

Just when you thought it was safe to get back on the water

We have all been battling through the quagmire which is International Logistics for many recent months and now, just as we thought things could not get any worse, carriers have indicated that they are planning a reduction in the container free-time allowance on the quay. This is being introduced at North European ports, including the UK, despite the desperate issues with container transport.

In general, free-time is a period between five and seven days after the vessel's arrival at the port, before demurrage and quay rent charges are incurred by importers. We are led to believe that more of the carriers are looking to reduce this to five days, cancelling any contracted agreements already in place for any extended free time.

The sudden move can be described as a 'kick in the teeth' for UK importers, especially when taking into account the current national HGV driver shortage crisis which often delays container transport by 3 weeks or more.

The motive to reduce free demurrage times may seem a logical incentive to turn containers around in Europe more quickly, meaning empties get back to Asia faster. However, for the UK market, it is effectively just adding more revenue to carriers, as the transport issues make it near impossible to meet the current free-time periods.

Meanwhile, container transport delays caused by the driver shortage, port congestion and sporadic restitution issues are continuing to disrupt collections and deliveries.

As always, the team here at Beckchoice will continue to work extremely hard to provide solutions to mitigate the any impact to all our customers. We will continue to monitor the situation and will provide specific updates as and when available.

Thank you for your understanding and as ever Beckchoice will keep you up to date with any further developments.

With kind regards

Team Beckchoice