

Update: Inflation, The Ocean Shipping Reform Act & the Shipping Industry, Continued...

As of July 18, exporters and shippers can now file complaints to the Federal Maritime Commission (FMC) regarding demurrage and detention fees. While this not the first time that shippers have been provided the option to submit complaints to the FMC, it is significant because we are starting to see the trickle-down of promises implied under OSRA. These complaints are specific to any violations made under 46 USC 41102 and/or 41104(a), including obtaining transportation at less than applicable rates, operating contrary to agreement, practices in handling property, retaliation and other discriminatory actions, and general common carrier provisions like unreasonably refusing cargo space accommodations when available. This is exciting news for exporters who have been denied carriage in the past in favor of bringing in more imports. Arvest's own Treasury Management Regional Sales Manager, Julie Simmons, reported speaking to an employee at Harbor Island's Duwamish East Waterway in Washington about the containers at the port shortly before July 18. When she asked if the containers were full and waiting to be shipped, she was informed that the majority of them were empty. *My question now is: "Were the empty containers on their way out, or are we already seeing positive change from OSRA before demurrage and detention complaints were specifically being targeted?"* I'll be keeping an eye on the situation and update you accordingly.

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