TRANSXPRESS



PRACTICAL GUIDE · PORT OF CONAKRY

Container stuck at the port of Conakry: find the cause and get it released

The vessel has arrived, but the container does not come out. Meanwhile, shipping line and terminal charges keep running. Before trying to get it released, you need to understand where and why the file is held: the solution depends entirely on that.

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01 Why does a container stay stuck?

A container stays stuck at the port of Conakry when one of the three clearances needed for its exit is missing: the customs release (release order, or BAE), the shipping line's delivery order (DO) and payment of the terminal charges. To get it out, you identify which one is missing and why, then deal with the cause, not the symptom.

The causes fall into six families, set out below. Several can combine on the same file.

02 The six most frequent causes

- Missing or inconsistent documents: bill of lading (B/L) not received, invoice or packing list missing, weight, number of packages or description differing from one document to another.
- Duties and taxes unpaid: the declaration is assessed, but payment has not been made or not yet recorded.
- Customs check in progress: the file is sent for a documentary check, scanner or physical inspection, or the value or classification is disputed.
- Shipping line hold: freight unpaid (freight collect bill of lading), original bill of lading not surrendered, container deposit not paid, or a dispute over the consignee.
- Delivery order (DO) not issued: the line is waiting for payment of its local charges or a missing document.
- Storage or terminal charges unpaid: customs and the line have released the container, but the terminal will not let it out.

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03 Diagnosis: at which desk is the file held?

1. Customs: has the declaration been lodged on SYDONIA? Has it been assessed? Are the duties paid? Which inspection channel was assigned? Has the BAE been issued?
2. Shipping line: has the original bill of lading (or electronic release) been surrendered? Are freight and local charges paid? Is the deposit paid? Has the DO been issued?
3. Terminal: has the container been located? Has storage been invoiced and paid? Are an exit appointment and a truck arranged?

> Ask your customs broker for a written update on these three desks. A hold said to be at customs is sometimes really a wait at the shipping line, and the other way round.

04 Steps to get the container released

- Missing document: obtain it urgently from the supplier or its forwarder, by email and then as an original if needed. If a document is wrong, ask the issuer for a formal correction, never a handwritten change.
- Discrepancy between documents: have a corrected version issued and, depending on the case, request an amendment of the declaration from customs.
- Inspection or dispute: attend the inspection if one is scheduled, provide supporting documents (contract, proof of payment, technical sheets) and, for value, comparable evidence.
- Unpaid duties: arrange the funding and check that the payment is properly recorded in the system.
- Shipping line: pay the charges due, surrender the bill of lading or have the line at origin confirm the release.
- Terminal: pay the storage and book the truck for exit as soon as all clearances are in hand.

> Be wary of anyone who promises to settle a file without documents or receipts. Payments must be made against an official receipt; it is also the only way to support them in your accounts.

05 Limiting demurrage and storage

Demurrage is charged by the shipping line for every day the full container stays in the port beyond the free time, the period at no charge. Storage is charged by the terminal for keeping the container. Both run during the hold.

- Note the free-time end date on arrival and deal with the causes in parallel, not one after the other.
- Depending on the case, ask the line for an extension of free time, with evidence of the delay: it is never guaranteed, but it is easier to negotiate early than late.

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- If the hold drags on and the site is far away, consider unstuffing at the port to return the container sooner, when the regulation and the state of the file allow it.
- Check demurrage and storage invoices against the actual dates before paying.

06 Avoiding the next hold

1. Have your customs broker check the supplier's documents before shipment.
2. Require the same description, weight and number of packages on the invoice, packing list and bill of lading.
3. Send the documents before the vessel arrives and arrange funding for the duties.
4. Settle the question of freight and the original bill of lading with the supplier in advance.

07 What we do for you

TransXpress can take over a file in progress: we check its status with customs, the shipping line and the terminal, tell you what is missing and check the invoices before payment. We do not promise a release date, but a clear action plan. Send us the bill of lading number, the container number and the documents you have.

? Frequently asked questions

Who charges fees while a container is stuck?

The shipping line charges demurrage beyond the free time, and the terminal charges storage. These charges are due even if the hold comes from customs or a missing document.

Can demurrage be waived?

A free-time extension or a commercial gesture can be requested from the line, with supporting evidence, but nothing is guaranteed. The decision belongs to the shipping line.

What if the original bill of lading has not arrived?

Ask the supplier to send it urgently or to have the bill of lading released with the line at origin (electronic release). Without it, the line will not issue the DO.

General information guide written by TransXpress. Customs rules and procedures change: every file is checked against the documents and the regulations in force. This guide is neither a quotation nor a commitment.

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