

Notice to Shippers

Date:
08/12/2017

Subject:
Europe - South Africa v.v. Trade
SAECS Service - Situation in South African Ports

Dear Clients,

As advised in our Notice to Shippers dated 12th October 2017 the port of Durban was hit on the 10th October 2017 by a severe tropical storm which caused excessive damage to the port and container terminal infrastructure. Although the port became operational again after a few days the container terminals are still only operating at about 40-50% of their capacity. Numerous container gantries are non-operational and loading and discharging productivity levels are at exceptionally low levels. Consequently there is substantial port congestion with vessels waiting on average 10-12 days for a berth.

These delays in the berthing of the SAECS vessels in Durban and the increased port stay times have created serious challenges to maintain the named day weekly service. To compensate for the lost time and ensure weekly sailing both from South Africa and Europe two additional vessels have been temporarily introduced into the service. Also it has been necessary to implement various operational contingencies such as port omissions or even turning vessels at Coega/Port Elizabeth and discharging all Durban containers there for final on-carriage overland or on a following vessel.

Cont.:

All these measures have been implemented at substantial cost to DAL and its SAECS service partners to ensure for you our clients that the consequences of the prevailing situation in Durban are minimized.

Unfortunately however, it is not expected that Transnet Port Terminals (TPT) - the sole operator of all container terminals in South Africa will be able to rectify the situation in Durban quickly and radically improve the productivity levels to acceptable international standard levels before the early part of 2018.

Even prior to the storm which hit Durban in October the year 2017 has been operationally a very difficult one with unusually bad and inclement weather periods along the South African coast with very high winds or strong under water currents and swells delaying or prohibiting vessel operations in all ports. During this period we made continual efforts to maintain the service schedule regularity and reliability via operating the vessels at maximum (uneconomical) speeds or omitting ports.

Please rest assured that we will continue all efforts to maintain our service reliability and regularity but unfortunately we cannot change the situation in Durban. Therefore until the situation improves and vessels can berth as on arrival in Durban as scheduled there will be extended transit times for all containers destined for this port. Furthermore there will be an ongoing requirement for port omission contingencies either in South Africa or Europe to compensate for the delays incurred in Durban.

We ask for your understanding and appreciation that we are doing all possible to minimize the effects on the overall service and any inconveniences for you.

Kind regards,

DAL Trade Management Hamburg