

Anti-terror laws could give freight industry a fright

Many companies involved in international trade, including freight forwarders, lack awareness of anti-terrorist laws, says software developer AEB International in a new white paper. AEB, which has just developed a suite of screening systems, points out that all companies that transfer goods to or from or even within the EU are required by law to check if embargoes or licensing requirements apply and that goods, persons, companies and countries are not subject to trade restrictions or laws such as the EC Dual-Use Regulation or the US Export Administration Regulations.

AEB's general manager, Claire Umney points out that while the ultimate responsibility lies with the shipper to comply with the law, freight forwarders do have some responsibility. "Forwarders do need to carry out basic checks of who they are doing business with and while forwarders are not responsible for obtaining export licences, they should be aware of what the goods are and whether they are liable to be checked."

Some of the companies that forwarders routinely do business with overseas, including other forwarders, shipping lines and

even banks may also be subject to sanctions.

She pointed out, moreover, that the Chief customs system is integrated with the Export Control Organisation's SPIRE system; Chief identifies licensable goods and relays a message to SPIRE. Goods held by customs for checking could delay other shipments if they are part of a consolidation.

Umney added: "As a forwarder, as an absolute minimum you should have knowledge of who you are dealing with and a good knowledge of embargoes and sanctions."

There have been cases of freight companies being fined for breaking export control laws, the most prominent being DHL which was fined \$9.4m in 2009 after it was accused of violating US sanctions against Iran, Syria and Sudan, one of the largest fines ever levied under anti-terrorism laws. Part of DHL's problem was its failure to keep adequate records of thousands of shipments.

In another case, UK-based freight forwarder Christopher Tappin has found himself at the centre of an extradition case for breaking US sanctions against Iran, although in this case the forwarder was also

acting in a procurement as well as a freight forwarding role.

Forwarders also need to be mindful of that the EU's Authorised

equipment (which could be used for torture).

AEB's software is designed to address the fact that the lists

Forwarders need to check who they are doing business with says AEB's Claire Umney



Economic Operator scheme also requires firms to carry out due diligence checks in this area.

Umney pointed out, too: "The US is becoming a lot more aggressive in its approach" and could and did pursue companies that had any US connection, whether or not the transaction itself had involved that country. Companies also had to be mindful that it was not just weaponry that could be the subject of trade embargoes; so could many electronics or even Police

of 'denied parties' and of goods subject to embargo are very long and growing - manual checking is time-consuming and may not be foolproof. AEB can screen all addressees, shippers and commodity codes, and is available either as software as a service or through a 'compliance engine' that sits on the company's server. It is also available in a SAP version. Lists are updated nightly and it also provides the necessary record keeping.

Forwarders only for new air charter specialist

Two former Chapman Freeborn directors have set up a new air cargo charter specialist pledged only to deal

with freight forwarders. Neo Air Charter has been launched by former director of business development for Chapman

Freeborn Airchartering Group, Adnan Duran as managing partner.

He will be joined in January, by the current managing director of Chapman Freeborn Germany, Stefan Kohlmann as the new company's joint managing partner, bringing over 20 years' experience in the air charter business.

Neo is based in Frankfurt, and is already planning to open offices at other strategic charter gateways and has also established service partners in Singapore and US, which will be added to in the coming months.

Adnan Duran said: "We have

fully recognised and respect the role of the freight agent as an essential link in the supply chain. For that reason, we will only accept enquiries and instructions from freight forwarders and logistics intermediaries. We believe that is a unique proposition in air charter. We believe our promise of commercial neutrality will really win the support of freight agents."

He adds that Neo is subject to stringent German company law and has solid financial backing.

It can offer any type of aircraft from a Cessna to the An-225, to or from anywhere in the world with offices manned around the clock.

NEWS ROUNDUP SHIPPING

Malaysian International Shipping Company (MISC) says it plans to exit the container liner business by the middle of 2012 after running up losses of \$789 million over the past three years. It told the Kuala Lumpur stock exchange that it could not justify investment in larger vessels at a time when the industry was plagued by overcapacity and operators were struggling to stay profitable. It also warned that the exit process would involve the withdrawal from trade alliances and liner agency agreements. MISC had already left the Europe Far East trade in January 2010 to focus on intra-Asian business. The operator added that it would in future concentrate on its energy shipping and transport business.

Zim Line and MSC have signed a swap agreement for the Europe-Med trade. The lines said it would give an extended range of direct calls, improved transit times, increased reefer capability and better reliability.

From mid-November, Zim's Asia-Med-Europe (AME) service and MSC's Israel Express Service will swap space in the North Europe-East Med trade, enabling both Zim and MSC to offer a full range of direct calls in all major North European ports including Felixstowe, Rotterdam, Antwerp, Hamburg and Le Havre.

Zim Line hosted a customer delegation from the Palestinian Authority for the first time on 17 November. Clients visited Zim's offices and the port in Haifa, led by Shai Babad, manager of Zim's Israel and Near East Are. The group also included Muchamad Abu Iyin, chairman of the Palestinian Importers and Exporters Association and Avi Nudelman, managing director of the Israel-Palestine Chamber of Commerce. As well as shipping matters, the participants discussed the possibilities of expanding economic activity between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

CSAV has introduced a new direct service between Ecuador and North Europe. It sails from Guayaquil, Balboa and Cristobal, Bremerhaven to Rotterdam, Antwerp, Balboa and back to Guayaquil. The service will be operated in cooperation with MSC using six 4,200teu vessels.

Van Uden Ro-Ro will resume regular departures from Immingham and Northern Europe to the Libyan ports of Benghazi and Misurata in November, said the Dutch-based operator.

The line will accept all types of ro-ro cargo for Libya, including cars, trucks, trailers, high & heavy equipment, project cargo and mafi trailers. The service also calls at Alexandria, Beirut, Latakia, Limassol, Mersin and Djen-Djen (Algeria).

Swansea-Cork ferry operator has been placed in interim examinership - the Irish equivalent of Chapter 11 - and has suspended services, although the company's management have pledged to resume operations in April next year. The company said that it had been hit by high fuel costs, which had made winter operations unviable. However, the decision to suspend the operation has attracted considerable criticism as local councils have invested around €0.7m in the operation.

Stena Line's £80 million Loch Ryan Port and terminal facility in Cairnryan was officially opened by Scottish First Minister Alex Salmond and Stena Line chairman Dan Sten Olsson on 25 November. The new 27 acre port is the Scottish terminal of a new route to Northern Ireland, which will be serviced by the Stena Superfast VII and VIII, the largest ferries ever to sail between the two countries.

Irish Sea ro-ro freight operator Seatruck launched the second in a series of four new vessels at FSG Flensburg Yard, Germany, on 28 October. The new ferry was named Seatruck Power by Niamh McManus, wife of Surefreight's Brian McManus, a long-established supporter of unaccompanied freight service. Seatruck Progress was launched in August and will enter service on the Liverpool-Dublin route in December to be joined in mid-February by Seatruck Power. The remaining new vessels are scheduled for delivery during the first half of 2012 and are likely to be deployed on Seatruck's key Irish routes.



Adnan Duran: Plans more offices at strategic gateways