



## NVOCC enters China-Europe trades with BBC vessel charters



Credit Mark Bennett

By [Martina Li in Taiwan](#) 20/09/2021

A Hong Kong-based unit of a UK forwarder has been chartering multi-purpose (MPP) ships to carry containers from China to the UK, *The Loadstar* has learnt.

This subsidiary, Lotus Lines, is active as a non-vessel owning common carrier (NVOCC), specialising in arranging container shipments from China and Hong Kong to the UK and Europe. Annually, Lotus Lines arranges to ship at least 60,000 containers. However, the recent equipment and shipping capacity crunch has prompted Lotus Lines to charter whole vessels to move containers.

While Lotus Lines did not respond to *The Loadstar's* request for comment, sources at German MPP ship operator BBC Chartering said that it had recently chartered two ships, *BBC Finland* and *BBC Norway*, to Lotus Lines. Each ship can take around 1,500 teu and enables Lotus Lines to help shippers who find it increasingly difficult to secure containers from mainline operators.

*The Loadstar* was informed that the ships carry containers from China's second-busiest port, Ningbo, to the UK ports of Liverpool and Tyne. The containers are said to be hired by Lotus Lines and the ships are fixed on consecutive voyage charters, meaning that BBC Chartering will arrange bunkering of the vessels.

More freight forwarders and NVOCCs have been securing space by chartering entire vessels. Alphaliner's [8 September issue](#) noted that Italian logistics company Rif Line chartered two 1,100-1,200 teu ships for around a year to carry containers between Asia and the port of Civitavecchia, near its headquarters in Rome. Furthermore, EShipping Gateways, a joint venture between OOCL Logistics and JD Logistics (part of e-commerce retailer JD.com) has already offered several sailings from Asia to North Europe.

The UK forwarder preferred not to be named for fear of reprisals from the container shipping lines, especially as they open contract negotiations.

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