

# «Well strapped, safely transported»

The legal requirements for securing cargo in transport are increasing all the time. In order to ensure that cargo in transport is adequately secured, also in ambiguous cases, STI Group has called on the advice of an expert. The reason is that between the haulier, the supplier and the customer, there are often ambiguous situations.

STI Group invests significant sums in a modern and reliable infrastructure. This includes transport and packaging where questions of safety and protection have a high priority. STI Group called on the advice of Richard Knaus, an experienced expert on securing goods in transit. «If the cargo has not been adequately secured, or not at all, there is a risk for the goods, the vehicle and others. Although it always takes time and costs money to secure cargo, there are simple means and methods with which a lot of safety can be achieved», says Richard Knaus during the training in Steinach (Switzerland).

## Inadequately secured cargo and its consequences

According to estimates by the «Association of German Insurers (GDV)» inadequately secured cargo could account for about 13% of road accidents in heavy goods traffic. «The most frequent excuse given for inadequately secured cargo is lack of time or lack of strapping material», explains Richard Knaus. Because in road transport, the acceleration and braking processes as well as avoidance manoeuvres or driving around bends causes significant forces to act on the cargo. Once a cargo is no longer secure serious accidents usually ensue.

## Choosing the right packaging

For decades STI Group has been cultivating close contact and cooperation with its customers. The coated and usually heavy and expensive components have to be delivered in excellent condition but also rapidly and on time. When the packaging is suitably designed – by the customer and the supplier– it is possible to avoid damage and/or loss. The packaging should not only protect the product from corrosion but also safely absorb forces occurring during transport. As STI Group is an intermediate supplier, the company relies on components being delivered in suitable packaging by its customers.

## Improving safety

Making cargo secure also means that one has to familiarise oneself with the legal and technical regulations as well as the laws of physics. This includes knowledge about the stability of transport vehicles and the strength of strapping. There are many examples that show that with relatively simple means and small changes, it is possible to significantly increase safety. STI Group secures its goods in transit based on three



criteria: the cargo should be as close-fitting as possible, it should be placed on anti-skid mats and it should be fastened with a suitable number of straps. In this way it is possible to reduce the risk to a minimum. STI Group is intent on making the subject of cargo security an issue of on-going high priority and, together with its customers, making every effort to ensure that cargo arrives at its destination safely and undamaged.

Richard Knaus  
expert on cargo security.



## «Cargo security is a mandatory requirement»

**STI Group puts quality first – and that includes the safety of HGV transport. For this reason, the company called on Richard Knaus who is an independent expert in the field. In the interview below he comments on a subject that unfortunately is often overlooked.**

**STI Group: Mr Knaus, cargo security is often seen as an overblown subject, but a necessary chore. What is your reaction to such comments?**

**Richard Knaus:** It is imperative to secure cargo; it is clear from transport checks and accident statistics that more must be done. Cargo safety is something everybody owes themselves and all other road users. And the route to correct cargo safety is actually relatively simple – although it is important to understand the basic principles.

**When securing cargo, what aspects should one focus on?**

Goods should always be loaded on to the vehicle in such a way that they make close contact with the cargo area – particularly in the direction of travel, as this is where the strongest dynamic forces occur.

**What is the most effective method for securing cargo?**

The simplest method for securing cargo would be to fully load the vehicle bed with goods. However, in many cases this is not possible because the size of the cargo and the vehicle dimensions do not match 100%. Where it is not possible to

closely pack the goods, gaps must be filled with pallets or air bags and the cargo must be secured with appropriate strapping and methods. What it is important to know: anti-skid materials such as anti-skid mats are useful in that they make strapping more effective. And – just like ratchet sets – they are inexpensive to buy.

**What strapping systems do you recommend?**

There are different systems available: straps, strapping wires and strapping chains; which one you choose depends a lot on the respective application. There are two important points to observe as a matter of principle. If the cargo has sharp edges, it is imperative to use edge guards. Secondly, any strapping used must be free from damage and have the appropriate label. The label should contain information such as the securing force of the respective strapping device.

**Who is responsible and who is liable in the case of an accident?**

Responsibility and liability are quite closely connected. The basic rule is: the security of the cargo is not only the vehicle holder's responsibility and that of the dispatcher, the driver and also the loader and the supplier. All parties will be called upon.

**How should be STI | Hartchrom's approach when it comes to unusual loads?**

In the case of unusual loads there are often misunderstandings and differing opinions. In such cases it is worth involving an independent expert.

**The police are stepping up checks on the safety of cargo. This often involves delays. What should drivers do?**

Today, major police control campaigns on motorways are carried out with a lot of manpower, comprehensive technical equipment and expertise. When we are talking about secure cargo, we are dealing with the laws of physics rather than opinions. The best approach is to be cooperative and, if requested, carry out additional safety measures. «

### Key points for securing cargo

1. Close-pack the cargo
2. Use strapping for fixing
3. Use anti-skid mats
4. In uncertain cases, carry out calculations
5. Apply the VDI 2700 guidelines  
(VDI = Association of German Engineers)

### Further information

www.ladungssicherungskreis.de  
www.tis-gdv.de  
www.containerhandbuch.de  
www.lasiportal.de  
www.zurmittelberechnung.de  
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