

# GSF SECRETARIAT REPORT

Week 19: Monday, 10 May 2021

*Confidential to GSF members*



## ***This week ...***

*GSF intervenes to bring realism to the pest contamination debate. Plus, upcoming meeting dates for your diaries.*

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### **Pest Contamination of Cargoes and Containers**

The Secretary General represented GSF at a two-session meeting of the IPPC's Sea Containers Task Force on Tuesday and Wednesday 27-28 April. This working group of government experts on plant health is developing new global recommendations on how the spread of invasive plant and animal pests via intermodal containers can be controlled. Some members of the group want to introduce a new international phytosanitary standard, similar to that requiring wood packaging material to be heat-treated, which would require every container movement to be inspected and certified pest-free prior to loading on board a vessel. This proposal has persisted despite concerns expressed by industry representatives that the idea was impractical and hugely expensive. GSF has likened the potential impact of this proposal to the Verified Gross Mass requirements introduced in 2016.

GSF joined with the other industry representatives on the Task Force - the World Shipping Council and the Container Owners Association - in presenting a joint position that urged the Task Force to consider more focussed requirements based on assessment of the threat in each trade lane and the cost-effectiveness of the measures proposed. Where mandatory measures were justified GSF called for use and acceptance of communications technology and data management systems to track and trace containers in high-risk trades and products and so reduce compliance cost. Our intervention succeeded in establishing this approach as an alternative to mandatory certification and will now be taken forward as part of the Task Force's work programme.

This is a welcome outcome, but it will need continued effort by GSF and the other industry representatives to maintain and develop this more pragmatic approach. The potential economic losses from invasive pests are huge and some governments remain committed to more restrictive controls. GSF also recognises that many of the businesses that would be most affected by outbreaks of invasive pests are themselves significant shippers of agricultural commodities and natural resource products. There is a big incentive for shippers to address this problem with or without the support of governments and the rest of the shipping industry and GSF will monitor this work closely and keep members informed of developments. The next meeting takes place on 19 May.

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### **Joint Statement on Pest Contamination by Cargo Integrity Group partners**

Ahead of the Task Force meeting, GSF joined with its partners in the Cargo Integrity Group in agreeing [a joint position paper](#) on measures to avoid infestation of containers and cargoes by invasive pests. The statement sets out the shared position of the five organisations comprising CIG, namely the Containers Owners Association (COA), the International Cargo Handling Co-ordination Association (ICHCA), the TT Club of mutual insurers and the World Shipping Council (WSC). It formed the basis of the interventions made by GSF at the Sea Containers Task Force meeting and will be reviewed by GSF's Policy Council on 18 May.

**The CIG statement may be shared with your members.**

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### **GSF is 10 Years old in 2021**

GSF reaches its 10th birthday on 11 June, the date in 2011 when the inaugural Board meeting was held. To mark the occasion the Board and Secretariat have been working on some bold new projects to make GSF ready for its next decade. Look out for further announcements in the next few weeks and keep Wednesday 30 June 2021 clear in your diaries!

## GSF Calendar: May-July 2021

All meetings and events are being held on-line

Date	Meeting	Topics	Further details
<b>Thursday 13 May</b>	<b>North American Sea Container Initiative (NASCI) meeting</b>	Pest contamination avoidance; awareness raising projects	Secretary General participating.
<b>Tuesday 18 May 11:00 UK</b>	<b>GSF Policy Council</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Container shipping market developments</li> <li>• Pest contamination avoidance</li> </ul>	Agenda and papers will be sent to all GSF members
<b>Thursday 19 May</b>	<b>IPPC Sea Containers Task Force (SCTF) meeting</b>	Development of mandatory measures for the avoidance of pest contamination	Secretary General participating
<b>Wednesday 26 May 11:00 UK</b>	<b>GSF Container Shipping Market Review Panel</b>	MDS Transmodal review of market data for Q1 2021	Contact GSF secretariat to participate
<b>Tuesday 1 June 11:00 UK</b>	<b>GSF/MDS Transmodal Container Shipping Market Quarterly Review publication date</b>	Data and commentary on recent container shipping market conditions	Copies will be sent to all GSF members
<b>Thursday 17 June</b>	<b>GSF Board</b>	GSF governance & finances	Board members only
<b>Tuesday 29 June 13:00 UK</b>	<b>IATA Digital Cargo Conference</b>	Use of interactive tracking devices in air cargo	Secretary General speaking; GSF members welcome to participate; awaiting further details from IATA.
<b>Wednesday 30 June 11:00 UK</b>	<b>GSF 10th anniversary members' meeting</b>	A look back on 10 years of campaigning for shippers and how GSF will look in the future	Further details to follow

### GSF Membership Fees

Members are respectfully reminded to ensure membership fees for 2020-21 are paid by 30 June, the end of GSF's financial year. If you have any queries about your invoice or you require a further copy, please contact the Secretariat urgently. Your support and co-operation is much appreciated.

The GSF Secretariat  
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