

## Acute shortage of empty 20'/40' containers for exports from the Hamburg Antwerp Range

Dear valued Customers,

Recently we are witnessing an acute shortage of empty 20'/40' containers for exports from the Hamburg Antwerp Range.

Furthermore, this severe shortage has also a negative impact on the quality of the empty equipment due to limited focus on maintenance and repair. We experienced quite a number of rejected containers in the last weeks.

The following aspects drive the present situation:

- Overall, very strong demand for sea freight since third quarter 2020.
- Overall longer processing time for all supply chains in combination with congested infrastructure. This holds true especially for US Westcoast and US Inland. There are still 33 container ships waiting for berthing in Long Beach. Equipment is kept in this trade and not being relocated for Transatlantic shipments to Europe and consequently being available for the Europe – Asia trade.
- European lockdown and consequences of Brexit (strong imports prior to Brexit and problems of evacuating empty containers to Mainland Europe).
- High Equipment demand and super high rates ex Asia – motivates carriers to return equipment empty to Asia instead of getting loaded in the hinterland.

We expect that this shortage will further increase due to blank sailings around Chinese New Year. This will even worsen the lack of empty containers in the hinterland of North Western Europe towards the end of the first quarter and beginning of the second quarter.

We presently work on solutions to keep our operational performance on a high level and to avoid extra costs wherever possible.

Nevertheless, ocean carriers are implementing “Equipment Imbalance Surcharges” for all trades and all container types to cope with the increase of costs related to the management of the empty container logistics.

We continue to evaluate all market options and will revert to you with individual solutions for your business.

If you have any questions regarding your shipments, please get in touch with your known contact person in the Leschaco Group.

**Kind regards**

**Your LESCHACO Customer News Team**

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