What is claimed is:

1. A computer-implemented method for controlling access to a first computer system that controls operations of an intermodal shipping container, the method comprising:

generating a secret value at the first computer system that controls operations of the intermodal shipping container;

sharing the secret value with associated computer systems;

choosing a time length for validity;

computing a derived key based on the secret value; and

controlling remote access to the first computer system that controls operations of the intermodal shipping container based on the derived key and a unique identifier associated with the first computer system, wherein the unique identifier is a serial number associated with the intermodal shipping container.

2. The computer-implemented method of claim 1 wherein:

the associated computer systems include computer systems operated by a common entity.

3. The computer-implemented method of claim 1 or claim 2 wherein:

the derived key is generated using a key derivation function.

4. The computer-implemented method of any preceding claim, further comprising:

validating one or more certificates received from a remote computer system; and

transmitting a session token to the remote computer system, in the case where the one or more certificates are validated.

5. The computer-implemented method of claim 4 further comprising:

granting access to the remote computer system based on receiving the session token.

6. A computer-implemented method for gaining remote access to a first computer system of any one of claims 1-5, the method comprising:

carrying out the method of any one of claims 1-5;

accepting the derived key and the unique identifier as an input at a remote computer system;

computing a passkey based on the derived key and the unique identifier;

transmitting the passkey to the first computer system;

receiving a session token from the first computer system; and

establishing a secure session with the first computer system using the session token.

7. The computer-implemented method of claim 6 wherein:

transmitting the passkey to the first computer system further comprises transmitting one or more certificates to the first computer system.

8. The computer-implemented method of claim 7 wherein:

the one or more certificates include a customer certificate and a mobile certificate.

9. The computer-implemented method of claim 7 or claim 8 wherein:

the one or more certificates are received from a certificate-granting authority upon proof of authorization.

10. An intermodal shipping container system comprising:

an intermodal shipping container having a first computer system that controls operations of the intermodal shipping container; and

an access control system for controlling access to the first computer system, the access control system comprising: a processer; and memory;

wherein the processor is configured to perform a method as defined in any preceding claim.