

INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

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Freight containers — Coding, identification and marking

*Conteneurs pour le transport de marchandises — Codage, identification
et marquage*



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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the member bodies casting a vote.

International Standard ISO 6346 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 104, *Freight containers*, Subcommittee SC 4, *Identification and communication*.

This third edition cancels and replaces the second edition (ISO 6346:1984), which has been technically revised.

Annexes A, B, C, D, E and F form an integral part of this International Standard. Annex G is for information only.

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Freight containers — Coding, identification and marking

1 Scope

1.1 This International Standard provides a system for the identification and presentation of information about freight containers. The identification system is intended for general application, for example in documentation, control and communications (including automatic data processing systems), as well as for display on the containers themselves.

The methods of displaying identification and certain other data (including operational data) on containers by means of permanent marks are included.

1.2 This International Standard specifies:

- a) a container identification system, with an associated system for verifying the accuracy of its use, having:
 - mandatory marks for the presentation of the identification system for visual interpretation, and
 - features to be used in optional Automatic Equipment Identification (AEI) and electronic data interchange (EDI);
- b) a coding system for data on container size and type, with corresponding marks for their display;
- c) operational marks, both mandatory and optional;
- d) physical presentation of marks on the container.

1.3 The terms “mandatory” and “optional” in this International Standard are used to differentiate those ISO marking provisions which shall necessarily be fulfilled by all containers from those which are not required of all containers. The optional marks are in-

cluded to further comprehension and promote uniform application of the optional mark. If a choice has been made to display an optional mark, the provisions laid down in this International Standard relating to the mark shall be applied. The terms “mandatory” and “optional” do not refer to requirements of any regulatory body.

1.4 This International Standard applies to all freight containers covered by International Standards ISO 668, parts 1 to 5 of ISO 1496, ISO 8323 and should, wherever appropriate and practicable, be applied:

- to containers other than those covered by the International Standards mentioned in clause 2;
- to container-related and/or detachable equipment.

NOTE 1 Containers marked according to previous editions of ISO 6346 need not be re-marked.

1.5 This International Standard does not cover temporary operational marks of any kind, permanent marks, data plates, etc. which may be required by intergovernmental agreements, national legislation or nongovernmental organizations other than ISO.

NOTE 2 Some of the major international conventions whose container-marking requirements are not covered in this International Standard are as follows:

- *International Convention for Safe Containers* (UN/IMO 1992);
- *Customs Convention on Containers* 1956 and 1972;
- *Customs Convention on International Movement of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention)* 1959 and 1975.

It should not be assumed that this list is exhaustive.

This International Standard does not cover the display of technical data on tank containers (see ISO 1496-3), nor does it, in any way, include identification marks or safety signs for items of cargo which may be carried in freight containers.

2 Normative references

The following standards contain provisions which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of this International Standard. At the time of publication, the editions indicated were valid. All standards are subject to revision, and parties to agreements based on this International Standard are encouraged to investigate the possibility of applying the most recent editions of the standards indicated below. Members of IEC and ISO maintain registers of currently valid International Standards.

ISO 668:—¹⁾, *Series 1 freight containers — Classification, dimensions and ratings.*

ISO 1496-1:1990, *Series 1 freight containers — Specification and testing — Part 1: General cargo containers for general purposes.*

ISO 1496-2:—²⁾, *Series 1 freight containers — Specification and testing — Part 2: Thermal containers.*

ISO 1496-3:1995, *Series 1 freight containers — Specification and testing — Part 3: Tank containers for liquids, gases and pressurized dry bulk.*

ISO 1496-4:1991, *Series 1 freight containers — Specification and testing — Part 4: Non-pressurized containers for dry bulk.*

ISO 1496-5:1991, *Series 1 freight containers — Specification and testing — Part 5: Platform and platform-based containers.*

ISO 8323:1985, *Freight containers — Air/surface (intermodal) general purpose containers — Specification and tests.*

ISO 10374:1991, *Freight containers — Automatic identification.*

3 Identification system and its associated marks

3.1 Identification system

The identification system shall consist only of the following elements, all of which shall be included:

- owner code: three letters;
- equipment category identifier: one letter;
- serial number: six numerals;
- check digit: one numeral.

3.1.1 Owner code

The container owner's code shall consist of three capital letters, shall be unique and shall be registered with the International Container Bureau (BIC — Bureau International des Conteneurs), either through an affiliated national registration organization (see annex G) or directly with:

Bureau International des Conteneurs
167, rue de Courcelles
75017 Paris
FRANCE

3.1.2 Equipment category identifier

The equipment category identifier consists of one capital letter of the Latin alphabet as follows:

- U for all freight containers;
- J for detachable freight container-related equipment;
- Z for trailers and chassis.

3.1.3 Serial number

The container serial number shall consist of six Arabic numerals. If the series of significant numerals does not total six, they shall be preceded by sufficient zeroes to make up six numerals. (For example, if the series of significant numerals is 1234, the serial number is 001234.)

1) To be published. (Revision of ISO 668:1988)

2) To be published. (Revision of ISO 1496-2:1988)