

# Free storage policy set to meet deadline this time



TAN: Group to list areas for improvement

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A LAW to reduce the number of free storage days for containers at Port Klang looks set to be implemented on January 1 next year, and logistics providers are getting ready for the inevitable move.

The implementation had been postponed three times in the last four years.

"As a whole, we are positive about the January 1 deadline. We are coming up with a list of areas for improvement after the Raya break," Selangor Freight Forwarders & Logistics Association (SFFLA) president Abel Tan Ah Beng told Business Times in a phone interview last Friday.

He said the list will include issues the SFFLA thinks need to be addressed to ensure the

transition, from five free days to three, goes smoothly.

In the past, plans to implement the three-day policy failed as there was no effort made to get all the players ready.

The situation looks to be different this time around. The SFFLA, for instance, has started its own pilot project to ensure its members are prepared.

Tan said its pilot project involving five freight forwarders going paperless on import dealings with the Customs Department in Port Klang will help save time.

However, it is still too early to assess the effectiveness of the system because of the slowdown in the number of containers during the Ramadan month.

"The Port Klang Authority (PKA) has also been taking an initiative by setting up meetings with other government agencies

(OGAs), but their role is more of a coordinator. It is the job of the stakeholders to really make it work," Tan said.

Other initiatives include having depot operators work round the clock to ease long queues at the depots and for shippers to commit to a 24-hour arrangement for delivery and pick-up come November 1.

International Shipowners Association of Malaysia chairman Ooi Lean Hin said its members are working towards the deadline set by the PKA.

"We are three months away from the deadline and there are still some issues to be ironed out, in particular with the Customs, but so far things seem to be progressing well," he said.

In June this year, PKA general manager Lim Thean Shiang announced the set-up of a committee tasked with coming up



Ooi: Some issues need to be ironed out

with a standard operating procedure (SOP) detailing the role that each party plays in the total logistics chain and the cut-off time for shipments.

It is understood that any party which fails to meet the SOP or January 1 target would be penalised.

At press time, Lim did not respond to e-mailed questions from Business Times.