

Maersk considers suspending all container bookings in and out of Russia

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On Monday Maersk said that it was considering suspending all container bookings in and out of Russia as a response to the Western economic sanctions currently being imposed.

Maersk handles about one in six containers shipped worldwide, said that it was focusing on safeguarding types of containers and cold chain operations that included “important goods” such as groceries and pharmaceuticals. Further information was expected from Maersk later on Monday night. Maersk operates container shipping routes to St Petersburg and Kaliningrad in the Baltic Sea, Novorossiysk in the Black Sea, and to Vladivostok and Vostochny on Russia’s east coast. About 2.5% of its total revenue was generated from Russia-related shipping movements. Maersk had already halted all port calls in Ukraine and had shut its office in Odessa.

Meanwhile, one web site reported that container ship **Vayenga Maersk** (IMO 9775751), which as of yesterday morning February 28th was at anchor off Rotterdam on its scheduled shuttle between Rotterdam and St. Petersburg, had been refused entry to the Port of Rotterdam due to it having Russian cargo on board. The ship had arrived on February 27th. Report is as yet unconfirmed and there has been no official statement on the matter from Maersk or the Port of Rotterdam, so this could be a matter of miscommunication or misunderstanding.

Maersk Co had previously said that “as the situation in Ukraine continues, AP Moller-Maersk is keeping a close eye on developments and assessing the best options for our customers and their cargo. Giving you the best ability to manage your supply chain is of the utmost importance to us and we are working to give you everything you need to run your global logistics in these circumstances.” Maersk said that, to prevent congestion in key ports, it was moving cargo to and from Ukraine to ports with less yard density, that still possessed the required reefer plugs to retain perishable commodities.

Maersk noted that it had announced a series of relief packages and said that some customers were already making use of these packages. It said that it strongly encouraged all customers with cargo destined to or originating from Ukraine to discuss these possibilities with Maersk “in the interest of keeping operations as smooth as possible”.

Among the options are free Change of Destination (COD) services and no cancellation fees on bookings to and from Ukraine.

2018-built, Denmark-flagged, 34,882 gt Vayenga Maersk is owned and managed by Maersk AS of Copenhagen, Denmark. It is entered with Britannia Club on behalf of Maersk AS.