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Ocean Updates

Managing Freight Spend the Main Concern as Red Sea Crisis Drags On

Managing freight spend is the biggest concern for shippers and forwarders, as the supply chain volatility driving ocean rate hikes appears to have no end in sight.

In Xeneta's mid-year ocean freight update, CEO and co-founder Patrik Berglund said: "Carriers were expecting to record massive financial losses in 2024, but the skyrocketing spot market will see them deliver a full-year profit, which seemed improbable six months ago."

According to a Xeneta poll, 'managing freight spend' is the biggest concern for shippers and forwarders this year, 46% listing it as a primary challenge.

Xeneta chief analyst Peter Sand said: "It's the one thing that is the mother of all that has to do with maritime supply chains and logistics – freight spend and the disruption that may or may not come about."

Read more in an [article from The Loadstar](#).

International Business/Government

ICC Unveils New Digital Trade Tool to Streamline Trading Under FTAs

The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) has launched a new digital trade tool, ICC Genesis, offering a new way to trade within the framework of free trade agreements (FTAs) by streamlining the invoice self-declaration process.

The tool has been developed by the World Chambers Federation (WCF) at ICC and eight member chambers of commerce, to simplify exporting under FTAs.

With ICC Genesis, exporters have clear guidance to complete the procedure to digitally certify declarations via chambers who act as a trusted third party between governments and businesses.

To benefit from FTAs, exporters must self-certify the originating status of their goods, a process for which no regulations or obligations are currently in place. During this procedure, rules of origin are applied to determine if goods are eligible for duty-free or reduced duties under FTAs. This assures importers and customs that the shipments they are receiving are at a lower risk of exposure to fraud, ensuring smoother customs checks and reducing legal liability.

Mistakes made during this process, due to the complexity of the rules of origin, can lead to fines and longer holding periods at customs clearance, costing businesses time and money during international transactions.

FTA numbers are rising, with over 360 currently in force worldwide, lowering barriers to international trade and opening up markets for businesses worldwide. Yet, the lack of standardization and low levels of knowledge around the invoice self-declaration procedure under FTAs can be a costly obstacle for companies looking to import or export, especially smaller businesses.

The simplified certification process offered by ICC Genesis is an oath of trust between exporters and importers, paving the way for a new era of trading digitally.

Read more in a [press release from the ICC](#).