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NEWSLETTER

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HORMUZ TRAFFIC HALTS AFTER ARMED INCIDENTS

Vessel movements through the Strait of Hormuz stopped less than 24 hours after Iran announced reopening, as armed confrontations forced ships to retreat, reported London's Lloyd's List. Iranian gunboats opened fire on at least three vessels, ending a brief resumption of traffic. Two ships were struck, including the 15,254-TEU CMA CGM Everglade, which sustained container damage after being hit by a projectile. No fire was reported and the crew remained safe. CMA CGM has yet to confirm the incident. The French liner had prepared three box ships - CMA CGM Everglade, 2,592-TEU CMA CGM Manaus, and 3,500-TEU CMA CGM Diamond - to exit the strait following the reopening. Data from Sea explorer showed the vessels remained in the Persian Gulf at the time of reporting. The situation escalated further on Sunday, 19 April, when the US Navy seized an Iranian-flagged container ship in the Arabian Sea near the strait. US Central Command said warnings were issued for six hours before US Marines boarded and took control after the crew ignored repeated instructions.

(Source: Shipping Gazette)

ZIM EMPLOYEES STRIKE AS HAPAG MERGER ADVANCES

Workers at Israeli carrier Zim have gone on strike over labor terms tied to the company's US$4.2 billion sale to Hapag-Lloyd, reported Fort Lauderdale's Maritime Executive. About 900 employees walked out during talks on a new collective bargaining agreement. Union officials said they feared Hapag-Lloyd planned early retirements for long-serving staff rather than retaining them. The strike has reportedly shut down Zim's local operations in Israel. The merger deal will see Hapag-Lloyd and Israeli investment fund FIMI acquire all of Zim and delist it from the NYSE. Hapag will keep most global operations and chartered-in tonnage, while FIMI will retain Israel-linked routes and owned tonnage to preserve Zim's national defense role. The sale has been controversial, with critics warning the Israeli-owned component will be too small to prosper. It is the second strike since the deal was announced. In February, workers staged a warning strike that ended with a $300 million severance package for 500 staff.

(Source: Shipping Gazette)

GREEN SHIPPING WANTS WIND SEEN AS FUEL PATHWAY

Wind propulsion should be formally recognized as a fuel pathway by the UN's International Maritime Organization (IMO) rather than treated as energy efficiency, argued Diane Gilpin, founder and CEO of Smart Green Shipping, reported Athens' Safety4Sea. Ms Gilpin said wind directly propels vessels and should be classified alongside fossil fuels and alternative energy sources in calculating the attained GFI. She added that the current designation as "energy efficiency" misrepresents its role and undermines adoption. Smart Green Shipping's Fast Rig system has recently been validated under ITTC (international tonnage certificate), giving shipowners and financiers confidence in performance predictions. Ms Gilpin said this "finance-grade" accuracy de-risks uptake and enables new wind-as-a-service business models.

(Source: Shipping Gazette)

COSCO LAUNCHES NORTH AFRICA EXPRESS SERVICE TO LIBYA

Cosco Shipping Lines has introduced a new North Africa Express service linking Chinese ports directly with Libya, reported London's Container Management. The service operates every three weeks with three vessels of about 4,300 TEU each. The 80,000 deadweight tonne box-shaped general cargo and bulk carriers are owned by Cosco Shipping Development and operated by Cosco Shipping Bulk, drawing on assets from across the wider Cosco group rather than the liner division's own fleet. The rotation calls at Ningbo, Shanghai, Nansha, Port Said, Benghazi and Misurata before returning to Qingdao. Libya has had limited direct container services from the Far East, with most cargo historically routed via Port Said transshipment. Direct calls at Benghazi and Misurata mark a significant change in access for Libyan importers.

(Source: Shipping Gazette)

CHINA CONTAINERIZED FREIGHT INDEX

ROUTE	LAST PERIOD 2026/4/17	THIS PERIOD 2026/4/24
CCFI	1211.08	1233.76
(JAPAN SERVICE)	949.58	937.19
(EUROPE SERVICE)	1583.41	1571.36
(W/C AMERICA SERVICE)	871.05	883.39
(E/C AMERICA SERVICE)	1008.05	1011.93
(KOREA SERVICE)	581.61	599.24
(SOUTHEAST ASIA SERVICE)	926.59	945.02
(MEDITERRANEAN SERVICE)	2020.32	1993.08
(AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND SERVICE)	937.52	988.65
(SOUTH AFRICA SERVICE)	1187.76	1173.94
(SOUTH AMERICA SERVICE)	758.88	762.29
(WEST EAST AFRICA SERVICE)	933.71	957.92
(PERSIAN GULF/RED SEA SERVICE)	1683.1	1964.74

EUROPEAN TRUCKERS PROTEST SURGING FUEL PRICES

Truckers across Europe have staged protests against soaring fuel costs as war-related inflation squeezes the industry, reports London's S&P Global. Transport unions mobilized drivers in Ireland, the UK, France, Germany and Italy as diesel prices in the European Union climbed to EUR2.169 (US$2.56) per liter, up 33 per cent since the Middle East conflict began, according to the International Road Transport Union. Paolo Montrone of Kuehne + Nagel said small operators were most exposed, with thin margins leaving livelihoods at risk. The IRU warned that 2026 growth forecasts now appear unlikely, citing a fragmented and cost-intensive operating environment. Italian truckers plan a nationwide strike from April 20 to 25, while Irish protests last week blocked oil supplies and the port of Galway. Demonstrations also hit Northern Ireland, Germany and France, where unions demanded stronger relief measures. Governments have responded with tax cuts and subsidies, but industry groups say support remains insufficient.

(Source: Shipping Gazette)

GULF FREIGHT RATES SURGE AS WAR RISKS MOUNT

Sea freight rates on Gulf trade lanes have jumped sharply since the Middle East crisis began, driven by war risk costs and rerouting, reports Mumbai's Indian Transport & Logistics News.
Container rates from Shanghai to Jebel Ali have risen from about US$1,800 per box in January to more than $7,000 by late March, according to Freights. The surge reflects higher insurance premiums, surcharges and costly detours around the Strait of Hormuz. Lockton said marine war risk premiums for voyages through Hormuz have climbed 200-300 per cent, with some extreme cases rising more than tenfold. Premiums now stand at 3-5 per cent of vessel value, compared with 0.2-0.5 per cent before the conflict. Transport Intelligence reported premiums jumped from 0.2 per cent to nearly one per cent within 48 hours of escalation, adding about $800,000 to a large tanker voyage. Some ships linked to the US, UK or Israel faced premiums of 5-7.5 per cent or were refused cover.

(Source: Shipping Gazette)

UK ENACTS MARPOL ON EMISSIONS AND FUEL SAFETY

The UK has implemented amendments to MARPOL Annex VI covering ship efficiency, alternative fuel safety and engine emissions, reported Saint Petersburg's Port News. The Maritime and Coastguard Agency said the update tightens requirements for the Ship Energy Efficiency Management Plan, mandating more detailed reporting under the IMO Data Collection System. It also introduces a revised compliance format for fuel oil consumption monitoring, replacing the 2022 guidelines with the 2024 version. Amendments to the IGF Code, effective since January, expand mandatory technical provisions for vessels using gases or low-flashpoint fuels. These cover ship design, fuel containment, bunkering, fire safety and onboard control systems, and formalize the use of high manganese austenitic steel in cryogenic fuel tanks for LNG-fueled ships. Changes to the NOx Technical Code, due to take effect on 1 September 2026, tighten certification procedures for engines undergoing major modification or seeking compliance with different emission tiers.

(Source: Shipping Gazette)

MSC REVAMPS ITS ASIA-US EAST COAST NETWORK

Mediterranean Shipping Co (MSC) will rework its transpacific services from May to improve reliability and direct China links into US east coast ports, reported New York's Journal of Commerce. MSC's Empire Service will drop Qingdao, focusing on Shanghai, Ningbo and Busan. On the US side, Jacksonville and Miami will be replaced by Norfolk and Port Everglades. The new rotation begins May 27 with the 6,178TEU MSC Leo VI departing Shanghai. Qingdao will be added to the Amberjack service into the US southeast, while calls to Yantian and Xiamen will be removed. Norfolk will be replaced by Jacksonville. MSC said the adjustments will improve transit times and stability, starting May 20 from Qingdao. The Emerald service from Southeast Asia will drop Kaohsiung in favor of Xiamen, providing direct access to major US east coast ports. The new rotation begins May 18 with the 7,000TEU Zim Topaz sailing from Singapore.

(Source: Shipping Gazette)

CHINA PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

China offices will be closed from May 1st, 2026 to May 5th, 2026 for Labour Day Holiday, and resume work on May 6th, 2026.
(Qingdao, Shanghai, Ningbo, Xiamen, Shenzhen)
Hong Kong office will be closed from May 1st, 2026 for Labour Day Holiday, and resume work on May 4th, 2026.