



GSA JOINT STATEMENT

5th of December 2019

GSA supports ESC position regarding the intention of the Commission to extend the Block Exemption Regulation for another four years. This extension will bring negative consequences for the market.

As indicated in the press release issued by the European Shippers' Council, the European Commission's decision to extend the BER is not sufficiently supported by relevant data. No credible link has been established with the current market drivers for such a decision. GSA, for that reason, fears a negative impact on business conditions in the years to follow.

At the same time, for GSA, it is obvious that the service delivered by container lines is still not up to standard. Even the most essential parts of the contract, such as departure and arrival times, are often not respected (the situation with blank sailings, in general, has not improved).

The contract of carriage should be seen as a legal agreement which should be binding for partners in the supply chain. For the moment, the market power, especially for smaller shippers, is not sufficient to successfully enter into a court procedure. The extension of the BER, certainly, will not improve the situation.

As the European Commission has issued legal rules to protect travellers taking air and rail transport, a comparable protection should be considered for shippers and specially for cargo, which is the trigger which moves the economy.

GSA would prefer setting up a dialogue with the maritime container lines instead of extending the present legal provisions. To enable such a dialogue to take place, a shorter extension could be considered.

GSA will be an active participant in the survey and is willing to provide any further clarification of its position.

For more information, please contact Joost Sitskoorn at J.Sitskoorn@evofenedex.nl.