enable safe operation and handling.
- Twistlocks must be properly maintained, with suitable, freely operating toggles.
- Ensure twistlocks are secured during lifting so they don't fall.
- Secure tools/equipment using tethers or holsters to minimise dropped objects.
- Twistlock poles transported via quay crane, not gangway.

### Safe Storage of Equipment

- Designated stowage must be available to hold lashing gear for each deck.
- Keep walkways clear of gear until needed.
- Ensure accessible, nearby storage for hatch being lashed. Minimise need to manually handle gear long distances.
- Use lashing gear for designated decks. No manual handling of gear long distances.
- Ensure good housekeeping, keep walkways free of unused lashing gear and other equipment.
- Minimise potential dropped objects.

### Lashing Inspection by Crew

- Allocate crew member to inspect lashing as completed to ensure suitability.
- Notify Port Management promptly where changes are required.
- Prompt resolution of lashing issues, as and when notified by shipping line.

### Clear Communication Between Personnel

- Communicate loading/unloading expectations clearly to port and stevedores.
- Communicate known issues or hazards clearly with stevedores to ensure they are fully aware before work starts.
- Communicate issues or additional hazards clearly to Vessel Master and Crew.
- Where additional hazards exist, conduct dynamic risk assessments and mitigate.
- STOP work immediately where safety of personnel is at risk.



**Port Skills & Safety Limited**

First Floor, 30 Park Street,  
London, SE1 9EQ

020 7260 1790

[portskillsandsafety.co.uk](http://portskillsandsafety.co.uk)

May © 2022