

“Life is ten percent what happens to you and ninety percent how you respond to it.”
Charles Swindoll

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EU Gives Conditional Nod to Maersk’s Acquisition of Hamburg Süd

The European Commission has cleared the proposed acquisition of Germany’s liner shipping company Hamburg Süd by Danish container shipping giant Maersk Line, subject to conditions.

The clearance is conditional upon the withdrawal of German carrier from five consortia on trade routes connecting (i) Northern Europe and Central America/Caribbean, (ii) Northern Europe and West Coast South America, (iii) Northern Europe and Middle East, (iv) the Mediterranean and West Coast South America and (v) the Mediterranean and East Coast South America, the EU Commission said.

The reason behind such decision is that the merged entity would have faced insufficient competition after the transaction on the said routes.

“Competitive shipping services are essential for European companies and for the EU’s economy as a whole. The commitments offered by Maersk Line and HSDG will maintain a healthy level of competition to the benefit of the very many EU companies that depend on these container shipping services,” **Commissioner Margrethe Vestager**, in charge of competition policy, said.

Maersk Line submitted commitments to the European Commission on March 20 aimed at removing potential competition related impediments to its acquisition of shares in Hamburg Süd.

As informed earlier, Maersk expects to close the transaction by the end of 2017.

The Danish container shipping company inked the sale and purchase agreement for the acquisition of the German carrier on March 14.

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New eastbound London-China rail service

The number of rail services between China and Europe that target airfreight customers increased again yesterday when a series of other companies came together to launch an eastbound operation.

The first of the new services left DP World's London Gateway terminal yesterday as it set off on a three week journey that will cover 7,500 miles before arriving in Yiwu in the Zhe Jiang province in eastern China.

Products on board include soft drinks, vitamins, pharmaceuticals and baby products.

This inaugural export train bound for China departed just under three months after the first ever import train from China arrived in the UK.

The service is part of China's One Belt, One Road programme that aims to revive the ancient Silk Road trading routes to the West.

After passing through the Channel Tunnel into France and Belgium, the DB Cargo locomotive will call in Duisburg, Germany, before InterRail pulls the cargo through Poland, Belarus, Russia and Kazakhstan before the train crosses to Yiwu, China.

Container operator OneTwoThree Logistics is overseeing the transportation and booking of cargo for the UK/China rail freight trains, in conjunction with Yiwu Timex Industrial Investment Co, which is running the service with China Railway Container.

At the recent World Cargo Symposium, Seabury Group senior vice president Marco Bloemen said that rail freight services were **"no longer carrying volumes that can be ignored"**.

Seabury figures show that rail volumes have increased at a compound annual growth rate of 65% between 2013 and 2016 and last year reached 511,000 tonnes.



Cyclone Debbie hits Queensland farmers hard, hundreds of millions in crops lost

Canegrowers around Proserpine and Mackay, and the horticulture industry at Bowen — including tomato, capsicum and eggplant producers — have been the hardest hit.

The Queensland Farmers Federation (QFF) said early figures show actual crop damage to Bowen's vegetable industry is about \$1billion, accounting for about 20 per cent of the season's crop.

Supermarket prices are expected to rise in May or June, as the region supplies most of Australia's tomatoes and capsicums over winter.

Initial estimates show the value of the sugarcane crop lost is about \$150 million, industry group Canegrowers has said.

"While that is a huge blow to our members, and the cyclone has shattered some family homes and left significant damage to sheds and other farm infrastructure and machinery, we are hearing no reports of serious injury," Canegrowers CEO Dan Galligan said.

About 90 per cent of the cane at Mackay and Plane Creek, and 100 per cent at Proserpine was damaged.

This is going to have a significant impact at the Grocery stores in months to come.



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Creepy crawly cargo caught out

Australian Border Force (ABF) officers in Melbourne x-rayed an international mail consignment from Northern Europe on 14 March and saw there were reptiles, and consulted biosecurity staff from the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources.

The consignment included:

- Three ball pythons, also known as royal pythons
- two hognose snakes
- six vipers, identified as Wagler's temple vipers— a venomous pitviper species native to South-East Asia
- two Colombian giant tarantulas
- five Mexican redknee tarantulas
- two Brazilian salmon pink tarantulas— considered to be the third largest tarantula in the world
- four Asian forest scorpions



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