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On course for container code

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THE international maritime industry is on course to publish a code of best practice for the container shipping industry by the end of this year.

This was confirmed in London on Monday evening by Peter Hinchliffe, marine director of the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), working on the document with the World Shipping Council.

The work is in response to two recent casualties – the Annabella and MSC Napoli – which highlighted the problems of overweight containers and the problems they cause for vessels and crews.

Hinchliffe said he wanted a voluntary code to be adopted by the IMO and the maritime industry. He told a seminar that he hoped the code would enable the industry to be self-regulating and able to influence legislation should that not prove impossible. The first draft is now available. “I am confident we can produce something this year,” he added, and said that the December meeting of IMO’s maritime safety committee was his target for publication. The code is likely to call for the weighing of containers pre-shipment, but the industry is eagerly waiting suggested for how weights will be validated.