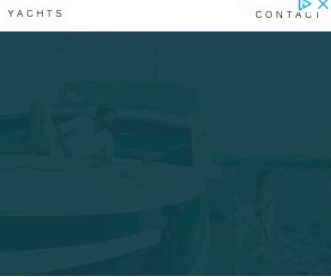


Logistics players assured of space by chartering own ships

TWO new carriers on the route have chartered small containerships to carry their own cargo and tap the lucrative spot market in what Alphaliner sees as a possible trend in the making



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TWO new carriers on the route have chartered small containerships to carry their own cargo and tap the lucrative spot market in what Alphaliner sees as a possible trend in the making.

Italian logistics company Rif Line has chartered two 1,100-1,200 TEU ships for around a year to ply between Asia and the port of Civitavecchia, near its headquarters in Rome. The 1,118-TEU

Iberian Express is chartered for 11-13 months for US\$35,000 a day.

The 2008-built feedermax had loaded in Taicang and Shanghai and, according to vesselsvalue.com. The forwarder is offering a second sailing from China this week, by the 1,200-TEU Cape Flores, fixed for a 12-month charter at \$39,000 a day.

Alphaliner said Rif Line intended to offer two sailings a month from Asia to the Italian port.

'The newcomer is paying a very high price for these small ships, but current spot rates between Shanghai and Genoa stand at nearly \$14,600 per FEU, according to the Shanghai Containerised Freight Index. This means a westbound trip could generate \$7.3 million of revenue if 500 FEU of spot cargo is carried,' said the Paris-based container shipping consultant.

Charter hire for the round trip would eat around half of this revenue and, after port and bunker costs, Suez Canal tolls and agency fees, the forwarder might struggle to turn a profit. However, it is investing in greater supply chain certainty, which its customers would regard as priceless.

The second newcomer on the route identified by Alphaliner is EShipping Gateways, a joint-venture between OOCL Logistics and JD Logistics (part of e-commerce retailer JD.com), which has already offered several sailings from Asia to North Europe.

The first EShipping Asia-North Europe sailing was by the 3,674-TEU Lyme Bay, which arrived at Hamburg from China on 23 June. Hamburg-headquartered liner agency PWL Group represented EShipping for the vessel's call.

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