

Hamburg, 09.04.2014

**Customer information: Shipment and Traffic situation in Hamburg**

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

Due to the current situation, we, as your Hamburg Freight Forwarder, would like to inform you about the actual traffic situation in the Hamburg area.

As you may have gathered from the media in the last few weeks as well as terminals and shippers an extraordinary situation has developed in the Hamburg port, just as it has for many other European and Asian ports. Due to severe weather conditions vessels have been delayed for several days. This caused the average retention time for an export container to double in the last few months. Accordingly up to 25% of storage capacity has been lost.

In some cases this congestion leads data processing to allocate the incorrect storing position.

In addition the maximal stacking height on the yards had to be taken into consideration.

That increased the routes for "Stevedag equipment (cranes, van carriers)" extremely. Much more handlings than usual are necessary, which are very time and cost intensive.

All this leads to a loss of productivity.

This situation caused longer waiting periods for import and export truck-handling, in some cases even to the complete stop of reception for export-containers. The holding time for our trucks therefore has grown extremely in the last few weeks. Because of this not all transfer orders were handled in due time.

At the moment it is not possible to say when the delays for cargo handling and resulting delays at the terminals will end. Extreme waiting periods for shipments will have to be expected.

The public road traffic will become more congested in the coming weeks. The reason for this is the maintenance and renewal of the public road-system – and not just in the Hamburg area.

As much as these measures for the public and economical transport are needed and welcome, they do put pressure and reduce business capacity at the moment.

In practice the following four measures will considerably obstruct traffic in the Hamburg port as well as the Hamburg area for the following weeks (years):

- Restoration of all lanes of the **Elbtunnel** (already started), with closing of two tunnels respectively
- Restoration of the **Köhlbrandbrücke**, with closing of one lane per direction (from March through mid-October for the next 3 yrs.)
- Development of the **A7 north of the Elbtunnel** and building of 3 noise protection top covers (May 2014 to approx. 2022)
- Restoration and development of the **A7 south of the Elbtunnel**, including a new motorway junction A7/A26 approx. till 2016

In addition several smaller, short-term building-sites will be coming, especially for bridges in the Hamburg port area.



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This will lead to considerable extensions of the average transportation time in local and long-distance traffic, as well as port haulage, which in turn will lead to an increase of costs per transport process.

Possible additional costs for resulting higher operation processes will be individually checked and billed as separate position on invoices. (Additional costs do not include waiting periods at terminals and depots).

Nonetheless we will try and keep these costs at a minimum, respectively do not charge them at all.

The current traffic situation does not always allow us to give a guaranteed and reliable disposition of vehicles, because truck demurrage often directly influence official driving- and resting hours.

We herewith inform you preventively that we can not be held responsible or liable for any resulting delays in haulage of any shipments.

We will keep you informed about further developments on these subjects. Please do not hesitate to contact us, if you need any further information.

Irrespectively of the current situation the Port of Hamburg is and in the future will remain our unique "Gateway to the World"!

With regards

Alfons Köster & Co. GmbH

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