



Joint ITCO–BIC Press Release

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ITCO and BIC Bring Instant Tank Container Onboarding to Ocean Carriers

Carriers can verify tank containers instantly, online or by API, using live specifications and inspection certificates in BoxTech, replacing email checks that can take up to 30 minutes per tank. Ocean carriers are now invited to join tank container operators in a pilot running in 2027.

ANTWERP, October 29, 2026 —

The International Tank Container Organisation (ITCO) and the Bureau International des Containers (BIC) announced today at the ITCO members meeting in Antwerp that the ITCO Digital Committee has reached a major milestone: live tank container data is now available in BoxTech. ITCO members Stolt Tank Containers and Bertschi have uploaded several hundred units, including inspection certificates, to demonstrate how ocean carriers can access the information they need to automate onboarding of tank containers quickly and easily.

Ocean carriers are now invited to join a pilot program, starting in early 2027, to prove the value of the new approach in day-to-day operations.

From email chains to instant verification

Before accepting a tank container for shipment, an ocean carrier must first confirm it is safe for transport, by requesting the specifications and inspection certificates. Today, that onboarding process is largely manual: details are requested and exchanged by email, then checked and entered into carriers' systems by hand. Some carriers estimate it takes up to 30 minutes per tank container, with additional time for the tank operator to gather and provide the information.

With tank container data held in BoxTech, verification becomes instant. Carriers can check a tank container online in BoxTech or receive the information by API directly into their own systems, with no email exchange and no rekeying. The approach is designed to replace the current manual process with a single, trusted source of data.

A joint ITCO–BIC initiative

The initiative was developed jointly by the ITCO Digital Committee and BIC. The committee brings together tank container operators, lessors, and service providers to harmonize the hundreds of attributes used to describe tank containers and to develop the ITCO Digital Twin. The first use case it has identified is efficient onboarding of tank containers into carriers' systems, based on a core set of attributes. Later phases will extend the Digital Twin into a full digital passport for each tank.

"The current manual booking and onboarding process has been a pain point for our members and for the carriers: inefficient and time-consuming. By working with BIC to share ITCO Digital Twin data for tanks through a neutral, trusted platform, our Digital Committee has shown what the tank container industry can achieve together. We now invite ocean carriers to join the pilot and help make automated onboarding the norm," said William Leigh-Pemberton, Chairman of the Advisory Board, ITCO, and Strategic Development Director, Bertschi.



“For tank operators, every new booking has meant gathering the same specifications and inspection certificates and sending them out again, one tank at a time. Agreeing on a core set of 14 attributes opens the way to something much simpler: operators upload their data to BoxTech once, keep it current with inspection certificate uploads, and every carrier can instantly access the information upon booking. Our first uploads showed how straightforward that can be, and we look forward to proving it at scale with carriers in the pilot,” said Shane Robertson, a member of the ITCO Digital Committee and Director Digital & Transformation, Stolt Tank Containers.

“Carriers have consistently brought up tank containers and shipper-owned containers as an area for improvement, with carriers having to chase inspection information via emails, open and check attachments, and key in information. With ITCO members sharing data through BoxTech, carriers can check a tank container instantly. This means a serious efficiency gain but also gives carriers consistent, up-to-date inspection data supporting their safety checks,” said Douglas Owen, Secretary-General of BIC.

Free to use, open to all tank operators

BoxTech is free for both data owners and users. It holds data on over 15 million containers from 900+ container owners and operators and is used by 6,000+ registered users worldwide. Tank container operators can upload fleet data by API, SFTP, or web, and control which fields they share.

Ocean carriers interested in joining the 2027 pilot, and tank container operators wishing to upload their fleets, can contact dow@bic-code.org or hicks@itco.org.

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About ITCO

Established in 1998, the International Tank Container Organisation (ITCO) represents the international tank container industry to the public and to governmental bodies, with more than 170 members worldwide. ITCO's mission is to represent and strengthen the tank container industry by promoting tank containers as the safest, most efficient, reliable, and sustainable intermodal transport equipment for the global movement of essential liquids, powders, and gases.

www.international-tank-container.org

About BIC

BIC (Bureau International des Containers) was founded in 1933 under the auspices of the International Chamber of Commerce as a neutral, non-profit, international organization. BIC promotes safety, security, standardization, and sustainability in the container supply chain. As the ISO 6346 registration authority for container owner codes, BIC has published the BIC Code Register since 1970. BIC also operates BoxTech (bic-boxtech.org), the free global container database holding data on 15.3M+ containers; the joint BIC–SMDG Facility Code API and the Global Container Geofence Library, providing harmonized identification codes and geofences for terminals, depots, and other container facilities in 160 countries; and the Global ACEP Database, in support of IMO requirements. BIC holds observer status at the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the World Customs



Organization (WCO), and consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). www.bic-code.org

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