



Bureau of
International Recycling

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Metal theft from containers - Update: BIR is alarmed in light of increasing crime rate

Over the last weeks, more BIR member companies have been reporting cargo losses due to theft and fraud, particularly with containers in transit in certain parts of the world. These reports show that the problem of metal theft from containers, which was extensively discussed during a special workshop at BIR's 2012 World Recycling Convention in Rome, is still ongoing.

There have been several cases of containers being tampered with en route, often on their way to and from the terminals, with growing evidence of organised crime involvement. Sophisticated theft techniques seem to make it possible to open certain container types whilst leaving the seals intact. The losses are only discovered once the container arrives at the consignee's warehouse.

Following a special agreement with the ICC International Maritime Bureau (IMB) (see BIR News dated 10.08.2012), BIR is in regular contact with this organisation to identify solutions that IMB anti-fraud services could provide to BIR membership.

Both BIR and IMB would like to further encourage companies to report such losses to the IMB. This will help define the scale of the problem and identify possible trends / similarities. This pooled information could well reveal a much larger criminal activity that could then not be easily ignored by the authorities.

In addition, we strongly recommend shippers to consider using more robust container seals and 'smart box' container technology in an effort to reduce their exposure to such losses.

It is difficult to quantify the damage, but reported cargo losses due to theft and fraud, throughout the supply chain, have been estimated to reach an amount of up to USD 200 billion.

The issue of container losses affecting BIR members has featured in a number of IMB publications and as articles on the www.icc-ccs.org (<http://www.icc-ccs.org>) website. Increased reporting of losses will ensure greater coverage in the future!

Losses from containers should continue to be reported to imb@icc-ccs.org (<mailto:imb@icc-ccs.org>). This information will be treated confidentially.

IMB recommends that BIR members post a warning on their website.



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