

## Shipping a vehicle from South Africa to Europe

When shipping a vehicle by sea, there are two options on the method of transport, either in a shipping container or on a 'Roll on-Roll off' vessel (Ro-Ro) similar to those ferries that make shorter journeys such as across the English Channel.

We discovered that the Ro-Ro method is more than likely to be the cheapest from South Africa to Europe, though does involve sending the vehicle from either Durban or Port Elizabeth rather than from Cape Town.

Notes:

*OF = Ocean Freight cost*

*BAF = Bunker surcharge, a fuel surcharge added to the OF relating to the current price of crude oil*

*\$1 = R7.48*

*€1 = R12*

*£1 = £11*

### Ro-Ro

We found two companies who could offer us as Ro-Ro service from either Port Elizabeth or Durban to Southampton in the UK.

The first of these is Wallenius Wilhelmsen whose main office is in Durban. The person to contact to enquire about dates and prices for freighting is Norman Naidu (031 277 6549 [norman.naidu@wilhelmsen.com](mailto:norman.naidu@wilhelmsen.com)). Once a booking has been made provisionally, then phone Bobby Singh (031 274 3229) who can assist in clearing and handling.

The costs broke down as such:

**Ocean Freight** = m<sup>3</sup> of vehicle (*lxwxh*) x \$65

**BAF** = m<sup>3</sup> x 23%

**Total** = OF +BAF

For us with a Landrover Defender and roofrack (at the size 4.55x1.79x2.32 = 18.895m<sup>3</sup>) this worked out as:

OF =	\$1,241.68	
BAF =	\$285.58	
<b>Total =</b>	<b>\$1,527.24 =</b>	<b>R11,404.00</b>

The handling charges were as follows, although I'm really not sure how these are justified, and I would advise anyone using the Ro-Ro service to question these:

Transport & Shipping =	R1,650.00	[driving the vehicle onto the ship??]
Cargo Dues =	R959.00	
Customs Exam =	R1,200.00	[We have heard these can be fee free, but even this for not even half an hour of the custom officials time in simply stamping the Carnet seems ridiculous.]
Clearing Charge =	R1,500.00	[Again, is this simply paperwork??]

We did also afterwards incur a **Bill of Lading fee** plus VAT from Norman Naidu which came to R218.12. All of the costs can be paid at once to the same bank account of Wilhelmsen once they have forwarded payment details.

**Grand Total:** **R16,977.88**

Once in Port Elizabeth we were put into contact with a guy called Robert Du Preez who then guided us into the port, introduced the customs official and left the key with a guy at the quayside who was in charge of driving all of the vehicles onto the ship. Over 2,700 Volkswagens were being shipped to Europe, and we have been told that the ship leaves once a week and will dock in Bremerhaven before turning back to stop off in Southampton.

The total cost on the South African side therefore was R16,997.88 and when compared to the shipping container method is just cheaper, although we still don't know of the costs that we will incur in the U.K. although these should be a lot cheaper than the costs when using a shipping container as we can simply drive the vehicle off the ship. The one problem of using Ro-Ro is that you have to give your car keys away, meaning that if your belongings in the vehicle are exposed, there is the possibility of theft. In the Landrover we had different keys for the rear door to the front and the ignition, and we had installed metal mesh across the divide between front and back to prevent anyone in the front from stealing anything in the rear.

The other company we found who operate a Ro-Ro service from S.A. to Europe are Voight Shipping, although bookings should be made through Susan at Hoegh Freight (011 99 44 553 [sss@hoegh.com](mailto:sss@hoegh.com)) who quoted us an ocean freight rate of \$65, but the BAF was only 12%. Sadly they couldn't quote us any handling charges, and only run one vessel per month via U.S.A.

### Container Shipping from Cape Town

Often we found that two companies are involved as per the Ro-Ro, and that there is normally a shipping company, and a separate clearing and handling agent. Of the clearing and handling agents we approached first, we had the largest quotes, as I presume they would find out the freight costs from the shipping company, and add on a little cut for themselves (plus a whole range of non-descript extras that they list on the quote.)

On the occasions we approached the smaller shipping companies first, they gave us a quote for the OF & BAF, before recommending a clearing & handling agent. As always the clearing and handling agents fees really do add up, and can range from anything from 'packing and transport' costs to 'communication fee' or 'documentation fee'. The majority of the quotes we received didn't include the handling, unpacking and port fees when the container would arrive in Europe.

#### **Shipping to Immingham U.K.: MACS**

**Handling:** TD Shipping. 1060, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Picbel Arcade, 58 Strand Street, Cape Town. Tony Moodley (021 421 3606/7)

OF & BAF =	\$1575	R12,000.00
Handling =		R7,900.00
<b>Total =</b>		<b>R19,900.00</b>

**Shipping:** AMT SA, 2805 ABSA Centre, Riebeek Street, Cape Town. Suren Narismula (021 425 0718 or 083 294 9359)

**Handling:** Ceynowa Freight Services, Floor 8, Office 819 Tuburg Centre (off Riebeek). Redewaan Bakardien (021 425 7457 or 083 5188 049)

OF & BAF =	\$1402	R10,582.82
Handling =		R8,628.40
<b>Total =</b>		<b>R19,972.83</b>

#### **Shipping & Handling to Felixtowe: Kenco Clearing & Forwarding. (021 552 6577)**

OF & BAF =	\$1514	R11,506.40
Handling =		R9325.54
<b>Total =</b>		<b>R27,473.19</b>

[These also offered to arrange for handling in the UK for R5,255.25]

**Shipping & Handling:** Space Clearing (Novamarine) (021 506 4402)  
 OF & BAF = \$1750 R13,300.00  
 Handling = R9,607.31  
**Total = R22,107.31**

**Shipping & Handling:** Meihuizen International (021 440 5400)  
 OF & BAF = \$1700 R13,260.00  
 Handling = R8,628.40  
**Total = R21,888.40**

**Shipping & Handling:** Multishipping. Nesan Naidu (021 511 3296 or 083 775 3495)  
 OF & BAF = \$1712 R12,710.00  
 Handling = R9,032.00  
**Total = R21,720.32**

All of the quotes are based on a 20 foot container, and where the destination hasn't been mentioned, it was either into Tilbury or Felixstowe, and most companies would offer to take it to most major container ports in Europe with the price variation being negligible.

The handling costs were never discovered for the other side, although one more quote to add is from a friend of ours in Cape Town who shipped a 4x4 to Hamburg:

**Shipping:** MSC  
**Handling:** Sebenza. Rogaya or Mirinda (021 505 9300)  
 OF & BAF = R12,331.00  
 Handling = R5,967.00  
**Total = R18,293.00**

**Handling In Hamburg:**  
 THC (Terminal Handling Charge) = €180  
 ISPS (Insurance at the port) = €14  
 Import Release = €25  
 Transport (+Tax @19%) = €446.25  
**Total = €656.25**

**Conclusions:**

If you are not afraid to leave someone else in charge of the key for your vehicle and you can get to Port Elizabeth or Durban, then Ro-Ro would seem to be the cheapest option. When if you add up the costs based on the cheapest quotes we received, the container method would cost R3,000 (\$400) cheaper to get the vehicle shipped from South Africa to Europe. When the costs at the destination port are added, the saving of shipping Ro-Ro is substantial, and at an estimate 20-30% cheaper.

The security is greater when sending the vehicle in a container, but the costs at each end can be confusing, unknown but mainly ridiculously priced when compared to Ro-Ro. Although we didn't enquire too often, we were told that by using a 40 foot container to ship 2 vehicles at a time was just as expensive as using 2 20 foot containers, but from other sources I have heard it can be up to 33% cheaper.